

## Sun Protection Policy

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### 1. Policy Statement

#### Values

NERPSA is committed to:

- promoting sun protection strategies for children, families, staff and visitors to minimise the harmful effects of over exposure to UV radiation, while allowing some UV exposure for vitamin D requirements
- ensuring that curriculum planning will minimise over exposure to UV radiation and also promote an awareness of sun protection and sun safe strategies
- providing information to children, educators, staff, volunteers, parents/guardians and others at the service about the harmful effects of exposure to the sun's UV radiation.

#### Purpose

This policy will provide:

- guidelines to ensure children, educators, volunteers and others participating in NERPSA programs and activities are protected from an overexposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation
- information for parents/guardians, educators, volunteers and children attending NERPSA regarding sun protection and UV

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of NERPSA.

This policy will apply for all outdoor activities **during the daily local sun protection times.**

The sun protection times from the Bureau of Meteorology tell you the time of day UV levels are forecast to reach 3 or higher. At these levels, sun protection is recommended for all skin types. In Victoria, UV levels regularly reach 3 or higher from mid-August to the end of April.

To assist with the implementation of this policy, educators and children are encouraged to access the local sun protection times via the SunSmart widget on the service's website, the free SunSmart app or at [sunsmart.com.au](http://sunsmart.com.au) or [myuv.com.au](http://myuv.com.au).

### 3. Background and legislation

Too much of the sun's UV radiation can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. Infants and toddlers up to four years of age are particularly vulnerable to UV damage due to lower levels of melanin and a thinner stratum corneum (the outermost layer of skin). UV damage accumulated during childhood and adolescence is associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life. It is a requirement under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* that employers provide a healthy and safe environment for all persons who access the service's facilities and/or programs.

Legislation that governs the operation of approved children's services is based on the health, safety and welfare of the children and requires that children are protected from hazards and harm.

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

*Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic) (Part 2: Principles for Children)

*Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*: Section 167

*Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*: Regulations 100, 113, 114, 168(2)(a)(ii)

*Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*

#### 4. Definitions

**Clothing for sun protection:** Clothing that is loose-fitting, made from cool, densely woven fabric and covers as much skin as possible: tops with elbow-length sleeves and, if possible, collars and knee-length or longer-style shorts and skirts. Singlet tops and shoestring tops/dresses do not provide adequate protection in the sun.

**Shade:** An area sheltered from direct and indirect sun, such as a large tree, canopy, veranda, or artificial cover. Shade can be built, natural or temporary and can reduce overall exposure to the sun's UV by 75%. When combined with appropriate clothing, hats and sunscreen, children can be well protected from UV overexposure when outdoors. Research shows that spacious preschool environments with trees, shrubbery, and broken ground not only provides better sun protection in outdoor play but also triggers more physical activity.

**Sunglasses:** Sunglasses are optional. If worn, it is recommended that glasses are a close fitting, wrap-around style that meet the Australian Standard 1067 (Sunglasses: Category 2, 3 or 4) and cover as much of the eye area as possible.

**Sunhat:** SunSmart recommends broad-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket-style hats that shade the face, neck and ears. Baseball caps and visors offer little protection to the cheeks, ears and neck, and are not recommended.

**Sunscreen:** SPF30 (or higher), broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen. Sunscreen should be reapplied every two hours, even when labelled 4 hours water resistance. Monitor the expiry date and store in a cool, dry place. From 3 years of age, children are encouraged to apply their own sunscreen under supervision of staff to help develop independent skills ready for school.

**SunSmart:** The name of the program conducted by Cancer Council Victoria to promote an awareness for the need for sun protection: [www.sunsmart.com.au](http://www.sunsmart.com.au)

#### 5. Sources and related NERPSA policies

- AS 4685.1: 2014 Playground equipment and surfacing – General safety requirements and test methods Safe Work Australia: Guidance Note – Sun protection for outdoor workers (2016)
- Cancer Council Australia: [www.cancer.org.au/sunsmart](http://www.cancer.org.au/sunsmart)
- *Get Up & Grow: Healthy eating and physical activity for early childhood*. Department of Health resources. Particularly Section 2 of the Director/Coordinator Book and the Staff Book: <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/phd-early-childhood-nutrition-resources>
- SunSmart: [www.sunsmart.com.au](http://www.sunsmart.com.au)
- *Child Safe Environment Policy*
- *Excursions Policy*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*

#### 6. Procedures

NERPSA responsible for:

6.1 Maintaining membership of the SunSmart early childhood program

6.2 Ensuring that this policy is up to date with current SunSmart recommendations: [www.sunsmart.com.au](http://www.sunsmart.com.au)

- 6.3 Ensuring there is adequate shade in the service grounds to protect children from overexposure to UV radiation (Regulation 114)
- 6.4 Reinforcing this policy by providing information on sun protection (available on the SunSmart website) to service users via newsletters, noticeboards, meetings and websites etc.

Educators are responsible for:

- 6.5 Ensuring parents/guardians are informed of the *Sun Protection Policy* on enrolment, including the need to provide an appropriate sunhat and clothing for sun protection (refer to *Definitions*) for their child when attending the service
- 6.6 Ensuring a parent's/guardian's authority for staff to apply sunscreen is obtained prior to their child commencing at the service and storing this with each child's enrolment record (refer to *General Definitions*)
- 6.7 Ensuring program planning includes the application of a combination of sun protection measures for outdoor activities during the times specified in the *Scope* of this policy
- 6.8 Ensuring the sun protection times on the SunSmart website or the SunSmart app are accessed daily to assist with the implementation of this policy
- 6.9 Ensuring information on sun protection is incorporated into the educational program (refer to the SunSmart website)
- 6.10 Ensuring that the availability of shade is considered in a risk assessment prior to conducting excursions and other outdoor events (Regulations 100, 101).
- 6.11 Wearing sunhats, clothing for sun protection (refer to *Definitions*) and sunglasses (optional) when outside, applying sunscreen and seeking shade during the times specified in the *Scope* of this policy
- 6.12 Encouraging each child, and any other participant at the service, to wear an appropriate sunhat, clothing for sun protection and sunscreen and seek shade for all outdoor activities during the times specified in the *Scope* of this policy
- 6.13 Keeping babies under 12 months out of direct sun whenever UV levels are three and above
- 6.14 Checking that all sunhats brought to the service meet the SunSmart recommendation for adequate protection, are named and stored individually
- 6.15 Ensuring spare sunhats are laundered as required
- 6.16 Ensuring a supply of sunscreen for use on all persons to whom this policy applies is available
- 6.17 Applying sunscreen (refer to *Definitions*) to children's exposed skin – except in cases where parents/guardians have not given authority. Where possible this should be done 20 minutes before going outdoors. Children, where appropriate, will be encouraged to apply sunscreen with the assistance of an educator (sunscreen is to be reapplied every two hours)
- 6.18 Storing sunscreen in a cool place and monitoring the expiry date – including for sunscreen supplied by parents/guardians
- 6.19 Ensuring that children without appropriate sunhats or clothing for sun protection play in the shade or in a suitable area protected from the sun
- 6.20 Encouraging children to seek shade when playing outside and utilise shaded areas for outdoor equipment that is not fixed during the times specified in the *Scope* of this policy
- 6.21 Encouraging children to wear sunhats when travelling to and from the service
- 6.22 Ensuring that sun protection strategies are a priority when planning excursions
- 6.23 Co-operating with their employer with respect to any action taken by the employer to comply with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*.

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- 6.24 Providing a named, SunSmart approved sunhat (refer to *Definitions*) for their child's use at the service

- 6.25 Applying sunscreen to their child before the commencement of each session during the times specified in the *Scope* of this policy
- 6.26 Providing written authority for staff to apply sunscreen to their child.
- 6.27 Providing, at their own expense, an alternative sunscreen to be left at the service if their child has a particular sensitivity to the sunscreen provided by the service
- 6.28 Wearing a sunhat, clothing for sun protection (refer to *Definitions*) and sunglasses (optional) when outside at the service, applying sunscreen and seeking shade during the times specified in the *Scope* of this policy.

**Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.**

## **7. Evaluation**

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, NERPSA will:

- Seek feedback regarding the effectiveness of the policy
- Monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- Keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- Revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required.

## **8. Authorisation**

The policy was adopted by NERPSA on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2013.

## **9. Review date**

The policy will be reviewed every two years from date of adoption.