

Keeping Children Safe: Rest Time

As a trainer or coach, you are responsible for ensuring that staff members keep children safe at all times—even while the children sleep. Read the following scenarios. Then write what you would do to support staff in each situation.

You are in a planning meeting with Sonya. Her co-teacher, Patrice, is supervising their class of preschool children during rest time. You receive a call in the office that one of Sonya’s preschoolers, Dante, has vomited in the classroom and is still quite ill.

1. What should you and Sonya do?

You and Sonya should end the meeting. At least one of you should go assist in the classroom. It will be very difficult for Patrice to supervise the entire group while caring for Dante. You should do what you can to assist with contacting the family, isolating Dante, or following any care plans.

2. What should Patrice do to keep Dante and the other children safe?

First, Patrice should go to Dante and check that he is OK. She should assist him to the restroom. She should call another adult to help her follow procedures for assessing and isolating sick children. She should use the phone, walkie-talkie, or other system her program uses. She should follow appropriate procedures for cleaning and sanitizing the cot, floor, and contaminated materials. She should be sure to use proper hand washing procedures.

While covering for a caregiver in an infant classroom, you notice one of the other staff members placing an infant in a crib on his belly. When you respond, the staff member says, “Trevor’s mom wants him to sleep on his belly. Every one of my kids slept on their tummies, too. They all survived.”

3. What would you say and do?

Ask if Trevor’s mother has provided written instructions from their pediatrician regarding Trevor’s sleep positioning. If written instructions have not been provided, then Trevor must sleep on his back in your program. Remind the caregiver of your program’s

written safe sleep policy. Follow through to make sure he is moved to his back. Remember that many instances of SIDS occur in child-care programs. Work with the team to develop posters or other reminders about placing children on their backs. If Trevor does have a written medical note allowing him to sleep on his belly, help the team put a sign on his crib so all caregivers know.

When you walk by one of your infant classrooms, you see several children asleep outside of cribs. Jonathan is asleep in the infant swing. Carmen is asleep under a play gym.

4. Are the staff members following safe sleep practices?

No, it is very important that infants only sleep in approved cribs. Adults must use active supervision to move a child who falls asleep while playing.

5. What do you say and do?

You should go in the classroom. Let the team know that you noticed some sleeping babies from the hall. Ask if you can help move them to cribs. Remind the staff how important it is to keep infants safe while sleeping. Monitor and provide feedback over time to make sure staff are complying with your program's sleep policy.