



Policy and Procedures Sun Care (Sun Smart)

Purpose

The educators, staff and management acknowledge the impact that over-exposure to the sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation has on health. This policy confirms our commitment to:

- ensure all children, educators, staff and families are protected from over-exposure to UV radiation
- ensure the outdoor environment provides shade for children, educators, staff and families
- ensure children are encouraged and supported to develop independent sun protection skills
- support our service's strategies to meet its duty of care and occupational health and safety obligations to minimise harmful UV exposure for children, educators, staff and families
- ensure that families, new educators and staff are informed of the service's sun protection measures.

As a health promoting service, we will promote safe UV exposure for children, educators, staff and families through learning, policies, creating a safe and healthy physical and social environment and developing community links and partnerships.

Policy statement

Background

Too much of the sun's UV can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage, and skin cancer. Infants and toddlers up to four years of age are particularly vulnerable to UV damage due to lower levels of melanin and a thinner stratum corneum (the outermost layer of skin). UV damage accumulated during childhood and adolescence is strongly associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life. Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world, with two in three Australians developing some form of skin cancer before age 70. A combination of sun protection measures is needed for all outdoor activities from mid-August to the end of April and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above – the level that can damage skin and eyes.

Whole service engagement

It is recognised that every member of the service impacts on the children's health and can contribute to creating an environment that promotes safe UV exposure. All members of our service, including educators, staff, children, families and volunteers will be supported to meet this policy.

Definitions

Sun protection: For the purposes of this policy and for the Healthy Early Childhood Services Achievement Program, the 'Sun Protection' health priority area focuses on the creation of environments and behaviours that will prevent over-exposure to UV radiation.

UV radiation: Ultraviolet (UV) radiation is a type of energy produced by the sun and some artificial sources, such as solariums. Too much UV radiation can cause skin and eye damage, sunburn, tanning and



[skin cancer](#). Some UV exposure is recommended for vitamin D. UV radiation isn't like the sun's light or heat, which we can see and feel. Your senses cannot detect UV radiation, so you won't notice the damage until it has been done.

Procedures and responsibilities

The sun protection measures listed below are used for all outdoor activities during the **daily local sun protection times**. Educators and staff are encouraged to access the daily local sun protection times at sunsmart.com.au or the free [SunSmart app](#) to assist with the implementation of this policy. The sun protection times are a forecast from the Bureau of Meteorology for the time of day UV levels are forecast to reach 3 or higher. At these levels, sun protection is recommended for all skin types. In Victoria, UV levels regularly reach 3 or higher from mid-August to the end of April.

Special note regarding infants

SunSmart practices consider the special needs of infants. All babies under 12 months are kept out of direct sun when UV levels are 3 or higher. Physical protection such as shade, clothing and broad-brimmed hats are the best sun protection measures. If babies are kept out of the sun or well protected from UV radiation by clothing, hats and shade, then sunscreen need only be used occasionally on very small areas of a baby's skin. The widespread use of sunscreen on babies under 6 months old is not recommended.

Leadership and commitment

- Educators, staff, families and children are active participants in the development and implementation of the whole service Sun Protection Policy and are encouraged to promote and support safe UV exposure in the service.
- Educators, staff and families are provided with information about policy requirements, with opportunities to provide feedback and input.

Healthy physical environment

- There are adequate shaded outdoor areas, particularly in high-use areas e.g. where children can play, learn and eat.
- The availability of shade is considered when planning all outdoor activities.
- Children are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside.
- Sun protection items, such as legionnaire, broad-brimmed or bucket-style hats and recommended sunscreen (see below), are provided by the service OR families are encouraged to bring sun protection items.

Healthy culture

- Diversity and cultural practices are considered when implementing this policy and sun protection practices.
- Sun protective behaviours are regularly reinforced and promoted.
- The dress code for children, educators and staff follow the sun protection guidelines:



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- Loose-fitting clothing that covers as much skin as possible. Clothing made from cool, densely-woven fabric is recommended.
 - Families are asked to choose tops with elbow-length sleeves, higher necklines (or collars) and knee-length or longer-style shorts and skirts for their child. Rash vests or t-shirts are used for outdoor swimming.
 - If a child is wearing a singlet top or shoestring dress, they will be asked to choose a t-shirt/shirt to wear over this before going outdoors.
 - All children and educators wear hats that protect their face, neck and ears, such as legionnaire, broad-brimmed or bucket style. Peak caps and visors are not considered a suitable alternative.
 - Where practical, children and educators are encouraged to wear close-fitting, wrap-around sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard 1067 (Sunglasses: Category 2, 3 or 4) and cover as much of the eye area as possible.
 - Children not wearing sun protective clothing and hats must stay in areas protected from the sun and UV radiation.
 - SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen is used. If this is not provided by the service, children, educators and staff are encouraged to bring their own SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen. Additionally:
 - Sunscreen is applied in accordance with the manufacturer's directions (which state to apply at least 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapply every two hours or more frequently if sweating or swimming).
 - To help develop independent skills ready for school, children from three years of age are given opportunities to apply their own sunscreen under supervision of educators/staff and are encouraged to do so.
 - Sunscreen is stored in a cool place, out of the sun and the expiry date is monitored.
 - Families and visitors are encouraged to wear clothing and hats that follow sun protection guidelines, such as legionnaire, broad-brimmed or bucket style, apply sunscreen, seek shade and wear sunglasses.

Child teaching and learning

- Age-appropriate sun protection education is provided about:
 - sun protective behaviours
 - UV radiation
 - health risks associated with UV exposure.
- Educators and staff have access to professional development and teaching resources about sun protection education.

Supported staff and educators

- Educators and staff are supported to follow sun protective behaviours.
- As part of OHS UV risk controls and role-modelling, educators and staff:
 - wear a suitable sun protective hat, covering clothing and, if practical, sunglasses
 - apply sunscreen, and



- seek shade whenever possible.
- Sun protection information is provided to educators and staff, including information about:
 - sun protective behaviours
 - UV radiation
 - health risks associated with UV exposure
 - early detection of skin cancer.
- Sun protection information and policy requirements are included in educator and staff orientation/induction.

Families and community partnerships

- Sun protection information is provided to families, such as information about sun-protective behaviours, UV radiation and health risks associated with UV exposure.
- Partnerships are established with relevant organisations and health professionals to support sun protection practices as appropriate.

Relevant legislation and policy documents

- [Occupational Health and Safety Act \(2004\)](#)
- [Children's Services Act 1996](#)
- [Children's Services Regulations 2009](#)
- [Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 \(Vic\) \(Part 2: Principles for children\)](#)
- [Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010](#): Section 167: Protection from harm and hazards
- [Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011](#)
- [ACECQA National Quality Standard 2018 – Quality Area 2](#)
- [Belonging, Being and Becoming. The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia. Commonwealth of Australia, 2009](#)
- [Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework For all Children from Birth to Eight Years. Department of Education and Training, 2016](#)
- [SunSmart website](#)

Related service policies (examples)

- Physical Activity and Movement/Active Play
- Clothing
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Staff Health and Wellbeing

BREACH OF THIS POLICY

Any educator or staff found to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action.

References:

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority



- *National Quality Framework Resource Kit*, October 2011

Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency

- *Radiation Protection Standard for Occupational Exposure to Ultraviolet Radiation* Dec 2006

Australian Safety and Compensation Council

- *Guidance Note for the Protection of Workers from the Ultraviolet Radiation in Sunlight* Nov 2008

Cancer Council Victoria

- *Sample Sun Smart policy for early childhood education and care services*, Nov 2012

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

- *Belonging, Being & Becoming - The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia* Commonwealth of Australia 2009
- *Educators' Guide to the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*, Commonwealth of Australia 2010

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

- *Building Quality Standards Handbook*, Oct 2008

Department of Health and Ageing

- *Get Up & Grow: Healthy eating and physical activity for early childhood (Section 2)* 2009

Early Childhood Strategy Division DET and Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority

- *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework*, November 2009

Legislation & Regulations

- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005*
- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2018*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*

Standards Australia & Standards New Zealand

- *AS/NZS 4486.1:1997 - Playgrounds and playground equipment Part 1- Development, installation, inspection, maintenance and operation Shade/Sun Protection*

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