

Sun Protection Policy

Aim

This Sun Smart Policy has been developed to:

- Ensure all children, educators and staff have some UV exposure for vitamin D.
- Ensure all children, educators and staff are well protected from too much UV exposure by using a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV levels reach 3 and above.
- Ensure the outdoor environment is sun safe and provides shade for children, educators and staff.
- Ensure children are encouraged and supported to develop independent sun protection skills.
- Support duty of care and regulatory requirements
- Support appropriate OHS strategies to minimise UV risk and associated harms for educators, staff and visitors.

Rationale

A balance of ultraviolet radiation (UV) exposure is important for health. Too much of the sun's UV can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. Exposure to the sun's UV during childhood and adolescence is associated with an increased risk of skin cancer in later life. Too little UV from the sun can lead to low vitamin D levels. Vitamin D is essential for healthy bones and muscles, and for general health.

Body

Procedures

- To assist with the implementation of this policy, educators and children are encouraged to access the daily local sun protection times at sunsmart.com.au, via the SunSmart widget on the service's website or via the free Sun Smart app.
- The sun protection measures listed below are used for all outdoor activities during the daily sun protection times (whenever UV levels reach 3 and above), typically from **September to the end of April** in Victoria.
- Where possible, active, outdoor sun safe play is encouraged throughout the day.
- SunSmart practices consider the special needs of infants. All babies under 12 months are kept out of direct sun during the sun protection times (when UV levels are three and above).

Healthy physical environment

- A shade assessment is conducted regularly to determine the current availability and quality of shade.
- Management makes sure there is a sufficient number of shelters and trees providing shade in the outdoor area.
- The availability of shade is considered when planning all outdoor activities and excursions.
- Children are encouraged to choose and use available areas of shade when outside.
- 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.

Healthy social environment

- When outside, children are required to wear loose fitting clothing that covers as much skin as possible. Clothing made from cool, densely woven fabric is recommended. Tops with elbow length sleeves, and if possible, collars and knee length or longer style shorts and skirts are best. If a child is not wearing sun-safe clothing (e.g. a singlet top or shoestring dress) they will be required to choose a t-shirt/shirt to wear over the top before going outdoors.

- **All** children are required to wear hats that protect their face, neck and ears, i.e. legionnaire, broad brimmed or bucket hats. Baseball or peak caps and visors are not considered a suitable alternative.
- SPF 30 or higher broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen is supplied by the service.
- Sunscreen is applied at least 20 minutes (where possible) before going outdoors and reapplied every TWO hours if outdoors.
- After parental consultation and consent, children with naturally very dark skin are not required to wear sunscreen to help with vitamin D requirements.
- To help develop independent skills ready for school, children from 3 years of age are given opportunities and encouraged to apply their own sunscreen under supervision of staff.
- Where practical, children 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.

Engaging children, educators, staff and families

- Educators, staff and families are provided with information on sun protection and vitamin D through family newsletters, service handbook, noticeboards and the service's website.
- When enrolling their child, families are:
 - Informed of the service's SunSmart policy
 - Required to give permission for educators to apply sunscreen to their child
 - Encouraged to use Sun Smart measures themselves when at the service
- As part of OHS UV risk controls and role-modelling, during the sun protection times (when the UV is 3 and above) educators, staff and visitors:
 - wear a suitable sun protective hat, covering clothing and, if practical, sunglasses when outside
 - apply sunscreen
 - seek shade whenever possible