

SUN PROTECTION POLICY

PURPOSE

The Sun Protection Policy applies to all children, educators, staff, and students with the aim to promote sun safety and reduce exposure to UVR, whilst ensuring some safe and appropriate UV exposure for vitamin D. Through a comprehensive approach reflecting on sun protection behaviour, organisation of activities, the outdoor environment and education of children, educators, staff, and parents we aim to ensure:

- All children, educators and students are well protected from too much UV exposure by using a combination of sun protection measures during the daily local sun protection times (issued whenever UV levels are 3 and above).
- The outdoor physical environment is sun safe and provides opportunities to seek shade and provide shade when required
- All children are encouraged and supported to develop independent sun protection skills through independent learning and collaborative conversations.
- The support of duty of care and regulatory requirements.
The use of appropriate WH&S strategies, to minimise UV risk and associated harms.
- That this policy is available to all educators, staff, students, families, and visitors.

BACKGROUND

A balance of ultraviolet radiation (UV) exposure is important for health. 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. 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.

IMPLEMENTATION

We have developed this policy in consultation with Cancer Council NSW and Sun Smart Childcare – a policy guide for service providers. The aim of the policy is to reduce the risk of long-term skin damage by exposure to UV radiation caused by our harsh climate and hot sun.

OUTDOOR HEALTHY ACTIVITIES

Our Sun Protection Policy applies to all who attend our centre, being children, educators, staff, families, and visitors and applies all year round but with different some varied conditions as stated below:

- October – March: sun protection is always required. Extra sun protection is needed between 11am and 3pm (daylight saving time) 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 outside.

To ensure adequate protection is provided the Cancer Council sun safe app is checked regularly including but not limited to before going outside at 9 am, preparing to go outside 2pm, as we go outside 3pm. The Cancer Council UV

Meter posters are also visibly posted in several outdoor areas to promote understanding and awareness of the UV Index.

Parents are encouraged to apply sunscreen in the morning and educators will apply again before going out in the afternoon. Sunscreen is provided in all children's rooms and parents are reminded to apply sunscreen through various communication.

- April- September: Outdoor activity can be planned at any time at any time of the day. However, sun protection practices are required between 10am-2pm
- June and July when the UV Index is mostly below 3 (in NSW), sun protection is not required. Extra care is needed for children that have very fair skin. On days when the UV Index is above 3 Sun-safe hats are reintroduced. Educators determine the need for protection by checking the Cancer Council SunSmart daily.

The Licensee will be responsible for ensuring that the outdoor play area is well shaded by trees, shade cloth and portable shade equipment. During outdoor play equipment will be set up in shaded areas with children being encouraged to play in the shade. Regular shade assessments will be made throughout the day and equipment moved to maximise the use of shade over the day.

EXCURSIONS:

All sun protection measures (included recommended outdoor times, shade, hat, clothing, and sunscreen) will be considered when planning all excursions and incursions.

Vitamin D and sun protection

Vitamin D, which is essential for developing and maintaining strong and healthy bones and muscles, is made in the body when skin is exposed to UV radiation. We now know that, despite our sunny climate, some Australians who spend little time in the sun may have low levels of vitamin D.

For most people, adequate vitamin D levels are reached through regular incidental exposure to the sun. When the UV Index is 3 or above (such as during summer), most people maintain adequate vitamin D levels just by spending a few minutes outdoors on most days of the week.

In late Autumn and Winter when the UV Index falls below 3, the Cancer Council states that it is safe to spend time outdoors in the middle of the day with some skin uncovered. The Cancer Council SunSmart App is used daily to check the current UV Index. On the days that the UV Index is above 3 children and educators are required to wear sun-safe hats.

Research tells us that being physically active also helps boost vitamin D levels.

SUN SAFE HATS- Ultraviolet Protection Factor (UPF):

Hats may be labelled with an Ultraviolet Protection Factor or UPF. The UPF is a scale developed to rate how much UV protection a fabric provides. The service provides each child a sun safe legionnaire hat on enrolment (\$12 fee). The fabric has a UPF of 50 allowing only one-fiftieth (or 2%) of UV radiation to pass through it and so offers excellent protection. Educators will ensure that

these hats are always worn during outdoor play throughout the year. The centre will encourage a “no hat – play indoors” strategy.

SUNSCREEN:

The centre will provide a SPF 30+ or higher broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen lotion, with parents expected to apply the lotion on arrival. Educators will assume the responsibility for applying or re - applying sunscreen when required and 20 minutes before the afternoon outdoor session. According to the TGA regulations and Australian Standards Test protocol a broad-spectrum sunscreen must block more than 90% of UVA rays. An SPF30 sunscreen blocks 96.7% of UV and transmits the remaining 3.3%. An SPF50 sunscreen blocks 98% of UV.

Children under 12 months of age, and those children and educators who are not able to wear any sunscreen for medical reasons, will use only the shaded areas of the playground and not be exposed to direct sunlight.

Parents wishing to use their own sunscreen may bring in sunscreen clearly labelled with their child's name. It is recommended that this action should only be for the purpose of children who have skin allergies or reactions to certain chemical absorbers. These are placed out of reach to ensure that they are used only for the child detailed on the label. Expiry dates are regularly monitored. Parents will be asked to fill out specific forms for ongoing use.

PROTECTIVE CLOTHING:

Parents will be requested to provide protective clothing for outdoor play, specifically shirts that cover the shoulders and mid-riff. If inappropriate clothing is worn and there is no other appropriate clothing available, children will be encouraged to play indoors.

EDUCATORS, STAFF and STUDENTS

Educators, staff, and students are required to encourage families and visitors to role model positive sun-safe behaviour when at the service. All educators are role models of sun-safe behaviour and will wear sun-safe hats, clothing and apply/reapply sunscreen before outdoor play sessions and as required. Educators are encouraged to move themselves and children into shaded areas when appropriate. Educators have a responsibility for their own safety and health and must follow UV protection policies and use sun protective measures provided.

EDUCATION:

Educators will incorporate sun protection awareness activities in teaching programs and display posters available from the Cancer Council NSW as reinforcement for these programs. Information and change of season reminders on Sun Protection and vitamin D will be available to parents through Elder Street ECHC Centre handbook, daybooks, weekly check in email communications, information booklets and pamphlets.

Engaging children, educators, staff, and families

- Staff, educators, and families are provided with information about sun protection through family Elder Street ECHC Centre handbook, daybooks, weekly check in email communications, information booklets, noticeboards, and the centre's website.

When enrolling their child, families are:

- informed of the service's SunSmart policy.

- asked to provide a suitable sun protective hat, covering clothing and sunscreen for their child.
- required to give permission for educators to apply sunscreen to their child; and
- encouraged to use SunSmart measures themselves when at the service.
- As part of WHS UV risk controls and role-modelling, educators, staff, and visitors:
 - wear a suitable sun-protective hat, covering clothing and, if practical, sunglasses.
 - apply sunscreen; and
 - seek shade whenever possible.

Monitoring and review

- All staff, including management and educators, monitor and review the effectiveness of the SunSmart policy and revise the policy when required (at least once every three years) by completing a policy review and membership renewal with SunSmart at sunsmart.com.au.
- SunSmart policy updates and requirements will be made available to educators, educators, families, and visitors.

REVIEW:

Reviewed: 10 June 2005 by M Duffy-Fagan
 16 March 2005 by M Duffy-Fagan
 20 April 2006 by M Duffy-Fagan
 December 2008 by M Duffy-Fagan, staff, and families
 October 2009 as above
 May 2012 as above
 July 2016 K Pomfrett & M Duffy-Fagan
 April 2018 M Duffy-Fagan, K Pomfrett R Saville, Creighton,
 October 2020 K Pomfrett, L Berwick, C Chippington, E Austin
 August 2022 K Pomfrett, E Austin, C Chippington

Source: The Cancer Council NSW
 Sun Smart Childcare – A policy guide for service providers
 Safe Work Australia
 National Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)
 National Quality Standards
 Cancer Council