

4.20 Rest and Relaxation Procedure

1. Purpose

My Place Family Day Care recognises that children have different sleep, rest and relaxation needs. Children of the same age can have different sleep patterns, which Educators need to consider within the service. Learning to relax is a technique children can develop and use throughout life.

This procedure aims to support Educators and workers to implement the principles outlined within the My Place Family Day Care 4.8 Safe Sleep Policy and should be read in conjunction to it.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all Nominated Supervisors, Coordinators, Administrative Staff, Educators, Educator Assistants, parents and children enrolled with the Service.

3. Procedure

3.1 Roles and Responsibilities

Nominated Supervisors and Coordinators are responsible for:

- Ensuring Educators provide children who do not wish to sleep with alternative quiet activities and experiences, while those children who do want to sleep are allowed to do so without being disrupted.
- Ensuring Educators provide all children access to a safe and comfortable area to rest, if they request a rest or are showing signs of tiredness, regardless of the time of day (if required).
- Ensuring Educators have a strong understanding of the importance of children being provided with opportunities for rest and relaxation, as well as sleep.
- Supporting Educators to consider rest and relaxation as a significant part of the curriculum being offered to children.

Educators are responsible for:

- Implementing a range of strategies to meet each child's rest and relaxation needs.
- Looking for and responding to children's cues for rest (e.g. yawning, rubbing eyes, disengagement from activities, crying, decreased ability to regulate behaviour, seeking comfort from adults, etc.).

- Avoiding the use of settling and sleep practices as a behaviour guidance strategy because children can begin to relate the sleep environment, which should be calm and secure, as a disciplinary setting.
- Minimising any distress or discomfort to children as they transition from sleeping routines to resting quietly while undertaking quiet activities.
- Acknowledging children's emotions, feelings, and fears by discussing with them their rest and relaxation needs.
- Actively building a strong relationship with children, understanding that younger children (especially those aged 0–3 years) settle more confidently when they have formed bonds with Educators and other children.
- Ensuring that the physical environment is safe and conducive to promoting rest and relaxation, by offering spaces that have nooks for one or two children with quiet experiences such as a book corner with a comfortable chair for one.

Families are responsible for:

- Working with the Educator to consider their child's sleep, rest and relaxation needs.
- Communicating openly to ensure a strong working relationship is formed between them and their Educator.
- Contacting the service if they require additional support.

3.2 Rest and Relaxation Practices

Educators will:

- Recognise that changes in rest time can be a significant shift in activity level and mood for children.
- Plan calming routines or rituals before these times of transition begin, such as reading a story, turning the lights down, or listening to soft music.
- Implement routines to signal that it is time for rest.
- Recognise that waking up is a major transition for children, and they may awaken disoriented or cranky. It is important that they are allowed to wake slowly with calm reassurances from the Educator. Keeping the lights dim will help to make this transition take place smoothly.
- Understand that not all children need a daytime sleep. Some children are not good sleepers, or they may find it difficult remaining quiet and still for long periods of time, for example, this should not exceed more than 15 minutes.
- For those who are not napping, offer quiet play activities:
 - This could include puzzles and books offered at their mats.
 - In these situations, this period could be referred to on an Educators schedule as "rest time" or "quiet time" to avoid resistance from children who don't "take naps".

- Talking with children about their needs and the importance of quiet play to their health.
- Negotiating the quiet-time period and how it will occur. Consider using some strategies such as have a 'Rest Box' for each child. This would have some quiet activities the child either has bought in from home or items the Educator has included based on the interest of the child.
- Have an area where children are away from other children resting offer quiet activities.

Some ideas for quiet spaces and rest time activities include:

- [10 Calming Activity for Wind Down Time](#)
- [Calming activities for Preschool Children](#)
- [15 Quiet Activities for toddlers](#)
- [12 Spaces to create quiet reading places](#)

4. Review

This procedure will be reviewed every two years or sooner as required.

	Date	Details
V1.0	07/2015	Original procedure issued
V2.0	12/2016	Reviewed
V3.0	08/2017	Reviewed
V4.0	10/2020	Reviewed
V5.0	05/01/2024	Reviewed – some content changes, significant change to document structure

6. Related Documents

Policies

4.8 Safe Sleep Policy