
Sun Smart Policy

Aim

This Sun Smart Policy has been developed to:

- ◆ 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

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.

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 times are a forecast from the Bureau of Meteorology for the time of day UV levels are forecast to reach 3 and above. In Victoria, UV levels regularly reach 3 or higher from mid-August to the end of April.

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 mid-August 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. Physical protection such as dense shade, cool covering, and soft broad-brimmed hats are the best sun protection measures. For those small areas of exposed skin not protected by clothing or hats, apply sunscreen to infants six months and older. The widespread use of sunscreen on babies under 6 months old is not recommended.

Healthy Physical Environment

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.

The service provides hats that protect the children's faces, necks 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.

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 through newsletters 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

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

Reviewed: January 2023