



TEMPLATE

# SLEEP AND REST RISK ASSESSMENT



From 1 October 2023, the approved provider, nominated supervisor and family day care (FDC) educator must 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 (Education and Care Services National Regulations, regulation 84A). Approved providers must also ensure policies and procedures are in place for managing sleep and rest for children (regulation 168) and take reasonable steps to ensure those policies and procedures are followed (regulation 170).

To ensure the safety of children during sleep and rest, from 1 October 2023, the approved provider must conduct a sleep and rest risk assessment at least once every 12 months, and as soon as practicable after becoming aware of any circumstance that may affect the safety, health and wellbeing of children during sleep and rest. The approved provider must make any necessary updates to the sleep and rest policies and procedures as soon as practicable after conducting the sleep and rest risk assessment and keep a record of each sleep and rest risk assessment conducted.

The sleep and rest risk assessment must be conducted for each education

and care service or for each FDC residence or FDC venue of the service.

Completing risk assessment and management plans is an ongoing part of good operational practice to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of children. One way to support this is by using a system of hazard identification and risk management. This can help identify, assess and manage the risk of harm before an incident occurs.

This sleep and rest risk assessment template is designed to assist approved providers and services in conducting sleep and rest risk assessments. This template is a starting point and should be adapted to meet the individual needs of your service or FDC residence/venue in line with regulations 84A, 84B and 84C. It is a requirement for services and FDC residences or FDC venues to complete a sleep and rest risk assessment at least once every 12 months, and as soon as practicable after becoming aware of any circumstance that may affect the safety, health and wellbeing of children during sleep and rest. This document is intended to be an evolving and regularly updated document, to be amended as circumstances change and new hazards arise. Once completed, it is also important to schedule regular reviews of this document to make sure hazards in your service are

identified, risks are managed before they cause harm and identified risks are addressed within policies and procedures (regulation 84B).

## USING THIS TEMPLATE

- To begin using this template, inspect and review sleep and rest practices in your service including environments, equipment, policies, procedures, and forms, to identify any potential or existing hazards and check current health guidelines on best practice control measures. Ensure the matters outlined in regulation 84C are considered as well as best practice guidance from recognised authorities (such as Red Nose Australia).
  - » Adapt this template to be relevant to your service context. To add to this template you can add rows by pressing the tab button on your keyboard from the last column.
- When identifying the action required include the:
  - » hazard identified
  - » level of risk (using the risk assessment matrix attached to this document)
  - » action identified to eliminate/mitigate/manage the hazard or risk
  - » elimination/control measures
  - » person(s) responsible for taking the required action
  - » timeframes for addressing the identified action.
- Once developed, make the template available to all service leaders, educators and staff so that they know what has been assessed as a risk, and how to manage it.
- After the sleep and rest risk assessment is complete, prepare/review the service's policies and procedures and address within policy and procedure any risks identified in the sleep and rest risk assessment (regulation 84C) as well as other matters required under regulation 84B.

ACECQA's [Risk Assessment and Management tool](#) is a useful resource and should be referred to for more information on how to conduct a risk assessment in your education and care service or residence.

What needs to be considered when conducting a sleep and rest risk assessment from 1 October 2023?

A risk assessment must consider the matters set out below:

- the number, ages and development stages of children being educated and cared for, including at each education and care service and FDC residence or approved FDC venue of the service
- the sleep and rest needs of children at the service (including specific health care needs, cultural preferences, sleep and rest needs of individual children and requests from families about a child's sleep and rest) including at each education and care service and FDC residence or approved FDC venue of the service
- the suitability of staffing arrangements required to adequately supervise and monitor children during sleep and rest periods
- the level of knowledge and training of the staff supervising children during sleep and rest periods
- the location of the sleep and rest areas, including the arrangement of cots and beds within the sleep and rest areas, including at each education and care service and FDC residence or approved FDC venue of the service
- the safety and suitability of any cots, beds and bedding equipment and having regard to the ages and developmental stages of the children who will use them
- any potential hazards in sleep and rest areas or on a child during sleep and rest periods
- the physical safety and suitability of sleep and rest environments, including temperature, lighting and ventilation at each education and care service and FDC residence or approved FDC venue of the service
- for FDC services that provide overnight care to a child, any risks that the overnight care provided at the family day care residence or approved venue may pose to the safety, health or wellbeing of the child.

For services where overnight care is provided (such as services in hospitals, where shift workers' children attend overnight), the risk assessment must address management of risks relating to overnight care, to inform policies and procedures.

## RISK MATRIX

A risk matrix is a useful tool to use during the risk assessment process. It helps in identifying the level of risk by looking at the likelihood that a negative event may occur, and the severity of the consequence should it occur.

The Guide to the NQF defines likelihood and consequences in a risk matrix in Section 5: Regulatory Authority power.

Risk Matrix						
		Likelihood				
		Rare	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Almost certain
Consequences	Major	Moderate	High	High	Critical	Critical
	Significant	Moderate	Moderate	High	High	Critical
	Moderate	Low	Moderate	Moderate	High	High
	Minor	Very low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
	Insignificant	Very low	Very low	Low	Moderate	Moderate

## LIKELIHOOD

The risk matrix includes five levels of likelihood:

- Rare
- Unlikely
- Possible
- Likely
- Almost Certain.

When thinking about likelihood, the approved provider and service leaders should prioritise actions based on ensuring compliance with the minimum legislative standards, particularly those standards relating to the safety, health and wellbeing of children. The following table is a useful guide.

Likelihood	
Rare	Very unlikely – the event may occur only in exceptional circumstances
Unlikely	Improbable – the event is not likely to occur in normal circumstances
Possible	Potential – the event could occur at some time
Likely	Probable – the event will probably occur in most circumstances
Almost certain	Very likely – the event is expected to occur in most circumstances

## CONSEQUENCE

The risk matrix also includes five levels of consequences:

- Insignificant
- Minor
- Moderate
- Significant
- Major

This considers the potential impact and how it might affect the safety and wellbeing of children, families, staff and the wider community.

**RISK ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE**

Risk assessment					
Activity	Hazard identified	Risk assessment (use matrix)	Elimination/control measures	Who?	When?

Plan and review		
Plan prepared by	Full name	Date
	Signature	
	Role/position	
Prepared in consultation with	Full name	
	Signature	
	Role/position	
Communicated to all relevant staff	Yes          No	Comment (if needed)

## Plan and review

Risks identified from this risk assessment have been addressed within policy and procedure (regulation 84C) as well as other matters required under regulation 84C, including:

- the number, ages and development stages of children being educated and cared for, including at each education and care service and FDC residence or approved FDC venue of the service
- the sleep and rest needs of children at the service (including specific health care needs, cultural preferences, sleep and rest needs of individual children and requests from families about a child's sleep and rest) including at each education and care service and FDC residence or approved FDC venue of the service
- the suitability of staffing arrangements required to adequately supervise and monitor children during sleep and rest periods
- the level of knowledge and training of the staff supervising children during sleep and rest periods
- the location of the sleep and rest areas, including the arrangement of cots and beds within the sleep and rest areas, including at each education and care service and FDC residence or approved FDC venue of the service
- the safety and suitability of any cots, beds and bedding equipment and having regard to the ages and developmental stages of the children who will use them
- any potential hazards in sleep and rest areas or on a child during sleep and rest periods
- the physical safety and suitability of sleep and rest environments, including temperature, lighting and ventilation at each education and care service and FDC residence or approved FDC venue of the service
- for FDC services, that provide overnight care to a child, any risks that the overnight care provided at the family day care residence or approved venue may pose to the safety, health or wellbeing of the child.

Yes

No

Comment if needed

Next sleep and rest risk assessment to be conducted before

\*AND as soon as practicable after becoming aware of any circumstance that may affect the safety, health and wellbeing of children during sleep and rest