

Early Learning Sun Protection Policy

1. Policy Statement

Uniting Early Learning is committed to:

- Promoting sun protection strategies for children, families, staff, and visitors to minimise the harmful effects of over exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation, while allowing some UV exposure for vitamin D requirements.
- Ensuring that curriculum planning will minimise over exposure to UV radiation and promote independent sun protection skills and sun safe strategies.
- Providing information to children, educators, staff, volunteers, parents, and others at the service about the harmful and beneficial effects of exposure to the sun's UV radiation.
- Meeting duty of care and legal requirements to minimise risk.
- As a health promoting service, we will promote sun protection measures for children, educators, staff and families through learning, policies, creating a safe and healthy physical and social environment and developing community links and partnerships.

2. Scope

This policy applies to the following persons:

- Approved provider and persons with management or control
- Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge
- ECT, Educators, FDC educators and all other staff
- Parents/guardians
- Contractors, volunteers, and students.

3. Executive Summary

Early childhood is recognised as a major stage of life where prolonged exposure to UV radiation can have a detrimental lifelong impact on health. Minimising exposure to reduce the damaging effects of the sun is required. Sun protection measures are essential during local sun protection times (issued whenever UV levels are three (3) and above). Babies less than 12 months of age are not to be exposed to direct sunlight when the UV index is three (3) or above.

Uniting Early Learning will utilise a combination of strategies to meet the Occupational Health & Safety, legal requirements, and duty of care to children, staff, volunteers, and visitors to minimise UV risk and associated harms.

Educators play a significant role in modelling appropriate sun protection measures and through intentional program planning.

Educators promote sun safe play by:

- Maximising the utilisation of outdoor shade areas
- Consistently implementing routines to facilitate the wearing of sun safe clothing, hats, and use of sunscreen
- Engaging a collaborative and educative approach with families to increase knowledge and understanding.

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- Teaching children, according to their capability level, independent sun protection skills
- Use of SunSmart app as part of intentional teaching
- Encouraging parents to apply sunscreen to their child prior to attending the service.
- Providing sunscreen to children who do not have access to it.

4. Current Environmental Context

Too much of the sun's UV can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage, and skin cancer. Infants and toddlers up to four years of age are particularly vulnerable to UV damage due to lower levels of melanin and a thinner stratum corneum (the outermost layer of skin).

UV damage accumulated during childhood and adolescence is strongly associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life. Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world, with two in three Australians developing some form of skin cancer before age 70. A combination of sun protection measures is needed for all outdoor activities from mid-August to the end of April and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above the level that can damage skin and eyes.

To be sure you are using sun protection when you need to (when levels are three and above) check and display the daily sun protection times for your location (available in the weather section of the newspaper, on the [SunSmart website](#) or [MyUV](#) on the free SunSmart app and the free widget that can be added to websites).

It is recommended that services apply for SunSmart membership and registration:

- [Victoria -SunSmart Registration](#)
- [Tasmania - SunSmart Registration](#)
- [Achievement Program](#) -Victorian services only

Monitoring and review

Management, educators, and staff monitor and review the effectiveness of the SunSmart policy and revise the policy when required (at least once every three years) by completing a policy review and membership renewal with [SunSmart](#). SunSmart policy updates and requirements will be made available to educators, staff, families, and visitors.

Uniting Early Learning acknowledges the contribution of the Central Gippsland Health Promotion Officers, in the development of this policy.

Forms

[UF-EL-027-Authority to apply insect repellent form 2.3.docx](#)

Review

This policy is due for review by September 2028.

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5. Responsibilities relating to the Sun Protection Policy

Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	ECT, Educators, FDC educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers, and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Ensure that this policy is up to date with current SunSmart recommendations at SunSmart R168	R				
Take reasonable steps to ensure that all educators and staff follow this policy R170	R	✓			
Ensure that copies of the Sun Protection Policy is readily accessible and available to all staff, volunteers, and families R171	R	✓	✓		✓
Ensure parents are informed about the Sun Protection Policy on enrolment, including the need to provide an appropriate sunhat and clothing for sun protection (refer to Glossary) for their child when attending the service R171	R	✓	✓		✓
Ensure Diversity and cultural practices are considered when implementing this policy and sun protection practices	✓	✓	✓		✓
Provide authorisation for staff to apply sunscreen prior to their child commencing at the service, this is part of the child's enrolment record (refer to Glossary)		✓		✓	
Where required provide authorisation (or provide an alternative repellent) for the service staff to apply insect repellent where required after sunscreen has been applied (refer Authority to apply insect repellent form 2.1)		✓		✓	
Provide a named, SunSmart approved sunhat (refer to Glossary) for their child's use at the service				✓	
Provide appropriate spare sunhats and alternative clothing as required, for children and adults that will be laundered after each use	✓	✓	✓		
Encourage children to seek shade when playing outside and utilise shaded areas for outdoor equipment that is not fixed during the times specified in the <i>Current Environmental Context</i> of this policy		✓	✓		✓
Encourage children to wear sunhats when travelling to and from the service		✓	✓	✓	✓

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R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Provide a supply of SPF50+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen for use on all persons to whom this policy applies S167	R	✓	✓		✓
The dress code for children, educators, and staff to follow the sun protection guidelines: - Loose-fitting clothing that covers as much skin as possible. Clothing made from cool, densely woven fabric is recommended. - Families are asked to choose tops with elbow-length sleeves, higher necklines (or collars) and knee-length or longer-style shorts and skirts for their child. - Rash vests or t-shirts are used for outdoor swimming. - If a child is wearing a singlet top or shoestring dress, they will be asked to choose a t-shirt/shirt to wear over this before going outdoors. - All children and educators wear hats that protect their face, neck, and ears, such as legionnaire, broad-brimmed or bucket style. Peak caps and visors are not considered a suitable alternative. Where practical, children and educators 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.		✓	✓	✓	✓
Store sunscreen in a cool place and monitor the expiry date – including for sunscreen supplied by parents/guardians S167	R	✓	✓		✓
Where required to apply insect repellent, apply sunscreen first		✓	✓		✓
Apply sunscreen to their child before the commencement of each session				✓	
To help develop independent skills, children are given opportunities to apply their own sunscreen under supervision/assistance of educators/staff and are encouraged to do so		✓	✓		✓

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Apply sunscreen (<i>refer to Glossary</i>) to children's exposed skin – except in cases where parents have not given authority. This should be done 20 minutes before going outdoors. Children, where appropriate, will be encouraged to apply sunscreen with the assistance of an educator (sunscreen is to be reapplied every two hours) <i>S167</i>	R	✓	✓		
Ensure age-appropriate sun protection education is incorporated into the program: • Sun protective behaviours • UV radiation • Health risks associated with UV exposure		✓	✓		✓
The SunSmart policy is reinforced through educator and children's activities and displays.		✓	✓		✓
SunSmart practices consider the special needs of infants. All babies under 12 months are kept out of direct sun during the sun protection times (when UV levels are three and above the best sun protection can be achieved when a combination of physical sun protection measures such as shade, clothing and hats are used. For those small areas of exposed skin not protected by clothing or hats, apply sunscreen to infants six months and older. The widespread use of sunscreen on babies under 6 months old is not recommended. <i>S167</i>	R	✓	✓		✓
Ensure alternative arrangements are in place for children who are unable to be protected from sun exposure by using sunscreen <i>S167</i>	R	✓	✓		✓
Ensure that children without appropriate sunhats or clothing for sun protection play in the shade or in a suitable area protected from the sun. <i>S167</i>	R	✓	✓		✓
Ensure there are adequate shaded outdoor areas, particularly in high-use areas e.g. where children can play, learn, and eat <i>R114</i>	R	✓	✓		
Ensure that the availability of shade is considered in a risk assessment prior to conducting excursions and other outdoor events <i>R100</i>	R	✓	✓		✓

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R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Reinforce this policy by providing information on sun protection and the importance of vitamin D to a healthy body (available on the SunSmart website) to service users via newsletters, noticeboards, meetings, and websites etc.	✓	✓	✓		✓
Sun protection and the importance of vitamin D to a healthy body are incorporated into the learning and development program.		✓	✓		✓
Ensure educators and staff have access to professional development and teaching resources about sun protection education	✓	✓	✓		
Ensure that program planning includes the application of a combination of sun protection measures for outdoor activities during the times specified in the <i>Current Environmental Context</i> of this policy		✓	✓		
Ensure the daily sun protection times on the SunSmart website are accessed to assist with the implementation of this policy		✓	✓		✓
Co-operate with the approved provider with respect to any action taken by the employer to comply with the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004		✓	✓		✓
Record daily UV rates as part of daily Safety Check list SUNSMART APP LINK		✓	✓		✓

6. Legislation/Regulations

[Australian Government Therapeutics Goods Administration \(TGA\) – Australian regulatory guidelines for sunscreens.](#)

[Cancer Council Australia](#)

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: Section 167

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulation 100, 113, 114 and 168

[Eye and face protection - Sunglasses and fashion spectacles AS/NZS 1067.1:2016.](#)

National Quality Standard Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety

AS/NZS 4685.0:2017, Playground equipment and surfacing - Development, installation, inspection, maintenance, and operation.6.2.1 General considerations, 6.3.9 Shade and sun protection, Appendix A Shade, and sun protection.

Safe Work Australia: [Sun protection for outdoor workers](#)

Safe Work Australia: [Guide on exposure to solar ultraviolet radiation \(UVR\)](#) (2019)

[Sun protective clothing: Evaluation and classification AS/4399:2020](#)

[Sunscreens: Evaluation and classification AS/NZS 2604:2012](#)

[Knitted and woven shade fabrics AS 4174:2018](#)

[Sun Smart Tasmania](#)

[Sun Smart Victoria](#)

ARPANSA [Radiation Protection Standard for Occupational Exposure to Ultraviolet Radiation](#) (2006)

[Get Up & Grow: Healthy Eating and physical activity for early Childhood – Resource Collection.](#)

[Victorian School building Authority \(VSBA\) Building Quality Standards handbook \(BQSH Sections 5.1.3, 5.1.4 Shade Areas May 2021](#)

Tasmanian Licensing Standards for Centre Based Child Care (2014) Standard 14

Children's Services amendment Act 2019

Children's Services Regulations 2020

7. Related Documents

Uniting

Diversity Statement

Child Safety Commitment Statement

Child Safety Code of Conduct

Child Safety Policy

Code of Conduct

Duty of Care Policy

Reconciliation, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Policy

WHS & Wellbeing Policy

Early Learning

Educational Program and Practice Policy

Excursion, Regular Outings and Service Events Policy

Nutrition Oral health and Active Play Policy

Workplace Health and Safety Policy

Supervision of Children Policy

Staff orientation checklist

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