

Sun Protection

Policy/Procedure Number: **QA2 - 2**

Policy/Procedure Requirement: National Quality Standards 2 & 7; Regulations 114, 168, 169 & 170

Policy Statement

Aims to ensure that children and Educators maintain a healthy balance between too little and too much ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun. The Service is committed to providing children with a safe environment that provides shade and sun protection to support their learning and opportunities for play.

Rationale

A healthy balance between too much and too little ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun is important for health. Too much UV radiation from the sun can cause sunburn, skin damage, eye damage and skin cancer. Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world, and overexposure to UV during childhood and adolescence is known to be a major cause of skin cancer.

Too little UV from the sun can lead to vitamin D deficiency. Vitamin D regulates calcium levels in the blood. It is also necessary for the development and maintenance of healthy bones, muscles and teeth. The policy seeks to provide guidance on a healthy balance between too much and too little UV. The vast majority of skin cancers, including melanoma, are caused by over-exposure to UV radiation from the sun.

Strategies and Practices

- All children, Educators and Coordinators use sun protection measures whenever UV Index levels reach 3 and above
- From **October to March** sun protection is **required at all times**. Extra sun protection is needed between **11am** and **3pm**, during which period outdoor activities should be minimised. Minimising outdoor activities includes reducing both the number of times (frequency) and the length of time (duration) children are outside
- From **April to September**, sun protection is required from **10am to 2pm** unless the **UV index is below 3**. In June and July, UV index is mostly below 3 and sun protection not required
- Particular sun protection and care needed for children with very fair skin
- Babies under 12 months should be kept out of direct sun

The Educators will:

- Monitor the impact of sun on play equipment and surfaces that children will be touching and using such as soft fall mats, artificial surfacing, etc.
- Ensure that risk assessments for excursions consider sun protection
- Integrate sun protection awareness into educational programming and planning.
- Ensure special precautions for children under 12 months of age, such as:
 - keeping them inside during the middle of the day
 - ensuring they are always completely in the shade
 - dressing them in protective clothing

- avoiding the use of sunscreen for babies aged six months or younger (or as recommended by recognised authorities)

Managing the physical environment

Shade

- Educators must consider the availability of shade when planning and implementing outdoor activities and excursions
- Provided the UV Index is below 3 (moderate), unrestricted outdoor play may take place. If the UV Index is 3 (moderate) or above, outdoor play is allowed provided appropriate sun protection measures are undertaken by all Educators, Staff and children whilst outdoors
- Children are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside
- Prams or strollers should have a hood that can be adjusted to block out direct sunlight

Protective Practices

Role modelling

Educators and staff will act as role models by:

- Wearing sun protective hats / clothing, and sunglasses when outside
- Applying SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen
- Seeking shade whenever possible

Clothing

- When outside, children, Educators and Staff are required to wear loose fitting clothing that covers as much skin as possible

Hats

- All children, Educators and Staff are required to wear hats that protect their face, back of the neck, eyes and ears, i.e. legionnaire, broad-brimmed or bucket hats
- The policy of “**No hats/appropriate clothing, no outdoor play**” will be enforced by Educators and Staff

Sunglasses

- Children and Educators are encouraged to wear close fitting, wrap around sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard 1067:2003 (Sunglasses: Category 2, 3 or 4) and cover as much of the eye area as possible

Sunscreen

- Educators should use SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen for them and the children
- Sunscreen should be applied at least 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapplied every two hours when 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 the Educators

Sharing information about sun protection

- The children learn about skin and ways to protect their skin from the sun
- Educators and families are provided with information on sun protection
- **When enrolling their child, families are:**
 - Informed of the scheme's sun protection policy and sun safe practices in general, and specific expectations within the Service (e.g wearing sun safe clothing), including considering their cultural backgrounds, beliefs and traditions
 - Asked to provide a suitable hat for their child
 - Asked to provide their child with suitable outdoor clothing that is cool and covers as much skin as possible
 - Asked to provide SPF30+, broad spectrum sunscreen for their child
 - Required to give permission for staff to apply sunscreen to their child
 - Authorise excursions and outings

Review

- Management and Educators monitor and review the effectiveness of the SunSmart policy every two years and revise the policy when required

Resources and Further Readings

- Education and Care Services National Regulations
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- ACECQA National; Quality Framework Resource Kit www.acecqa.gov.au
- Australian Standards for sun protection clothing, sun glasses and shade cloth
- Cancer Council ACT
- SunSmart Family Day Care: A Guide for Schemes
- Starting Blocks – Sun Protection in Childcare

Related FDC Policies, Procedures & Documents

- Excursions and Regular Outings
- Excursion Risk Assessment
- Providing a Child Safe Environment
- Emergency & Evacuation
- Child Enrolment and Parent Agreement Form
- Interactions with Children
- Acceptance & Refusal of Authorisations

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Next Review: