

Sun Protection Policy and Procedure

Title:	Sun Protection Policy and Procedure		
Last Reviewed:	July 2017	Next review due:	July 2020
NQF Reference:	National Law section 167 National Regulations 114, 168 NQS 2		

Rationale

Australia has the highest case of skin cancer in the world; with evidence indicating that overexposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation during childhood significantly contributing to an increased risk of developing skin cancer later in life.

Policy

Blackmans Bay Childrens Services will implement sun protection procedures when the UV Index is 3 or above (i.e. **predominantly** September - April), to protect children and others attending the service from UV radiation.

It is important to ensure a safe balance of sun exposure while supporting adequate levels of vitamin D. Vitamin D is formed in the skin through exposure to the sun's UV rays and is necessary for the development and maintenance of healthy bones, muscles and general health. In Tasmania a safe dose of sunlight during summer months may be obtained from just a few minutes of incidental sunshine to the whole of face, arms and hands outside peak UV times.

During high UV periods, all sun protection strategies will be used, with special care being taken at peak UV times of day between 10 am - 3 pm.

Procedure

Managing the Physical environment

Slip on sun protection clothing;

Stop on a broad spectrum, water resistant SPF50 plus sunscreen;

Slap on a broad brimmed/legionnaires hat;

Seek shade;

Slide on sunglasses.

For the best protection against the sun, a combination of sun safe measures will be implemented.

In more detail

Slip on sun protection clothing that covers as much skin as possible. Fabrics that hold an ultraviolet protection factor (UPF) rating are recommended. The higher the UPF, the greater the sun protection provided by the fabric. Where possible, parents will be encouraged to choose clothing that is at least UPF15 (good protection) but preferably UPF50 (excellent protection); or loose fitting, tightly woven garments, such as cotton or linen, with long sleeves to protect the arms and collars to protect the nape of the neck.

Longer style tops, knee length or longer style shorts are also recommended to assist in protecting children from exposure to the sun.

Stop on a broad spectrum, water resistant SPF50 plus sunscreen to any areas of the body that cannot be protected by clothing (e.g. face, ears, back of hands). Sunscreen will be applied 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapplication as per label directions (preferable every 2 hours), as required (i.e. excursion). When applying sunscreen, it is recommended to use at least one teaspoon for each limb, front and back of the body and half a teaspoon for the face, neck and ears. The incorrect application of sunscreen (i.e. not enough) may result in 50 - 80% of the protection stated on the product. Sunscreen should never be used to extend the time spent in the sun.

School age children will be encouraged to apply their own sunscreen with supervision; with children over 3 years of age being supported to apply their own sunscreen effectively, to encourage sun safe practices.

Where an educator applies sunscreen to a child, the educator will ensure the sunscreen is hygienically applied (e.g. washing hands before and after applying sunscreen).

Where a child is not permitted to wear sunscreen, the parent must provide a written statement from a registered medical practitioner, detailing the reasons why.

Children with allergies to the sunscreen supplied by the service will be required to provide their own sunscreen.

Slap on a broad brimmed/legionnaires hat - Parents will be requested to send a hat with their child. Where a child does not have access to their own hat, the service will endeavour to have spare hats available.

Apart from a maximum of 10 minutes of safe sun exposure a day for vitamin D (before the UV level is 3 or above (normally before 10am or after 3pm), children will be encouraged to wear a broad-brim, bucket or legionnaire style hat to protect the face, head, neck and ears.

Seek shade. Educators will consider the availability and use of shade within the outdoor environment when planning experiences, including excursions. Where possible when the UV level is 3 or above, staff will utilise shaded areas for outdoor experiences during peak UV times.

Non fixed equipment will be placed in shaded areas of the outdoor environment where possible. All other equipment will be monitored for usability throughout the day.

When excursions are planned, potential changes in weather and temperature are to be taken into account. Educators are to ensure the availability of adequate undercover or enclosed areas to protect children from the sun or inclement weather.

Children's clothing, hats and shade positioning will be checked regularly to ensure they continue to provide adequate protection.

Slide on sunglasses. Where practical, children and staff will be encouraged to wear sunglasses to protect their eyes. Close-fitting wraparound sunglasses that meet the Australian/New Zealand Standard for sunglasses (categories 2, 3 and 4 AS/NZS 1067:2003) are recommended. Children are particularly sensitive to UV radiation and eye damage and as such it is important to protect children's eyes. The service supports the

use of a sun protective hat to protect eyes from UV rays.

Where the UV Index reaches 3 or above, a combination of sun protection measures will be used.

Additional Sun Protection for Babies

It is important to ensure children and infants are well protected from the harmful effects of the sun. Activities are to be planned to minimise the time outside during the middle hours of the day during the summer period when UV levels are highest.

Children under 12 months old should be not exposed to direct sunlight where the UV Index is 3 or above. Appropriate sun protection practices (shade, clothing, hats and sunglasses as practicable) are to be implemented. Where skin is not protected by other means, sunscreen may be used to ensure exposed skin is protected at all times (as per instructions on bottle label) (e.g. sunscreen on the face and hands).

Maintaining Hydration

Water will be offered to children throughout the day regardless of indoor or outdoor experiences, to prevent dehydration. Children will be encouraged to bring a drink bottle of water from home.

Role Modelling

All adults will act as appropriate role models and comply with the service's Sun Protection Policy and Procedure, including applying a SPF50 plus broad spectrum sunscreen, wearing a protective hat and seeking shade whenever possible when engaged in outdoor play experiences or excursions. It is also recommended that appropriate sunglasses are worn when outdoors.

Education

Staff will incorporate programs on sun protection and skin cancer prevention within their program and planning.

Sun Smart behaviour will be reinforced positively through newsletters, parent meetings and displays.

Parents will be informed of Sun Protection Policy and Procedure on enrolment, with sun smart behaviours and practices outlined within the enrolment package.

Signed permission will be sought from families on enrolment so that sunscreen may be applied to children's exposed skin areas (e.g. face, arms, hands, legs and back of the neck).

The UV Index will be verified on a daily basis and sun safe practices will be implemented when the UV alert is 3 or above; older children will be encouraged to help educators verify the UV Index as a learning opportunity.

The UV Index may be verified in the weather section of The Mercury or via www.bom.gov.au and search for UV alert. When UV levels are below 3 'No UV Alert' is

issued.

From September to April when UV is usually 3 and above

- Sun protection (including hats, sunscreen, clothing, shade and sunglasses) should be used when UV levels are 3 or above when heading outdoors for more than a few minutes.
- Most Australians have adequate vitamin D levels just from doing typical day to day activities. A few minutes of mid-morning or mid-afternoon sun exposure to arms and hands on most days of the week should be sufficient to maintain adequate Vitamin D.
- Take extra care in the middle of the day when UV levels are highest.

From May to August when UV level is usually below 3

- Sun protection is not necessary unless near snow or other reflective surfaces.
- To support Vitamin D production, spend time outdoors in the middle of the day with some skin uncovered. Being physically active whilst outdoors helps to boost vitamin D levels.

Links to other policies or documents

- Medical Conditions Policy and Procedure
- Technology Use Policy and Procedure
- Excursion Policy and Procedure
- Staffing Policy and Procedure
- Safe Environment Policy and Procedure
- Supervision Policy and Procedure

Sources

- Cancer Council
- Staying Healthy (5th Edition)
- *Education and Care Services National Law*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations*