

Infant Sleep Policy

_____ (INSERT NAME OF THE PROGRAM) _____

Ensuring infants are safe while they sleep is very important to our program. For this reason, _____ (INSERT NAME OF THE PROGRAM) _____ has created a policy on safe sleep practices for infants under 12 months old. We follow the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) to provide a safe sleep environment and reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). SIDS is the “sudden death of an infant under 1 year of age, which remains unexplained after a thorough investigation.” The staff, substitute staff, and volunteers at _____ (INSERT NAME OF THE PROGRAM) _____ follow the following policy.

Sleep Position:

- All infants (under 12 months of age) will be placed completely flat on their backs in a safety approved crib or playpen for sleep unless a written note from the infant’s health care provider is provided stating the medical reason and the specific time frame that an alternate sleep position or alternate sleep surface (ex. car seat) is to be followed. Written permission from both parents must also be obtained in order to follow the order. _____ (INSERT NAME OF THE PROGRAM) _____ reserves the right to refuse care if _____ (INSERT NAME OF THE PROGRAM) _____ does not feel comfortable following the order.
- Infants will always be placed completely flat on their backs for sleep. However, when an infant can easily turn front to back and back to front, they can remain in whatever position they prefer to sleep.
- All infants’ heads/faces will remain uncovered when sleeping.
- Infants will remain lightly clothed and will not be over-layered to prevent overheating.
- Headbands, bibs, necklaces (including teething necklaces), hooded clothing, and hats will be removed before laying an infant down for sleep.
- Pacifiers will not be tied around an infant’s neck or clipped on to an infant’s clothing. Pacifiers will be checked for cracks/tears before use. No stuffed animals/toys will be attached to the pacifier.
- Positioning devices or wedges are not recommended and will not be used without a written order from a health care provider. _____ (INSERT NAME OF THE PROGRAM) _____ reserves the right to refuse care if _____ (INSERT NAME OF THE PROGRAM) _____ does not feel comfortable following the order.
- Blankets are not recommended. If used, only one thin blanket is allowed. Weighted blankets are not allowed.
- Swaddling is not recommended. If swaddled, only one thin blanket will be used no higher than the infant’s shoulders. Swaddling will be discontinued once the infant shows signs of attempting to roll.
- Sleep sacks are recommended instead of blankets. Sleeveless sleep sacks will be used. Swaddle sleep sacks can be used but will not be used once the infant shows signs of attempting to roll. Sleep sacks must fit properly so the infant’s head cannot slip through the neck hole or cause excess material to cover or gather around the infant’s face. Weighted sleep sacks are not allowed. Lightweight sleep sacks will be used to prevent overheating. Sleep sacks will not be allowed once an infant no longer sleeps in a crib/playpen.
- Written parental permission must be obtained to use one blanket, sleep sack, pacifier, or security item for sleep. A blanket and sleep sack cannot be used at the same time. Copy will be posted by each child’s crib/playpen.

Sleep Environment:

- Our program will use CPSC guidelines for safety approved cribs and playpens.
- The temperature of the room where infants sleep will be maintained at 68-72 degrees F.
- Hardware will be checked weekly on cribs to make sure no pieces are loose, broken or missing.
- The mattress of the crib will be always in the lowest position and completely flat.
- No crib toys or mobiles will be attached to the crib or playpen. No items will be hung over the side or over the top of the crib/playpen when an infant is in the crib/playpen.
- No monitors/devices are allowed to be attached to an infant or placed in the crib/playpen.
- All items will be kept out of the reach of an infant in the crib or playpen.
- Infants will not sleep on/in water beds, sofas, soft mattresses, car seats, swings, bouncy seats, Boppys, or other soft surfaces.
- Soft materials such as pillows, stuffed toys, loose bedding, bumper pads, quilts, (including breathable/mesh bumper pads) and comforters will not be placed in infants’ sleep environment.
- If a crib is used, infants will only sleep on a firm tight-fitting mattress with a properly fitting fitted crib sheet.

- If a playpen is used, infants will only sleep on the pad provided by the manufacturer with a properly fitting fitted playpen sheet. Pad will maintain shape when fitted sheet is used; lay flat and meet all four corners of frame. If the sheet does not fit properly, no sheet will be used. No extra padding or mattresses will be added. Velcro/snap straps provided by the manufacturer will be used to keep pad in place.
- Pad (floor of playpen) will be checked frequently to make sure wood panels are not broken or haven't shifted. Area under pad will be kept clean and free from rips/tears.
- Playpen mesh will be less than ¼" and free from tears/holes.
- Playpen frame will be structurally intact and checked often to make sure the frame is sturdy.
- Bassinets will not be used.
- Bassinet inserts and changing pad inserts for playpens will not be used.
- Infants will not share cribs/playpens at the same time.
- Smoking will not be allowed within 20 feet of ____ (INSERT NAME OF THE PROGRAM) _____. Staff will not be permitted to smoke on their breaks during work hours.

Supervision:

- A staff member will visually check on the sleeping infants regularly (every 10-15 minutes) to view the color of infant's skin, to check on infant's breathing, to monitor for signs of overheating, to re-adjust blanket/clothing if needed, make sure the head/face is uncovered. Lighting in the room will be bright enough to see the infant's skin color and breathing.
- Sleeping infants will be within hearing of staff at all times. Monitor will be used if staff is not always present in the room. Music/sound machines will be placed at a low volume to ensure infants' noises can be heard.
- When infants are awake, they will have supervised "tummy time".
- Infants will spend limited time (maximum of 15 minutes x 2 times a day) in restrictive equipment (ex. swings, bouncer/infant seats, etc.) when they are awake and supervised.

Arrival/Departure:

- All infants must be removed from their car seats (and have outer clothing removed) by their parents and given to the staff when they arrive.
- All staff, substitute staff, and volunteers are not allowed to place infants in their car seats unless the ____ (INSERT NAME OF THE PROGRAM) ____ is transporting the infants.

Training:

- All staff, substitute staff, and volunteers at the ____ (INSERT NAME OF THE PROGRAM) ____ will be trained in safe sleep policies and practices before any individual is allowed to care for infants and yearly.
- Safe sleep policies and practices will be reviewed with all staff, substitute staff, and volunteers each year.
- Documentation that staff, substitutes, and volunteers have read and understand these policies will be kept in each individual's file.
- All staff, substitutes, and volunteers at ____ (INSERT NAME OF THE PROGRAM) ____ will be trained on emergency procedures for unresponsive infants as well as what to do when they have a question or need assistance before they are allowed to care for infants.

When the Policy Applies:

This policy applies to all staff, substitute staff, parents, and volunteers when they are caring for infants at ____ (INSERT NAME OF THE PROGRAM) ____.

Communication Plan for Staff and Parents:

Parents will review and sign this policy when they enroll their infant in the ____ (INSERT NAME OF THE PROGRAM) ____ and a copy will be given to the parents. Parents are asked to follow this same policy when the infant is at home to prepare their infant to sleep at child care. Information regarding safe sleep practices, safe sleep environments, reducing the risk of SIDS in child care as well as other program health and safety practices will be shared if any changes are made. A copy will also be provided in the staff handbook.

Licensing requires written parental permission to use a blanket, sleep sack, pacifier or security item for sleep. A copy of the permission form will be posted by the infant's crib/playpen out of the infant's reach for staff to reference.

Any individual who has questions may ask:

Program Contact: _____ NAME OF CENTER DIRECTOR or FAMILY/GROUP CHILD CARE PROVIDER) _____

Health Professional Contact: (if applicable) _____

Infant's Name: _____ DOB _____

Signed by:

Director/Owner: _____ Date: _____

Parent: _____ Date: _____

_____ Date: _____

Effective Date and Review:

This policy is effective ___/___/___ and will be reviewed annually by ___/___/___ or sooner if needed. Parents and staff will be notified of any upcoming policy review.

Sources:

CFOC, 4th Edition, 2019

Adapted from the Sample Policy for Use in Child Care, AAP

ND Licensing Rules & Regulations

Sleep-Related Infant Deaths: Updated 2022 Recommendations for Reducing Infant Deaths in the Sleep Environment, AAP, Pediatrics, 2022.

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