



Sample SunSmart policy for early childhood centres

Early childhood and childcare centres are welcome to copy this SunSmart policy directly and use it as their own to suit their setting.

Please note: To comply with SunSmart guidelines, ensure your policy states sun protection is used during terms 1, 3 and 4 (August until the end of April) and whenever UV radiation levels reach 3 or above at other times.

Poonindie's SunSmart policy

This policy applies to all centre events on and off-site.

Rationale

A balance of ultraviolet (UV) radiation exposure is important for health. Too much of the sun's UV radiation can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. Sun exposure in the first ten years of life is a major factor in determining future skin cancer risk.

Too little UV radiation from the sun can lead to low vitamin D levels. Vitamin D is essential for healthy bones and muscles and for general health.

Objectives

This SunSmart policy has been developed to:

- encourage children and staff to use a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV Index levels reach 3 and above
- work towards a safe outdoor environment that provides shade for children and staff at appropriate times
- ensure all children and staff have some UV radiation exposure for vitamin D
- assist children to be responsible for their own sun protection
- ensure families and new staff are informed of the centre's SunSmart policy.

Legislation

This policy relates to the following National Law and Regulations:

- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010:*
 - Section 167 – Protection from harm and hazards
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011:*
 - Regulation 100 – Risk assessment must be conducted before excursion
 - Regulation 113 – Outdoor space – natural environment
 - Regulation 114 – Outdoor space – shade
 - Regulation 168: Policies and procedures (2)(a)(ii) – sun protection

National Quality Standards

All of the following SunSmart procedures link to: Quality area 2: Children's health and safety.

There are also links to:

- Quality area 1: Educational program and practice
- Quality area 3: Physical environment
- Quality area 5: Relationships with children
- Quality area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
- Quality area 7: Leadership and service management

Procedures

Staff are encouraged to access the daily sun protection times to assist with the implementation of this policy.

We use a combination of sun protection measures for all outdoor activities during terms 1, 3 and 4 (August until the end of April) and whenever UV radiation levels reach 3 and above at other times.

1. Clothing

Quality area 2: Children's health and safety

When outside, children are required to wear loose fitting clothing that cover as much skin as possible. Clothing made from cool, closely woven fabric is recommended. Tops with elbow length sleeves, collars and knee length or longer style shorts and skirts are best.

If a child is wearing a singlet top or dress they wear a t-shirt/shirt over the top before going outdoors.

2. Sunscreen

Quality area 2: Children's health and safety

- SPF 30 or higher, broad spectrum and water resistant sunscreen is available for staff and children's use
- sunscreen is applied at least twenty minutes before going outdoors and reapplied every two hours if outdoors
- with parental consent, children with naturally very dark skin are not required to wear sunscreen to help with vitamin D requirements
- children, once old enough, are encouraged to apply their own sunscreen under the supervision of staff.

3. Hats

Quality area 2: Children's health and safety

All children are required to wear hats that protect their face, neck and ears, i.e. legionnaire, broad brimmed or bucket hats. Baseball or peak caps are not considered a suitable alternative.

4. Shade

Quality area 2: Children's health and safety Quality area 3: Physical environment

- a shade audit is conducted regularly to determine the current availability and quality of shade
- management makes sure there is a sufficient number of shelters and trees providing shade in the outdoor area
- the availability of shade is considered when planning excursions and all other outdoor activities
- Outdoor activities are scheduled outside the peak UV radiation times or in the shade where possible.
- 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.

5. Sunglasses [optional]

Quality area 2: Children's health and safety

Children and staff are encouraged to wear close fitting, wraparound sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard AS/NZS 1067:2003 (Sunglasses: lens category 2, 3 or 4) and cover as much of the eye area as possible.

6. Babies

Quality area 2: Children's health and safety

Our SunSmart practices consider the special needs of infants. All babies under twelve months are not exposed to the direct sun when UV radiation levels are 3 and above.

Infants should be protected by using shade, clothing and hats. Sunscreen should be applied to small areas of exposed skin not protected by clothing or hats.

7. Enrolment and information for families

Quality area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities

When enrolling their child, families are:

- informed of the centre'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. shirts with collars and elbow length sleeves, longer style dresses and shorts)
- asked to provide SPF 30 or higher, broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen for their child
- required to give permission for staff to apply sunscreen to their child
- families and visitors are encouraged to use a combination of sun protection measures (sun protective clothing and hats, shade, sunglasses and sunscreen) when attending the centre.

8. Staff WHS and role modelling

Quality area 5: Relationships with children

As part of WHS UV risk controls and role modelling, when the UV radiation is 3 and above, staff:

- wear sun protective hats, clothing and sunglasses when outside
- apply SPF 30 or higher broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen
- seek shade whenever possible.

9. Education

Quality area 1: Educational program and practice

Quality area 5: Relationships with children

Quality area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities

- sun protection and vitamin D are incorporated into the learning and development program
- the SunSmart policy is reinforced through staff and children's activities and displays
- staff and families are provided with information on sun protection and vitamin D through family newsletters, noticeboards and the centre's website.

10. Policy review

Quality area 7: Leadership and service management

Management and staff monitor and review the effectiveness of the SunSmart policy and revise the policy when required (at least once every three years).

Date of next policy review: . . . December 2018.