

## **Inquest into the death of Indianna Rose Hicks**

Indianna Rose Hicks was almost five months old when she died from sudden infant death syndrome whilst in the care of her family day carer. The Deputy State Coroner examined best sleep practices with respect to infants in Indianna's age group.

Deputy State Coroner John Lock delivered his findings of inquest on 12 December 2014.

The Queensland Government responds to recommendations directed to government agencies at inquests by informing the community if a recommendation will be implemented or the reason why a recommendation is not supported. Further information relating the implementation of recommendations can be obtained from the responsible agency named in the response.

### **Recommendation 1**

It is recommended that approved providers of early childhood education and care services ensure they have documented sleep and rest and supervision policies incorporating best practice principles. SIDS and Kids has safe infant sleeping recommendations and has available for purchase the SIDS and kids infant safe sleeping child care kit for education and care services and this could be considered as a starting reference for any review of existing policies or in the event there are no such policies in the course of implementing one.

Response and action: the recommendation is implemented.

Responsible agency: Department of Education

On 19 June 2015, the Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games responded:

On 18 February 2015, an email bulletin was sent from the Department of Education and Training to all education and care services under the Education and Care Services National Law and the *Education and Care Service Act 2013* informing approved providers and services of the sleep and rest recommendations made by the coroner. This email bulletin remains available for services and the public on the department's website.

The March 2015 (edition 68) of the A-Z Bulletin for Early Childhood Education and Care directed approved providers seeking guidance about sleep and rest practice for infants to the SIDS and Kids website.

The Department of Education and Training updated its website information relating to safe sleeping to include a link to the SIDS and Kids website.

### **Recommendation 2**

It is recommended that relevant governments give consideration to amending the national regulations and in particular current regulations 81 and 168 to require approved providers to have a written policy and procedure relating to sleep and rest under the Education and Care Services National Regulations based on contemporary best practice principles.

Response and action: the recommendation is implemented.

Responsible agency: Department of Education

On 19 June 2015, the Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games responded:

On 29 May 2015, the Education Council was updated on the progress of the 2014 Review of the National Partnership Agreement on the National Quality Agenda for Early Childhood Education and Care (NP NQA). Ministers agreed to progress work on potential amendments to the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations.

The Coroner's recommendation is being considered as part of these amendments and final agreement will be sought by the Education Council later in 2015.

### **Recommendation 3**

I raise as an issue for public awareness that the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission has issued a warning notice concerning amber teething necklaces on the basis they pose a strangulation and choking hazard and if used, should be removed while sleeping during the day or night.

Response and action: the recommendation is implemented.

Responsible agency: Department of Justice and Attorney-General.

On 19 September 2015 the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills responded:

The Office of Fair Trading does not support the use of amber teething necklaces due to the risk of strangulation and choking. Information relating to the hazards of amber teething necklaces is available on the Office of Fair Trading's website and includes tips for safe use, for example recommending removing the necklace when the child is alone and when they go to bed (day or night).

The amber teething necklace safety advice is available [here](#).

Further press releases and public information on the safety of amber teething necklaces will be issued on a periodical basis as part of the Office of Fair Trading's ongoing commitment to inform parents and caregivers about hazards associated with children's products.