



Educational Leader

Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation.

Looking at the element in detail - A service reviewed what the NQF Guide said about element 2.1.1 and understood wellbeing and comfort:

- includes children's physical, mental and spiritual needs
- involves active and restful experiences that support each child's health, nutrition, sleep, rest and relaxation.

How do educators know they're meeting each child's 'physical, mental and spiritual' needs? In her article '[Shared Care for Children](#),' Elly Singer (Associate Professor Developmental Psychology and Education) says developmental theories must become more 'context-bound' ie must consider the particular histories and moral values of parents, children and other involved in the specific child care situation.

She says up to now developmental theories have been presented as objective and universal when in fact they're full of hidden assumptions and value-laden perspectives and morals, most of which come from Western culture. For example:

"within attachment theory, the regulation of emotions fits neatly with Western culture, where a clear distinction is made between 'dependence and 'independence'.. secure dependence or attachment to the other paves the basis from which the outside world can be explored, independently and autonomously. Note that other cultures have very different ways of dealing with the need for dependence and independence."

Secure attachment is seen as being directly linked only to the mother-child bond, rather than any network of community carers, and it's implicit that successful attachment can only be achieved when the child feels they're 'in control' of the mother/parent.

In the late 1980s debate about the damaging effects of day care resurfaced. New research led to claims that full-time care care harmed emotional development. Supposedly the research showed children were less 'securely attached' to their mother in the 'Strange Situation,' and schoolchildren with day care experience were more aggressive and disobedient.

Some people thought the research was flawed though because it ignored the situational context, and because the researchers values and assumptions led to incorrect conclusions. For example:

"Does resistant behaviour when mother re-enters, having left her child alone in an unfamiliar room, point to an anxious attachment to mother? Or is it possible that day care children are blasé about their mothers going away and returning? This would mean that these children do not 'avoid' their mothers out of anger or revenge, but because in their world nothing 'strange' has occurred in the Strange Situation."

"On what grounds do researchers judge a child to be aggressive, maladjusted or disobedient? Could these children not just as well be described as being independent, assertive and having their own point of view?"

Singer notes that in the long run child psychology always involves a question of which 'truth' and whose 'judgement' counts the most. It's important we understand each child's situation, family life, culture, family values and expectations when meeting their physical, mental and spiritual needs. Just as important is ensuring we can recognise our own values and assumptions, and those implicit in child developmental theories, and how these may hinder the promotion of a child's wellbeing.

For example, what views do educators have on the impact of 'peer culture' on children's wellbeing? Studies of peer relations among babies and toddlers in some European day care centres show that a basic aspect of peer culture (and children's wellbeing) is children's creation and sharing of a stable set of activities or routines.

Week 26, 22 - 26 August 2022 – 2.1.1 Wellbeing and comfort

“Even 1-year-olds seem to enjoy making rules together, for instance by playing peek-a-boo. Rules at that age are spontaneous and bound to concrete situations, but even then they give the children the joy of sharing and controlling their environment.”

Could educators’ assumptions and values (for example about parent roles, family structures, social classes, cultures) be impacting a child’s wellbeing? How could you help educators consider a child’s wellbeing from different perspectives or in relation to the specific context?

Could you use Singer’s article as the basis to critically reflect on other child development theories?

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Sleep, Rest, Relaxation and Clothing Policy

- We will have a safe, quiet and restful environment for sleep and rest that enables educators to always see, hear and closely monitor children
- Educators will follow the safe sleep practices in the policy which are based on recommendations from Red Nose.
- If a child has a medical condition which prevents educators following these practices alternative practices must be authorised by a doctor in writing and form part of a child’s Medical Management Plan
- Educators will consider and meet where possible families’ preferences for their child’s sleep/rest. Educators have a legal obligation to allow children to sleep/rest if they’re showing signs of tiredness. If a resting child falls asleep without help and families have requested the child not have naps, educators may allow the child to sleep for a period they believe is in the best interests of the child’s health and wellbeing
- All cots must meet Australian Standards and be labelled AS/NZS 2172:2010 or AS/NZS 2195:2010 (folding cots)
- Mattress firmness must comply with AS/NZS 8811.1:2013 Methods of testing sleep surfaces
- Babies must never be left to sleep in a bassinet, hammock, pram or stroller
- Sleeping babies will be physically checked every 10 minutes and the check recorded
- If portacots used they must only be used temporarily (no more than a few days) for children up to 15 kg
- Educators will provide quiet, meaningful activities for children who do not need or wish to sleep or rest
- Educators will communicate daily with families about their child’s sleep and rest routines
- Educators will respect and help maintain children’s privacy during toileting, dressing/undressing etc
- Cleaning practices will ensure sleep/rest environments are hygienic. Beds, linen and mattress covers will be cleaned when they look dirty, and every day or at the end of the week if used by the same child
- Children’s clothing must be safe, suitable for the weather, able to get dirty, allow free movement and ease of access for toileting
- Educators may organise for children to sleep/rest outdoor in suitable weather while ensuring their safety and wellbeing
- For safety reasons children must not wear amber teething necklaces or bracelets.

Do you have any feedback or comments about this policy? Please include below.

Educator’s Name	Educator’s Signature

Note we are now listing any Procedures which relate to the Policy reviewed. We have a comprehensive Procedure Pack (in addition to the procedures already included in the policies) which is currently part of our HR Toolkit. Please contact us on admin@centresupport.com.au if you would like a quote for the Kit.

Procedure - Cleaning Cots and Stretchers

Procedure - Spill Blood urine Poo and Vomit

Procedure - Sleep

Procedure - Toileting

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