



SKIN PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Background Information

Australia has the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world with two out of every three people diagnosed with skin cancer before they are 70. Skin damage, including skin cancer, is the result of cumulative exposure to the sun. Childhood is a critical period during which exposure to UV radiation is more likely to contribute to skin cancer later in life. Cancer Council SA advises people protect their skin at times when the ultraviolet (UV) radiation level is 3 and above. For much of South Australia, UV radiation levels are 3 and above every day from September to April - it is during these months that sun protection is necessary.

This policy is based on guidelines from the Cancer Council of South Australia.

Our sun protection policy includes procedures for the months of September to April and May to August to ensure that everyone involved in our service is protected from skin damage caused by the sun, while allowing sufficient exposure to Vitamin D for healthy bone development. In accordance with Cancer Council SA guidelines, our policy uses UVLevel 3+ as the level at which sun protection is required.

Implementation

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that all members of our Early Childhood Service are protected from skin damage caused by the harmful rays of the sun and are given adequate opportunities to maintain Vitamin D levels. It is an expectation that all staff, students and parents of Coromandel Valley Kindergarten will use the following skin protection strategies:

1. We will avoid playing in the sun when the UV level is at 3+. UV levels will be checked on www.sunsmart.com.au or www.bom.gov.au/weather/uv at the beginning of each session and the recommended sun protection hours for that day will be noted. Activities in the sun will be programmed for times when the UV level is below 3. During the warmer months extra care should be taken between 10.00 am and 3.00 pm when UV radiation levels are highest;
2. When the UV level is 3+ children will be encouraged to play in shaded areas, i.e. under trees, verandas, pergolas and shade structures. Props and equipment will be moved under shade where possible. When the UV level is below 3, play in the sun will be encouraged as practical.



3. When the UV rating is 3+ we will wear appropriate clothing which protects the skin:
 - Children, staff and parents will be expected to wear a hat, with a deep crown and minimum 5cm brim for children under 5 years of age whenever they are involved in outside activities. Children not wearing an appropriate hat will be expected to play under the verandah or borrow a spare hat;
 - Children will be encouraged to wear shirts with collars and sleeves;
 - Staff will role model wearing appropriate clothing and hats.
4. Sunscreen will be applied from AUGUST to APRIL and on days in the other months when the UV rating is greater than 3. Parents are asked to apply sunscreen before arrival at the centre or they can use our sunscreen here. Staff will apply a broad-spectrum, water resistant sunscreen with an SPF of 30+ to clean, dry skin, 15—20 minutes before afternoon outside play. Children will be taught to apply their own sunscreen, where possible, so as to avoid cross infection risks.
5. Reinforcing the SunSmart message in all service activities and in general service procedures is an important strategy in the adoption of skin protection behaviours.
 - Staff will be encouraged to role model appropriate SunSmart strategies in all service activities.
 - Skin cancer prevention will be included in appropriate teaching activities.
 - Staff will be encouraged to keep up to date with new information and resources from Cancer Council SA.
6. Planning of excursions will be made with consideration to shade and SunSafe principles.
7. When children are enrolled parents are made aware of the Sun Protection Policy and its requirements. Our centre will promote the SunSmart message through newsletters and activities. When children are enrolled, a permission slip needs to be signed by the enrolling parent as to whether staff can apply sunscreen to their child. Children with skin sensitivities will need to supply their own sunscreen. Children with naturally darker skin may require more sun exposure to maintain vitamin D levels and skin protection arrangements are made on an individual basis for these children.
8. The Coromandel Valley Kindergarten 'Skin Protection Policy' will be evaluated on a two-yearly basis. Policy issues will be discussed at staff and parent meetings.