

Sun Protection and Heat Safety Policy

Quick reference: SunSmart | sunscreen | shade | hats and clothes | sunglasses | heat stress | heatstroke | heat exhaustion | risk management | excursions | cancer council | high temperatures | UV index | authorisations

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

- (1) To set out how we manage the risk of sun and heat exposure for children and staff
- (1) This policy is a requirement under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*. The approved provider must ensure that policies and procedures are in place for dealing with health and safety matters, including sun protection (s 168(2)(a)(ii))
- (2) This policy also helps us to comply with work health and safety laws, and aligns with the SunSmart and Cancer Council guidelines

SCOPE

- (3) This policy applies to:
 - 'Staff': the approved provider, nominated supervisor, paid workers, volunteers, work placement students, and third parties (e.g., contractors, subcontractors, self-employed persons, employees of a labour hire company)
 - Children in our care, their parents, families and care providers
 - Visitors to our service, including allied health support workers
- (4) This policy applies to all of our activities and events, on and offsite

DEFINITIONS

- (5) The following definitions apply to this policy and related procedures:
 - 'Heat-related illnesses' are conditions such as heat exhaustion or heatstroke caused by prolonged exposure to high temperatures
 - 'Parents' includes guardians and persons who have parental responsibilities for the child under a decision or order of court

- 'Shade' means an area that is protected from direct sunlight by natural or artificial means
- 'Staff', unless otherwise indicated, refers the approved provider, nominated supervisor, paid employees, volunteers, students, and third parties who are covered in the scope of this policy
- 'Sun protection times' are a forecast from the Bureau of Meteorology for the time-of-day UV levels are predicted to reach 3 or higher (when sun protection is recommended for all skin types). Sun protection times vary according to location
- 'UV radiation' means ultraviolet radiation from the sun, which can cause sunburn, skin damage and increase the risk of skin cancer. The UV index measures UV levels on a scale from 0 (low) to 11+ (Extreme)

POLICY STATEMENT

Risk management

- (6) Staff will be aware of the risks associated with UV radiation and heat exposure to themselves and to children, including that:
- Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world, with more than two in three people diagnosed with skin cancer in their lifetime
 - UV damage accumulated during childhood and adolescence is strongly associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life
 - Children are particularly vulnerable to heat stress because their bodies cannot cool down as effectively as adults. Heat can cause serious illness in children, including dehydration, heat exhaustion and heatstroke (which can be life-threatening)
 - During hotter months, playground equipment and surfaces such as metal, concrete, stone, sand, rubber, plastic, soft fall mats, artificial turf can heat up quickly and retain heat, which can cause serious burns
- (7) We must consider UV radiation and heat exposure as part of our regular risk assessment and management for our physical environment and program of activities, including those held off-site
- (8) We must also manage and minimise any risks posed by UV radiation and/or heat exposure in our risk assessments for specific activities:
- Before an excursion (*National Regulations* ss 100, 101) – see [Excursion Policy](#)

- Sleep and rest (*National Regulations s 84*) – see [Sleep and Rest Policy](#)
- Transporting children (*National Regulations ss 102B, 102C*) see [Transport Policy](#)

Monitoring UV levels, heat and humidity

- (9) Every morning, we will check the UV Index, local daily sun protection times, temperature and humidity at the Bureau of Meteorology website or on the SunSmart Global UV app
- (10) We will use sun protection strategies for staff and children of all skin types when UV levels are 3 or above when outside, including wearing sun protective hats, clothing, and sunglasses, applying SPF 50 or SPF50+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen and seeking shade whenever possible
- (11) We will plan outdoor activities to occur outside of peak UV radiation times, but if this is not possible, we will try to do them in the shade
- (12) We will check the HeatWatch website daily and implement heat safety measures during hot or humid weather

Shade

- (13) The approved provider must ensure that our outdoor spaces include adequate shaded areas to protect children from overexposure to UV radiation (*National Regulations s 114*)
- (14) We will regularly assess the amount and quality of shade, including as the sun changes position in the sky depending on the season
- (15) The approved provider must ensure that shade structures are safe, clean, kept in good condition and regularly maintained (*National Regulations s 103*)
- (16) Any new playground equipment and surfacing will be developed and installed according to the relevant Australian Standard/s, and shade structures and natural shade will be incorporated within the design
- (17) Where possible, we will use surfaces that reflect less UV (e.g., natural, dark or rough surfaces such as grass, soil, tanbark)
- (18) Where necessary, the approved provider will consider moving shade structures throughout the day or seasonally to protect play equipment from direct sunlight
- (19) Educators will encourage children to use shaded areas during outdoor activities

Hats

- (20) Children and staff should wear a UV protective, broad-brimmed hat, bucket hat or legionnaire-style hat when outdoors
- (21) Caps and visors do not cover necks and ears, so they are not considered a suitable alternative
- (22) We have a 'no-hat, play in the shade' rule: if a child is not wearing a suitable hat, they must play in the shade or inside only, or educators may supply a spare hat for the child to wear
- (23) Families must ensure their child brings a suitable hat to our service

Clothing

- (24) Staff and children should wear clothing that is made from cool, densely woven fabric and that covers as much skin as possible:
 - Tops with elbow-length sleeves and higher necklines or collars
 - Knee-length or longer style shorts, pants, skirts and dresses
- (25) If a child is wearing clothes that do not cover their shoulders, chests, stomachs, backs or upper arms (e.g., singlets, spaghetti strap dresses, midriff/crop tops, halter neck tops etc), they will be required to play in the shade or inside, or educators may supply a spare shirt for the child to wear over their clothes
- (26) Children should wear UV protective rash vests or t-shirts for outdoor swimming and water activities
- (27) On hot and sunny days, children should wear shoes outside to prevent burns to their feet

Sunscreen

- (28) We will supply SPF50 or SPF50+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen with an Australian Licence (Aust L) number for children and staff to use
- (29) Educators will store the sunscreen below 30°C in a supervised area, away from direct sunlight or other heat sources
- (30) Educators will regularly check the sunscreen's expiry date and dispose of any sunscreen that is out of date, has been exposed to high temperatures for a prolonged time, or has separated, looks watery, lumpy or gritty
- (31) If a child has sensitivities to sunscreen, parents should provide an alternative sunscreen labelled with their child's name
- (32) If a child cannot use sunscreen, educators will encourage them to stay in the shade

- (33) Sunscreen will be applied:
- With clean and dry hands
 - According to the manufacturer's directions
 - At least 20 minutes before children go outdoors, and reapplied every two hours if children will be remaining or returning outdoors, and
 - More frequently if children are sweating or swimming
- (34) Educators will supervise and help children (if required) apply their own sunscreen. This helps children to develop their skills and independence, while ensuring they have applied the sunscreen properly
- (35) Educators will adapt their practices for applying sunscreen to meet the individual needs of children in our care (e.g., taking into consideration a child's developmental stage, any disabilities or sensitivities)
- (36) Educators will remind children to apply and reapply sunscreen, using strategies such as reminder notices, sunscreen monitors and sunscreen buddies, where appropriate
- (37) Staff should also apply SPF50 or SPF50+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen to themselves
- (38) We must only apply sunscreen to a child if we have written authorisation to do so (see [Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy](#)) (*National Regulations s 93*)

Sunglasses

- (39) Where it is practical, staff and children should wear close-fitting, wrap-around sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard 1067 (Sunglasses: Category 2,3 or 4) and cover as much of their eye area as possible

Heat safety during hot or humid conditions

- (40) When it is hot or humid, staff must implement heat safety measures to protect themselves and children in our care
- (41) Heat safety must be considered for indoor and outdoor activities, including excursions, water-based and physical activities, sleep, rest, transport and travel
- (42) During hot or humid conditions, educators will:
- Modify outdoor activities or relocate them to shaded areas
 - Schedule vigorous physical activities for the cooler parts of the day

- Encourage children to drink water more frequently and stay inside or in the shade
- (43) During periods of extreme heat or humidity, educators will keep children inside and use fans and air conditioning to keep cool
- (44) Educators will regularly check the temperature of outdoor surfaces, furniture and equipment on hot or sunny days before allowing children to access them
- (45) Educators should not spray water on surfaces to cool them down as this may lead to burns/scalds as the water heats up
- (46) In emergency circumstances, the nominated supervisor may contact the regulatory authority about additional measures we may need to take

Managing heat stress

- (47) If a staff member or child is showing signs of heat stress (reduced urine output, dry mouth and skin, flushed skin, dizziness, fainting, rash, muscle cramps, paleness and sweating, rapid heart rate, nausea and vomiting, confusion, seizures, becoming unconscious), educators must follow our first aid policies and procedures, including calling 000 in an emergency
- (48) The nominated supervisor must ensure that first aid kits are regularly reviewed and include sufficient ice packs

Learning and communication

- (49) Sun protection and heat safety will be included in our educational program
- (50) Educators will promote sun protection and heat safety measures, including by:
- Displaying posters reminding children, families and staff about the five forms of sun protection (Slip on sun-protective clothing, Slap on a sun protective hat, Slop on Sunscreen, Slide on sunglasses and Seek shade)
 - Encouraging children to be involved and take on responsibilities (e.g., checking the daily temperature and sun protection times, monitoring for hats and sunscreen, setting sunscreen and hydration reminders)
- (51) The approved provider and nominated supervisor will ensure that staff and families are provided with information about sun protection and heat safety through our usual communication channels
- (52) Educators will be encouraged to complete the Cancer Council's free [Generation SunSmart](#) online learning program

- (53) Staff, families and visitors should act as role-models and demonstrate sun protection and heat safety measures

PRINCIPLES

- (54) The safety, health and wellbeing of children in our care is our number one priority, so we take every reasonable measure to protect children from UV radiation and heat risks
- (55) We ensure that our outdoor environment offers the required amount and quality of shade, and that educators implement our sun protection and heat safety strategies
- (56) We consult with staff, families, and children to identify, assess, manage and mitigate risks, ensuring that everyone is informed and contributing to our sun protection and heat safety measures
- (57) Staff are trained and resourced to be able to keep themselves and the children in our care protected from the sun and heat
- (58) Children are helped to take increasing responsibility for their health and physical wellbeing. Sun and heat safety is included in our education programming and planning
- (59) We regularly review and update our policies and procedures to make sure they still reflect current best practice, Australian Standards, legislation and guidelines

POLICY COMMUNICATION, TRAINING AND MONITORING

- (60) This policy and related documents can be found in our front office
- (61) The approved provider and nominated supervisor provide information, training and other resources and support regarding the Sun Protection and Heat Safety Policy and related documents
- (62) All staff (including volunteers and students) are formally inducted. They are given access to, review, understand and formally acknowledge this Sun Protection and Heat Safety Policy and related documents
- (63) The nominated supervisor runs a professional development program for each staff member, which covers this policy
- (64) Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined in this policy and in individual position descriptions. They are communicated during staff inductions and in ongoing training

- (65) The approved provider and nominated supervisor monitor and audit staff practices and address non-compliance. Breaches of this policy are taken seriously and may result in disciplinary action against a staff member
- (66) At enrolment, families are given access to our Sun Protection and Heat Safety Policy and related documents
- (67) Families are notified in line with our obligations under the *National Regulations* when changes are made to our policies and procedures

LEGISLATION (OVERVIEW)

Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations

Law	Description
s 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
Regulations	
ss 84A - 84D	Sleep and rest
ss 92 - 96	Administration of medication
ss 97 - 98	Emergencies and communication
ss 102AA – 102AAC	Safe arrival of children
ss 102A – 102F	Transportation of children other than as part of an excursion
ss 103 - 110	Physical environment – Centre-based services and family day care services
ss 111 – 115	Physical environment - Additional requirements for centre-based services
s 168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures
s 170	Policies and procedures to be followed
s 171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
s 172	Notification of change to policies or procedures

Other applicable laws and regulations

National Quality Standard

Act / Regulation / Standard	Description
<i>Work Health and Safety Legislation</i>	Describes the primary duty of care to people in the workplace
<i>Australian Standards: 1067, 4399, 2604, 4685</i>	Describes the standards for sunglasses, sun protective clothing, sunscreen products, and playground equipment and surfacing – shade requirements, respectively

Standard / Element	Concept	Description
2.1	Health	Each child’s health and physical activity is supported and promoted
2.1.1	Wellbeing and comfort	Each child’s wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child’s need for sleep, rest and relaxation
2.1.2	Health practices and procedures	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazards
3.1	Design	The design of the facilities is appropriate for the operation of a service
3.1.1	Fit for purpose	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child
3.1.2	Upkeep	Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained
6.1.1	Engagement with the service	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions

My Time, Our Place (MTO) V2.0

Outcome	Key component
3: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE A STRONG SENSE OF WELLBEING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and young people become strong in their physical learning and wellbeing • Children and young people are aware of and develop strategies to support their own mental and physical health, and personal safety

National Principles for Safe Organisations

Most relevant principles

Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Key Policies	Child Safe Environment Policy Physical Activity Policy Clothing and Footwear Policy Excursions Policy Transport Policy Safe Arrival of Children Policy Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy Physical Environment Policy Work Health and Safety Policy Enrolment Policy Medical Conditions Policy
Procedures	Roles and Responsibilities – Sun Protection and Heat Safety Policy (attached)
Resources	SunSmart Bureau of Meteorology HeatWatch Cancer Council

SOURCES

Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations | National Quality Standard | ACECQA Sun Protection Policy and Procedure Guidelines | SunSmart guidelines | Cancer Council guidelines | State/territory regulatory authority guidelines for preventing and managing heat stress | Safe Work Australia Guidelines | Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) UV index and Sun Protection Times

POLICY INFORMATION

Approval	Dina Kahn
Review	Reviewed annually and when there are changes that may affect this policy or related procedures. The review will include checks to ensure the document reflects current legislation, continues to be effective, or whether any changes and additional training are required Last reviewed: 25th March 2026 Date for next review: 25th March 2027

APPENDIX A

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES – Sun protection and heat safety**Approved provider responsibilities (not limited to)**

Ensure our service meets its obligations under the *Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations*, including to:

- Take every reasonable precaution to protect children from harm and hazards likely to cause injury
- Ensure that outdoor spaces include adequate shaded areas to protect children from overexposure to UV radiation from the sun
- Ensure that our premises, furniture and equipment (including shade structures) are safe, clean and well-maintained
- Conduct risk assessments (as outlined in the Sun Protection and Heat Safety Policy)

Ensure that our service's governance, management, operations, policies, plans, (including risk management and action plans), systems, practices and procedures for sun protection and heat safety are appropriate in practice, up-to-date, best practice, and comply with all relevant legislation, standards and guidelines

Ensure this Sun Protection and Heat Safety Policy and related procedures are in place and available for inspection

Take reasonable steps to ensure our Sun Protection and Heat Safety Policy and related procedures are followed (e.g. through clear and accessible communication, and systemised inductions, training and monitoring of all staff – including volunteers, students)

Ensure staff and children have access to enough sunscreen and that we have the requisite authorisation from parents to apply sunscreen to their child

Regularly review this Sun Protection and Heat Safety Policy and related procedures in consultation with children, families, communities and staff

Notify families at least 14 days before changing this Sun Protection and Heat Safety Policy if the changes will: affect the fees charged or the way they are collected; or significantly impact the education and care of children; or significantly impact the family's ability to use the service

Nominated supervisor / persons in day-to-day charge responsibilities (not limited to)

Ensure our service meets its obligations under the *Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations*, including to take every reasonable precaution to protect children from harm and hazards likely to cause injury. Support the approved provider to:

- Ensure that outdoor spaces include adequate shaded areas to protect children from overexposure to UV radiation from the sun
- Ensure that our premises, furniture and equipment (including shade structures) are safe, clean and well-maintained
- Conduct risk assessments (as outlined in the Sun Protection and Heat Safety Policy)

Support the approved provider to ensure that our service's management, operations, policies, plans, (including risk management/action plans), systems, practices and procedures for sun protection and heat safety are appropriate in practice, up-to-date, best practice, and comply with all relevant legislation, standards and guidelines

Implement this Sun Protection and Heat Safety Policy and related procedures

Take reasonable steps to ensure our Sun Protection and Heat Safety Policy and related procedures are followed (e.g. through clear and accessible communication, and systemised inductions, training and monitoring of all staff – including volunteers, students)

Monitor the UV index and temperature daily and implement sun protection and heat safe strategies when necessary, and communicate this to staff

Ensure that educators have access to enough sunscreen and that we collect written authorisations from parents before applying sunscreen to their child

Contribute to policies and procedure reviews and risk assessments and plans in consultation with children, families, communities and staff. Support the approved provider to notify families of reviews and changes according to legislation and our policies and procedures

Educator / other staff responsibilities (not limited to)

Follow this Sun Protection and Heat Safety Policy and related procedures

Monitor the UV index and temperature daily and manage risks to children accordingly

Check the temperature of surfaces and play equipment is safe for children to use or touch

Model sun and heat safe practices and communicate to families and children our expectations for clothes, hats, sunscreen, water etc



Discuss any concerns you have related to sun protection or heat safety with the nominated supervisor or approved provider

Contribute to policy and procedure reviews and risk assessments and plans, and participate in training and professional development opportunities for sun and heat protection

Families responsibilities (not limited to)

Be aware of our service's [Sun Protection and Heat Safety Policy](#)

Dress your child in the appropriate clothes for sun protection

If possible, provide written authorisation at the time of enrolment for our educators to apply sunscreen to your child. If your child has reactions to sunscreen, please provide us with an alternative sunscreen, labelled with their name
