



## Department of Early Education and Care

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

### EEC Child Care Licensing

#### **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: Quiet Activities for Children Who Do Not Sleep**

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EEC Childcare regulations require that an extended period of sleep, rest or quiet activities be provided for children in care for longer than four hours. Children who choose not to sleep or awaken early must be offered quiet activities for the remainder of the sleep or quiet activity period [See 606 CMR 7.11(13), 7.06(1)], [102 CMR 7.24(5)].

The quiet activities offered must be developmentally appropriate for the children served. [See 606 CMR 7.06(1)]. Infants and toddlers must not be offered materials which might present a choke hazard. Depending on the activities offered, on program space and supervision requirements, quiet activities may be offered to children in the napping space, or in a nearby space that can easily be observed by educators supervising the napping area.

A designated “quiet space” or “cozy corner” is an ideal spot for children who need some alone time or time away during regular program activities, as well as for children who do not nap. The “cozy corner” should be equipped with cushions, pillows, and blankets to allow children to recline and snuggle comfortably. Audio tape players (with head phones) can offer stories or quiet music, including everything from lullabies to soft jazz and quiet classical music. A variety of story books and picture books will appeal to children of different ages. These activities strengthen language and literacy skills as well as appreciation of the arts.

Children who do not sleep may also enjoy a variety of quiet, table-top activities. Creating pictures or words on a flannel board and drawing and coloring with a variety of media (crayons, chalk, colored pencils, markers) allow for relaxation and self-expression. Making collages using glue or contact paper to adhere colored paper bits, tissue paper, or other materials, or simply attaching stickers to paper is a fun activity for many children. Tracing stencils, completing “dot-to-dot” pictures, and stringing beads or macaroni with cotton or leather shoe laces, pipe cleaners or yarn serve to develop fine-motor skills and hand-eye coordination. Sewing cards (with pre-punched holes outlining a picture) and pouring activities (starting with dried beans and progressing to barley, rice and salt) support fine motor development and teach math concepts and practical life skills. Puzzle- making and memory / matching games also support cognitive development, and can be simple or complex, depending on the child’s developmental level. Sorting beads, beans, coins, soft blocks or other materials by color, shape or size and sorting objects by category enhances cognitive skills and can focus on early math skills or science and nature, depending on the objects used. Remember always to use developmentally appropriate materials that do not pose a choke hazard to children.

The activities described above are just a few of the many ways that children can productively use quiet time without being forced to remain on a mat or in the napping area. Just as adults use knitting, painting, reading, scrap-booking and other activities for rest and relaxation, safe, developmentally appropriate, quiet activities will support children's growth and development as well as their need for rest and relaxation, and will help prevent children from seeing rest time as "punishment".