

Safe Sleep Environments

Policy

In accordance with the Head Start Program Performance Standards, all grantee programs must work with families to discuss sleep routines that meet the child's developmental needs and observe safety practices that minimize health risks. Research findings demonstrate that appropriate sleeping arrangements for infants reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Safety practices must be shared with all parent/guardians who have infants in their care or are expectant. Through following health and safety regulations regarding sanitation, staff can lessen the spread of contagious illnesses.

Children in the Center-Based program options which are 6 hours or longer will be given the opportunity to nap or rest without distraction from other activities at the site. Children are not, at any time, forced to go to sleep.

Reference and Regulation:

Head Start Performance Standards: 1302.21 (b)(1)(i-ii), 1302.44(2)(v), 1302.47 (2), 1302.47 (5)(ii)

California Community Care Licensing Title 22: 101230(b)(c), 101216.3(a), 101416.5 (d), 101439.1

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

Caring For Our Children Basics

Neighborhood House Association

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EHS HEA-02

Safe Sleep Practices

Procedure

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All Early Head Start (EHS) programs must promote safe sleep practices by implementing health and safety practices that reduce the risk of SIDS and minimize the spread of contagious diseases. Staff also maintains proper ratios while supervising infants or toddlers that are napping.

Staff discusses the child's sleeping patterns and habits while completing the following forms with the parent/guardian: Preadmission Health History (LIC 702), Infant Nutrition Health Questionnaire, and Toddler Nutrition Health Questionnaire.

Information on the child's sleeping habits may also be documented on the Well-Baby Checkups or Toddler Physical Exam, which have been completed by the child's physician.

Cribs and Bedding

- Cribs must follow current U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and ASTM International safety standards.
- When it is safe and developmentally appropriate, use firm mattresses or cots with fitted sheets for children under 18 months.
- For children under 12 months, soft bedding materials, such as pillows, quilts, comforters, fluffy blankets, and crib bumpers, and toys may not be used. Use only a lightweight breathable blanket approved or purchased by Neighborhood House Association.
- If necessary for additional warmth, use sleep clothing for infants, such as a one-piece sleeper or footed pajamas

- Bedding is individually stored so that each child's bedding is identifiable and does not come into contact with another child's bedding.
- A napping space and a cot or mat must be available for each child. Each crib will be occupied by only one infant at a time.

Sanitation

- Cribs are wiped with detergent/disinfectant daily and when soiled or wet.
- Cots are wiped with detergent/disinfectant weekly and whenever soiled or wet.
- Cots are labeled with each child's name and bedding should be stored individually so that each child's used bedding does not come into contact with another child's bedding.
- Each child's bedding will be used by only him/her and replaced when wet or soiled. Bedding will be changed daily or more often if required.

Sleeping Arrangements

- Placement of cribs and cots must not hinder entrances or exits to and from the napping areas or classroom exits.
- Staff must always place infants to sleep on their backs (never on their stomachs) and make sure that nothing covers the baby's head.
- Cribs, mats, or cots will be arranged to provide a walkway and work space between the cribs, mats, or cots sufficient to permit staff to reach each child without stepping over any other child.

Ratio/Supervision

- Appropriate EHS classroom ratios (1:4) must be maintained during all hours of program operation including naptime. The only exception to this regulation is that during naptime, one teaching staff member may be replaced by another staff member or volunteer who does not meet the teaching qualifications required for the age.

NHA Head Start Standard Operating Policies and Procedures

- Infants are held while being fed and are not laid down to sleep with a propped bottle.
- The “Boppy” pillow, or other nursing pillows, should only be used when nursing or feeding. Under no circumstances should a child be left unattended to play with or sleep on a Boppy as a pillow. Positioning devices are unnecessary and can pose a health risk.

Documentation:

Preadmission Health History (LIC 702)

Infant Nutrition Health Questionnaire

Toddler Nutrition Health Questionnaire

Well-Baby Check Ups

Toddler Physical Exam

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