

## 3. Sun Protection



### Introduction

Australia has the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world and sun exposure during childhood significantly increases the risk of developing skin cancer and melanoma. Sand, concrete and water can reflect up to 85% of sunlight and intensify exposure to ultraviolet radiation. Centres and educators can play a vital role in the long-term prevention of skin cancer and in teaching healthy sun habits to young children, and are responsible for preventing and reducing the risks from excess sun exposure while children are in their care.

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that centre practises protect children from the dangerous and adverse effects of sun exposure.

### Goals – What are we going to do?

To protect children from the adverse effects of sun exposure, centres will:

1. A balance of Ultraviolet Radiation (UV) exposure is important for health. Too much of the sun's UV can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer in later life. Too little UV from the sun can lead to low Vitamin D levels. Vitamin D is essential for healthy bones and muscles and for general health.
2. Be aware that sun safety precautions need to be taken all year, not only on hot days, but also on cloudy days, in winter, and even when children are playing in the shade – harmful ultraviolet radiation can reflect on children from buildings, water, and grass, concrete and sand.
3. In any circumstances, do not place babies and infants under 12 months of age directly in sunlight. When outside babies will always remain in dense shade.

### Strategies – How will it be done?

#### Outdoor Play

- At all times when the UV index is above 3 sun protection is required.
- UV levels and daily sun protection times are used to plan daily activities and ensure a correct understanding of local sun protection requirements.
- When children are on excursions all sun protection practices are planned, organised, understood and available.
- All outdoor activities will be planned to occur in shaded areas where possible.
- UV radiation exposure is considered as part of the service's risk assessments for all outdoor events and activities on and off-site.

## Shade

- Play activities will be set up in the shade and moved throughout the day to take advantage of shade patterns.
- The centre will provide and maintain adequate shade for outdoor play. Shade options can include a combination of natural and built shade.
- Regular shade assessments will be conducted to monitor existing shade structures and assist in planning for additional shade.

## Clothing

- Parents will be required to dress their children in Sun Safe clothing that protects as much of the skin as possible especially shoulders, back and stomach. Clothing with collars or high necks and sleeves that cover the shoulders and chest, trousers and longer style skirts and shorts that are Sun Smart.
- Singlet tops or tops with straps are *not SunSmart* and parents are asked not to send their children wearing these clothes.
- Children who are not wearing sun safe clothing will be provided with spare clothing.
- Educators are supplied with a uniform that has sleeves and a collar, a bucket style hat with a 6 cm brim for use at the centre and on excursions and SPF30 (or higher) broad spectrum sunscreen located in the staffroom

## Hats

- All staff and children are required to wear SunSmart hats. The centre will supply all children that enrol at the centre with either a Legionnaire style hat with a flap at the back or a buckets style hat (2-6 year olds) or a bucket style hat (0-2 year olds) with a brim size of at least 5cm. Educators will be supplied with a bucket style hat with a brim size of at least 6cm. These hats stay at the centre marked with each child's/educators name to ensure that a hat is always available for each child.
- Hats will be stored in sealable plastic bags or hat pocket, labelled with each child's name and days of attendance. Hats will be stored at the centre and each day the child attends will be hung on the veranda for the child's use.
- Baseball hats are not permitted to be worn at the centre as they do not provide good protection because they do not protect the face, neck and ears, which are common places skin cancers can appear.
- Hats with toggles or cords will not be permitted to be worn due to risk of strangulation and danger of cord being caught on play equipment.
- Children without a sun safe hat will be asked to play in an area protected from the sun (e.g. under shade, veranda or indoors) or can be provided with a spare hat.

## Sunscreen

- The centre will supply SPF30 (or higher) Broad Spectrum water resistant sunscreen
- Where appropriate, children will be encouraged and supervised by staff to apply their own sunscreen using mirrors, before all outdoor play.
- Babies under 12 months (if immobile) will not be exposed to direct sunlight and are to remain in dense shade when outside. If child is mobile, they will have a small amount of sunscreen applied to small areas of skin not covered by clothing applied at morning and afternoon nappy change routine times (see Nappy change Procedure) as these times are prior to going outside.
- Staff will apply sunscreen in the amount according to the instructions on the bottle.

- Sunscreen to be applied 20 minutes before going outside and should be reapplied every 2 hours if children continue to play outdoors.
- Ensure hygiene by applying sunscreen with tissue or glove – one for each child.
- Permission to apply sunscreen is included in the service enrolment form. Where children have allergies or sensitivity to the sunscreen, parents are asked to provide an alternative sunscreen.
- Cancer Council recommends usage tests before applying a new sunscreen. All sunscreen is stored in a cool, dry place and the expiry dates monitored

### Babies

- Babies under 12 months will be kept in dense shade, wear sun-safe hats and clothing, and have small amounts of at least SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen applied to exposed skin.
- Babies clothing, hat and shade positioning are checked regularly to ensure they continue to be well protected from UV. The use of sunscreen on babies under 6 months is not recommended due to their sensitive skin.

### Roles and Responsibilities

#### Approved Provider will:

- Ensure the service operates in line with the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations.
- Provide shelters and shade trees as one of the primary preventative measures.

#### Nominated Supervisor will:

- Ensure Sun Protection information is promoted to all staff, families and visitors
  - Parent information handbook includes information on sun smart clothing and sun protection, centre hats and sunscreen supplies.
  - Sun smart information is on display throughout the centre including policies and posters.
  - Staff handbook includes information on sun protection and sun smart clothing and includes a copy of the centres sun smart policy.
- Provide support and advice to all staff with regard to implementation of the Sun protection policy
- When planning excursions that involve spending time outdoors the centre will:
  - Plan the time of the excursion based on sun smart recommendations for outside play as listed in the policy above
  - Remind parents to send their child in sun smart clothing
  - Take the children/staff/volunteers centre hats
  - Take and apply a SPF30 (or higher) broad spectrum sunscreen

Educators will:

- Adhere to strategies and practices of the Sun protection policy
- As part of WH&S UV risk controls and role modelling, staff will demonstrate SunSmart behaviours when outside, including:
  - Wearing a SunSmart hat, protective clothing, and wearing sunglasses (optional).
  - Applying SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen.
  - Promoting the use of shade.
  - Discussing sun protection with children and demonstrating a positive and proactive approach to the management of sun protection in the service.
- Sun safety is everyone's responsibility. By being role models ourselves and leading the way with our own sun safety, we can inspire our children to be SunSmart when they step outside.
- SunSmart App daily UV times are promoted to guide staff, parents and children behaviour. Further information is available from Cancer Council NSW's website [www.sunsmartnsw.com.au](http://www.sunsmartnsw.com.au)
- Sun protection is incorporated regularly into learning programs. Children understand why sun safety is important and learn how to take effective sun protection actions, including taking leadership roles in managing sun protection e.g., accessing daily UV levels and sun protection times, hat reminders and management of sunscreen
- Plan and implement a program to increase sun protection and sun safe practices which may include games or songs on sun protection such as "SLIP, SLOP, SLAP, SEEK, SLIDE. Further information is available from The Cancer Council website [www.cancer council.com.au/sunsmart](http://www.cancer council.com.au/sunsmart).

Families will:

- Dress their child in cool clothing that covers as much skin as possible e.g. tops that cover the shoulders, arms and chest, collared shirts, longer style shorts.
- Give permission for educators/staff to apply a SPF30 (or higher) broad spectrum sunscreen supplied by the service to all exposed part of their child's skin including their face, neck, ears, arms and legs.
- Will supply own sunscreen if allergies to centre sunscreen occur.
- As part of WH&S UV risk controls and role modelling families, and visitors will demonstrate SunSmart behaviours when outside, including:
  - Wearing a SunSmart hat, protective clothing, and wearing sunglasses (optional).
  - Applying SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen.
  - Promoting the use of shade.
  - Discussing sun protection with children and demonstrating a positive and proactive approach to the management of sun protection in the service.
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- Sun safety is everyone's responsibility. By being role models ourselves and leading the way with our own sun safety, we can inspire our children to be SunSmart when they step outside.

## Policy Review

- Management and educators will regularly monitor and review the effectiveness of the Sun Protection Policy. The centres Sun Protection Policy must be updated and submitted to the Cancer Council NSW every three years to maintain SunSmart status and ensure best practice. Refer to the Cancer Council's Guidelines and website [www.cancer council.com.au/sunsmart](http://www.cancer council.com.au/sunsmart) for further information. Updated 22.05.2024

### Related Legislation

- Education and Care Services National Law Act: Section 167
- Education and Care Services National Regulations: Regulations 113, 114, 168
- Workplace Health and Safety Act 2011

### Links to other policies and documents

- Excursion Policy
- Room Routines
- Enrolment Form
- Parent Information Booklet
- Staff Handbook

Links to Education and Care Services National Regulations: 100, 113, 114, 168

Links to National Quality Standards/Elements: All 7 Quality Areas

### Sources

- NSW Cancer Council: [www.cancer council.com.au](http://www.cancer council.com.au)
- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)
- Community Early Learning Australia - CELA