

Sleep and Rest Policy	Document No:	r 81, r 168, r84D
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Responsible Officer: Early Childhood Coordinator	Version	01
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The City of Greater Geelong is a Child Safe Organisation. We take the safety and wellbeing of children seriously and have zero tolerance for child abuse of any type.

1. PURPOSE

The City of Greater Geelong Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Services recognise effective sleep and rest strategies are important factors in ensuring a child feels secure and is safe at an education and care service.

2. SCOPE

ALL SERVICES:

Approved Providers, Nominated Supervisors and educators have a duty of care to ensure children are provided with a high level of safety when sleeping and resting and every reasonable precaution is taken to protect them from harm and hazard. We recognise that as a legislated ECEC service we can no longer follow the requests of parents as we are bound by the safe recommendations of the Red Nose Foundation, unless there is a written medical exemption.

We also have a duty of care to each child's need for rest; and are guided by the Australian Government's Guidelines for Healthy Growth and Development for your child, which outlines physical activity, sedentary behaviour and sleep during a 24-hour period.

In line with the **Paramountcy Principle (s2A)** every person involved in delivering our education and care services will ensure that the safety, rights and best interests of children is the **paramount consideration in all their decisions and actions**.

3. REFERENCES

- Education and Care National Regulations 2011
- Amendments 2017
- Education and Care National Law Act 2010
- Amendments 2017, 2023
- Education and Care National Quality Standard
- RED NOSE Safe Sleep Guidelines 2017
- Keeping Baby Safe 2013
- Guidelines for the Healthy Growth and Development of your Child
www.health.gov.au
- Child Safe Standards 2022 2,4,5,9,11

4. ECEC POLICY

IN ALL SERVICES, MANAGEMENT WILL:

- Ensure there is a suitable safe space and equipment available to provide children in an ECEC service with an opportunity to have their individual sleep and rest needs catered for, taking into consideration their ages and developmental stages and current Australian Standards for equipment.
- Ensure all policies and procedures are based on current research and recommended evidence-based principles and guidelines.
- Ensure that the induction, training and knowledge of staff and educators at each service in relation to safe sleep and rest procedures occurs.
- Ensure the safety of children during sleep and rest, by scheduling regular reviews & conducting a sleep and rest risk assessment at least once every 12 months, and as soon as practicable after becoming aware of any circumstance that may affect the safety, health and wellbeing of children during sleep and rest. *(new October 2023)*
- Keep a record of each sleep and rest risk assessment conducted. *(see Rest Risk Assessment Template; pdf)*
- Ensure that copies of “*Guidelines for the Healthy Growth and Development of Your Child: The Early Years*” are available and followed, as these are the recognised national guidelines for the integration of physical activity, sedentary behaviour, and sleep.
- Regularly review and update sleep and rest procedures in program rooms to ensure they are maintained in line with best practice principles and guidelines.
- Ensure there are no bassinets (of any description) on the premises during times the service is operating.

IN ALL SERVICES, EDUCATORS WILL:

- Receive regular information and training to fulfil their roles effectively, including being made aware of the sleep and rest guidelines, their responsibilities in implementing these, and any changes that are made over time. See latest guidelines on **Responsive Settling**. *(see end of Policy references)*
- Consult with families about the services’ requirements to follow the current Red Nose Foundation recommendations for infant sleeping.
- Support Centre Leadership with completing each scheduled sleep and rest risk assessment.
- Consult with Management in the event that a medical practitioner has provided evidence siting exceptional circumstances that allow for alternate practices to those specified in any current health guidelines on the best practices to adopt to ensure the safety of children during sleep and rest.
For example, with some rare medical conditions, it may be necessary for a baby to sleep on his or her stomach or side, which is contrary to any current health guidelines on the best practices to ensure the safety of children during sleep and rest. It is expected that in this scenario the service would only endorse the practice, with the written support of the baby’s medical practitioner and should be accompanied by a risk minimisation plan.
- Educate families that educators cannot follow practices requested by a family, if they differ with any current health guidelines on the best practices to adopt to ensure the safety of children during sleep and rest recommendations. For example, a parent may request the service wrap or swaddle their baby while they are sleeping. However, according to Red Nose Foundation recommendations, this practice should be discontinued when a baby starts showing signs that they can begin to roll (usually around four to six months of age, but sometimes earlier).
- Refer to the Service’s Sleep and Rest Policies and Guidelines if parents make requests that are contrary to the safety of the child. Child safety should always be the first priority.

- Work in partnership with each family about their child's engagement in a long day educational program; and the needs of their child for rest and sleep. Recognising the *duty of care* to the child, and that a child can't be "kept awake" if they are in need of rest.
- Children are never left to sleep in prams. Ensuring if children arrive at the service asleep in a pram they are immediately transferred to a safe sleeping space.

IN ALL SERVICES, FAMILIES WILL:

- Discuss the individual sleep or rest needs of their child with the educator on enrolment and orientation. Engaging in ongoing discussions as the child grows and the sleep patterns change.
- Assist educators and management to minimise the risk to their child's safety by supporting any current health guidelines on the best practices to adopt to ensure the safety of children during sleep and rest. Provide written medical support in the event that any current health guidelines on the best practices to adopt cannot be followed whilst their child is in an ECEC service.
- Recognise that rest needs may look different for children in a group educational program as to home life. Discuss openly any concerns, ask questions and voice concerns leading to a shared understanding and seeking to find agreement.

5. QUALITY RECORDS

ACECQA Policy Guidelines: Sleep and Rest for Children

ACECQA National Quality Review: Rest Risk Assessment.

https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-08/Sleep_restriskassessment_template_0.pdf

ECEC REST RISK ASSESSMENT - Jotform. [Sleep and Settling Risk Assessment](https://geelongcity.jotform.com/232338172599061)

<https://geelongcity.jotform.com/232338172599061>

6. ATTACHMENTS

- **Guidelines: Safe Sleep & Rest in ECEC Services** (D20 – 520284)

- [Guidelines for Healthy Growth, Development for your Child.](#)

The Early Years (Birth to 5 years). Incorporating the Australian 24-hour movement guidelines for the early years: physical activity, sedentary behaviour and sleep.
(*Ideal amounts of sleep*)

- Duty of Care: Childcare and children's health.

https://ww2.rch.org.au/emplibrary/ecconnections/CCH_Vol9_No1_March2006.pdf

- Raising Children Network – guidelines on **Responsive Settling**

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/babies/sleep/settling-routines/responsive-settling-at-6-18-months-reducing-settling-help>

- Red Nose Foundation <https://rednose.org.au/article/red-nose-safe-sleeping-recommendations>

