

HEALTH AND SAFETY: SUN PROTECTION POLICY

OVERVIEW:

Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world with two in three Australians developing some form of skin cancer before the age of 70. Too much of the sun's UV radiation can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. Infants and toddlers up to four years of age are particularly vulnerable to UV damage due to lower levels of melanin and a thinner stratum corneum (the outermost layer of skin). UV damage accumulated during childhood and adolescence is strongly associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life (Cancer Council Australia).

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD	RELATED SERVICE POLICIES/ DOCUMENTATION	OTHER
R 77 100, 113, 114, 168	S2.1, 2.1.1, 2.1.3, 2.2, 2.2.1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parent Handbook - Staff Handbook - Providing a Child Safe Environment Policy - Excursion Policy 	<p>Cancer Council NSW – www.cancercouncil.com.au/reduce-risks/sun-protection</p> <p>Australian Safety Standards.</p> <p>My Time Our Place.</p> <p>Cancer Council SunSmart program</p> <p>Safe Work Australia.</p> <p>Kidsafe</p>

OUTLINE:

This policy outlines the guidelines followed by management and staff to ensure exposure to harmful UV rays are minimised, as recommended by the Cancer Council, to include considerations when scheduling activities, shade, clothing, sunscreen, modelling by staff, collaboration with children, and education & information.



WHO THE POLICY AFFECTS?

Management
Staff
Students
Parents

POLICY STATEMENT:

SUNBEAMS aims to balance the risk of skin cancer from too much sun exposure with maintaining adequate vitamin D levels in our children. We aim to take a sensible approach to sun protection in our service that empowers children to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing (*"My Time, Our Place" Outcome 3*).

The sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation is both the major cause of skin cancer and the best source of vitamin D. We need vitamin D to maintain good health and to keep bones and muscles strong and healthy.

We aim to ensure that all children in attendance at the service when the UV forecast is 3 or above will be protected from harmful rays of the sun. All staff will model appropriate sun protection behaviour and enforce the sun protection policy.

Evidence suggests that childhood exposure to UV radiation contributes significantly to the development of skin cancer in later life. Ultraviolet (UV) radiation cannot be seen or felt and can be high even on cool and overcast days. This means our service educators will teach children not to rely on clear skies or high temperatures to determine the need for sun protection and provide them with exposure to resources and materials that will reinforce this message and assist children to understand the complexities of their environment (*"My Time, Our Place" Outcome 2*).

Strategies for teaching sun protection in the service will be based on children actively practicing and monitoring their own implementation of sun protection strategies as active learners (*"My Time, Our Place" Outcome 4*). This will include children having opportunities to access UV Alerts and monitoring the exposure to the sun of both them and their peers (*"My Time, Our Place" Outcome 5*).

SUNBEAMS believes that implementing a best practice sun protection policy will have a major impact on reducing the chance of our children developing skin cancer in later life.

PROCEDURE:

SCHEDULING OF ACTIVITIES:

The following procedures will be implemented when scheduling activities when the UV Rating is 3 or above. (Regulation 168)(2)(a)(ii)

- Where appropriate, outdoor activities will be scheduled outside of peak UV times or planned for shaded areas with sun protection used for all children.
- In non-daylight-saving time (April-Sept) outdoor activities can take place at any time as long as sun protection (hats, clothing, sunscreen, shade) is used when the UV Index is 3 or above.
- When planning all outdoor activities (including excursions) sun protection will be included in the risk assessments for service participation.
- All sun protection practices will be maintained while staff are escorting children to and from school and on any future excursions.

SHADE

- Structured outdoor activities will be held in shaded areas whenever possible when the UV Index is 3 or above. (Regulation 114)
- Sunbeams will identify shade options at various times of the day and the year within the outdoor space and promote these to the children. Educators will set up activities and play spaces to make best use of the shade.
- Children will be encouraged to use available shade when playing outside during times when the UV Index is 3 or above.

CLOTHING

- Educators and children will wear protective clothing when outside during periods of time when the UV Index is 3 or above.
- When outdoors children will be encouraged to wear sun-safe clothing with sleeves, collars or covered necklines.
- Midriff, crop or singlet tops do not provide adequate protection and are not recommended. The Family Handbook will remind families and children of the appropriate clothing to wear to the service to meet the sun protection policy and reminders throughout the year to families to support sun safe practices.
- Children will be encouraged to wear sun-safe hats that protect the face, neck and ears when outside. Recommended hats are bucket hats and broad brimmed hats. Baseball caps and visors are not recommended.



- All educators will be required to wear tops with sleeves and collars or covered necklines and longer style skirts, shorts or trousers. (Sunbeams uniforms will comply with sun safe practices.
- Children who do not have a hat must play in a sheltered area. Staff are to enforce the rule that where a child has not got a hat or is wearing clothing that is not recommended as appropriate, they must access shaded areas in which to play.

SUNSCREEN

- At least SPF 30+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen will be available at the service for children and educators to use.
- Educators will ensure there are regular reminders (minimum every 2 hours) to apply sunscreen prior to outdoor play during the months of October to March between 11am and 3pm or when the UV Index 3 or above.
- Permission to apply sunscreen will be included in the service enrolment form. Educators will respect the parents' right to refuse authorisation to apply sunscreen however will require children to wear appropriate clothing or play in the shade.

MONITORING UV RATINGS:

Sun protection is required when UV levels reach level 3 or above. Our Service will monitor the UV levels daily through one or more of the following methods:

using the smartphone SunSmart app available at iTunes App Store and Google Play store

using the SunSmart widget on the Service's website available at www.cancer.org.au

viewing the Bureau of Meteorology website <http://www.bom.gov.au>

visiting www.myuv.com.au

MODELLING OF STAFF

- Educators will wear protective clothing and practice a combination of sun protection strategies (sun-safe hats, clothing, sunglasses, at least SPF 30+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen) when in attendance at the service.
- Wherever possible, staff will seek out shade when undertaking outdoor supervision in months where the UV Alert is 3 or above.
- Educators will use opportunities to discuss with children sun protection and demonstrate a positive and proactive approach to the management of sun protection in the service. (Regulation 77 (1 & 2) (a & b))

COLLABORATION WITH CHILDREN:

- Children will be provided with opportunities to take leadership roles in managing sun protection.
- Children will be encouraged to access the internet/ newspaper and other media to check the UV ratings for the day and advise educators of the times when the UV Index will be 3 or above.
- Opportunities for children to set alarms for when the UV Index increases above or drops below 3 will be provided and children assigned duties regarding UV reminders, hat reminders and management of sunscreen.
- Children will be reminded that they can remove their hats when the UV Index falls below 3.

EDUCATION & INFORMATION:

- The sun protection policy will be available to all families using the service.
- All parents, including for vacation care, will be informed of the sun protection policy including appropriate hat, clothing and sunscreen requirements during enrolment.
- For vacation care services: parents are encouraged to apply at least SPF 30+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen to children before spring and summer program sessions.
- Where children have allergies or sensitivity to the sunscreen, parents will be asked to provide an alternative sunscreen that is at least SPF 30+ broad spectrum water-resistant, or the child encouraged to play in the shade.
- Sunbeams will incorporate sun and skin protection awareness activities in the program and provide notices and posters about the topic from Cancer Council NSW as appropriate.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER/ NOMINATED SUPERVISOR AND EDUCATORS WILL:

- Ensure risk assessments are conducted to identify any potential hazards to children during summer months that could cause harm or injury to children. Risk minimisation control measures will be put in place to protect children. Potential hazards could include:
 - Hot equipment- slides, poles, guardrails, any metal surfaces
 - Hot surfaces- rubber and synthetic grass, walkways, concrete surfaces
 - Sun burn
 - Access to bodies of water (filled water troughs/containers/trays/pools)
 - Complete a Daily Playground Surface Temperature Check during summer months or extreme hot weather.



- Use a thermometer or their hand to test surface temperature and make an informed decision about permitting children to play on equipment or in the outdoor space. If the surface temperature is determined to be too hot or is recorded as at or above 50°C it is recommended by Kid safe Australia that children do NOT play on the surface
- Ensure children wear shoes when playing in the outdoor area.

ENDORSEMENT BY THE SERVICE:

The policy will be reviewed as required. The review will be conducted by management, staff, children, families and the wider community.

Last reviewed: September 2025

Date of next review: September 2027

APPROVAL DATE: _____

DATE FOR REVIEW: _____