



Sun Protection Policy

Policy Number: 31
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Rationale and Policy Considerations

All children have the right to experience quality care in an environment which provides for their health and safety. The service has a duty of care which extends to ensuring that appropriate sun protection policies and practices are implemented to adequately protect children, educators/staff and visitors from ultraviolet radiation from the sun. The Cancer Council advises that two out of three Australians will develop some form of skin cancer during their lifetime, with childhood sun exposure being an important risk factor. Young children have very little skin pigment (melanin) to protect them from sun exposure. This means if a child gets too much sun, their skin can be permanently damaged resulting in moles, freckles, wrinkles, sunspots and even skin cancer later in life. It is widely understood that the risk of developing skin cancer is directly related to the intensity and duration of sun exposure. Research now indicates that childhood sun exposure is an important contributing factor to the development of skin cancer later in life, with the majority of damage occurring in the first twenty years of life.

The Education and Care Services National Law (WA) Act 2012 requires that approved provider/nominated supervisor/coordinators take reasonable care to protect children from foreseeable risk of harm and hazard.

Employers and employees have a responsibility to reduce the risk of all types of injuries and risks to health in the workplace. Ultraviolet radiation exposure from the sun is a hazard, and as such, employers and employees both have roles and responsibilities to ensure appropriate measures are taken to prevent over-exposure.

Legislation and Government Requirements

Federal and State Occupational Safety & Health Legislation (Check your State or Territory legislation).
Education and Care Services National Law (WA) Act 2012
Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012.

Children's needs

Individual allergies; cultural differences; and other special needs regarding sunscreen application and outdoor play environment (shade provision) to be taken into account i.e. babies special needs; as competent learners children are educated from an early age about the need for sun protection.

Families' needs

Their child will be protected from the harmful effects of exposure to ultraviolet radiation from the sun; their child will not be discriminated against regarding their cultural norms.

Educator/Staff needs

Education about sun protection strategies including: use of effective shade; appropriate clothing (uniforms/hats); application of sunscreen; wearing of sunglasses; hygiene considerations; importance of role modelling sun-smart behaviours.

Management needs

To be informed and educated in regard to requirements and legislation; to monitor policy and review annually; to be assured that the service is meeting legislative requirements and providing best practice.

Scope

This policy is for all staff and children of Lifestreamers Childcare

Policy Statement

The Lifestreamers Childcare policy has been developed to ensure all children, employees and visitors attending the centre are protected from the harmful effects of the sun. We believe it is necessary to protect staff and children

from UV rays all year round. The service will therefore become a "Sun Smart Centre" within the Cancer Council program and promote the importance of sun protection for young children in particular.

Policy Principles

- Hats and sunscreen must be worn whenever the staff and children are engaged in outdoor activities when the UV Index is three or above. Legionnaire, bucket or broad brim hats that cover the ears, neck, face and nose need to be supplied by families and worn. Most skin cancers appear on the head and neck and are linked to lifetime exposure to UV rays.
- Upon enrolment, families will be notified of the sun protection policy and will be requested to provide a suitable hat for their child. Hats are to be labeled and left at the centre. Children who do not have a hat will be provided with a spare hat, if available. Spare hats will be washed at the end of each use.
- Children are required to wear shirts that cover their shoulders and neck. Therefore singlets and summer tops with the back missing will be changed for a t-shirt or collared shirt upon arrival at the centre.
- Each day the UV **alert times, where sun protection is required**, will be accessed from the Cancer Council website and displayed. The children will use sun protection measures when outside **when the UV index is 3 or above**. Children under 12 months of age will not be exposed to direct sunlight when the UV Index is three or above. Availability of shade on excursions will be considered when planning. Hats and sunscreen will be enforced on all outdoor excursions. Children without a hat will remain at the centre.
- Children will be encouraged to play in the shade. Even in the shade, UV can reach you after being reflected off surrounding surfaces such as sand, concrete or walls. Stationary experiences are set up in shady areas. Management will ensure there are a sufficient number of shelters and/or trees providing shade at the centre all year round. UV radiation is not felt as heat on the skin, so even on a cool or cloudy day it may be as high and damaging as on a clear and sunny day.
- Families are expected to apply sunscreen to their child before they arrive at the centre. Staff will ensure that sunscreen is reapplied to the children and themselves every two hours (if we are outside) or more frequently if it is washed or wiped off. Sunscreen will be available next to the sign-in sheets. Sunscreen is applied before morning tea. Any child who comes in after this time will have sunscreen applied by their families and will sit at a stationary experience in the shade for 20 minutes while it soaks in.
- Sunscreen is applied at least 20 minutes before children move outside and is SPF50+. It will be applied liberally and not rubbed in. Wherever possible, a broad spectrum, water resistant, SPF50+ sunscreen is applied. Sunscreen is recommended for all children (including babies) when sun exposure is unavoidable.
- Sunscreen will be applied by educators. A tissue or damp paper towel will be used to apply sunscreen, thus ensuring germs are not transferred from one child's skin to another.
- Families of children who have allergies to our sunscreen need to provide an appropriate bottle for use on their child. Alternatively, a letter will need to be provided from the child's doctor stating that sunscreen cannot be applied. All families will be asked to sign a form giving permission for us to apply sunscreen to their child.
- Educational resources will be available to staff and families. Children's programs will include learning about skin and ways to protect skin from the sun.
- The sun protection policy will be included in the newsletter every six months to remind families of their obligation to apply sunscreen to children before coming to daycare and the importance of protecting our skin.
- Employees and visitors will act as role models by wearing suitable hats and clothing, seeking shade when possible and applying sunscreen before going outdoors.
- Outdoor excursions and activities will be planned to ensure children are not unprotected in the sun when the UV index is 3 or above. The availability of shade will be considered when planning all outdoor excursions and activities. Portable shade structures may be used if the area does not have much natural or artificial shade. Children and educators/staff participating in excursions will be covered by the policy and broad brimmed or legionnaire style hats and protective clothing should be worn on all excursions. Sunscreen is also a necessity on day long excursions.
- Employees and visitors to the service will act as role models by:
 - Wearing appropriate hats, sunglasses and protective clothing when outdoors.
 - Using SPF 50+ broad spectrum water resistant sunscreen for skin protection.
 - Seeking shade whenever possible.
 - Looking after their skin and avoiding sunburn.

- Learning about skin and ways to protect skin from ultraviolet radiation from the sun will be incorporated into programmed activities.
- The Sun Protection Policy will be reinforced in a positive way through family newsletters, noticeboards and meetings, and will be available in writing to families on request.
- Educators/staff and families will be provided with educational material on sun protection.
- When enrolling their child, parents/guardians will be:
 - Informed of the Sun Protection Policy;
 - Asked to provide a suitable hat for their child's use;
 - Required to give authority and directive for educators to administer sunscreen to their child;
 - Encouraged to practice sun protective behaviours themselves.

Water Safety

- **Where children are taken on an excursion that is close to a body of water additional adult supervision will be organised to ensure children's safety. Direct and constant supervision is required at all times children are in or near water. Educators/staff will have constant visual contact and be in close proximity to all children at all times.**
- Wading or paddling pools will only be used under the direct supervision of an educator. When not in use this equipment will be emptied and stored in such a manner that it cannot collect water. Wading and paddling pools must be of a size that can be emptied by one person.

Maintaining hydration levels

- Infants and children's body/water ratio mass is significantly different than from adults, therefore the risk for dehydration from outdoor play and hot weather is high and can be dangerous.
- Water will be offered to children throughout the day regardless of indoor or outdoor play settings.
- Cooled boiled water may be offered to infants and young children after bottle feeds if children show signs of continued thirst.

Related Documents

- **Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010(Vic)** - Section 3(2)(a); 167
- **Education and Care Services National Regulations** -: 77(1)(a), (2)(a), (3)(a); 114; 168(2)(ii); 171.
- **National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care (Nov 2010)** - Element 2.1.1; Element 2.1.3; Element 2.2.2; Element 2.3.2; Element 3.1.1
- **Early Years Learning Framework for Australia Framework for School Age Care in Australia**
- Duty of Care Checklist
- Educator/staff Code of Ethics
- First Aid Kit Checklist
- Procedure for child without a hat
- Risk assessment for excursions

Links to other policies

- Accidents, Emergencies and First Aid
- Educator/Staff Dress Code
- Health, Hygiene and Infection Control
- Illness
- Medication and Medical Conditions
- Occupational Safety and Health
- Partnerships and Communication with Families
- Supervision

Sources

Anti Cancer Council of Victoria
 The Cancer Council, Western Australia
www.pscalliance.org.au

Further Sources

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Cancer Council Northern Territory - Sunsmart Early Childhood Program - Retrieved 4 April 2011, from <http://www.cancercouncilnt.com.au/Sunsmart/SSEarlyChildhood.htm>

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Document History

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