

POLICY NO 38: HEALTH AND SAFETY - SUN PROTECTION

Key Policy Contact Person: Manager, Our Village Family Childcare

POLICY STATEMENT:

Our Village Family childcare has a duty of care to ensure that all persons are provided with a high level of sun protection during the hours of operation of the service.

Following the Occupational Health and Safety Act it is required that the Coordination Unit and Educators implement and endorse the services *Health and Safety Sun Smart Policy and Procedure* and ensure a level of protection to anyone who access’s the service facilities.

Educators, the Coordination Unit, and families together share the responsibility of carrying out the recommended sun protection procedures.

CRITICAL INFORMATION:

When enrolling their child, families are:

- Informed of the Sun Protection Procedure during the Educator and Family interview
- Asked to provide a suitable hat for their child.
- Asked to provide their child with suitable outdoor clothing that is cool and covers as much skin as possible (i.e., covers shoulders, chest, upper arms, and legs)
- Asked to provide SPF50 or SPF50+, broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen for their child.
- Required to give permission for staff to apply sunscreen to their child.
- Encouraged to practice SunSmart behaviours themselves when attending the Service

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PURPOSE:

This Sun Protection Procedure has been developed to provide guidelines recommending Sun Protection practices as provided by the Cancer Council Australia.:

- Enable all children and staff to maintain a healthy UV exposure balance.
- Encourage children and staff to use a combination of sun protection measures whenever the UV index level reaches three (3) and above.
- Work towards a safe outdoor environment that provides shade for children and staff at appropriate times.
- Ensure that children are supported to develop independent sun protection skills.
- Support duty of care and regulatory requirements
- Ensure that families and new staff are informed of this Procedure.

Further information can be sourced through the [SunSmart website](#)

OUTCOME:

The sun’s UV can’t be seen or felt. Whatever the weather, it’s important for people of all skin types to use sun protection whenever UV levels are three or higher.

Too much UV radiation from the sun can cause sunburn, skin damage, eye damage and skin cancer. Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world. Two in three Australians will develop some form of skin cancer before they reach the age of 70. 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.

By teaching sensible sun protection habits from an early age and implementing sun protection measures, early childhood services can play a significant role in reducing skin cancer risk.

SCOPE/RESPONSIBILITIES:

This document applies to the Educators, Families and Children, Coordination Unit Staff, Students and Volunteers of Our Village Family Childcare Service.

STATEMENT OF DIVERSITY

Sunbury and Cobaw Community Health is committed to improving the health of our community and being accessible to all, including people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, those from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background, people with a disability, Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Intersex and Queer (LGBTIQA+) people and other socially vulnerable groups and supporting their communities across the lifespan from birth to older age.

DEFINITIONS:

Ultraviolet (UV radiation)	Ultraviolet (UV) radiation is a type of energy produced by the sun and some artificial sources, such as arc welders and solariums. The sun’s UV
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	<p>is the main cause of skin cancer. Too much UV exposure also causes sunburn, tanning, premature ageing, and eye damage. You can see the sun’s light. You can feel the sun’s heat. But you cannot see or feel the sun’s UV radiation. UV can reach you directly from the sun. It can also be reflected off different surfaces and scattered by particles in the air. Your senses cannot detect UV radiation,</p>
UV Index	<p>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, location, and surrounding surfaces.</p> <p>https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/radiation-the-ultraviolet-(uv)-index</p>
Sun Protection times	<p>The sun protection times are a forecast from the Bureau of Meteorology showing when UV levels will be 3 and above. At this level there is a risk of skin damage for most Australians. In Victoria, UV levels regularly reach 3 and above from mid-August to the end of April.</p> <p>You can find the sun protection times for your location on the free SunSmart Global UV widget and app or at sunsmart.com.au or at myuv.com.au.</p>
Shade	<p>Well-designed and positioned shade can significantly reduce direct and indirect UV exposure and create cool, comfortable spaces for outdoor learning and play. Shade can be natural (trees, shrubs, or shadow cast from nearby buildings), built (pergola, shade sails, etc.), portable (shade umbrellas, marquees, etc.) or a combination of these. Ensure shade is easily accessible, aesthetically pleasing, in good condition and regularly maintained. Use surfaces that reflect less UV, e.g., natural, dark, or rough surfaces such as grass, soil, and tanbark. When combined with appropriate clothing, hats and sunscreen, children can be well protected from UV when outdoors. Research shows that preschool environments with trees, shrubbery, and broken ground not only provides better sun protection in outdoor play but also triggers more physical activity.</p>
Sun Protective hat	<p>A hat should shade the face, neck and ears such as a wide-brimmed or bucket hat (at least 5cm brim for young children) or legionnaire hat (make sure the front peak and back flap overlap at the sides). Caps and visors do not provide enough protection and should be swapped for a UV protective hat.</p>
Sun Protective Clothing	<p>If you can see skin, UV can reach it. Clothing can be a great barrier between the sun’s UV and your skin. Cover as much skin as possible with cool, loose-fitting clothing made from densely woven fabric like cotton. This includes tops that cover the chest, shoulders and arms and longer style shorts or skirts. If a child is wearing a singlet top or dress with thin straps, they add a t-shirt or shirt before outdoor play.</p>
Sunscreen	<p>Sunscreen should be labelled SPF50 or SPF50+ and be broad-spectrum and water-resistant. For all children over 6 months, apply sunscreen to</p>

	any skin not protected by clothing 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapply every two hours or after water activities. Make sure it has an Australian Licence (Aust L) number and monitor the expiry date. Store sunscreen below 30 degrees and out of direct sun. Cancer Council recommends a usage test before applying a new sunscreen. The widespread use of sunscreen on babies under 6 months old is not recommended.
Sunglasses	If practical for your setting, 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. Wearing a hat with a brim that shades the eyes can also reduce UV radiation to the eyes by 50%.

PROCEDURES:

Our Village obeys to the sun protection recommendations that are outlined by Cancer Council Australia. The Coordination Unit Staff., Educators and children will ensure the procedures outlined within this Policy. From August to the end of April in Victoria a combination of sun protection measures is used for all outdoor activities and at any other time of the year whenever UV levels reach 3 and above.

Our SunSmart Practices consider the special needs of infants within our service. All babies under the age of 12 months are kept out of direct sun when UV levels are three and above. The best physical protection is achieved by using a combination of physical measures such as shade, clothing, and hats. When protecting the smaller areas of exposed skin that is not protected by clothes or hats approved sunscreen is applied to infants six months and older. The widespread use of sunscreen on babies under 6 months old is not recommended.

Our Village Family Childcare Educators and Coordination Unit Staff are encouraged to access the daily local sun protection times at www.sunsmart.com.au or on the free SunSmart application to assist with the implementation of this policy. The sun protection measures included below are used for all outdoor activities **during the daily local sun protection times.**

(The sun protection times are a forecast from the Bureau of Meteorology for the time-of-day UV levels are forecast to reach 3 or higher. At these levels, sun protection is recommended for all skin types. In Victoria, UV levels regularly reach 3 or higher from mid-August to the end of April.)

Managing the Physical Environment – Shade:

- Coordination Unit staff regularly conducts a shade audit to determine the current availability and quality of shade.
- Educators and/or staff make sure there is enough shelter 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.

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 dress, they must wear a t-shirt/shirt over the top before going outdoors.

Hats:

- Children are required to wear hats that protect their face, neck, and ears, i.e. legionnaire, broad-brimmed or bucket hats,
- A baseball cap does not offer enough protection, a child wearing a baseball cap will have the same consequences as a child not wearing a hat.

Sunglasses (recommended):

- Children and Educators/staff 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 as possible.

Sunscreen and Water Consumption:

- SPF 50 or SPF 50+, broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen is available for educators/staff and children's use.
- Sunscreen is applied at least 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapplied every two (2) hours when outdoors, or as directed by the manufacturer.
- From three (3) years of age, children are encouraged to apply their own sunscreen under supervision of Educators and staff.
- Permission will be sought at enrolment from the parent/guardian for the educator to apply sunscreen.
- Where age and developmentally appropriate children will be encouraged and assisted to apply sunscreen themselves with educator's oversight.
- Children's body to water ratio mass is quite different to that of an adult, meaning 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.
- Cooled boiled water may be offered to infants and younger children after a bottle feed if showing signs of continued thirst.

When enrolling their child, families are:

- Informed of the Sun Protection Procedure during the Educator and Family interview
- Asked to provide a suitable hat for their child.
- Asked to provide their child with suitable outdoor clothing that is cool and covers as much skin as possible (i.e., covers shoulders, chest, upper arms, and legs
- Asked to provide SPF 50 or SPF 50+, broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen for their child.
- Required to give permission for staff to apply sunscreen to their child.
- Encouraged to practice SunSmart behaviours themselves when attending the Service.

Educators and Staff OHS and Role Modelling:

As part of OHS, UV risk controls and role-modelling, when the UV is three (3) and above, Educators and staff will:

- Wear sun protective hats and clothing, and sunglasses outside
- Apply SPF 50 or SPF 50+, broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen.
- Seek shade whenever possible.
- Families and visitors are requested to use a combination of sun protection measures (sun protective hats, shade, sunglasses, and sunscreen) when attending the service.

Planned Experiences:

- Programs on sun protection and vitamin D are incorporated into planned experiences.
- The Sun Protection procedure is reinforced through Educators, staff, children's activities and displays.
- Educators, staff, and families are provided with information on sun protection and vitamin D through family newsletters, noticeboards, and meetings.

Monitoring and Review:

- Management and Educators monitor and review the effectiveness of the SunSmart Procedure every two years (or earlier if recommended practices are changed) by completing a policy review and consultation process, including consulting with professional organisations i.e., SunSmart.

REFERENCES:

- [Education and Care Services National Regulations, \(current version July 1, 2023\) – Regulation 168](#)
- [SunSmart Sample Policies](#)
- [Victorian Early Years Learning & Development Framework \(VEYLF\)](#)
- [Early Years Learning Framework V 2.0 \(EYLF\)](#)
- [Building Quality Standards Handbook \(BQSH\), May 2023 Section 5.1.5 Shade Areas](#)
- [ARPANSA Radiation Protection Series No. 12](#)
- [Safe Work Australia – Guide on exposure to solar ultraviolet radiation \(UVR\) 2019](#)
- [Australian Regulatory Guidelines for Sunscreens Version 2, July 2021](#)
- [Early Childhood Resources - SunSmart](#)
- [Free online learning for educators - SunSmart](#)

RELATED POLICIES & PROCEDURES/ WORK INSTRUCTIONS:

- Excursions – 16
- Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness - 14
- Governance and Management of FDC Service including Confidentiality of Records - 8
- Child safe Environment & Child Protection - 7
- Enrolment and Orientation – 31
- Occupational Health & Safety – 28
- Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations – 22
- (SCH Legacy) Child Abuse Response & Reporting Work Instruction
- SCCH Client Empowerment Policy and Procedure
- SCCH Risk Management Policy and Procedure
- SCCH Incident Prevention Reporting Policy and Procedure

VERSION CONTROL AND LEGISLATION:

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