Sun Protection Policy

Policy Number: 31
Date Updated: 1/10/26

Rationale and Policy Considerations

All children have the right to experience quality care in an environment which provides high priority to 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 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 the 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.

Most relevant policies and procedures

- Enrolment and orientation
- Delivery and collection
- LEL's response to the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

Scope

This policy is for all Educators and children of Lifestreamers Early Learning

Policy Statement

The Lifestreamers Early Learning 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 educators 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 SPF 50 must be worn whenever the educators and children are engaged in outdoor activities when the UV Index is 3 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, as well as personal sunscreen if preferred. 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 before going outside.
- 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 go outside when the UV Index is 3 or above. Children over 12 months, until they move into the Wombats' room can be outside until the UV reaches 5, if there is an educator to be with them.

- The Responsible Person (RP) on duty will check the UV and surface temperature in the morning and afternoon when the complete the ratio check. Children will move indoors when UV is over 8 or surface temp is over 50 degrees.
- Children will be encouraged to play in the shade. Even in the shade, UV can have effects by being reflected off surrounding surfaces such as sand, concrete or walls. Stationary experiences are set up only in shady areas. Management will ensure there is sufficient 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.
- Children should be kept in dense shade and out of direct sun during the daily sun protection times (when the UV is 3 or higher).
- During summer, before the children head out for a play, educators will check the temperature of the playground surface with a gun thermometer. If it is more than 50 degrees, children will remain indoors until the surface temperature drops.
- Families are expected to apply sunscreen to their child before they arrive at the centre. Educators 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 at the front door. Sunscreen is applied by families on arrival and children will sit at a stationary experience in the shade for 20 minutes while it soaks in.
- During school terms one and four, wherever possible, children will begin the day outside and then do indoor activities between the hours of 9am and 4pm.
- During school terms two and three, children will use the outdoor play area as appropriate with the weather.
- 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. Older children will be assisted to apply their own sunscreen.
- 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 give permission on their enrolment form for us to apply sunscreen to their child.
- Educational resources will be available to educators 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.
- Outdoor incursions 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 activities. Portable shade structures may be used if the area does not have much natural or artificial shade.
- Employees and visitors to the service will act as role models by:
  - Wearing appropriate hats, shoes, 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.
- 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.

Procedures

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**.

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Related Legislation and Documents

- **Education and Care Services National Law (WA) Act 2012**
- **Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012**
- **National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care**
- **Early Years Learning Framework for Australia**

Document History

Version	**Date updated**
Sun Protection Policy	18/12/13
Sun Protection Policy	29/12/14
Sun Protection Policy	12/11/15
Sun Protection Policy	25/10/16
Sun Protection Policy	6/3/17
Sun Protection Policy	8/3/19
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