Skin Cancer in Australia

Australia is the skin cancer capital of the world. At least 2 in 3 Australians will be diagnosed with skin cancer before the age of 70 (4), and annually over 1,850 will lose their lives to skin cancer (5).

In people aged 12 – 24 years in Australia, melanoma is the most common cancer, with more than double the number of cases of any other kind of cancer (6).

Overexposure to UV radiation from the sun has been identified as the cause of around 99% of non-melanoma skin cancers and 95% of melanoma in Australia (2).

Children have delicate skin which places them at particular risk of sunburn and skin damage. In fact, sun exposure during the first 10 years of life has a significant impact on the likelihood of developing skin cancer later in life (2).

The good news is that most skin cancers can be prevented by protecting skin from over exposure to the sun (7).

RATIONAL

A balance of ultraviolet (UV) radiation exposure is important for health. Too much of the sun’s UV radiation can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. Too little UV from the sun can lead to low vitamin D levels. Vitamin D is essential for healthy bones and muscles, and for general health.

BROAD POLICY STATEMENT:

Our Sun Protection Policy has been developed to ensure that all children, employees and visitors attending Oaklands Estate Kindergarten are protected from skin damage caused by harmful ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun. It is to be implemented throughout the year and will be effective from 1st September until the 30th April and whenever the UV levels reach 3 or above at other times.

Objectives

This Sun Protection Policy has been developed to:

- encourage children and staff to use a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV Index levels reach 3 and above
- work towards a safe outdoor environment that provides shade for children and staff at appropriate times
- ensure all children and staff have some UV exposure for vitamin D
- assist children to be responsible for their own sun protection
- ensure that families and new staff are informed of the service’s Sun Protection Policy.

Staff are encouraged to access the SunSmart UV Alert at [www.cancersa.org.au/early-childhood](http://www.cancersa.org.au/early-childhood) to find out daily local sun protection times to assist with the implementation of this policy.

We use a combination of sun protection measures for all outdoor activities from 1 September to 30 April and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above at other times.

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

The service will ensure all sun protection measures are applied to children and staff while outside when the UV level is 3 or above.

SHADE

- A shade audit is conducted regularly to determine the current availability and quality of shade.
- Management makes sure there is a sufficient number of shelters and trees providing shade in the outdoor area.
- The availability of shade is considered when planning excursions and all other outdoor activities.
- Children are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside.
- Children who do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing are asked to play in the shade or a suitable area protected from the sun.
HATS
- All children will wear a wide brim, bucket or legionnaires style hat that protects the face, neck, ears and crown of the head whenever they are outside or on an outside excursion. Caps will be not allowed at the kindergarten. Children without hats will be required to play inside or under the shade of the veranda.

CLOTHING
When outdoors, all children will wear SunSmart clothing that protects as much of the skin as possible. Clothing made from cool, closely woven fabric is recommended. Tops with elbow length sleeves and, if possible, collars and knee length or longer style shorts and skirts are best. If a child is wearing a singlet top or dress they may be asked to wear a t-shirt/shirt over the top before going outdoors or be required to play indoors or in the shaded area of the veranda.

SUNSCREEN
- Families are required to apply SPF30+ broad-spectrum water resistant sunscreen prior to arrival at kindergarten.
- Families are required to provide their child/children with a SPF30+ broad-spectrum water resistant sunscreen.
- The kindergarten will supply SPF30+ broad-spectrum water resistant sunscreen for families to access upon their arrival at kindergarten, however staff will not apply this to children.
- Sunscreen will be stored in a cool place, out of the sun.
- Staff will monitor the expiry date of the kindergarten sunscreen and will discard and replace when out of date.
- Families will monitor the expiry date of their child/children’s sunscreen and will discard and replace when out of date.
- Staff will ensure sunscreen is applied at least 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapplied every 2 hours if outdoors.
- Children are encouraged to apply their own sunscreen, under the supervision of staff.
- Children without sunscreen will be supported to play in the shaded areas of the kindergarten.
- With parental consent, children with naturally very dark skin are not required to wear sunscreen to help with vitamin D requirements.

BABIES
Children under 12 months of age will not be exposed to direct sunlight.

ROLE MODELLING
Staff, students, families and visitors will act as positive role models and demonstrate SunSmart behaviour when attending the service by:
- wearing a SunSmart hat
- applying SPF30+ broad-spectrum water resistant sunscreen
- using and promoting shade
- wearing SunSmart clothing
- wearing sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard 1067

EXCURSIONS
Sun protection will be considered when excursions are planned, particularly time of day and availability of shade.

EDUCATION
Sun protection is part of the learning program.

INFORMATION
Sun protection information will be promoted to staff, families and visitors.

WHEN ENROLLING
Families are:
- informed of the service’s Sun Protection Policy
- asked to provide a suitable hat for their child
- asked to provide their child with suitable outdoor clothing that is cool and covers as much skin as possible (i.e. that cover the shoulders and chest, upper arms and legs)
- asked to provide SPF 30 or higher broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen for their child
- encouraged to practice SunSmart behaviours themselves when at the service.

POLICY
The Sun Protection Policy will be made available to staff, families and visitors. The policy is monitored and reviewed annually.
Child’s Name………………………………………………………………

☐ I have read the Sun Protection Policy and I agree to provide my child with an appropriate sun hat, clothing and named SPF30+ broad-spectrum water resistant sunscreen.

☐ I understand that if my child does not have an appropriate sun hat or clothing they will be required to play indoors or under the shade of the veranda.

Parent/Guardian .................................................................

Signed .............................................................................