

SunSmart Policy



Background

Jointly funded by Cancer Council Victoria and VicHealth, the SunSmart program leads the world in skin cancer prevention. UV damage accumulated during childhood and adolescence is associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life. Infants and toddlers up to four years of age are particularly vulnerable to UV damage. The sun's UV can't be seen or felt. Whatever the weather, it's important for people of all skin types to use sun protection whenever UV levels are three or higher.

This SunSmart Policy has been developed to ensure children attending programs at Beaconsfield Neighbourhood Centre are protected from and educated about skin damage caused by harmful UV rays. It is to be implemented throughout the year when UV levels are 3 or higher with emphasis on the months between September and March.

Purpose

The aims of the policy are to:

- ensure all children, staff and volunteers are protected from exposure to UV rays,
- ensure the outdoor environment provides shade for children, staff and volunteers,
- ensure children are encouraged and supported to develop independent sun protection skills,
- support duty of care and regulatory requirements,
- support appropriate OHS strategies to minimise UV risk and associated harms for staff, volunteers and visitors.

Policy statements

Beaconsfield Neighbourhood Centre will provide UV index information at the door to the Children's Room. By teaching sensible sun protection habits from an early age and implementing sun protection measures, early childhood services can play a significant role in reducing skin cancer risk. Staff, parents and volunteers are to act as role models by adhering to the following five forms of sun protection:

1. Slip on sun protective clothing

Families are encouraged to dress children in cool, loose-fitting clothing that covers as much of the skin as possible. If a child is wearing a singlet top or dress with thin straps, add a t-shirt or shirt before outdoor play.

2. Slop on sunscreen

Parents should apply SPF50+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen to their children before arriving at the Centre. The Centre will have sunscreen available for use by members if required and for reapplication during the day. Apply sunscreen to any skin not covered by clothing 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapply every two hours or after water activities.

To help develop independent skills ready for school, children from three years of age should be given opportunities to apply their own sunscreen under the supervision of their parents.

3. Slap on a hat

The Centre requires children to wear hats that protect their face, neck and ears whenever they are outside. Children who do not have their hats with them will be asked to play in an area protected from the sun.

4. Seek shade

Children will be encouraged to use available areas of shade for outdoor play.

A shade assessment is conducted regularly to determine the current availability and quality of shade.

5. Slide on protective sunglasses [if practical]

If practical for the setting, close fitting, wrap-around sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard 1067 (Sunglasses: Category 2, 3 or 4) and cover as much of the eye area as possible can be worn. Wearing a hat with a brim that shades the eyes can also reduce UV radiation to the eyes by 50%.

Roles and Responsibilities

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| Committee/Centre Coordinator | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure that legislative obligations are met.• Take reasonable steps to ensure that the nominated supervisor, educators and staff follow the sun protection policy and procedures.• Ensure adequate shading over areas for both active and passive outdoor play.• Ensure staff dress code includes sun protective clothing and hats. |
| Staff/Educators | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement the sun protection policy and procedures as documented.• Monitor the daily sun protection times for Beaconsfield and manage sun safe outdoor play and learning accordingly.• Ensure access to an adequate supply of sunscreen for children, educators and staff.• Monitor, and where practical, adjust outdoor learning and play experiences to minimise direct and indirect UV exposure.• Utilise and role-model sun safe practices.• Communicate with families about SunSmart practices in general and specific expectations within the service (e.g., wearing protective clothing, sun protective hat styles). |
| Parents/Guardians | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be aware of, support and follow the service's sun protection policy and procedures.• Ensure children are dressed in appropriate sun protective clothing. |

Legislative requirements

Occupational Health and Safety Act (2004)

Children's Services Act 1996

Children's Services Regulations 2020

Associated Documents

Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy

Enrolment and Orientation Policy

Excursion Policy

Governance and Management Policy

Interactions with children

Water Safety Policy

Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Policy

Document History

| Version | Title | Author | Authorised | Date | Changes to Previous |
|---------|-----------------|--------------------|------------|----------|---|
| 1 | SunSmart Policy | Centre Coordinator | COM | Sep 2017 | Original - taken from 3YO and Occasional Care Policies & Procedures |
| 2 | SunSmart Policy | Centre Coordinator | COM | Dec 2019 | Minor |
| 3 | SunSmart Policy | Centre Coordinator | COM | Aug 2024 | Review and update |