

SUN PROTECTION POLICY

Legislation: Education and Care Services National Law (WA) Act 2012: 167
Education and Care Service National Regulations, 2012: 77 (1)(a),
(2)(a); 114; 168(2)(ii); 171
National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care;
2.1.1; 2.1.3; 2.2.2; 2.3.2; 3.1.1

SOURCES:

SunSmart Childcare: A guide for service providers – The Cancer Council –
www.cancerwa.asn.au

POLICY:

Early Childhood Educators will actively protect children from skin damage caused by harmful ultraviolet radiation (UVR) from the sun.

PROCEDURES:

Early Childhood Educators, Students and Volunteers must comply with the Sun Protection Policy and role model appropriate practices when with the children in their care.

Managing the physical environment:

Refer to the Cancer Council website for the Factsheet on *Be SunSmart* at:

http://www.cancer.org.au/Healthprofessionals/patientfactsheets/Lifestyle/Be_sunsmart.htm

- Early Childhood Educators will consider the availability of shade when planning and implementing outdoor activities and excursions (such as verandas, pergolas, shade shelters, large leafy trees);
- Children under 12 months of age will not be exposed to direct sunlight without adequate sun protection when the UV Index is 3 and above.
- Provided the UV Index is below 3 (low) unrestricted outdoor play may take place. If the UV Index is 3 (moderate) or above, outdoor play is allowed provided appropriate sun protection measures are undertaken by all staff, educators and children whilst outdoors. This includes wearing sunscreen, playing in shaded areas, sun safe hats (provided by Unicare), clothing that at least covers the shoulders; long sleeves and trousers are recommended and wearing sunglasses were possible.
- The Cancer Council of Australia recommends that services operating in the Perth metropolitan area and south allow exposure to 30 minutes of sunshine (ie. June/July) when the UV level is usually 3 or below to ensure children get enough Vitamin D.
<http://www.cancerwa.asn.au/articles/news-2012-media-releases/winter-sun-reminder-thanks-to-new-vitamin-D-guidelines>
- Appropriate sun protection measures are defined as a broad brimmed, (provided by Unicare) bucket style or legionnaire's hat, clothing that covers as much skin as

possible, SPF 30+ sun screen, maximum use of available shade. (Refer to *Be SunSmart Factsheet*). If the UV Index is 8 (very high) or above, avoid being outside at midday and use appropriate sun protection measures.

- Normal picnic days, walks in the community and excursions will be affected by this sun protection policy and staff will need to make alterations to plans and programs to comply.

Educators are aware that the UV Index is available from the Bureau of Meteorology website at www.bom.gov.au/wa/uv/index UV information is displayed across numerous environments at Unicare and sunscreen provided.

Protective practices:

- Educators should be aware that broad brimmed hats with toggles can be a choking hazard.
- Educators will model sun safe practices.
- Educators will request permission from the parent/guardian to apply sunscreen.
- Sunscreen of SPF 30+ broad spectrum and water resistant must be applied at least 20 minutes before commencing outdoor play wherever possible.
- Sunscreen must be reapplied every 2 hours.
- If a child presents with an allergic reaction to the sunscreen, the educator will stop applying the sunscreen, notify the parent/guardian and request that a hypoallergenic sunscreen be supplied by the parent/guardian for the child to use.
- Sunscreen applications are generally not recommended for use on children under 12 months of age. Appropriate clothing and shade are the best protection for this age group. Parents can elect to supply the centre with an appropriate sunscreen for their own baby under 12 months of age. It is highly recommended that parents of children under 12 months have already trialled this sunscreen on their child before providing it to the centre.
- Educators need to be aware that certain surfaces become very hot in the sun and can cause burns.

Maintaining hydration levels:

- Safe drinking water will be accessible to children throughout the day in both indoor and outdoor settings.

Communication with families

- Learning about the harmful effects of sun exposure to the skin and ways to protect the skin from the sun's UV Rays will be spoken about with the children. The Service will provide up to date information on sun protection for families.
- Educators will actively promote sun safe practices through discussion of activities undertaken with children.