



# Infant mattress safety standard

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## Do the mattresses in your service comply with the new Australian Standard?

In April 2013 the Australian and New Zealand standards associations published a joint test standard for the minimum safe firmness of infant sleep surfaces which the Australian government is proposing to make mandatory under law— see the following link for further information: <http://accc.gov.au/media-release/safety-standards-for-cots-prams-strollersand-bunk-beds-under-review>. Copies of the new standard can be ordered via: <http://infostore.saiglobal.com/store/Details.aspx?ProductID=1621576>.

Services should ensure that all mattresses meet the Australian safety standard.

## What is an infant sleep surface?

An infant sleep surface can be any object, piece of furniture, or commercially produced baby product on which an unsupervised baby might be placed in a horizontal position. This includes (but is not limited to) cots, prams, strollers, cradles, bassinets, travel cots, infant carriers, cocoons, and infant sleep mats (as well as adult beds).

## Easy test to determine infant mattress suitability

Research studies have established that an infant mattress that is too soft is dangerous to infants aged 0-12 months. There is an informal test that you can conduct to determine if an infant mattress is firm enough. The instructions can be accessed via this video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hW6\\_rKx-lK-g](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hW6_rKx-lK-g) or you can access written instructions via: <http://www.wikihow.com/Assess-the-Safe-Firmness-of-an-Infant-Mattress-to-Prevent-Asphyxiation>.

To conduct the firmness safety test you will need the following items: a ruler or tape measure; a pen or waterproof marker; two one litre unopened cartons of milk (or juice); 12 CDs or DVDs; and some kitchen cling wrap. The CDs or DVDs will not be damaged during the test. The required milk (or juice) cartons are approximately 70 mm (2¾ inches) square at the bottom.

## Other important sleep safety considerations

A SIDS and Kids booklet (endorsed by the Paediatrics & Child Health Division of The Royal Australasian College of Physicians) provides important information about safe sleeping considerations including dangling cords or strings, heaters and electrical appliances, and baby restraints. This booklet is available at: <http://www.sidsandkids.org/wpcontent/uploads/SidsSafeSleep-ing14ppa1.pdf>.

## The National Quality Framework and sleep and rest

Regulation 81 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations states that education and care services 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. Element 2.1.2 of the National Quality Standard relates to each child's comfort being provided for with appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation.

## Contact details

Early Childhood Services  
Phone: 08 8226 0077 or 1800 882 413  
Website: [www.esb.sa.gov.au](http://www.esb.sa.gov.au)  
Email: [EducationStandardsBoard@sa.gov.au](mailto:EducationStandardsBoard@sa.gov.au)