

Early Childhood Education and Care Sun Protection Policy

To join the SunSmart Program choose to:

- Agree to implement the Cancer Council NSW Sun Protection Policy shown below.
- OR**
- Ensure your service Sun Protection Policy includes the following 10 recommendations.

Using the Cancer Council NSW sun protection Policy? Complete this form:

Service name _____ Date: _____

This policy will support your service to meet the requirements of the *Education and Care Services National Law*, the *Education and Care Services National Regulations* and the National Quality Standard (NQS):

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: Section 167 – protection from harm and hazards

Education and Care Services National Regulations: Regulation 113 Outdoor Space- Natural environment
Regulation 114 Outdoor Space- Shade
Regulation 168 Education and care service must have policies and procedures 2 (ii) Sun protection

National Quality Standard: All seven quality areas

Rationale

Australia has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. Skin cancer, including melanoma and non-melanoma, is the most common cancer in Australia. Exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation in childhood is a major risk factor for the development of skin cancer later in life. By implementing a best-practice Sun Protection Policy, Early Childhood Education and Care Services can help protect staff and children from UV radiation and teach children good sun protection habits from an early age to reduce their risk.

Sun protection times are a forecast for the time-of-day UV levels will reach 3 or above. At these levels, sun protection is recommended for all skin types and the policy areas should be implemented. In NSW, UV levels are high enough (UV 3 or above) to damage unprotected skin most months of the year. UV levels are particularly high during the summer months and highest in the middle of the day. UV levels and daily sun protection times can be accessed via the SunSmart App or Cancer Council Australia's home page to determine sun protection requirements.

Recommendations

1. Scheduling outdoor activities Quality Area 1 – Educational program and practice, Quality Area 2 – Children's health and safety

- UV levels and daily sun protection times are used to plan daily activities and ensure a correct understanding of local sun protection requirements.
- UV radiation exposure is considered as part of a service's risk management and assessment for all outdoor events and activities on and off-site.
- When children are on excursions all sun protection practices are planned, organised, understood and available.

2. Shade Quality Area 3 – Physical environment

- All outdoor activities are planned to occur in shaded areas.
- Shade options are provided, maintained, and promoted to the children.
- Play-based learning activities are set up and moved throughout the day to take advantage of shade patterns.

Shade options can include a combination of portable, natural, and built shade. Cancer Council encourages regular shade assessments and the monitoring of existing shade structures, to assist in planning for additional shade.

3. Hats Quality Area 2 – Children's health and safety

- All staff and children are required to wear SunSmart hats* that protect their face, neck, and ears.
- Children without a SunSmart hat are encouraged to play in an area protected from the sun (e.g., under shade, veranda or indoors), or are provided with a spare SunSmart hat.

* SunSmart hats include:

- Broad-brimmed hats with a brim size of at least 6cm (adults 7.5cm).
- Bucket hats with a deep crown and brim size of at least 5cm (adults 6cm).
- Legionnaire style hats.

Baseball caps or visors do not provide enough sun protection and therefore are not recommended.

4. Clothing Quality Area 2 – Children's health and safety

- Staff and children are required to wear SunSmart clothing that covers as much of the skin (especially the shoulders, back and stomach) as possible.
- Children without SunSmart clothing are encouraged to play in an area protected from the sun (e.g., under shade, veranda or indoors) or are provided with spare clothing.

*SunSmart clothing includes wearing:

- Loose fitting shirts and dresses with sleeves and collars or covered neckline.
- Longer style skirts, shorts and trousers.

Midriff, crop, or singlet tops do not provide enough sun protection and therefore are not recommended.

5. Sunscreen Quality Area 2 – Children's health and safety

- All staff and children are required to apply broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen of SPF30 or higher 20 minutes before going outdoors and to reapply every 2 hours. Cancer Council recommends the use of SPF50 or SPF50+ sunscreen for maximum protection.
- Permission to apply sunscreen is included in the service enrolment form. Where children have allergies or sensitivity to the sunscreen, parents are asked to provide an alternative sunscreen, or the child encouraged to play in the shade.

Cancer Council recommends usage tests before applying a new sunscreen. All sunscreen is stored in a cool, dry place and the expiry dates monitored.

6. Babies Quality Area 2 – Children's health and safety

- Babies under 12 months are not exposed to direct sunlight.
- Babies clothing, hat and shade positioning are checked regularly to ensure they continue to be well protected from UV.

The use of sunscreen on babies under 6 months is not recommended due to their sensitive skin.

7. Role Modelling of staff, families, and visitors Quality Area 1 – Educational program and practice, Quality Area 5 – Relationships with children

As part of WH&S UV risk controls and role modelling, staff, families, and visitors demonstrate SunSmart behaviours when outside, including:

- Wearing a SunSmart hat, protective clothing, and wearing sunglasses (optional)
- Applying apply broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen of SPF30 or higher. Cancer Council recommends the use of SPF50 or SPF50+ sunscreen for maximum protection.
- Promoting the use of shade
- Discussing sun protection with children and demonstrating a positive and proactive approach to the management of sun protection in the service.

Sun safety is everyone's responsibility. By being role models ourselves and leading the way with our own sun safety, we can inspire our children to be SunSmart when they step outside.

8. Education Quality Area 1 – Educational program and practice, Quality Area 4 – Staffing Arrangements, Quality Area 5 – Relationships with children

- Sun protection is incorporated regularly into learning programs. Children understand why sun safety is important and learn how to take effective sun protection actions, including taking leadership roles in managing sun protection e.g., accessing daily UV levels and sun protection times, hat reminders and management of sunscreen.
- SunSmart App daily UV times are promoted to guide staff, parents, and children behaviour.

9. Information and policy availability Quality Area 6 – Collaborative partnerships with families and communities, Quality Area 7 – Governance and leadership

- Sun protection policy, procedures, requirements, and updates are made available to staff, families, and visitors.
- Sun protection information and resources are accessible and communicated regularly to families.
- All parents/families are informed of the sun protection policy including appropriate hat, clothing, and sunscreen requirements on enrolling their child in the service.

10. **Implementation and Review** Quality Area 4 – Staffing arrangements, Quality Area 7 – Governance and leadership

- Appoint school champion(s) to drive sun protection policy implementation and engagement.
- Management and the school champion(s) regularly monitor and review how effectively they implement their sun protection policy.
- Sun protection policies must be updated and submitted to Cancer Council NSW every three years to maintain SunSmart status.

When used in its entirety, this policy ensures your school is following current evidence-informed Cancer Council sun protection guidelines and recommendations. Any changes or adjustments to the policy may mean it no longer meets these guidelines and should be submitted to Cancer Council NSW for review.