

Sample SunSmart policy for family day care



Services are welcome to copy this SunSmart policy directly and use it as their own or incorporate all of the main points into their own SunSmart policy. All parts underlined are essential and must be included.

< service >'s SUNSMART policy

Rationale

A healthy balance of the sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation exposure is important for health.

Too much UV from the sun can cause sunburn, skin damage, eye damage and skin cancer. Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world. Two in three Australians will develop some form of skin cancer before they are 70. Overexposure to UV during childhood and adolescence is a major cause of skin cancer.

Sun protection is needed whenever UV levels reach three and above. In Victoria average UV levels are three and above from September to the end of April. During these months extra care is needed between 10am – 3pm when UV levels reach their peak.

Too little UV from the sun can lead to low vitamin D levels. Vitamin D regulates calcium levels in the blood. It is also necessary for the development and maintenance of healthy bones, muscles and teeth and for general health. From May to August in Victoria, average UV levels are below three so sun protection isn't usually needed during these months unless in alpine regions, near highly reflective surfaces such as snow or outside for extended periods.

Objectives

The goals of the SunSmart Policy are to:

- Ensure that all children and staff maintain a healthy UV exposure balance.
- Encourage children and staff to use a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV Index levels reach 3 and above.
- Encourage safe UV exposure whenever UV Index levels are below 3.
- Work towards a safe outdoor environment that provides shade for children and staff at appropriate times.
- Assist children to be responsible for their own sun protection.
- Ensure that families and new staff are informed of the service's SunSmart policy.

~ Where applicable, care providers are encouraged to access the daily SunSmart UV Alert to assist with the implementation of this policy.

From September to April in Victoria

When average UV Index levels reach 3 and above.

- Children and staff use a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV Index levels reach 3 and above. Extra care is taken between 10am and 3pm when UV Index levels reach their peak during the day.
- Our SunSmart practises consider the special needs of infants. Babies under 12 months are kept out of direct sun.

1. Shade

- Care providers make sure there is sufficient shade in the outdoor area.
- The availability of shade is considered when planning excursions and all 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.

2. Clothing

- When outside, children are required to wear loose fitting clothing that covers as much skin as possible. Tops with elbow length sleeves, and if possible, collars and knee length or longer style shorts and skirts are best. (Please note: Singlet tops do not offer enough protection and are therefore not recommended.)

3. Hats

- All children are required to wear hats that protect their face, neck and ears, i.e. legionnaire, broad-brimmed or bucket hats. (Baseball caps do not offer enough protection and are therefore not recommended.)

4. Sunglasses [SUGGESTED]

- Children and staff are encouraged to wear 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.

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5. Sunscreen

- SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen is available for care provider and children's use. Sunscreen is applied at least 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapplied every two hours if outdoors.
- With parental consent, children with naturally very dark skin (skin that rarely or never burns) are not required to wear sunscreen.

Staff OHS and Role modelling

As part of OHS UV risk controls and role modeling, care providers:

- wear sun protective hats, clothing and sunglasses when outside
- apply SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen
- seek shade whenever possible
- Families and visitors are encouraged to use a combination of sun protection measures (sun protective clothing and hats, sunglasses and sunscreen) when attending the service.

When enrolling their child, families are:

- Informed of the service's SunSmart 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, longer style shorts)
- Asked to provide SPF 30+, broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen for their child
- Required to give permission for staff to apply sunscreen to their child

From May to August in Victoria

When average UV Index levels are below 3.

- To help maintain winter vitamin D levels, sun protection measures are not used from May until August unless the UV Index level reaches 3 and above.
- Sun protection measures are only required when in alpine regions, near highly reflective surfaces such as snow or outside for extended periods.

Planned experiences

- Programs on sun protection and healthy UV exposure levels are incorporated into planned experiences.
- Care providers and families are provided with information on sun protection and vitamin D through family newsletters, notice boards and meetings.

Review

- Management and care providers monitor and review the effectiveness of the SunSmart policy every three years and revise the policy when required.
- Next policy review:

Relevant Documents / Links

1. Children's Services Regulations (2009): Section 97, Outdoor space (1c)
2. CCQA Principles: Quality Improvement and Accreditation System (QIAS) Quality Practices Guide (2005) – Principle 6.5
3. Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF) – Outcomes 2 and 3 – Birth to five years
4. Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Guidelines for Early Childhood Settings: Section 2: Physical activity
5. Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
6. Radiation Protection Standard for Occupational Exposure to Ultraviolet Radiation (2006) ARPANSA Radiation Protection Series No. 12 <http://www.arpansa.gov.au/publications/codes/ps12.cfm>
7. Safe Work Australia: Guidance Note for the Protection of Workers from the Ultraviolet Radiation in Sunlight
8. SunSmart UV Alert (issued whenever the UV Index reaches 3 and above) sunsmart.com.au or www.bom.gov.au/weather/uv/
9. Sun protection: sunsmart.com.au
10. UV and vitamin D: sunsmart.com.au/vitamin_d