

Y Whittlesea

Sleep and Rest Policy

1. Purpose

The Y Whittlesea is committed to ensuring the safety, health, and wellbeing of all children during sleep and rest times. Every child will be provided with the opportunity to sleep, rest, or engage in quiet relaxation in a calm, comfortable, and secure environment. Each child's individual needs for rest or sleep will be considered and met where safe and practical, in consultation with families and in accordance with best practice guidelines provided by *Red Nose Australia*.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all operations and services of The Y Whittlesea, including early learning centres, kindergartens, and children's programs, and applies to management, educators, staff, students, volunteers, and families.

3. Policy Statement

The Y Whittlesea recognises that sleep and rest are essential for children's development and wellbeing. All children in our care will be supervised actively and appropriately during rest and sleep periods. Sleep and rest environments will be physically safe and developmentally appropriate, and practices will be informed by the most current health and safety recommendations from recognised authorities such as *Red Nose Australia* and ACECQA.

The service will maintain clear procedures for monitoring sleeping children, maintain appropriate ratios, and ensure that educators are able to consistently supervise, observe, and respond to children's needs.

Children will never be placed in a situation where sleep or rest compromises their safety. Bassinets are not permitted in any education and care setting. Individual sleep preferences and family routines will be considered within the context of safety and service capabilities.

4. Responsibilities

Approved Provider

- Ensure compliance with the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations
- Provide access to up-to-date sleep and rest policy and procedures to all staff, volunteers, students, and families
- Ensure all educators (including casual and relief staff) are informed of and trained in safe sleep practices, including supervision expectations
- Conduct and document regular risk assessments of sleep and rest environments
- Ensure safe, hazard-free indoor environments for sleep and rest that include natural ventilation, appropriate lighting, and safe temperatures
- Ensure all sleep and rest equipment (cots, mattresses, bedding) meets Australian Standards and is in good condition
- Ensure all sleep environments allow for visual supervision at all times and enable physical checks to be carried out unobstructed
- Maintain a record of training provided to educators on safe sleep practices and ensure training is current
- Provide appropriate staffing to allow for continuous supervision during rest periods
- Ensure bassinets are not present or used at any time
- Support services in responding to incidents and concerns related to sleep and rest

Nominated Supervisor

- Ensure individual sleep and rest needs of all children are met, considering age, development, and family preferences

- Ensure sleep and rest spaces are supervised, with adequate lighting for observation and visual checks
- Ensure all sleep equipment is set up safely and is free of hazards
- Implement regular checks and ensure staff document them at the time they occur
- Ensure clear procedures are followed for responding to children who do not sleep
- Ensure all educators understand their obligations under this policy and are trained in safe sleep practices
- Ensure sleep practices align with *Red Nose Australia* recommendations and are updated as guidelines change
- Respond to any concerns raised by educators or families regarding sleep and rest practices
- Ensure daily communication with families regarding each child's sleep patterns and wellbeing

Educators

1. Always Follow safe sleep procedures and Red Nose guidelines
 - Maintain continuous, active supervision of all children during sleep and rest periods
 - Conduct and record physical checks at scheduled intervals
2. Position themselves to be able to always see and hear sleeping children
 - Ensure children's sleep clothing is safe and free from choking or strangulation hazards (e.g. remove bibs, hooded tops, jewellery)
 - Provide individualised sleep and rest routines as agreed with families where safe and practical
 - Discuss children's needs regularly with families and include them in decision-making
 - Create a calm and relaxing environment for rest using soft lighting, quiet music, and culturally inclusive practices
 - Offer quiet alternative activities for children who do not require sleep (e.g. books, drawing, puzzles)
 - Ensure bassinets are not used or stored in the service
 - Report any concerns, hazards, or incidents during rest time to the Nominated Supervisor immediately

Families

- Provide accurate and up-to-date information about their child's sleep and rest needs upon enrolment and throughout their time at the service
- Communicate daily with educators about their child's sleep, including changes in routine or sleep behaviour
- Provide required bedding and comfort items as agreed with the service
- Dress children appropriately for the weather and sleeping conditions, avoiding hazardous clothing items
- Read and review the service's Sleep and Rest Policy and procedures
- Work in partnership with the service to support safe and respectful sleep practices

4. Related policies. Procedures and resources:

- Administration of First Aid
- Child Safe Environment Policy & Procedure
- Enrolment & Orientation Policy & procedure
- Emergency and Evacuation Policy & procedure
- Interactions with Children Policy & Procedure
- Red Nose: <https://rednose.org.au/section/safe-practices>
- Red Nose: Cot to bed safety https://rednose.org.au/downloads/RN3356_Cot_Bed_DL_Oct2018_Online.pdf

5. Legislative and Industry Requirements: [Link here](#) to Legislative Compliance Register

6. **Consequences of breaching this policy:** All elements of this policy must be adhered to, and any breach will be dealt with in accordance with the [YMCA Whittlesea Disciplinary and Termination Policy](#).
7. **Policy owner:** The General Manager Early Years is responsible for keeping this policy current - including making amendments as required, and regular reviews as scheduled.
8. **Document Control:** Review of this policy will be undertaken every two years, or prior as required by law, in consultation with appropriate Y People.

Version:	Description of Amendment	Amended by	Date	Release Date
3.0	Review	R Davis	17/7/25	July 2025
2.0	Reviewed and updated template	Farryn Burrill	12/10/2024	Oct 2024
1.0	Updated template and reviewed	Children and families leadership team	29/03/2019	April 2019