
Bendigo Regional YMCA Children’s Services – Relaxation and Sleep Policy and Procedures

Mandatory – Quality Area 2

Policy Number	CS 2.23	Version	1
Drafted by	CSM	Approved by CEO on	10.04.2018
Responsible Person	CSM	Scheduled Review date	10.04.2019

1. OBJECTIVE

This policy provides guidelines to BRYMCA Children’s Services for the implementation of safe relaxation and sleep practices that meet the needs of the children attending.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities.

3. POLICY

BRYMCA is committed to:

- providing a positive and nurturing environment for all children attending the service
- recognising that children have different requirements for relaxation and sleep, and being responsive to those needs to ensure that children feel safe and secure at the service
- consulting with parents/guardians about their child’s individual relaxation and sleep requirements/practices, and ensuring practices at the service are responsive to the values and cultural beliefs of each family
- complying with all legislative requirements, standards and current best practice and guidelines, including recommendations by Red Nose (refer to *Sources*).

4. PROCEDURES

BRYMCA is responsible for:

- taking reasonable steps to ensure the sleep/rest needs of children at the service are met, with regard to the age of children, developmental stages and individual needs
- regularly reviewing practices to ensure compliance with the recommendations of Red Nose in relation to safe sleeping practices for children (refer to *Sources*)
- providing information and training to ensure staff are kept informed of changing practices in relation to safe sleep practices for children
- ensuring parents/guardians are consulted about appropriate relaxation and sleep practices for their child
- protecting children from hazards and harm

- ensuring cots provided at the service comply with the most current Australian/New Zealand Standards (refer to *Sources* and Attachment 1 – Cots)
- consulting with staff in relation to OHS issues when purchasing new equipment for the service
- ensuring compliance with WorkSafe Victoria’s *Children’s services – occupational health and safety compliance kit* (refer to *Sources*), including in relation to staff lifting children into and out of cots
- ensuring adequate supervision of children at the service at all times, including during relaxation and sleep
- ensuring that rooms used for sleep and relaxation are well ventilated

The ELC Director, OSHC Coordinator, Occasional Care Supervisor and OSHC Supervisors are responsible for:

- taking reasonable steps to ensure the sleep/rest needs of children at the service are met with regard to the age of children, developmental stages and individual needs
- ensuring the educational program provides opportunities for each child to sleep, rest or engage in appropriate quiet play activities, as required
- protecting children from hazards and harm
- removing any hazards identified in the child’s resting or sleeping environment and informing the Community Services Manager , as soon as is practicable
- ensuring all staff and educators comply with the recommendations of Red Nose in relation to safe sleeping practices for children (refer to *Sources*)
- educating families about evidence-based safe sleeping practices
- assessing whether there are exceptional circumstances for alternative practices where family beliefs conflict with current recommended evidence-based guidelines for safe sleeping practices, seek written support from a professional and develop a risk management plan
- ensuring all staff and educators comply with WorkSafe Victoria’s *Children’s services – occupational health and safety compliance kit* (refer to *Sources*) in relation to lifting children into and out of cots
- ensuring adequate supervision of children at the service at all times, including during relaxation and sleep
- storing items such as bedding in a hygienic manner to prevent cross-contamination (refer to *Hygiene Policy*).

All Educators are responsible for:

- providing each child with appropriate opportunities for relaxation and sleep according to their needs
- complying with the recommendations of Red Nose in relation to safe sleeping practices for children (refer to *Sources*)
- developing relaxation and sleep practices that are responsive to:
 - the individual needs of children at the service
 - parenting beliefs, values, practices and requirements
 - the length of time each child spends at the service
 - circumstance or events occurring at a child’s home
 - consistency of practice between home and the service
 - a child’s general health and wellbeing
 - the physical environment, including room temperature, lighting, airflow and noise levels

- implementing the documented sleep regime and risk management strategies where in exceptional circumstances family beliefs conflict with current recommended evidence-based guidelines for safe sleeping practices
- minimising distress or discomfort for the children in their care
- ensuring that resting and sleeping practices are not used as a behaviour guidance strategy (refer to *Interactions with Children Policy*)
- providing a range of opportunities for relaxation throughout the day
- complying with WorkSafe Victoria's *Children's services – occupational health and safety compliance kit* (refer to *Sources*), including in relation to lifting children into and out of cots
- conducting regular safety checks of equipment used for sleeping/resting, such as cots and mattresses
- removing any hazards identified in the child's resting or sleeping environment and informing the Supervisor, as soon as is practicable
- ensuring that any hanging cords, mobiles, curtains and blinds are inaccessible to children who are resting or sleeping
- providing adequate supervision of all children, including during sleep, rest and relaxation
- supervising children displaying symptoms of illness closely, especially when resting or sleeping
- ensuring that artificial heating, such as heat bags and hot-water bottles, is not used to provide warmth
- ensuring that each child has their own bed linen, and that the *Hygiene Policy* and procedures are implemented for the cleaning and storage of cots, mattresses and linen
- documenting and communicating children's rest and sleep times to co-workers during shift changes
- providing information to families about the service's relaxation and sleep practices
- developing communication strategies to inform parents/guardians about their child's rest and sleep patterns, including times and length of sleep
- encouraging children's independence, and assisting children with dressing as needed.

5. LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

Australian Consumer Law and Fair Trading Act 2012

Australian Consumer Law and Fair Trading Regulations 2012

Australian/New Zealand Standard – Cots for household use – Safety Requirements (AS/NZS 2172:2010)

Australian/New Zealand Standard – Cots for day nursery, hospital and institutional use – Safety Requirements (AS/NZS 2130:1998)

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004

6. SOURCES

Australian/New Zealand Standards: (at the time of printing) the current relevant standards are:

Australian/New Zealand Standard – Cots for household use – Safety Requirements (AS/NZS 2172:2010), and

Australian/New Zealand Standard – Cots for day nursery, hospital and institutional use – Safety Requirements (AS/NZS 2130:1998)

Current standards are available on the SAI Global website at: www.saiglobal.com

Belonging, Being & Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF): <https://www.education.gov.au/>

Grow and Thrive, *Sleep*, volume 2 number 1, February 2013, Centre for Community Child Health: <https://www.rch.org.au/home/>

Product safety: a guide for businesses and legal practitioners: <https://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/>

Red Nose: Evidence-based information and advice about safe sleeping practices across ages and stages at <https://rednose.com.au/>

WorkSafe Victoria, *Children’s services – occupational health and safety compliance kit*: <https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/>

Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF): <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx>

7. DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy.

Adequate Supervision	(In relation to this policy) Supervision entails all children in all areas of the service, being in sight and/or hearing of an educator at all times including during toileting, sleep, rest and transition routines.
Red Nose	(formerly SIDS and Kids), the recognised national authority on safe sleeping practices for infants and children (refer to <i>Sources</i>)
SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome)	The unexpected and unexplained death of an infant, usually occurring during sleep.

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Department/Area	Role/Responsibility
Educators, Supervisors, Directors and Coordinators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervisors, Directors and Coordinators will oversee the implementation and service adherence to this policy All Educators are responsible for the daily implementation of the policy when directly supervising children.
Community Services Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is responsible for ensuring suitable resources and support systems to enable compliance with this policy. Drive the consultation process and provide leadership and advice on the continuous improvement of the policy. Seek individual community feedback and facilitate an active consultation process with service users as appropriate.

CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policy Approval
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9. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

BRYMCA management team is responsible for formally reviewing and updating this policy every twelve months, in consultation with representatives from key stakeholder groups and in accordance with current legislation, research, policy and best practice. Small changes and additions may be made outside of the formal review to ensure the policy remains relevant and current. We retain records of each review undertaken. Such records may include minutes of meetings and documentation of changes to policies and procedures that result from a review.

10. ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Cots

ATTACHMENT 1

Cots

There are currently (at the time of printing) two standards that apply to the use of cots:

Australian/New Zealand Standard – Cots for household use – Safety Requirements (AS/NZS 2172:2010), and Australian/New Zealand Standard – Cots for day nursery, hospital and institutional use – Safety Requirements (AS/NZS 2130:1998).

Services can check current standards on the SAI Global website at: www.saiglobal.com

Household cots usually have a lower base and mattress, and WorkSafe Victoria have expressed concern for staff in relation to the manual handling risks posed when working with cots at a lower height.

The Institutional Cot Standard allows for cots with a higher base and mattress, but requires these cots to be made of metal, and to have a drop side that can be lowered to the level of the mattress. The early childhood sector has expressed concerns in relation to the safety of cots with sides that lower to the level of the mattress.

Services should investigate options either for:

cots that meet the Australian/New Zealand Standard – Cots for household use – Safety Requirements (AS/NZS 2172:2010) and have a higher base and mattress, or

cots that meet the Australian/New Zealand Standard – Cots for day nursery, hospital and institutional use – Safety Requirements (AS/NZS 2130:1998).

No alterations should be made to purchased cots under any circumstances, as this may have serious consequences in relation to liability in the event that an incident occurs.

ELAA **does not** recommend that services use portable or folding cots, as they present an increased risk of injury or death to a child if erected incorrectly. Portable cots also pose an increased risk of manual handling injuries to staff. If a service requires an extra cot to be available for occasional use, it is possible to purchase a cot that meets the Australian/New Zealand Standard – Cots for household use, and folds flat for easy storage.

Further information on portable or folding cots is available as outlined below:

- Red Nose has information on portable or folding cots: <https://rednose.com.au/>
- Australian Competition and Consumer Commission also has information on folding cots: <https://www.productsafety.gov.au/>
- ELAA also has a range of relevant resources on its OHS website <http://www.ohsinecservices.org.au/> including:
 - a) Fact Sheet – Cots
 - b) Manual Handling Tip sheet