



# Sun Protection Policy

## (Skin protection and hot weather policies)

Australia has the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world with two out of every three people developing some form of skin cancer before they are 70. Skin damage, including skin cancer, is the result of cumulative exposure to the sun. Sun exposure in the first ten years of life determines, to a substantial degree, the likelihood of skin cancer developing later in life. Cancer Council SA advises people protect their skin at times when the ultraviolet (UV) radiation level is 3 and above—this is when it is strong enough to cause damage to unprotected skin. For much of South Australia, UV radiation levels are 3 and above everyday from the beginning of August to the end of April—it is during these months that sun protection is necessary. Cancer Council SA recommends that a skin protection policy be in place from 1 August until 30 April when UV radiation levels are 3 and above. It is highly recommended that UV radiation levels are monitored, particularly during May and July as they still may be 3 or above depending on your location. Cancer Council SA also recommends that particular care should be taken during these months between 10.00 am – 3.00 pm, when the UV radiation levels are at their highest. It is important to balance sun protection with safe sun exposure for the production of vitamin D for bone growth and development. During May to August, at times when the UV radiation level is below 3, sun protection for most people is not necessary.

### Aims

The aims of the Happy Valley Kindergarten

Sun Smart policy are to promote among children, staff and parents:

- Positive attitudes towards skin protection.
- Lifestyle practices which can help reduce the incidence of skin cancer and the risk of heat illness and the number of related deaths.
- Personal responsibility for and decision making about skin protection.
- Awareness of the need for environmental changes in our centre to reduce the level of sun exposure when the UV radiation level is 3 and above.

### Implementation

This policy is for implementation from the first day of Term 3 until the last day of Term 1. The purpose of the policy is to ensure that all members of our Early Childhood Service are protected from skin damage and heat illness caused by extreme temperatures and the harmful rays of the sun. It is an expectation that all



staff, students and parents of Happy Valley Kindergarten will use the following strategies:

**Take care to protect the skin when the ultraviolet radiation level is 3 (moderate) and above. Extra care should be taken between 10:00 am and 3:00 pm when UV radiation levels are highest.**

- Outdoor play will be permitted all day on days that are forecast to be 34°C or below.
- On days where the temperature is forecast 35°C or over, initially outdoor play will be permitted until 11:30am. A thermometer under the verandah will be checked at 1:00pm, and if it reads 35°C or over, outdoor play in direct sunlight will not be permitted for the afternoon. Play will take place in shaded areas.
- Due to our large gumtrees, extra caution will be taken on days where the temperature is hot and windy. Outdoor play will not be permitted on days where the temperature is over 35°C and windy. The verandah area and lunch room may still be accessible to children and staff.

**To keep cool and be protected from extreme UV in hot weather children will be encouraged to use the shade of trees, pergolas, umbrellas and tents whenever outdoors.**

- The further provision of shade areas is a priority for the service.
- Children are to be frequently offered water or fluids. Families are required to supply children with a drink bottle containing water. Drinking water is to be accessible to children at all times.
- Parents will be encouraged to pack food in insulated containers with a freezer brick or frozen water. Sites are to provide a cool place to store food.

**Wear appropriate clothing which protects the skin and minimises heat gain.**

- Children, staff, parents, visitors and volunteers will be expected to wear a broad brimmed hat, legionnaire style hat, or a bucket hat (bucket hat must have a deep crown and minimum 5 cm brim for children under 5 years of age and 6 cms for older children and adults) whenever they are involved in outside activities. Anyone not wearing an appropriate hat will be expected to play in the shade. 'Beanies' may be worn underneath appropriate hats in cooler weather.
- Children will be encouraged to wear shirts with collars and at least elbow length sleeves and longer style shorts/skirts. Parents are to be encouraged to dress children in clothing that minimises heat gain, in layers that can be easily removed during activity and of a type that is sunsafe.



- Due to health reasons, we no longer provide 'spare hats'. If a child consistently forgets to bring a hat to Kindergarten, they will be given one of our new hats available for purchase, and the family will be charged \$15 to cover this cost.

**Apply a broad-spectrum, water resistant sunscreen with an SPF of 30+ to clean, dry skin, at least 20 minutes before going outdoors. Sunscreen should be reapplied every two hours if outdoors for a prolonged period of time or more frequently if involved in water activities or perspiring.**

- Sunscreen should be applied before arrival at kindy and staff will reapply sunscreen at lunch time on full day sessions.
- Adequate time (at least 20 minutes) must be allowed for correct application of sunscreen on children before they go outdoors.
- Although there will be bulk sunscreen packs available at the site, in the case of allergies or sensitive skin, parents will be encouraged to supply sunscreen for their children. This will be named and kept in their bags.

**Reinforcing the SunSmart message in all service activities and in general service procedures is an important strategy in the adoption of skin protection behaviours.**

- Staff will role model appropriate Sun Smart strategies in all service activities.
- Skin cancer prevention and reducing the risk of heat illness will be included in appropriate teaching activities.
- Staff will be encouraged to keep up to date with new information and resources from Cancer Council SA.
- Information about the centre's SunSmart Policy will be given to all new staff, students and families.

**The Happy Valley Kindergarten's "Sun Smart Policy" will be evaluated on a two yearly basis.**

Policy issues will be discussed at staff and parent meetings.

For more information please don't hesitate to contact:

**Cancer Council Helpline 13 11 20** or visit the website on: [www.sunsmart.org.au](http://www.sunsmart.org.au)