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SUN(UV)PROTECTION POLICY

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY

National Quality Standard (NQS)

Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety		
2.1	Health	Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted
2.1.1	Wellbeing and comfort	Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's needs for sleep, rest and relaxation
2.1.3	Healthy lifestyle	Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard

Quality Area 3: Physical Environment		
3.1.1	Fit for Purpose	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Children (Education and Care Services) National Law Act 2010	
100	Risk assessment must be conducted before excursions
113	Outdoor space natural environment
114	Outdoor space shade
167	Protection from harm and hazards
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
168 (2)(a)(ii)	Sun protection

Scope

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management, volunteers and visitors of the Service.

Introduction

Australia has among the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. Research has indicated that young children and babies have sensitive skin that places them at particular risk of sunburn and skin damage. Exposure during the first 15 years of life can greatly increase the risk of developing skin cancer in later life. Early childhood services play a major role in minimising a child's UV exposure as children attend during times when UV radiation levels are highest. Some sun exposure is important for vitamin D which is essential for healthy bones and muscles, and for general health.

Implementation period

Woden Early Childhood Centre (WECC) is committed to ensuring the best practices in sun safety. It requires a combination of sun protection measures when UV levels are 3 and above as recommended by Cancer Council ACT.

In Canberra, sun protection will be required for most or part of each day between August and May. The beginning of August is hats ON for all of us, and the end of May is hats OFF day.

Due to low UV level experienced in the winter period, hat wearing, and sunscreen application is generally not required around the June and July period, unless spending extended time outdoors i.e. excursions, out and about walks to the park, etc.

Goals

WECC will follow best practice guidelines to protect children, family members and educators from the damaging effects of over exposure to solar UV radiation.

WECC will maintain its national SunSmart status by participating in its three-year SunSmart Review by Cancer Council ACT. This policy will be updated accordingly to maintain minimum SunSmart standards.

WECC will use a combination of sun protection measure whenever UV Index levels reach 3 and above. In Canberra this will include:

- sun protection for part or most of each day between August and May
- in June and July when the UV Index is mostly below 3, sun protection is generally not required unless spending extended time outdoors

Outdoor activities and events shall be minimised between 11.00am and 3.00pm, when possible, during the daylight saving/summer period, this is when UV peaks in Canberra.

All sun protection measures (including recommended outdoor times, shade, hat, clothing and sunscreen) will be considered when planning excursions and activities.

Ultraviolet (UV) Radiation Vs Temperature

If the UV is 3 or above children and Educators will be required to adopt a combination of sun protection measures during outside play.

Our Educators are aware that UV levels are not related to temperature and that temperature does not damage skin. However, if the temperature is under 26°C it is comfortable for the children to play outdoors. If the temperature is 26°C or over, educators will consider whether it is safe for the children to go outdoors.

Shade

All outdoor activities will be planned to occur in shaded areas. Play activities will be set up in the shade and moved throughout the day to take advantage of shade patterns.

All efforts will be made for outdoor excursions to not be scheduled during the middle of the day when UV levels peak and with it the risk of sunburn. Where this cannot be avoided, shade will be sought where appropriate.

WECC will provide and maintain adequate shade for outdoor play. Shade options can include a combination of portable, natural and built shade. Regular shade assessments should be conducted to monitor existing shade structures and assist in planning for additional shade.

Hats

WECC provides hats for its educators and has a limited supply of spare hats for children whose parents have not included one in their day pack. Educators and children are required to wear sun safe hats that protect their face, neck and ears. A sun safe hat is:

- a legionnaire hat with adequate flaps
- a bucket hat with a deep crown and brim size of at least 5cm (adults 6cm)
- a broad brimmed hat)

Baseball caps or visors do not provide enough sun protection and will not be acceptable. Children without a sun safe hat (or clothing) will be asked to play in an area protected from the sun (e.g. under shade, veranda or indoors) or can be provided with a spare hat.

Clothing

When outdoors, educators and children will wear sun safe clothing that covers as much of the skin (especially the shoulders, back and stomach) as possible. This includes wearing:

- loose fitting shirts and dresses with sleeves and collars of covered neckline
- longer style skirts, shorts and trousers

Children who are not wearing sun safe clothing can be provided with spare clothing. Midriff, crop or singlet tops do not provide enough sun protection and will not be worn.

WECC will ensure that parents are aware of their responsibility to ensure that children are dressed in sensible clothing that covers as much skin as possible.

WECC will encourage and support those children who choose to wear sunglasses. A close-fitting wrap around pair will offer best protection (AS 1067).

Sunscreen

All educators and children will apply or have applied SPF30 or higher broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen, 15-20 minutes before going outdoors. This sunscreen will be reapplied every two hours. Sunscreen is stored in a cool, dry place and the use-by-date monitored.

WECC will ensure that parents are aware of their responsibility to apply sunscreen to their child in the morning when they arrive.

Babies

Babies (i.e. 12 months) will not purposely be exposed to direct sunlight and are to remain in dense shade when outside (if UV levels are 3 and above), specifically an enclosed area under the veranda.

They will wear sun safe hats, sensible clothing and seek shade when UV levels are 3 and above. For babies over 6 months, small amounts of SPF30 or higher broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen may be applied to their exposed skin if shading becomes dappled and direct UV exposure is unavoidable.

Role modelling and work health and safety

Educators will act as role models and meet their WH&S responsibilities by adopting a combination of sun safe behaviours by:

- wearing a sun safe hat (see *Hats*)
- wearing sun safe clothing (see *Clothing*)
- applying SPF30 or higher broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen 15–20 minutes before going outdoors
- using and promoting shade
- wearing sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard 1067 (optional)

Families and visitors are encouraged to role model positive sun safe behaviour.

Education and information

Sun protection will be incorporated regularly into learning programs. Sun protection information will be promoted to all educators, families and visitors. Further information including resources for ACT Educators is available from Cancer Council ACT's website (www.actcancer.org).

All our Educators will be encouraged to complete Cancer Council's (free) Generation SunSmart online training modules. Upon completion receive a Certificate of Completion.

Educators can download the SunSmart App to assist them with daily sun protection times in Canberra.

Policy availability

This Sun (UV) protection policy, updates and requirements (including hat, clothing and sunscreen) will be made available to educators, families and visitors. This policy will be included in WECC's staff induction pack and within the introductory pack provided to families when they enrol at WECC and via the website.

Review

WECC's management and educators will monitor and review the effectiveness of the Sun Protection policy

regularly. WECC's sun protection policy must be submitted every three years to the Cancer Council ACT for review to ensure continued best practice. Refer to the Cancer Council ACT's website for further information.

National SunSmart Early Childcare Program

Woden Early Childhood Centre was awarded national SunSmart status in 2006. This policy will be submitted to Cancer Council ACT every 3 years to be reviewed. This policy will be update, if necessary, to maintain national SunSmart standards for Canberra. Our next SunSmart Review will be February 2024.

Evaluation

- WECC educators demonstrate SunSmart behaviours with the wearing of suitable clothing and application of sunscreen
- Sun exposure is limited throughout the day in accordance with Cancer Council ACT's recommendations
- The curriculum and program incorporate sun safety awareness experience.

Related policies /documents

- *Clothing and footwear*
- *Excursions*
- *Providing a child-safe environment*
- *Supervision*
- *Workplace Health and Safety*

Sources and references

- National Health and Medical Research Council - www.nhmrc.gov.au
- NSWDepartmentof Health - www.health.nsw.gov.au
- ECA Code of Ethics.
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- Children's Services Act 1996
- Supervision in Children's Services. Putting Children First, the Newsletter of the National Childcare Accreditation Council (NCAC) Issue 15, p. 8-11.
- Cancer Council www.cancercouncil.com.au/sunsmart
- SunSmart Child Care
http://www.imagineeducation.com.au/files/CHC30113/Sunsmart_20Childcare_A_Guide_for_Service_Providers.pdf
- Revised National Quality Standard

Policy Reviewed	September 2022	Ratified Date	Next Review Date
Modifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional information added to the Education and Care Services law and regulations • Editing of requirements for hats • Minor wording edits • Sources reviewed and checked • Addition of modifications table 	Sept 2022	Sept 2025
Policy Reviewed	April 2018	Ratified Date	Next Review Date
Modifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing policy 	April 2018	April 2021
Policy Reviewed	August 2016	Ratified Date	Next Review Date
Modifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing policy 	Aug 2016	Aug 2019

Policy Reviewed	May 2013	Ratified Date	Next Review Date
Modifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Existing policy	May 2013	May 2015

Authorisation

Paul Halloran
President
2021-22 WECC Management Committee

