Rest and Sleep Policy - Reviewed by Management/Staff and Families Jan 2011

Indicator 13.5
Quality Improvement and Accreditation System (QAIS)

Policy Statement

- Effective rest and sleep strategies are important factors in ensuring a child feels secure and safe in a child care environment.
- The centre's Rest and Sleep Policy is based on recommendations from the recognised national authority SIDS & Kids.
- The centre consults with families about their child’s individual needs and to be aware of the different values and parenting beliefs, Cultural or otherwise that are associated with rest.
- If family beliefs and practices are in conflict with SIDS & Kids, then the service will not endorse an alternative practice, unless the centre is provided with written advice from a medical practitioner.
- The centre defines ‘rest’ as a period of inactivity, solitude, calmness or tranquillity, and can include a child being in a state of sleep.
- Holland Park Childcare Centre has a duty of care to ensure that all children are provided with a high level of safety when resting or sleeping while in care.
- Staff, children and families understand that there is a shared responsibility between the centre and other stakeholders that the rest and Sleep Policy and procedures are accepted as a high priority.
- In meeting the centre's duty of care, it is a requirement that management and staff implement and adhere to the service's Rest and Sleep Policy.

Strategies and Practices

The primary safety resting and sleeping practices for children in care at Holland Park Childcare Centre are:
- All children will be placed on their back to rest when first being settled for a rest. If a child turns on their side or stomach during sleep, then allow them to find their own sleeping position;
- All children will rest with their face uncovered;
- Children's rest environments are free from cigarette or tobacco smoke;
- The rest environment, equipment and materials will be safe and free from hazards; and
- Staff monitor resting children a regular intervals and supervise the rest environment as per best practice standards.
- Some children may fall asleep on cushions, couch or swing but will be moved to safer sleeping areas.
Safe resting practices for toddlers and preschool children

- At no time will a child’s face be covered with bed linen;
- Light bedding is the preferred option; and
- Quiet experiences may be offered to children who do not fall asleep.

Safe resting practices for school age children

- If a school age child requests a rest then there is a designated area for the child to be inactive and calm, away from the main group of children;
- The designated rest area may be a cushion or bed in a quiet section of the care environment; and light bedding is the preferred option.

Safe resting practices for a child who is unwell

- A child will be placed on their back to rest
- All children will rest with their face uncovered
- Children who are unwell will be given the highest priority and monitored constantly especially if the child has: a high temperature, vomited or received minor trauma to the head.

Please refer to the Centre’s Illness, First Aid and Supervision Policies for additional information.

Protective behaviours and practices

Supervision of resting children

- All children who are resting will be supervised by staff;
- Students or Volunteers will not be left unsupervised when settling children for rest;
- All children who have fallen asleep in the centre will be monitored regularly with specific attention to breathing patterns;
- Adults will not rest or sleep in the same environment as a child or group of children;
- Supervision ratios will be maintained during the designated rest period; and

The centre regularly checks the rest environments of all children and observes the following:
- the position of the child’s body on their bed
- each child’s breathing rate
- the arrangement of bed linen
- the environment (e.g. monitoring the temperature)

Settling children for rest

The techniques and strategies for settling a child/children for rest may reflect the:
- Individual needs of the child or group of children;
- Parenting beliefs and values of families accessing the centre;
- Professional philosophy, knowledge and experience of staff;
- Cultural and religious practices
- Frequency of days that the child attends care;
- Circumstances or events happening at home;
- Consistency of practices between home and care;
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* Child’s general health and well being;
* Status or condition of the rest environment; and
* Use of comforters or resting aids (including dummies and security blankets)

When considering settling procedures for resting children, it is important for staff to:
* Meet the individual needs of children;
* Maintain health and safety practices;
* Minimise any distress or discomfort;
* Acknowledge children’s emotions, feelings and fears;
* Avoid using settling and resting practices as a behaviour guidance strategy because the child begins to relate the rest environment, which should be calm and secure, as a disciplinary setting; and
* Understand that young children settle confidently when they have formed bonds with familiar and trusted staff.

The rest environment and equipment

Position and maintenance of rest and sleep equipment and environment
* The centre will conduct a visual safety check of the resting environments and equipment on a weekly basis and a documented one every six months. If staff identify any hazards they will lodge a report as instructed in the Maintenance of Building and Equipment Policy.
* The service does not permit the use of hot water bottles, electric blankets or heated wheat bags on children’s beds. These items present a risk of children either being scalded or developing hyperthermia (overheating).

Hygiene practices
* The children’s beds are cleaned with a non rinse disinfectant on a daily basis;
* Each child has their own bed linen;
* Bed linen is supplied and washed by the child’s family;
* Should linen need to be supplied by the centre, it will be washed once a week and before use by another child.

Rest and sleep times of the day
At the centre, the rest period is between 12.30pm and 2.30pm, however this is flexible to meet the needs of the children in care. Quiet rest areas are available throughout the day to meet the individual resting need of children, for example, when a child is unwell, taking medication that causes drowsiness, after immunisation, stress, or a change in sleeping patterns.

Sleepwear
* Children resting in jumpers with hoods and cords are at higher risk of choking and should not be encouraged to wear these garments when resting.
* Sleepwear should take into consideration the:
  - child’s age;
  - safe resting practices established by the service;
- temperature of the rest environment;
- bed linen used for resting; and
- child’s individual needs.

Communicating with different stakeholders

Children

Rest/Sleep routines will be established for each age group incorporating the needs of the children, individually and as a group.

Families

- Rest strategies and practices are outlined in the Parent Handbook, enrolment forms and newsletters;
- Information regarding SIDS & Kids Safe Sleeping Practices will be displayed on noticeboards;
- Rest/Sleep Charts are displayed in each of the rooms on a daily basis, informing parents of their children's rest/sleep.

Staff and Management

- Staff and Management receive regular first aid training in resuscitation as defined by licensing regulations.