

This policy applies to all service events on and off site.

Rationale

A balance of ultraviolet (UV) radiation exposure is important for health. Too much of the sun's UV radiation can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. Sun exposure in the first 10 years of life is a major factor in determining future skin cancer risk. 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.

Objectives

This SunSmart Policy has been developed to:

- encourage children and staff to use a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV Index levels reach 3 and above
- work towards a safe outdoor environment that provides shade for children and staff at appropriate times
- ensure all children and staff have some UV exposure for vitamin D
- assist children to be responsible for their own sun protection
- ensure that families and new staff are informed of the service's SunSmart Policy.

Staff are encouraged to access the SunSmart UV Alert at www.cancersa.org.au/early-childhood to find out daily local sun protection times to assist with the implementation of this policy.

We use a combination of sun protection measures for all outdoor activities from **1 September to 30 April** and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above at other times.

- Our SunSmart practises consider the special needs of infants. All babies under 12 months are kept out of direct sun when UV levels are 3 and above.

1. Shade

- A shade audit 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 excursions and all other outdoor activities.
- Children are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside.
- Children who do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing are asked to play in the shade or a suitable area protected from the sun.

2. Clothing

- When outside, children are required to wear loose fitting clothing that covers as much skin as possible. Clothing made from cool, closely woven fabric is recommended. Tops with covered shoulders and, if possible, collars and knee length or longer style shorts and skirts are best. If a child is wearing a singlet top or dress they wear a t-shirt/ shirt over the top before going outdoors.

3. Hats

- **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 are not considered a suitable alternative.

4. Sunglasses [OPTIONAL]

- Children and staff 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.

5. Sunscreen

- SPF 30 or higher broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen is available for staff and children's use.
- Sunscreen is applied at least 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapplied every 2 hours if outdoors.
- With parental consent, children with naturally very dark skin are not required to wear sunscreen to help with vitamin D requirements.
- Children, once old enough, are encouraged to apply their own sunscreen under the supervision of staff.

When enrolling their child, families are:

- informed of the service's SunSmart policy
- 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 (i.e. that cover the shoulders and chest, upper arms and legs)
- asked to provide SPF 30 or higher broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen for their child
- required to give permission for staff to apply sunscreen to their child
- encouraged to practise SunSmart behaviours themselves when at the service.

Staff WHS and Role modelling

As part of WHS UV risk controls and role-modelling, when the UV is 3 and above staff:

- wear sun protective hats, clothing and sunglasses when outside
- apply SPF 30 or higher broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen
- seek shade whenever possible.

Families and visitors are requested to use a combination of sun protection measures (sun protective clothing and hats, shade, sunglasses and sunscreen) when attending the service.

Planned experiences

- Sun protection and vitamin D are incorporated into the learning and development program.
- The SunSmart policy is reinforced through staff and children's activities and displays.
- Staff and families are provided with information on sun protection and vitamin D through family newsletters, noticeboards and the service's website.

Review

- Management and staff monitor and review the effectiveness of the SunSmart policy and revise the policy when required (at least once every three years).

Date of next policy review: March 2024

Relevant resources

- **SunSmart UV Alert:** available as a free SunSmart app, online (www.cancersa.org.au/sunsmart-apps), in the weather section of newspapers, or as a free widget to place on your website. The sun protection times show when the UV is forecast to be 3 or above.
- **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.)
- **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 www.sunsmart.com.au/createposter
- **Creating effective shade:** This online shade audit tool allows you to assess whether the existing shade at your service is adequate. It also helps you develop a list of practical recommendations to improve shade: <http://www.sunsmart.com.au/shade-audit/>
- **A range of resources for early childhood services** is available at www.cancersa.org.au/early-childhood