

SUN PROTECTION

Early Years Services

1. Purpose

Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011 SI 653) require services to have a policy in place in relation to sun protection. We aim to provide strategies to protect all children and Educators from over-exposure to the sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation and to minimise the risks associated with the care of children being performed outside.

2. Policy

Children should be given the opportunity to participate in a range of activities, both indoor and outdoor, throughout the year. We are committed to ensuring all children, Educators and other staff are protected from ultraviolet radiation (UV) while outside through providing shade, ensuring sun protection measures are promoted and encouraged and by providing learning opportunities to children and their families.

Sun Protection measures outlined are used for all outdoor activities during the daily local sun protection times as forecast by the Bureau of Meteorology when the UV Index level is due to reach 3 or higher. In Melbourne, the UV levels commonly reach 3 or higher from mid-August until the end of April.

Definitions:

Ultraviolet (UV) Radiation – A type of energy produced by the sun and some artificial sources, such as arc welders and solariums. The sun's UV is the main cause of skin cancer. Too much UV exposure also causes sunburn, tanning, premature ageing, and eye damage. You can see the sun's light. You can feel the sun's heat. But you cannot see or feel the sun's UV radiation. UV can reach you directly from the sun. It can also be reflected off different surfaces and scattered by particles in the air. Your senses cannot detect UV radiation, so you will not notice it is all around you and you will not immediately notice any damage.

UV Index - The World Health Organization's Global Solar UV Index measures UV levels on a scale from 0 (Low) to 11+ (Extreme). Sun protection is recommended when UV levels are 3 (Moderate) or higher. The UV level is affected by several factors including the time of day, time of year, cloud cover, altitude, location, and surrounding surfaces.

Too much UV exposure - Too much UV from the sun can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. 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 they reach the age of 70. Overexposure to UV during childhood and adolescence is strongly associated with an increased risk of skin cancer.

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3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Early Years Coordinator
- Team Leaders
- Administration Officer
- Educators
- Children
- Parents/Guardians
- Agency Educators engaged at the service
- Students on placement
- Volunteers

4. Responsibilities

The following roles are responsible for monitoring compliance with this policy:

- Early Years Coordinator
- Team Leaders
- Educators

5. Procedure

Sun Protection Measures

- Team Leader and/or Educators will access, display, and communicate the daily sun protection times in accordance with the SunSmart app and SunSmart website www.sunsmart.com.au
- All children and Educators use a combination of sun protection measures during the daily sun protection times (when UV Index levels reach 3 or above) typically between mid-August and the end of April
- Babies under 12 months of age are kept out of direct sun when UV levels are three or higher. Physical protection such as dense shade, cool covering clothing and soft broad-brimmed hats are the best sun protection measures. The use of sunscreen on babies under 6 months is not recommended
- Children and Educators remain indoors while the temperature is 33c or above to ensure health and wellbeing is safeguarded. Team Leaders and Educators can check the current temperature on the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) app or website <http://www.bom.gov.au/>
- When going outside Educators will identify surfaces that are in direct sunlight, checking and monitoring the temperature to ensure children's safety is protected and to reduce the risk of contact burns. If applicable, Educators must ensure children are wearing shoes outside.
- This policy also works in conjunction with the Weather policy to safeguard the health, safety, and wellbeing of both children and Educators
- When enrolling their child, parent/guardians are made aware of the Sun Protection Policy and required to provide authorisation on the *Enrolment Record* for Educators to apply sunscreen to their child

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- From mid-August to end of April parents are required to provide a suitable hat, appropriate clothing and encouraged to apply sunscreen on their child on arrival

Environment - Shade

- Early Years Coordinator plans for the future of each service to ensure there are sufficient trees, verandahs and shade sails that provide shade in the outdoor environment
- Outdoor spaces are checked and assessed regularly to ensure availability and quality of shade is appropriate
- Educators will create or use shade in the children's yards and encourage children to play in these shaded areas
- Children who do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing are asked to play in the shade or a suitable area protected from the sun
- When planning excursions or regular outings sun protection strategies will be considered when completing risk assessments

Behaviours - Clothing

- While outside, children are encouraged to wear loose fitting clothing that covers as much skin as possible. Tops with elbow length sleeves, and if possible, higher necklines (collars) and knee length or longer style shorts and skirts are recommended
- Educators will assess children's clothing prior to going outside and if a child is wearing a singlet or shoestring straps request that they add a t-shirt/shirt over the top
- Educators that prefer to wear long sleeve tops can choose to wear the Stonnington provided uniforms such as the light blue shirts or navy sun grade long sleeve tops

Sunscreen

- Services use SPF30 (or Higher), broad spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen
- Parent/guardians are encouraged to apply sunscreen before their child arrives and Educators will regularly reapply throughout the day. Sunscreen is applied at least 20 minutes (where possible) before going outside and reapplied every two hours
- Older children are encouraged to apply their own sunscreen however Educators will supervise and support children to ensure adequate coverage of sunscreen
- Sunscreen is stored in a cool place, out of the sun and the expiry date is monitored

Hats

- All children and Educators are required to wear hats that protect their face, neck, and ears, i.e., legionnaire, broad-brimmed or bucket hats. Peak caps and visors are not considered a suitable alternative
- If the child does not have a hat and spare hats are not available, children are limited to play in areas protected from the sun (e.g., under shade with sunscreen on)

Sunglasses

- Children and Educators are encouraged to wear close fitting, wraparound sunglasses that meet the Australian/New Zealand Standard AS/NSS 1067 and cover as much of the eye area as possible

Role Modelling

- Educators conduct themselves as role models by
 - wearing sun protective hats (i.e., legionnaire, broad-brimmed or bucket hats), clothing, and sunglasses when outside
 - applying SPF 30+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen
 - seeking shade whenever possible

Education and Learning Program

- Sun Protection is incorporated into the education program so children learn about their skin and the importance of protecting skin from the sun and ultraviolet (UV) radiation
- Families are provided with relevant information on sun protection through parent handbooks, online communication tools, notice boards and newsletters

6. Relevant Legislation, Policies and Sources

Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACEQA)

Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) <http://www.bom.gov.au/>

Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005

Consumer Goods (Sunglasses and Fashion Spectacles) Safety Standard 2017

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010

Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011 SI 653) – Version 1st October 2023

National Quality Standards

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004

Parent Handbook

Supervision Policy

The Cancer Council. Sample SunSmart Policy for Early Childhood Services. www.sunsmart.com.au

Weather Policy

7. Related Services Forms

Enrolment Record

Hygiene Cream or Lotion Authorisation Form

Parent Handbook

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