

Sun Smart and Heat

Purpose

All children have the right to experience quality care education in an environment which provides for their health and safety.

ECMS has a duty of care which extends to ensuring that appropriate sun protection policies and practices are implemented to adequately protect children, educators/staff and visitors from ultraviolet radiation from the sun.

The Cancer Council advises that two out of three Australians will develop some form of skin cancer before the age of 70, with childhood sun exposure being an important risk factor. Infants and toddlers (up to 4 years of age) are particularly vulnerable to UV radiation-induced changes in the skin due to lower levels of melanin and a thinner stratum corneum, the outermost layer of skin. This means if a child gets too much sun, their skin can be permanently damaged resulting in moles, freckles, wrinkles, sunspots and even skin cancer later in life.

It is widely understood that the risk of developing skin cancer is directly related to the intensity and duration of sun exposure. Research now indicates that childhood sun exposure is an important contributing factor to the development of skin cancer later in life, with the majority of damage occurring in the first twenty years of life.

ECMS is committed to ensuring a healthy UV exposure balance to help with vitamin D and protect from the harmful effects of overexposure to the sun's ultraviolet radiation whilst in a service and at any outdoor events organised by the ECMS.

ECMS educators will:

- reduce direct exposure to potentially harmful solar ultraviolet radiation (UVR) amongst children and educators;
- Promote and encourage the ongoing maintenance and development of effective shade amongst settings; and

Increase children's (and workers) awareness about skin damage and how to protect their skin and eyes from too much UV.

Policy Principles

- Ensure all children and educators have some UV exposure for vitamin D.
- Encourage children and educators 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 educators at appropriate times.
- Assist children to be responsible for their own sun protection.
- Ensure that families and new educators are informed of the service's SunSmart measures.
- Values and nurtures the uniqueness of each child; we will listen to children and include them in decision making.
- Responds to the specific needs of the children we serve; each child potentially involved will be considered when implementing the Sun Smart Policy.
- Provides access to resources and opportunities for learning; families will be provided with information that will inform their thinking and consideration in regards to sun smart activities.
- Recognises that children are both vulnerable and capable; children will be taught to care for their own and others' health, safety and wellbeing
- Ensures the commitment to child health and safety is clear and shared by all.
- Educates staff, students, Family Day Care (FDC) educators and volunteers about child health and safety and the importance of children learning to assess potential hazards, identify and respond to risks.

Role and Responsibilities

CEO	Is accountable for ensuring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All aspects of this policy and procedure are strictly adhered to at all times
General Managers, Operations	Are responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All aspects of this policy and procedure are strictly adhered to at all times
Area Managers	Are responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring the implementation of this policy and procedure • Providing feedback to review this policy and procedure
Nominated Supervisors and Centre Directors	Are responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring all staff implement this policy and procedure • Parents are aware of the service's policy and procedure
Employees, Volunteers, Contractors, and Student Placement Workers	Are responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • working within the parameters of this policy and procedure at all times
Parent/Guardians	Are responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reading and complying with this policy

Procedure

Educators are encouraged to access the daily local sun protection times at sunsmart.com.au or on the free SunSmart app to assist with the implementation of this policy.

We use a combination of sun protection measures for all outdoor activities during the local daily sun protection times (issued whenever UV levels reach three and above - typically from September to the end of April in Victoria).

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

1. Shade

- A shade audit is conducted regularly to determine the current availability and quality of shade.
- ECMS 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, densely woven fabric is recommended. Tops with elbow length sleeves, and if possible, collars and knee length or longer style shorts and skirts are best. If a child is wearing a singlet top or a dress with singlet straps they will be required to wear a t-shirt/ shirt over the top/dress before going outdoors.
- Footwear
 - Children's footwear must be appropriate for all centre activities - both indoor and outdoor (i.e., It must be supportive and protective for when children are climbing).
 - Babies that are not yet walking or just beginning to walk may have bare feet while at the centre as this practice promotes sensory and tactile input.
 - Children are to have footwear on at all times during play periods. Sometimes they may be required to have bare feet during sensory activities or music and movement.

Examples of clothing and footwear that is considered unsafe/ inappropriate

- Long skirts/dresses
- Singlet top and shoestring dresses
- Tank tops
- Thongs
- Crocs
- Dress up high heels
- Slip on sandals/shoes
- Shoes / sandals that are either too big or too small or provide no support

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 and visors are not considered a suitable alternative. It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to provide a suitable hat as outlined above. It is the educator's responsibility to ensure the child/ren wear the hat when required.
- It is the educator's responsibility to request from the parents a suitable hat for the child/ren.

4. Sunglasses [OPTIONAL]

- Where practical, children 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 educators and children's use.
- Sunscreen is applied at least 20 minutes (where possible) before going outdoors and reapplied every two hours if outdoors.
- From 3 years of age, children are encouraged and assisted to apply their own sunscreen under the supervision of educators.

6. Maintaining hydration levels

Infants and children's body/water ratio mass is significantly different than from adults, therefore the risk for dehydration from outdoor play and hot weather is high and can be dangerous.

- Water will be offered to children throughout the day regardless of indoor or outdoor play settings.
- Children are able to bring in water bottles from home and are encouraged to access water to drink throughout the day.
- Cooled boiled water may be offered to infants and young children after bottle feeds if children show signs of continued thirst.
- Educators will monitor and document the input/output of infants and young children's fluids.

When **enrolling** their child, families are:

- Informed of the service's SunSmart policy and are shown where to access the centre's generic sunscreen.
- Asked to provide a suitable hat for their child as outlined previously
- 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)
- Required to give permission for educators to apply sunscreen to their child
- Required to provide an alternative sunscreen if their child/ren have allergies to generic sunscreens. This must be clearly labelled with the child/ren's name/s.
- Encouraged to practise SunSmart behaviours themselves when at the service

- Where a parent specifically requests an exemption from this policy eg: an educator/staff member does not apply sunscreen to their child due perhaps to their cultural norms or a severe allergy, the educator/staff member will need to ensure that the child is wearing appropriate clothing and plays in shaded areas. Educators/staff must cover their duty of care to the child, and alert the parent in writing of any recommendation that precautions against harmful UV rays that should be taken.

Educators OHS and Role modelling

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

- wear sun protective hats and clothing when outside (sunglasses are optional)
- apply SPF 30 or higher broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen
- seek shade whenever possible
- request families and visitors 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 educators and children's activities and displays.
- Educators and families are provided with information on sun protection and vitamin D through family newsletters, noticeboards and the service's website.

Review

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 at sunsmart.com.au.

Policy Date	Created	July 2014, Reviewed July 2016
Policy Date	Review	December 2018
Sources and Further Reading		Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 Regs- 165, 166, 167, 169
		http://www.sunsmart.com.au/communities/early-childhood-primary-schools/sample-policies
		http://www.sunsmart.com.au/communities/early-childhood-primary-schools/resources-primary-early-childhood
		http://www.careforkids.com.au/newsletter/november09/story3.html
		Guide to the National Quality Standard http://www.acecqa.gov.au/links-and-resources/national-quality-framework-resources/
		Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005, Part 2: Principles for Children AS/NZS 4486.1:1997

	<p>Playgrounds and Playground Equipment Part 1: Development, installation, inspection, maintenance and operation Shade/Sun Protection (Appendix A)</p> <p>http://www.playaustralia.org.au</p> <p>Sun protection times (issued whenever the UV Index reaches 3 and above) www.sunsmart.com.au or www.bom.gov.au/announcements/uv/</p> <p>SunSmart App can be downloaded at http://www.sunsmart.com.au/tools/interactive-tools/free-sunsmart-app</p> <p>Be SunSmart, play SunSmart by Anne Stonehouse - Updated 2016 Retrieved October 2016, from http://www.sunsmart.com.au/downloads/communities/early-childhood-primary-school/resources/be-sunsmart-play-sunsmart.pdf</p>
<p>Relevant Legislation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic) (Part 2: Principles for children) • Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: Section 167 • Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulations 113,114,168 (2) (a) (ii) • Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 • National Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) • Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF) • Building Quality Standards Handbook (BQSH): Section 8.5.5 Shade Areas (Oct 2011) • Get Up & Grow: Healthy eating and physical activity for early childhood (Section 2) 2009 • ARPANSA Radiation Protection Standard for Occupational Exposure to Ultraviolet Radiation (2006) • • Safe Work Australia: Guidance Note – Sun protection for outdoor workers (2016) • • AS 4685.1: 2014 Playground equipment and surfacing – General safety requirements and test methods •
<p>Related to NQS Q.A</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children’s Health and Safety <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Standard 2.3: Each child is protected ○ Element 2.3.2: Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury