

SUN PROTECTION POLICY

Mandatory – Quality Area 2

PURPOSE

This policy will provide:

- guidelines for the protection of children, staff and other participants in the kindergarten from the harmful effects of too much exposure to ultraviolet radiation from the sun.
- educative information for parents/guardians, staff, participants, and children attending the kindergarten regarding the harmful effects of too much exposure to ultraviolet radiation from the sun.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. VALUES

This kindergarten is committed to:

- providing all kindergarten participants with protection from the harmful effects caused by too much exposure to the sun's ultraviolet radiation, during all aspects of the program.
- educating children, parents/guardians and other participants in the kindergarten on the harmful effects of too much exposure to the sun's ultraviolet radiation.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to staff, committee of management, children attending the kindergarten, parents/guardians on duty and attending siblings, visiting children, students, volunteers and any other person participating in the program provided at Gray Court Kindergarten .

This policy will apply for terms 1 and 4. Particular care will be taken during the middle of the day between 10 am and 2 pm (11 am and 3 pm daylight saving time) when UV Index levels reach their peak.

3. BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

Background

Australia has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. Too much exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun causes sunburn, skin damage and increases the risk of skin cancer. Sun exposure in the first 15 years of life contributes significantly to the lifetime risk of skin cancer.

Legislation

The Children's Services Regulations 2009

The Children's Services Act 1996

The Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004

The Health Act 1958

4. DEFINITIONS

Minimum clothing for sun protection: Loose fitting, close-weave clothing that covers as much skin as possible. Tops with elbow length sleeves, and if possible, collars and knee length or longer style shorts and skirts.

Shade: An area sheltered from sunlight, for example, a large tree, canopy, or artificial cover.

Sunscreen: SPF 30+, broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen.

Sun Smart: The name of the program conducted by The Cancer Council Victoria to promote an awareness of the need to provide sun protection.

Sun hat/head covering providing sun protection: To protect the neck, ears, temples, face and nose, Sun Smart recommends broad brimmed, legionnaire, or bucket style hats. Baseball caps and visors offer little protection to the cheeks, ears and neck and are therefore not recommended.

5. SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

Sources

- The Cancer Council Victoria's Sun Smart Early Childhood Program.
- The Cancer Council Victoria's Sun Smart Early Childhood frequently asked questions.

Service policies

- *Hygiene Policy*

PROCEDURES

The committee of management are responsible for:

- membership with the Sun Smart early childhood program.
- requesting children to bring an appropriate sun protective hat when attending the kindergarten.
- requesting children wear appropriate sun protective clothing when attending the kindergarten.
- requesting staff to act as role models by wearing sun protective hats, clothing and sunglasses when outside, applying sunscreen and seeking shade whenever possible.
- providing a supply of sunscreen for use on all persons to whom this policy applies.
- reinforcing this policy through providing information to new users of the kindergarten, and through newsletters, notice board displays and meetings.
- ensuring there is a sufficient number of shelters and trees providing shade in the kindergarten grounds.
- considering the availability of shade when planning excursions and other outdoor events.
- ensuring the policy is up to date with current Sun Smart recommendations.

The staff are responsible for:

- collecting from the parent/guardian of each child, the authority to apply sunscreen, during the child being at the kindergarten.
- ensuring a combination of sun protection measures are applied during outdoor time with particular care taken between 10.00am and 2.00pm (11.00am and 3.00pm daylight saving time) when UV levels reach their peak.
- applying sunscreen to all children's exposed skin before going outdoors. Children will be encouraged to apply the sunscreen with the assistance of a staff member. Sunscreen is to be reapplied every two hours.
- encouraging other adult participants in the program to apply sunscreen and to wear a sun protective hat.
- ensuring each child and any other participant at the kindergarten, wears an appropriate sun hat for all outdoor activities during their attendance at the kindergarten from the start of September to the end of April.
- checking that all hats brought to the kindergarten are named and meet the Sun Smart recommendation for adequate protection.
- if the child does not bring a suitable sun hat and there are insufficient spare hats available, or they are not wearing appropriate sun protective clothing, children will be asked to play in the shade or indoors.
- ensuring that the children's sun hats are stored in their bags, individual pegs, or in individual lockers.

- encouraging children to seek shade when playing outside.
- including education in the children's program on the sun, skin and ways to protect our skin using Sun Smart's recommended "Outside 5".

The parents/guardians are responsible for:

- providing an authority for the staff to apply sunscreen to their child.
- providing a named sun hat that provides adequate sun protection for their child to use at the kindergarten. (Refer to recommended hats in Background Information).
- if their child has a particular sensitivity to the sunscreen provided by the kindergarten, to provide, at their own expense, an alternative sunscreen, to be left at the kindergarten for application under staff supervision.
- acting as role models when on duty or participating in the program by wearing a sun protective hat, clothing and sunglasses (if possible) when outside; applying sunscreen and seeking shade whenever possible.

EVALUATION

In order to assess whether the policy has achieved the values and purposes, the committee of management will:

- Assess whether a satisfactory resolution has been achieved in relation to issues covered by this policy.
- If appropriate, conduct a survey in relation to this policy or incorporate relevant questions within the general parents/guardians survey.
- Take into account feedback from staff regarding the policy.
- Monitor complaints and incidents regarding the operation of the Sun Protection Policy.

This policy was written in consultation with The Cancer Council Victoria's Sun Smart Program. The Sun Smart Sample Sun Protection Policy released in February 2006 is incorporated into the KPV policy.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Background Information

AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the Gray Court Kindergarten committee of management, at the committee of management meeting on 04/05/2015.

REVIEW DATE

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years, 04/05/2018 or varied earlier if necessary, and the committee will within 28 days of making any change, notify the parents/guardians of the children attending, of that change.

ATTACHMENT 1

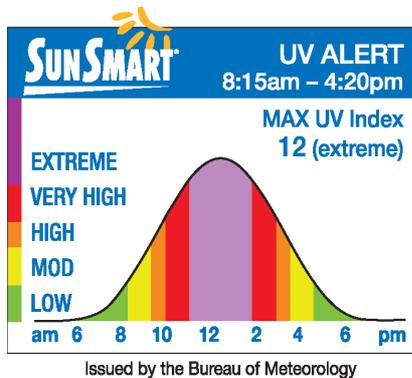
Background Information

Although our senses can easily detect sunlight and infrared radiation (heat), they cannot detect the level of ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun. UV radiation can't be seen or felt and can be damaging to our skin on cool, cloudy days as well as hot, sunny ones. Whenever UV radiation index levels reach 3 (moderate) and above, sun protection is required. At that level UV radiation is intense enough to damage our skin and contribute to the risk of skin cancer.

In Victoria from September to April, the UV radiation index levels are 3 and above for most of the day. Particular care should be taken between 10 am and 2 pm (11 am and 3 pm daylight saving time) when UV levels reach their peak.

From May to August, the UV radiation index levels in Victoria are usually low (below 3). Therefore sun protection measures are not necessary during these months unless you are in alpine regions, or near highly reflective surfaces like snow or water.

The Sun Smart UV Alert



The Sun Smart UV Alert is a quick and easy tool that helps you know when UV Index levels will be high enough to damage the skin and when you need to encourage children to use sun protection measures.

When the UV Index is forecast to reach 3 and above, the Bureau of Meteorology issues the Sun Smart UV Alert. It is reported daily in newspapers around Australia, some mobile phone and radio weather forecasts and on the Bureau of Meteorology website at;
www.bom.gov.au (do a search for UV Alert).

The effect of too much UV radiation – skin cancer

Australia has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. One in two people living in Australia will develop skin cancer during their lifetime, however most skin cancer can be prevented.

The role of early childhood kindergartens

There is enormous potential for early childhood kindergartens to prevent skin cancer in future generations.

Early childhood kindergartens are central to protecting children's skin. This is because:

- Children attend kindergartens at times when ultraviolet (UV) radiation levels are high.
- Most damage due to sun exposure occurs during the early years.
- Kindergartens can play a significant role in changing behaviours through role modelling and education.

Protecting children from foreseeable harm is part of a kindergarten's duty of care to children. As part of an employer's general duty of care under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004, staff working all or part of their day outside should be protected from the sun's UV radiation.

The 'Outside 5'

Sun Smart recommend using a combination of these five important sun protection measures:

1. Shade

Try to use shade whenever possible. Even while in the shade, UV radiation can reflect from surfaces such as water, sand and concrete so it is important that children continue to wear a hat, appropriate clothing and sunscreen.

2. Sun-protective clothing

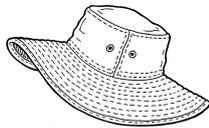


As well as hats, Sun Smart recommends loose fitting, close weave clothing that covers as much skin as possible during outside activities. Tops with elbow length sleeves, and if possible, collars and knee length or longer style shorts and skirts are best.

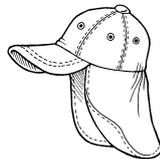
Garments especially designed for sun protection will carry a UPF (ultraviolet protection factor) level on their tags. The higher the number, the greater the protection from UV radiation. Fabric rated above UPF 30 provides very good protection.

3. Hats

To protect the neck, ears, temples, face and nose, encourage children to wear a broad brimmed, legionnaire or bucket hat.



Broad brimmed hat



Legionnaire hat



Bucket hat

Broad brimmed hats should have a brim of at least 7.5 cm (6 cm for very young children).

A legionnaire hat should have the front peak and the long, back flap meet at the sides to protect the side of the face, neck and ears.

Bucket hats should have a deep crown and a brim of at least 5 cm for young children.

Baseball caps and visors offer little protection to the cheeks, ears and neck and are therefore not recommended.

4. Sunglasses



Eyes, like skin, can be damaged by exposure to UV radiation. Sun Smart suggests, where practical, wearing close fitting, wrap around sunglasses that cover as much of the eye area as possible. The sunglasses should meet Australian Standard 1067 (sunglasses: category 2, 3 or 4) and preferably be marked EPF 10 (eye protection factor). There are products available that have been specifically designed for babies and toddlers and have soft elastic to keep them in place. You can also get swimming goggles with EPF 10.

Please remember that the colour or darkness of the lenses doesn't indicate the level of sun protection and you will need to check the label. It is also good to find sunglasses that are polarised as these reduce the glare.

If your kindergarten prefers not to introduce the wearing of sunglasses, or a child is reluctant to wear them, you can still protect the eyes by avoiding peak UV times, wearing a hat and staying in the shade.

5. Sunscreen



It is good to teach children to apply SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen before going outside and to reapply it every two hours. Sunscreen screens out UV radiation but does not completely block it out so some UV radiation still reaches

our skin. It is recommended that you inform families of the brand/type. Some children may be sensitive to some sunscreens, so families may wish to supply an alternative for their child. However, even if all families are asked to provide SPF 30+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen, the kindergarten should still have a supply available.

Role models

Children often copy those around them and learn by imitation. If you adopt sun protection behaviours the children in your care are more likely to do the same.

Sun exposure for staff is also an Occupational Health & Safety issue. For information on sun protection in the workplace contact Sun Smart on 9635 5148.

Family information

It is helpful if families understand the kindergarten's sun protection policy and are aware of how they can assist by providing appropriate clothing, hats, and possibly sunglasses, and being good role models themselves. Newsletters and noticeboards are an ideal way of keeping families informed. The above information could be displayed on the noticeboard or provided in a newsletter.

Sun Smart can provide materials (posters, brochures and information sheets) for this purpose. Their website also has useful information. Visit www.sunsmart.com.au. This includes frequently asked questions from early childhood kindergartens.

UV and Vitamin D

Some UV radiation exposure is important for a child's vitamin D production. Vitamin D is necessary for bone, joint, muscle and neurological function and is produced in the skin by exposure to UV radiation. Low levels are also present in some foods.

A balance is required between avoiding an increase in a child's risk of skin cancer and achieving enough UV radiation exposure to maintain their vitamin D levels.

During peak UV months in Victoria (from September to April), children usually receive enough sun for Vitamin D production from incidental sun exposure during their day-to-day activities, even if they are adopting recommended Sun Smart behaviour. Five minutes of sun exposure in the morning and another five minutes in the late afternoon on most days of the week is generally all that is required. Extra care should always be taken during the middle of the day when UV Index levels reach their peak. Children with dark skin may need slightly longer periods of sun exposure, about 5 minutes more in the morning and again in the afternoon.

From May until August UV Index levels in Victoria reach below 3 (low). Generally the lower UV Index levels are not intense enough to damage the skin.

When UV Index levels are low, children need greater exposure time to maintain vitamin D stores. Asking children to follow sun protection throughout the entire year in Victoria is not necessary and may lead to other health concerns for them.

Resources

Sun Smart Early Childhood Program
The Cancer Council Victoria
1 Rathdowne St
CARLTON VIC 3053
Ph: 9635 5161 Fax: 9635 5260

www.sunsmart.com.au