

Sun Protection Policy and Procedure

Introduction

A balance of Ultraviolet Radiation (UV) exposure is important for health. Too much of the sun's UV can cause sunburn, skin, eye damage and 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.

Policy

Our Education and Care Services will:

- Enable children, educators and staff to experience some UV exposure for vitamin D.
- Use a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV levels reach 3 and above to ensure children, educators and staff are well protected from too much UV exposure.
- Provide shade outdoors for children, educators and staff.
- Encourage and support children to develop independent sun protection skills.
- Implement WHS strategies to minimise UV risk and associated harms for educators, staff and visitors.
- Educate and update children, families and staff about current recommendations from the Cancer Council NSW regarding sun safety measures.
- Maintain registration as a Sun Smart service.
- Consider all sun protection measures (including recommended outdoor times, shade, hat, clothing and sunscreen) when planning excursions and related activities.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Ultraviolet (UV) Radiation	Ultraviolet (UV) radiation is a type of energy produced by the sun and some artificial sources, such as solariums. The sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation is the main cause of skin cancer. UV damage also causes sunburn, tanning, premature ageing and eye damage.
Vitamin D	The sun's UV radiation is the best natural source for vitamin D. Vitamin D is a hormone that controls calcium levels in the blood. It is needed for strong bones, muscles and overall health.
The UV Index	The World Health Organization's Global Solar UV Index measures UV levels on a scale from 0 (Low) to 11+ (Extreme). Sun protection is recommended when UV levels are 3 (Moderate) or higher. The UV level is affected by a number of factors including the time of day, time of year, cloud cover, altitude, how close you are to the equator, scattering and reflection.

Eligibility

The policy applies to all staff and participants in Learning Links Education and Care Services.

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Responsible

Responsibilities for this policy are:

Who	Responsible for...
Nominated Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sun protection policy is available for staff, families and visitors. • Ensure the service operates in line with the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations 2011. • Ensure measures are in place so that children are adequately supervised and protected from harms and hazards. • Provide sun protection information to staff, families and visitors. • Provide support and advice to staff with regard to implementation of the Sun Protection Policy. • Regular shade assessments conducted to monitor existing shade structures and assist in the planning/location of activities.
Educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adhere to the strategies and practices of the Sun Protection Policy. • Educators shall role model and demonstrate sun safe behaviour by: Wearing a sun safe hat (see Hats). Wearing sun safe clothing (see Clothing). Applying SPF30+ or higher broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors. Using and promoting activity in shaded areas. • Encouraging families and visitors to role model sun safe behaviours when at the service. • Sun protection messages are incorporated into the learning program for children. • Check the UV Alert on a daily basis at www.sunsmart.com.au
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dress their child/ren in cool clothing that covers as much skin as possible e.g. tops that cover the shoulders, arms and chest, collared shirts, longer style shorts. • Provide a sun protective hat that shades the face, neck and ears (e.g. wide brimmed, bucket or legionnaire style). • Give permission for educators to apply SPF 30+ or higher broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen supplied by the service to all exposed parts of my child's skin including their face, neck, ears, arms and legs (unless the child has naturally very dark brown or black skin). Where sunscreen is supplied from home this will be labelled with the child's name and an adequate supply made available at the service at all times. • Encouraged to practise Sun Smart behaviours themselves when at the service.

Procedure

Sun Protective Behaviours	Action
Outdoor Activity	<p>The service will use a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV Index levels reach 3 and above. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> From October to March sun protection is required at all times. Extra sun protection is needed between 11am and 3pm and during this 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 exposed to the sun. From April to September (excluding June and July) outdoor activity can take place at any time. However, from 10am–2pm sun protection is required. <p>In June and July when the UV index is mostly below 3, sun protection is not required.</p>
Shade	<p>All outdoor activities will be planned to occur in shaded areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The program will be set up in the shade and moved throughout the day to take advantage of shade patterns. The service will provide and maintain adequate shade for outdoor play. Shade options can include a combination of portable, natural and built shade structures. Outdoor activities will be scheduled where possible outside of peak UV times.
Hats	<p>Educators and children are required to wear sun safe hats that protect their face, neck and ears.</p> <p>A sun safe hat is a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legionnaire hat, or a Bucket hat with a deep crown and brim size of at least 5cm (adults 6cm), or a Broad brimmed hat with a brim size of at least 6cm (adults 7.5cm). <p>Please note: Baseball caps or visors do not provide enough sun protection and are not considered a suitable alternative.</p> <p>Children without a sun safe hat will be asked to play in an area protected from the sun (e.g. under shade, a veranda or indoors) or can be provided with a spare hat.</p>
Clothing	<p>When outdoors, educators and children will wear sun safe clothing that covers as much of the skin as possible (especially the shoulders, back and stomach). This includes wearing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loose fitting shirts and dresses with sleeves and collars or covered neckline. Longer style skirts, shorts and trousers. <p>Children who are not wearing sun safe clothing will be provided with spare clothing. Please note: Midriff, crop or singlet tops do not provide enough sun protection and are not recommended.</p>
Sunscreen	<p>All staff and children will be encouraged to apply SPF30+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors and re-apply every 2 hours*</p> <p>Where appropriate, children will be encouraged and supported to apply their own sunscreen under the supervision of staff.</p> <p><i>* The World Health Organisation reports that people with naturally very dark brown or black skin (skin that rarely or never burns) may not be required to wear sunscreen as the melanin in their skin can often tolerate higher levels of UV radiation without burning. This is a decision for families to make. Hats remain necessary to protect the student's eyes from UV damage. With parental consent, children with naturally very dark skin are not required to wear sunscreen to help with vitamin D requirements.</i></p>

Related documents

Related Legislation

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: Section 167
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulations 100, 113, 114, 168(2)(a)(ii)
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004

Related guidelines, standards, frameworks

- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 1: Educational Program and Practice – Standards 1.1, 1.2
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children’s Health and Safety – Standards 2.1,2.3
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 3: Children’s Health and Safety – Standards 3.1, 3.2
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 4: Staffing Arrangements – Standards 4.1, 4.2
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 5: Relationships with Children – Standards 5.1,5.2
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities – Standards 6.1
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 7: Leadership and Service Management – Standards 7.1, 7.3
- Radiation Protection Standard for Occupational Exposure to Ultraviolet Radiation (2006)
- Safe Work Australia: Guidance Note for the Protection of Workers from the Ultraviolet Radiation in Sunlight (2008)

Sources

- Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) – www.acecqa.gov.au
- NSW Cancer Council – www.cancercouncil.com.au
- Community Early Learning Australia (CELA) <https://www.cela.org.au/resource/sample-policy-sun-protection-13062017>

Document control

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