

Rationale:

Australia has the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world with 140,000 new cases and 1,000 deaths recorded each year. There are four factors, often occurring simultaneously, which contribute to these statistics:

- The population is predominantly fair-skinned.
- Ultraviolet light from the sun is of sufficient intensity to induce skin cancer in this susceptible population.
- For most of this century, social values have supported the belief that a suntan is healthy and attractive.
- Lifestyle, work, school and recreational habits expose people to the sun for long periods.

Skin damage, including skin cancer, is the result of cumulative exposure to the sun. Much of the damage occurs during childhood and adolescence. Research suggests that sunburn is a contributor to skin cancer and other forms of skin damage such as wrinkles, sunspots, blemishes and premature aging. Most skin damage and skin cancers, therefore, preventable.

Aims:

The aims of the Sun Protection policy are to promote among children, staff and parents:

- Positive attitudes towards skin protection
- Lifestyle practices, which can help, reduce the incidence of skin cancer and the number of related deaths.
- Personal responsibility for and decision-making about skin protection.
- Awareness of the need for environmental changes in schools to reduce the level of exposure to the sun.

Implementation Strategies for skin protection:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all children attending our centres are protected from skin damage caused by harmful ultraviolet rays of the sun throughout the year. Our sun smart policy will be implemented each year from the beginning of August through to the end of May.

Most Australians receive a bulk of their vitamin D supply from exposing their skin to small amounts of ultraviolet radiation in sunlight. Please note in June and July sun protection is not recommended in Canberra due to low levels of UV radiation. This is to reduce the risk of Vitamin D deficiency in the ACT region only.

As part of general protection strategies:

- Children will wear hats which protect the face, neck and ears when outside.
- Legionnaire, broad-brimmed hats and bucket hats are recommended. Please note baseball style caps are not recommended.
- Outdoor activities will be in shaded areas whenever possible.
- Outdoor activities will take place before 10.00am and after 3.00pm during summer months (August to May)
- Outdoor activities will take place at the discretion of the Team leader during winter months between June and July. These outdoor activities may be substituted for regular walks around the suburb or games at the ovals.
- The management will continue to provide shelters and shade trees
- The centre will incorporate sun and skin protection awareness activities in teaching programs
- The centre will provide a SPF 30+ broad-spectrum, water resistant sunscreen to be applied to children and staff at least 20 minutes prior to going outside each morning and afternoon. Any children with sensitive skin need to have their own sunscreen supplied by the parents.

5 Sun protection Behaviours are always considered when planning outdoor play for children

- Slip on protective clothing

- Slop on SPF30+ broad-spectrum sunscreen
- Slap on a hat
- Seek shade
- Slide on some sunnies (that meet AS 1067)

*It is also recommended that babies under 12 months of age should not be exposed to the sun light during 10am-3pm when UV levels peak. Sunscreen should only be applied where necessary to exposed skin not protected by clothing or hat.

Staff will:

- Be expected to practice skin protection behaviour such as wearing protective hats. Sunscreen will be provided for the use of staff. It is recommended that staff apply sunscreen when children are having sunscreen applied.
- Direct children to use shaded areas wherever possible.
- If weather becomes too hot during outdoor play, staff will re-direct play inside or on the veranda.
- Children will have access to cold water on a regular basis, both indoors and outdoors.