

SUN PROTECTION

AIM:

To protect all children, educators and staff from the dangerous and adverse effects of sun exposure.
To comply with the requirements of the Education and Care Services National Regulation 2011
To protect the health and safety of children in care.
To satisfy the recommendations of the Cancer Council of NSW in relation to protecting children from the negative impacts of over exposure to Ultra Violet Radiation (UVR)

RATIONALE:

Exposure to UV radiation from the sun causes sunburn, long-term skin damage and an increased risk of skin cancer. Unprotected sun exposure in the first 15 years of life can greatly increase a child's risk of developing skin cancer later in life.

Taking steps to minimise exposure to Ultra Violet Radiation (UVR) is a requirement under Work Health and Safety legislation.

POLICY:

This sun protection policy provides a framework for developing comprehensive sun protection measures and for adopting a systemic approach to achieving sun safety.

Educators and staff will endeavour to protect children from the dangerous and adverse effects of sun exposure and educate children in sun safe practices.

Educators and staff will consistently model SunSmart practices during all outdoor activities by wearing appropriate hats, clothing and sunscreen.

PROCEDURES:

1a. **October – March:**- Sun protection is required at all times when outdoors. Scheme staff and educators will minimise outdoor activity between 11am and 3pm (daylight saving time).

1b. **April – September:**- The scheme and educators may plan outdoor activities at any time during the day.

Sun protection is required between 10am and 2pm (eastern standard time), except in June and July when the UV Index is mostly below 3. (*Australian Government, Bureau of Meteorology*)

2. Outdoor activities will be planned to occur in shaded areas.
3. Adequate shade will be provided for outdoor play. eg: shade sails, outdoor verandah, tree shade.
4. Educators will encourage children to wear a SunSmart hat that protects the face, neck, ears and crown of the head whenever they are outdoors or on an excursion.

Suitable hats include:-

- a broad brimmed hat with a brim size of at least 7.5cm.
- a bucket hat with a brim size of at least 6cm
- a legionnaire hat.

Note: Baseball caps and sun visors do not provide protection for the neck, ears and cheeks and are not considered to be appropriate.

5. Encourage children not wearing hats to participate in indoor activities or to play within shaded areas if indoor play cannot be adequately supervised.
6. Educators will guide parents to provide their children with SunSmart clothing for outdoor play, that protects as much of the skin as possible, especially the shoulders, back and stomach.

SunSmart clothing includes:-

- loose-fitting shirts or dresses, with collars and sleeves that cover the shoulders and chest.
- trousers and longer-style skirts and shorts.
- closely woven fabrics.

Note: Midriff and singlet tops are not appropriate

7. All children, educators and staff will apply SPF 30+ broad-spectrum water resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors. Educators will have parents complete written permission forms for the application of sunscreen if the educator applies sunscreen for a child in care.

8. Exposure to direct sunlight will be avoided for children under 12 months of age.

9. Wherever practical, staff, educators, families and visitors to the service will act as positive role models and demonstrate SunSmart behaviour for children, by:-
 - wearing a SunSmart hat (*ie: a broad-brimmed hat with a brim at least 7.5cm wide, a bucket hat or legionnaires hat*) and clothing,
 - applying appropriate sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors,
 - using shade whenever possible,
 - wearing sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard 1067.

10. Sun protection strategies will be considered when outdoor activities and excursions are being planned.

11. Sun protection awareness activities (both planned and spontaneous) will be included in the learning program for children.

12. Sun protection information will be promoted to staff, educators, families and visitors to the service.

13. All staff, educators, families and visitors to the service will be informed of the scheme's Sun Protection Policy if appropriate.

14. Ensure that children have access to and are provided with adequate cool water to help prevent heat stroke.

15. Administer first aid promptly to any child who appears to be suffering from the effects of the sun.

Individuals with heat exhaustion tend to have symptoms such as:

- profuse sweating,
- weakness,
- muscle cramps,
- headache, and
- nausea and vomiting.

As dehydration increases from the loss of body water, lightheadedness may occur and fainting may occur, especially if the affected individual stands up quickly. A low grade fever also may be present.

16. Management and staff will monitor and review the effectiveness of the Sun Protection Policy regularly and revise the policy as required.

Key Resources:

SunSmart Childcare – *A Guide for Service Providers: 2008*
The Cancer Council NSW www.cancercouncil.com.au

Relevant Legislation: *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011:*
Work Health & Safety Act 2011: