



SUN PROTECTION POLICY

SUBCATEGORY: Health, Hygiene and Safety

POLICY GOAL

To minimise the exposure to harmful UV radiation to all children and adults at the service. To promote a positive attitude towards sun protection in children from an early age to protect them throughout life.

RATIONALE

- *By teaching sensible sun protection habits from an early age and implementing best-practice sun protection measures, early childhood services can play a significant role in reducing the lifetime risk of skin cancer.*
- *The sun protection measures listed are used for all outdoor activities between 10.30 am and 2.30 pm, especially in the warmer months.*

Special Note Regarding Infants

SunSmart practices consider the special needs of infants. All babies under 12 months are kept out of the direct sun. 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 needs only be used occasionally on very small areas of a baby's skin. The widespread use of sunscreen on babies under 12 months old is not recommended.

*Additional sun protection measures must be adhered to in accordance with the following recommendations for **Queensland** - This policy is implemented all year round. Wherever practicable, outdoor activities should take place before 10.30 am and after 2.30 pm, when UV levels are lower. As the UV level is often above three outside of peak UV periods, the UV level must be checked daily to ascertain when sun protection is required outside of peak UV periods. Multiple sun protection is required whenever the UV index level is forecast to reach three or above. In Queensland, the UV Index is usually at three or above all year round.*

1. Seek shade

- *Management makes sure there is a sufficient number of shelters and trees providing shade in the outdoor area, particularly in high-use areas.*
- *The availability of shade is considered when planning all outdoor activities.*
- *Children are encouraged to choose and use available areas of shade when outside.*
- *Play activities will be set up in the shade and moved throughout the day to take advantage of shade patterns.*
- *Children who do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing are asked to choose a shady play space or a suitable area protected from the sun.*
- *In consultation with the service's committee, shade provision is considered in future plans and upgrades.*

2. Slip on sun-protective clothing

Children are required to wear 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. 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.

3. Slap on a hat

All children are required to wear hats that protect their face, neck and ears (legionnaire, broad-brimmed or bucket style) however, the service provides each child with an Acorn bucket hat on enrolment.

4. Slop on sunscreen

- SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen is supplied by the service and/or families.
- 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 the supervision of staff and are encouraged to do so.
- Sunscreen is stored in a cool place, out of the sun and the expiry date is monitored.

Learning and skills

Sun protection is incorporated into the learning and development program. The policy is reinforced by educators and through children's activities and displays.

Engaging children, educators, staff and families

Educators, staff and families are provided with information about sun protection through family newsletters, service handbook, noticeboards and the service's website.

When enrolling their child, families are:

informed of the service's Sun Protection policy;

asked to provide suitable clothing and apply our sunscreen on their child on arrival;

required to give permission for educators to apply sunscreen to their child; and

encouraged to use SunSmart measures themselves when at the service.

As part of WH&S UV risk controls and role-modelling, educators, staff and visitors:

- wear a suitable sun-protective hat, covering clothing and, if practical, sunglasses;
- apply sunscreen, and
- seek shade whenever possible.¹

To minimise your skin cancer risk protect your skin every day with a combination of these five steps:



Slip-on protective clothing that:

- Covers as much skin as possible, for example, shirts with long sleeves and high necks/collars.
- Is made from close weave materials such as cotton, polyester/cotton and linen.
- Is dark in colour to absorb UV radiation (white and lighter colours reflect UV radiation onto the skin).

¹ "National SunSmart early childhood sun protection policy template" Cancer Council (accessed on-line April 2020) <https://www.cancer.org.au/preventing-cancer/sun-protection/sunsmart-schools/>

- *If used for swimming, is made from materials such as lycra, which stays sun protective when wet.*

Slap on SPF30 or higher sunscreen that is:

- *Broad-spectrum and water-resistant.*
- *Applied liberally to clean, dry skin at least 20 minutes before going outside.*
- *Reapplied every two hours.*
- *Used with other forms of protection such as hats and shade.*

Slap on a hat that is:

- *Broad-brimmed and provides good protection for the face, nose, neck and ears, which are common sites for skin cancers (caps and visors do not provide adequate protection).*
- *Made with closely woven fabric – if you can see through it, UV radiation will get through.*
- *Worn with sunglasses and sunscreen to increase your level of protection.*

Seek shade by:

- *Making use of trees or built shade structures or bring your own pop-up tent or umbrellas.*
- *Making sure your shade structure casts a dark shadow and using other protection (such as clothing, hats, sunglasses and sunscreen) to avoid reflected UV radiation from nearby surfaces.*

Slide on sunglasses:

- *That is a close-fitting wrap-around style that meets the Australian Standard AS 1067 and provides an Eye Protection Factor (EPF) of 9 or above.*
- *With a broad-brimmed hat to reduce UV radiation exposure to the eyes by up to 98 per cent.*
- *To children as well as adults.”²*

Adults

In addition to the protection of children, our service has a duty of care to all employees and visitors. State Occupational Health and Safety Acts require employers to provide and maintain safe working environments. Employers must ensure their employees can work safely and without risk to their health - this includes exposure to UV radiation. In turn, employees have a responsibility for their own safety and health and must follow UV protection policies and use sun protective measures provided.

Personal protection

Avoiding overexposure to ultraviolet radiation (UVR) is the best way to prevent skin cancer. Follow these simple steps:

- *minimise the time in the sun between 10.30 am and 2.30 pm*
- *slip-on clothing*
- *slop on SPF 30+ sunscreen*
- *slap on a hat*
- *seek shade*
- *slide on sunglasses.”³*

IMPLEMENTATION

- Sun protection methods are required at all times.
- All sun protection measures will be considered when planning excursions and all events held at the centre, this will be documented and included in the Excursion Risk Management Plan.

Shade

² “Sun Protection” Cancer Council Queensland (accessed on-line April 2020) <https://cancerqld.org.au/cancer-prevention/understanding-risk/sun-protection/>

³ “Sun Safety for Outdoor Workers” Workcover Qld (accessed on-line April 2020) <https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/tourism/articles/sun-safety-for-outdoor-workers>

- Activities will be set up in shaded areas and moved throughout the day to take advantage of shade patterns.
- Our outdoor playgrounds provide shaded areas for children to play to reduce their exposure to ultraviolet radiation.
- Educators must assess the available shade at different times of day and year. Shade can be natural, built or a combination of both.
- The Nominated Supervisor in consultation with educators should do an assessment of shade at least every 3yrs or when changes occur to the outdoor environment.

Hats

- Staff, educators and children are required to wear sun-safe hats that protect their face, neck and ears.
- Sun-safe hats include:
 - bucket hats with a deep crown and brim size of at least 5cm (adults 6cm)
 - broad-brimmed hats with a brim size of at least 6cm (adults 7.5cm)
 - Legionnaire style hats.
- Please note: Baseball caps or visors are not sun-safe hats.
- Children without a sun-safe hat are required to play in an area protected from the sun (e.g. under the shade, veranda or indoors) or will be provided with a spare hat.

Since children and educators are regularly outdoors each day for prolonged periods, hats should be worn by children and adults at all times when outdoors, not just during peak UV periods. This helps to form healthy habits and makes hat-wearing part of the daily routine

Clothing

Staff, educators and children are required to wear sun-safe clothing that covers as much of the skin (especially the shoulders, back and stomach) as possible. This includes wearing:

- loose-fitting shirts and dresses with sleeves and collars or covered neckline
- longer style skirts, shorts and trousers
- Please note: Midriff, crop or singlet tops are not sun-safe clothing.
- Children without sun-safe clothing are required to play in an area protected from the sun (e.g. under the shade, veranda or indoors) or will be provided with spare clothing to put over the top of their clothes.
- Educators should support families by sharing SunSmart education with children and families.

Sunscreen

- Where sunscreen is supplied by the service, families should be informed of the brand.
- Educators will ensure a water-resistant sunscreen with a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of 30+ is applied to every child at least 20mins before any outdoor session and then reapplied every 2hrs.
- Sunscreen should be applied liberally to clean, dry skin. Ensure sunscreen is applied lightly – don't rub it in.
- Educators should use a separate tissue or cotton wool ball to apply the sunscreen to individual younger children's faces to prevent the spread of germs from skin, noses, mouths, ears and eyes.
- Children over 3yrs of age will be encouraged to apply their own sunscreen and educators will supervise to ensure effective application
- Families are to be encouraged to apply sunscreen prior to attending care in the morning and educators will check if it is applied upon arrival. If not applied, they will direct families to the sunscreen or apply to the child themselves.

- Sunscreen application must be monitored by educators, this may be done using a Sunscreen Register, stamp system or similar strategy.
- Educators will monitor sunscreen expiry dates.
- Permission for the application of sunscreen will be sought on children's enrolment forms.
- Where families wish to use alternative sunscreen for their child this should be supplied and clearly labelled.

Role Modelling

- All adults should act as role models for children in all aspects of SunSmart behaviour by:
 - Wearing appropriate hats, sunglasses, shoes and clothing for all outdoor activities
 - Using SPF 30+ or higher, broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen
 - Seeking shade whenever possible
 - Consistently ensure that children who are not wearing hats play in shaded areas

Environments and exposure to the sun

- Before children enter the playspaces that have been exposed to the sun during the day, use a thermometer to check the temperature of the playground surface, including artificial grass, mats, decks and climbing equipment. Alternatively, hold your hand just above the surface to determine if the playground surface is too hot. If the surface temperature feels too hot or is 50° or more, it is too hot for play. It may be cooled by, turning mats over, using a hose or damp cloth or placing a mat or other item over a surface.
- The best way to avoid equipment heating up during the day is to move it to the shade when not in use.

Education and Supporting Children

- All adults should act as role models for children in all aspects of SunSmart behaviour by:
 - Wearing appropriate hats, sunglasses, shoes and appropriate clothing for all outdoor activities at all times when outdoors unless under solid shade such as verandahs
 - Using SPF 30+ or higher, broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen
 - Seeking shade whenever possible
 - Consistently ensure that children who are not wearing hats play in heavily shaded areas
- Educators should;
 - support children to take responsibility for their own sun protection and to minimise their exposure to the sun
 - direct children to use shaded areas where possible
 - educate children on the dangers of sun exposure and strategies to minimize the risks.
 - set up outdoor activities in shade areas where possible
 - pack equipment that may become hot during the middle of the day undercover when not in use.
 - ensure that where possible equipment is left in shaded areas during the day to reduce the risk of burns when children come out to play in the afternoon. Educators are responsible for checking equipment when children return to playgrounds.
 - discuss sun safety with children and incorporate into learning programs
 - ensure Sun protection is incorporated into the learning and development program.
 - provide families with information on Sun Safety and vitamin D in newsletters and through the information available at the centre.
 - involve families and in the use of the UV alert apps and websites

Relevant resources

- **SunSmart UV Alert:** available as a free SunSmart app, online (www.sunsmart.com.au or www.bom.gov.au/weather/uv), in the weather section of newspapers, or as a free widget
- **Be SunSmart, Play SunSmart** by Anne Stonehouse Includes suggested play experiences to help encourage children to play the SunSmart way and incorporates concepts from the new learning and development frameworks. (See link below.)
- **Songs, video clips, online learning modules and suggested play experiences** available from <https://www.sunsmart.com.au/communities/early-childhood-schools/resources-schools-early-childhood/early-childhood-resources>
- **Create your own SunSmart poster:** online SunSmart poster templates where children choose the scene, text, upload an image of their own face to place into the scene and print off their very own poster with them as the SunSmart star. There are sun protection, vitamin D and snow posters to choose from <https://www.sunsmart.com.au/communities/early-childhood-schools/resources-schools-early-childhood/early-childhood-resources>
- **SunSmart UV Alert:** The SunSmart UV Alert indicates daily weather forecasts including temperature, local UV levels and times sun protection is or isn't needed. This is available in the weather section of the newspaper, on the SunSmart website at www.sunsmart.com.au as a free smartphone app or as a widget that you can add to your website.
- **Online shade audit** <http://www.sunsmart.com.au/shade-audit/>

In Summary

- Educators should;
 - support children to take responsibility for their own sun protection and to minimise their exposure to the sun
 - schedule activities for times as recommended
 - direct children to use shaded areas where possible
 - educate children on the dangers of sun exposure and strategies to minimize the risks.
 - set up outdoor activities in shade areas where possible
 - pack equipment that may become hot during the middle of the day undercover when not in use.
 - ensure that where possible equipment is left in shaded areas during the day to reduce the risk of burns when children come out to play in the afternoon. Educators are responsible for checking equipment when children return to playgrounds.
 - discuss sun safety with children and incorporate into learning programs
- Families will be required to provide clothing for children that provides protection from the Ultra Violet rays of the sun including, but not limited to;
 - clothing that covers the shoulders and arms, preferably with a collar and sleeves. Loose-fitting shirts and longer-style skirts, shorts and trousers are recommended. Midriff, crop or singlet tops are not encouraged.
 - sunglasses for children where appropriate.
 - a wide-brimmed, bucket or legionnaire hat
- Babies under 12 months will be kept in out of direct sunlight, wear sun-safe hats and clothing, and have small amounts of SPF30+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen applied to exposed skin when necessary.
- Sun protection messages are incorporated into the learning program for all children
- Families are provided with information on Sun Safety in newsletters and through the information available at the centre.

RELATED FORMS AND DOCUMENTS

- Induction Form
- Training Manual for staff
- Children’s Daily Communication Sheet
- Excursion Risk Management Plan

RECOGNISED AUTHORITIES AND DOCUMENTS WHICH GUIDE POLICY

- “Sun Protection” Cancer Council Queensland (accessed on-line April 2020)
<https://cancerqld.org.au/cancer-prevention/understanding-risk/sun-protection/>
- Cancer Council Australia website (accessed on-line April 2020)
<https://www.cancer.org.au/preventing-cancer/sun-protection/about-skin-cancer.html>
- “Sun Safety for Outdoor Workers” Workcover Qld (accessed on-line April 2020)
<https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/tourism/articles/sun-safety-for-outdoor-workers>
- “Early Childhood sun safety” Queensland Health Website (accessed on-line March 2019)
<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/public-health/schools/sun/early-childhood>
- “Guide to the National Quality Framework” Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority January 2020
- “National SunSmart early childhood sun protection policy template” Cancer Council (accessed on-line April 2020) <https://www.cancer.org.au/preventing-cancer/sun-protection/sunsmart-schools/>
- “Early Childhood sun safety” Queensland Health Website (accessed on-line April 2020)
<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/public-health/schools/sun/early-childhood>

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REVIEW DETAILS:

Review Date	Details of Changes
December 2021	