



Relaxation & Sleep

Relaxation and sleep are central to health and wellbeing.

Relaxation techniques learnt during childhood provide children with a skill they can use throughout their lives. Relaxation helps to reduce stress and promotes health & wellbeing.

All children have individual sleep and rest requirements. Children need a comfortable relaxing environment to enable their bodies to rest. This environment must be safe and well supervised to ensure children are safe, healthy and secure in their environment.

Aim

Kangaroo Valley Preschool Inc. will ensure that all children have appropriate opportunities to sleep, rest and relax in accordance with their individual needs.

Relaxation techniques will be offered to the children, including opportunities for visualisation and meditation.

The risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) will be minimised by following practices and guidelines set out by health authorities.

Strategies:

The Approved Provider will:

- “Take reasonable steps to ensure that the needs for sleep and rest of children being educated and cared for by the service are met, having regard to the ages, development stages and individual needs of the children.” (Regulation 81.)
- Ensure that areas for sleep and rest are well ventilated and have natural lighting.
- Ensure that enough suitable rest mats and extra linen are available when needed.
- Ensure that children are suitably supervised while relaxing and sleeping.

The Nominated Supervisor will:

- “Take reasonable steps to ensure that the needs for sleep and rest of children being educated and cared for by the service are met, having regard to the ages, development stages and individual needs of the children.” (Regulation 81.)

- Ensure that children are suitably supervised while relaxing and sleeping.
- Maintain up to date knowledge of safe sleeping practice and it is communicated to educators.

The Educators will:

- Consult with families about children's sleep and rest needs. Educators will be sensitive to each child's needs so that sleep and rest times are a positive experience.
- Ensure that cushions / mattresses are clean and in good repair. Any mattresses used will be wiped over with warm water and neutral detergent or disinfectant wipes between each use.
- Ensure that any bed linen used is clean and in good repair. Bed linen is for use by an individual child and will be washed before use by another child.
- Create a relaxing atmosphere for resting children by playing relaxation music, reading stories, cultural reflection, turning off lights and ensuring children are comfortably clothed. Relaxation techniques will be introduced and encouraged. The environment should be tranquil and calm for both educators and children. Educators will sit near resting children and support them by encouraging them to relax, listen and visualise as music, stories or relaxation sequences are presented
- Encourage children to rest their bodies and minds for 10-15 minutes. If children are asleep after this time, they will be provided with a cover to suit the weather conditions and a screen will be placed near them to define their sleeping space. The other children will be reminded to respect the needs of sleeping children.
- Closely monitor children while they are asleep, and where necessary, assist them in joining back in with the group once they are awake.
- Assess each sleeping child's circumstances and current health to determine whether higher supervision levels and checks may be required.
- Communicate with families about their child's sleeping times and the service policy regarding sleep and rest times.
- Respect family preferences regarding sleep and rest and consider these daily while ensuring children feel safe and secure in the environment. Conversations with families may be necessary to remind families that children will neither be forced to sleep nor prevented from sleeping.



- Encourage children to dress appropriately for the room temperature when resting or sleeping. Lighter clothing is preferable, with children encouraged to remove shoes, jumpers, jackets and bulky clothing. The room temperature will be considered to ensure maximum comfort for the children.

Families will:

- Communicate with educators regarding their child's sleep and rest needs.
- Provide a cushion, stored in a carry bag, for their child's use during relaxation sessions.

Evaluation:

Children enrolled at Kangaroo Valley preschool are provided with a safe, comfortable, relaxing environment where they can rest and sleep according to their needs. They are also given the opportunity to learn and practice relaxation techniques which contribute to their health & wellbeing.

References:

NSW Children's Regulation 2004

Community Child Care Co-operative: "Safe Sleep & Rest Times" Sample Policy.

"Relaxation is a Must"- Dr Brenda Abbey www.childcarebydesign.com.au

"Daily relaxation for Children" www.shambalakids.com

"Safe Sleeping" - Sids and Kids