



SUN PROTECTION/HOT WEATHER POLICY

NQS 2.1, 2.2 Regulations 100, 113, 114, 168 (2) (a) (ii) Version 1.13

Rationale

Australia has the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world with 2 out of 3 people developing some form of skin cancer in their lifetime. Skin damage, including skin cancer, is the result of cumulative exposure to the sun and much of this damage occurs during childhood and adolescence. Research suggests that severe sunburn is a contributor to skin cancer and other forms of skin damage such as wrinkles, sunspots, blemishes and premature ageing. Most skin damage and skin cancer is, therefore, preventable. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all children and staff at Roxby Downs Children's Centre are protected from skin damage caused by the harmful rays of the sun, while still acknowledging the benefits of sunlight and Vitamin D for healthy development and growth.

The 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 every day from 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 levels are 3 and above. It is highly recommended that UV radiation levels are monitored, particularly during May as they still may be 3 or above depending on location. Cancer Council SA also recommends that particular care should be taken during these months between 10.00am – 3.00pm, when UV radiation levels are at their highest.

Aims

The aims of the Roxby Downs Children's Centre Sun Protection/Hot Weather policy is 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 number of related deaths
- Personal responsibility for and decision making about skin protection
- Awareness of the need for environmental changes at our Children's Centre to reduce the level of sun exposure when the UV radiation level is 3 and above.

Implementation

This policy is for implementation from 1 August to 30 April. Outside this time, care should also be taken when the ultraviolet radiation level is 3 (moderate) and above. Sunhats are required to be worn by children and staff when outdoors throughout the whole year.

The following strategies will be strongly encouraged:

- The use of clothing that protects the skin, including the shoulders
- Children and educators wear a broad brimmed or legionnaire style hat without cords or toggles whenever they are outside. Children who do not have a hat will be required to play inside.

- Use the shade of trees, pergolas, shade sails and the verandah whenever possible outdoors
- Apply a broad-spectrum, water resistant sunscreen with a SPF of at least 30+ to lean, dry skin, 15-20 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. Parents will be encouraged to apply sunscreen to their child at the beginning of the day. Staff will assist children to re-apply sunscreen prior to afternoon outside play. A generic sunscreen suitable for children will be provided by the Children's Centre for this purpose. Parents will need to provide for any specific sunscreen requirements their child may need by providing a named container of sunscreen and a Medication Authority letter from their doctor or chemist.
- Reinforcing the SunSmart message in all Children's Centre activities and in general service procedures is an important strategy in the adaption of skin protection behaviours. Staff will be encouraged to model appropriate SunSmart strategies in all service activities. Skin cancer prevention 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 Children's Centre Sun Protection/Hot Weather Policy will be evaluated on a two yearly basis. Policy issues will be discussed at staff and parent meetings.
- Educators will not apply sunscreen to those children who are under the age of 6 months unless requested by parents. Children under the age of 6 months will be kept in a shaded area and encouraged to wear a hat.
- Educators will record the forecast UV level each day after checking the website [www.....](http://www.bom.gov.au)and this will be displayed at each sign in bench.
- As we have effective cooling systems which are regularly maintained, the Centre will remain open for normal operating hours in hot weather. In the event of a power failure, families may choose to collect their child/ren early, or if this is not possible, water and other suitable activities will be provided. In the vent of a blackout or breakdown of the air-conditioning system staff will activate an early dismissal. Early dismissal (1 hour prior to regular closure) is only to be evoked where the forecast is at least 40 degrees Celsius.

Early Dismissal Procedure:

- Notify District Office of intention to evoke early dismissal
- Notify parents of early dismissal
- Staff are to remain on duty on days of early dismissal
- Children who are unable to be collected must be adequately supervised by staff and kept as comfortable as possible.
- The interests of the children are to be paramount considerations if developing an early dismissal clause and procedures.
- In the case of an extended breakdown of the cooling system during hot weather the Children's Centre Director will undertake a risk management process and work with the District Office to manage the situation.

Strategies to reduce the risk of heat illness

Shade

Activities conducted in periods of hot weather are to be undertaken in shaded areas. Set up activities under the shade of trees, pergolas, verandas and shad sails.

Outdoor temperature

When the temperature outside is 38 degrees Celsius or above, children will be required to play inside inside. They may also play under the veranda outside the building or in the sandpit when the misting system is activated. The temperature will be monitored through the use of an outside thermometer.

Drinks

Children are to be frequently offered water or fluids. Drinking water will be accessible to children at all times.

Clothing

Parents are encouraged to dress children in clothing that minimises heat gain, in layers that can be easily removed during activities and of a type that is sun-safe. Children and staff are to wear hats outside at all times. Everyone must wear clothing that covers their shoulders when outside.

Lunch

The Children's Centre supplies fridges to store children's food.

Equipment

Outdoor equipment will be assessed by a staff member to ensure it is not hot enough to place children at risk of burn injuries.

CREATED: July 2012

REVIEWED: September 2014, April 2016, December 2016, July 2017

TO BE REVIEWED: July 2019

SOURCED: Cancer Council SA www.cancersa.org.au
Sunsmart.org.au
Healthy SA www.healthysa.sa.gov.au
DECD – OHS&W: HR – UV Radiation/Sun Protection Procedure
DECD – OHS&W: HR – Heat Stress Procedure
DECD – Hazard Alert No. 17, December 2012
DECD – Hazard Alert No HA39 – Cords, Drawstrings and Toggle Entrapment 2017

Date reviewed:	Reason:
1/12/16	New Sunsmart guidelines released by Cancer Council SA – to extend period of sun protection to Terms 1, 3 and 4
1/12/16	There was no outside temperature guideline for extreme heat conditions – this has been set to no outside play if 38°C or above to ensure children's health and safety.
July 2017	DECD hazard alert HA39 – cords, drawstrings and toggle entrapment