



## **Sun (UV) Protection Policy**

### **Policy**

Cubby House on Campus – Early Learning Centre (Cubby) has a duty of care toward protecting children and educators from the dangerous and adverse effects associated with over exposure to solar Ultraviolet Radiation (UVR). This policy will be implemented from the beginning of August through to the end of May when daily UV levels reach 3 and above for part of or most of the day in Canberra. Extra care will be taken during the peak UV period of the day

Educators and children are not generally required to wear a SunSmart hat or sunscreen outside during the months of June and July this is due to low UV levels and to assist in the maintenance of vitamin D levels during winter. Sun protection may still be required if spending extended time outdoors during this period.

### **Background**

Australia has amongst the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world and over exposure to UVR during childhood and adolescence significantly increases the risk of developing skin cancer later in life including melanoma. Adult exposure also plays an important role in this development. Sand, concrete, and water can significantly reflect UVR and increase one's exposure.

Educators and parents can play a vital role in the long-term prevention of skin cancer by teaching & role modelling healthy sun habits to young children. Cubby is responsible toward minimising the risks associated with over-exposure to UVR amongst the children and staff in the Services care. Working amongst UVR is a Work Health and Safety hazard.

Effective sun protection practices not only reduce a child's risk of skin and eye damage and ultimately skin cancer but should also ensure they obtain enough vitamin D from the sun to allow for healthy bone development and maintenance.

There is a shared responsibility between educators, children, families, and other stakeholders to ensure that this policy and procedures are implemented.

This policy will be reviewed and revised as required by Cancer Council ACT every 3 years under the National SunSmart Early Childhood Program in the ACT. This policy will be updated, if required, to maintain minimal SunSmart standards for ACT early childhood settings.

## **Practices**

To protect children and educators from the long term and adverse effects associated with over exposure to the sun's ultraviolet radiation (UVR). When daily UV levels reach 3 and above educators and children will adopt a combination of the 5 sun protection measures when planning outdoor activities and excursions. Children who do not come equipped with adequate clothing or hat will be directed to play under a well shaded area or remain inside. No Hat-Play in the Shade.

This policy will be implemented from the beginning of August to the end of May each year or when UV levels are 3 and above.

Educators are required to:

Be aware that protection is recommended when UV levels reach 3 and above (strong enough to damage unprotected skin and eyes.). *This can be done by checking daily sun protection times via BOM, the SunSmart app or at [www.myuv.com.au](http://www.myuv.com.au).*

- In any circumstances, educators will not purposely expose babies or infants directly in sunlight when UV levels are 3 and above. Always protect infants well when UV levels are 3 and above.
- The widespread use of sunscreen on babies under six months is not generally recommended as babies have very sensitive skin which may be more likely to suffer a reaction. Small amounts of sunscreen may be applied to baby's skin that cannot be protected by clothing when direct exposure is unavoidable.
- For babies older than six months, sunscreen should be used as the last line of defence after avoiding direct sunlight, putting on covering clothing, a hat and shade.
- Small amounts of direct exposure are considered safe when UV levels are low (under 3) however if spending time outdoors during this low UV period then continue to well protect baby's skin with clothing and shade if available.
- Sunscreen should only be applied where necessary to exposed skin not already protected by clothing and/or a hat if direct exposure is unavoidable.
- Care will always be taken between 10am and 2pm. This includes minimising time outside between 11am and 3pm during summer/ daylight saving time (late October to late March). This is the time of the year when UV levels are at their most intense in the ACT.
- Ensure parents supply and all children wear appropriate sun protection clothing such as shirts with sleeves that cover the shoulders longer shorts and/or dresses, wide brim hats (broad brimmed, bucket or legionnaire), sunglasses (optional but encouraged) and Sun Protection Factor (SPF) 30+ sunscreen when outdoors or on outdoor excursions. (Baseball caps or visors do not provide enough sun protection and therefore are not recommended).
- Educators are required, whilst parents and visitors encouraged to positively role model sun protection behaviour and attitudes by also wearing a combination of

sun protection clothing, hat, sunglasses, and SPF 30+ sunscreen when outdoors.

- The service and all its workers are aware of their responsibilities and duty of care when it comes to protecting workers from Occupational UV Exposure. Workers are aware of prevention and the importance of early detection of skin cancer.
- Apply sunscreen in the amount according to instructions on the bottle.
- Be aware that sunscreen should be applied to clean, dry skin 15-20 minutes before outside activities and should be reapplied every 2 hours or more if sweated or washed off. Ensure hygiene by applying sunscreen with a cotton ball, tissue – one for each child or by allowing the child to sunscreen themselves under your supervision. Sunscreen will always be used in a combination with the other sun protection measures and should not be used to extend one's time in the sun.
- Adequately shade outdoor play areas, conduct an annual shade audit, and erect shade structures and plant trees where necessary. Educators will encourage/educate children to seek out shaded areas to play in.
- Children will learn about skin and how to protect skin from the sun, educational games and activities should be incorporated into planned activities.  
<http://www.actcancer.org/sun-smart/resources-childhood.aspx>
- Educators and parents will be provided with educational material on the importance of sun protection. The service will regularly reinforce and promote this policy through newsletters, parent/committee meetings, website, educator inductions and enrolments etc.
- All educators are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the SunSmart UV Index to assist them better implement this policy at <https://www.myuv.com.au/>.
- Educators are to complete the Generation SunSmart PL on the Cancer Council Website via the following link <https://www.generationsunsmart.com.au.>

| <i>Policy Action</i> | <i>Process Development</i>   |
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| Source               | <p>NCAC FDCQA Policy Templates 2012<br/>The Cancer Council NSW. (2015). <i>SunSmart childcare: A policy guide for service providers</i>. Sydney</p> <p>Cancer Council ACT Website, <i>National Early Childhood Program</i> <a href="https://actcancer.org/prevention/sunsmart/act-schools-and-early-childhood-services/national-early-childhood-program/">https://actcancer.org/prevention/sunsmart/act-schools-and-early-childhood-services/national-early-childhood-program/</a></p> <p>National Quality Standards 2.1.1, 2.2, 3.2</p> <p>Education and Care Services National Regulation 168(2)(ii)</p> |

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