

Acorn Child Care Centres

Policies and Procedures



2.6 Sun Protection

Background

Australia has the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world. Of all new incidents of cancer diagnosed in Australia each year, 80 per cent are skin cancers. Given that children in childcare attend during peak ultraviolet radiation (UVR) times and that they spend much of their day outdoors, childcare has a major role in minimising children's UVR exposure. Further, childcare provides the ideal opportunity to instil in children long-term positive SunSmart habits.

Policy statement

The Service takes every reasonable precaution to protect children and staff from the harmful effects of exposure to the sun while they are at the Service or at any event organised by the Service. Acorn provides a centre hat for each child attending the centre. The hat is kept at the centre. Sunscreen is provided for parents to apply to their children upon drop off at the centre each day.

The *Sun Protection Policy* is consistent with the Cancer Council's SunSmart recommendations for outdoor environments, clothing, sunscreen, scheduling of activities, and ongoing education for the children, families and staff at the Service.

Strategies and practices

- The *Sun Protection Policy* is explained to parents when they enroll their child in the Service, and their attention is specifically drawn to their responsibilities under this Policy. QA 6.1.1, 7.3.5
- The sun safety message is promoted and positively reinforced amongst families through notice boards, newsletters, educator-parent meetings, the website and Facebook and providing them with up-to-date SunSmart materials. QA2.1.2
- Educators promote sun safety awareness in children by including it in daily routines and intentional teaching such as role-modeling, discussions, songs, stories, games, and SunSmart resources (for older children). QA 2.3.2
- The Service's outdoor playground is adequately shaded. The built and natural shade features are continuously evaluated for effectiveness and, if required, additional shade structures are built and trees planted. QA 3.1.1
- Children play outdoors at the discretion of the educators who take into account the weather and are guided by the routines and children's interests. QA 2.3.2
- Between 10am and after 2pm, educators set up activities in the shade, wherever possible, and actively encourage children to play in the shade. At times when the weather becomes too hot, educators move play to protected and shady areas, such as verandahs, or inside. QA 2.3.2
- Between 10am and 2pm, planned outdoor activities and events are minimised, and are encouraged only in the shade. QA 2.3.2

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- Wherever possible, excursions to outdoor areas occur before 10am and after 2pm. Refer to the *Service's Excursion Policy*. QA 2.3.2
- All staff model positive SunSmart behavior to the children by:
 - wearing a hat and appropriate clothing for all outdoor activities
 - using SPF 30+ broad-spectrum, water resistant sunscreen
 - seeking shade whenever possible
 - are able to wear sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard (AS/NZS1067:2003). QA 2.1.4, 4.2.1
- The Service supplies 30+ broad-spectrum waterproof sunscreen for children and staff. The sunscreen is available in each room and in the outdoor play area. Parents are advised upon enrolment about the use of sunscreen. Parents are required to notify the Service in writing if their child is allergic to sunscreen, and to supply an alternative clearly labeled with the child's name. QA 2.1.1, 2.3.2
- Educators ensure that all children wear a hat that provides sun protection for the face, neck and ears when outside. QA 2.1.1
- Educators ensure children wear clothes with adequate protection from UVR when playing outdoors. Any child who does not have suitable clothing is expected to wear clothing from the Service's set of spares kept for the purpose, or to play in the shade. Also if the spare clothes supply is exhausted, the children without suitable clothing will be required to play indoors or in shaded areas. The Cancer Council recommends loose fitting clothes with collars and sleeves, closely woven natural fibre fabric, and of a dark colour. QA 2.1.1, 2.3.2
- Water is offered to children frequently throughout the day regardless of whether they are indoors or outdoors. QA 2.2.1
- Parents are asked to liberally apply a 30+ broad-spectrum water resistant sunscreen to all exposed areas of their children's skin on arrival at the Service. QA 2.1.1, 2.3.2
- Educators liberally apply broad spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of 30+ to all exposed areas of children's skin 15-20 minutes before the children go outside, and initial the Sunscreen section on the Daily Communication Chart available for parents to view in each room. QA 2.1.1, 2.3.2
- Educators reapply sunscreen every two hours if children are outdoors for a prolonged period, or more frequently if the children are perspiring or involved with water play. Older children apply their own sunscreen under supervision. QA 2.1.1, 2.3.2
- If parents supply their child with sunglasses that are wrap-around and/or are close fitting (that meet AS 1067-EPF 10 is best), educators will ensure children wear them during outdoor play. QA 2.1.1, 2.3.2
- Educators are kept up-to-date with SunSmart recommendations. QA 7.2.2

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Additional safe resting practices for babies

- Babies under the age of 12 months are kept out of direct sunlight as a matter of course. However, when outdoors, a small amount of sunscreen is applied only to those exposed areas not already covered by clothing or hats. QA 2.3.2
- Educators monitor fluid intake of babies and document it in each child's Daily Communication Chart. QA

Responsibilities of parents

- To apply sunscreen to their child on arrival at the Service.
- To ensure their child collects and returns their centre hat each day upon arrival and departure.
- To dress their child in SunSmart clothing, including spares, each time the child attends the Service.
- To model positive SunSmart behaviour to the children when at the Service.
- To notify the Service in writing if their child is allergic to sunscreen, and to supply an alternative sunscreen clearly labeled with the child's name.

Links to other policies

- Clothing Policy
- Educational Program Policy
- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Excursion Policy

Sources, Further reading and useful websites

- Cancer Council Queensland. *Early childhood settings: SunSmart Policy Guidelines*. <http://www.cancerqld.org.au/f/OrderBrochures/Medical/> accessed 24 November 2013
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011.
- Guide to the National Quality Standard 2011.
- Shaw, M. (2011). *Keeping sun safe in child care*. <http://ncac.acecqa.gov.au/educator-resources/pcf-articles/KeepingSunSafeMar2011.pdf> accessed 24 November 2013
- Cancer Council Queensland – http://www.cancerqld.org.au/page/support_us/fundraise/queensland_sunsmart_day/ accessed 24 November 2013
- Queensland Government. *Sun safe Queensland workplaces: Sun safety at work*. http://www.sunafety.qld.gov.au/documents/factsheet_workplaces.pdf accessed 24 November 2013

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- Cancer Council Queensland. *SunSmart Policy Guidelines: Working towards a SunSmart Queensland.*
http://www.cancerqld.org.au/icms_docs/54255_Early_Childhood_Settings_SunSmart_Policy_Guidelines_.pdf accessed 24 November 2013

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