

Early Learning

Sun Protection Policy

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.

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.

They 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
- 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.

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 at www.sunsmart.com.au or myuv.com.au 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** - <https://www.sunsmart.com.au/advice-for/schools-early-childhood> >
- **Tasmania** - <https://www.cancer.org.au/cancer-information/causes-and-prevention/sun-safety/be-sunsmart/sunsmart-in-schools/tas>

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- **Achievement Program** - <https://www.achievementprogram.health.vic.gov.au/> - Victorian services only

Attachment 2a: Responsibilities relating to the Sun Protection Policy

Attachment 2b: SunSmart procedures

Reference/Sources

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

Uniting Child Safety Policy – Uniting adopts the Uniting Church Australia National Child Safety Policy Framework, 2019 and the principles of this Policy Framework

This protocol is shared with the whole service community with opportunities to provide feedback/input

- 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
- Australian Government Therapeutics Goods Administration (TGA) – Australian regulatory guidelines for sunscreens: [4. Labelling and advertising–directions for use of the product](#)
- Cancer Council Australia: www.cancer.org.au/sunsmart
- 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](#)
- [Sunscreen products: Evaluation and classification AS/NZS 2604:2012](#)
- [AS 4174:2018 Knitted and woven shade fabrics](#)
- SunSmart Tasmania: <https://www.cancer.org.au/cancer-information/causes-and-prevention/sun-safety>
- SunSmart Victoria: www.sunsmart.com.au
- Victorian School Building Authority (VSBA) [Building Quality Standards Handbook \(BQSH\)](#): Section 5.1.3, 5.1.4 Shade Areas (May 2021)
- ARPANSA [Radiation Protection Standard for Occupational Exposure to Ultraviolet Radiation](#) (2006)

Get Up & Grow: Healthy eating and physical activity for early childhood. Department of Health resources. Particularly Section 2 of the Director/Coordinator Book and the Staff Book:

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/phd-early-childhood-nutrition-resources>

- Tasmanian Licensing Standards for Centre Based Child Care (2014) Standard 14
- Children’s Services amendment Act 2019
- Children’s Services Regulations 2020
- The achievement program

Authorisation

This policy was adopted by Uniting Early Learning on 24/10/2022

Review

This policy is due for review by 24/10/2023

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Attachment 2a - Responsibilities relating to the Sun Protection Policy

Approved Provider

- Ensuring that this policy is up to date with current SunSmart recommendations:
www.sunsmart.com.au
- Ensuring 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
- Providing a supply of SPF 30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen for use on all persons to whom this policy applies
- Ensuring and obtaining parent's authority 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](#))
- Ensuring children wear appropriate sunhats, clothing for sun protection and sunscreen when attending the service ([refer to Glossary](#))
- Providing appropriate spare sunhats and alternative clothing as required, for children and adults that will be laundered after each use
- Ensure there are adequate shaded outdoor areas, particularly in high-use areas e.g. where children can play, learn and eat
- Ensuring that program planning includes the application of a combination of sun protection measures for outdoor activities during the times specified in the *Current Environmental Context* of this policy
- Ensuring that the availability of shade is considered in a risk assessment prior to conducting excursions and other outdoor events
- Ensuring that information on sun protection is incorporated into the educational program (refer to the SunSmart website)
- Ensuring educators, staff, children and other participants at the service wear sunhats, clothing for sun protection and sunglasses (optional) when outside, apply sunscreen and seek shade during the times specified in the *Current Environmental Context* of this policy
- Ensuring educators and staff are aware of the special needs of infants including the need to keep babies under 12 months out of direct sun whenever UV levels are three (3) and above
- Reinforcing this policy by providing information on sun protection (available on the SunSmart website) to service users via newsletters, noticeboards, meetings, and websites etc
- Ensure that appropriate internet is available for services to access SunSmart app

Responsible Person

- Ensuring Diversity and cultural practices are considered when implementing this policy and sun protection practices.
- Ensuring 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
- The dress code for children, educators and staff 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.

Sun hat, such as legionnaire, broad-brimmed or bucket-style

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.

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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.

- Providing a supply of sunscreen for use on all persons to whom this policy applies and regularly checking sunscreen expiry date.
- Ensuring and obtaining parent’s authority 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](#))

To help develop independent skills ready for school, children from three years of age are given opportunities to apply their own sunscreen under supervision of educators/staff and are encouraged to do so.

Age-appropriate sun protection education is incorporated into the program:

- sun protective behaviours
- UV radiation
- health risks associated with UV exposure.
- Educators and staff have access to professional development and teaching resources about sun protection education.
- providing appropriate spare sunhats and alternative clothing as required, for children and adults that will be laundered after each use
- Ensuring that program planning includes the application of a combination of sun protection measures for outdoor activities during the times specified in the *Current Environmental Context* of this policy
- Ensuring alternative arrangements are in place for children who are unable to be protected from sun exposure by using sunscreen
- Ensuring that the availability of shade is considered in a risk assessment prior to conducting excursions and other outdoor events
- 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.
- Reinforcing this policy by providing information on sun protection (available on the SunSmart website) to service users via newsletters, noticeboards, meetings and websites etc.
- Ensuring the daily sun protection times on the SunSmart website are accessed to assist with the implementation of this policy
- Co-operating with their employer 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](#)

Educators

- Ensuring and obtaining parent’s authority 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](#))
- Ensuring that program planning includes the application of a combination of sun protection measures for outdoor activities during the times specified in the *Current Environmental Context* of this policy

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- Ensuring that the availability of shade is considered in a risk assessment prior to conducting excursions and other outdoor events
- Age-appropriate sun protection education is incorporated into the program:
- Sun protective behaviours
- UV radiation
- Health risks associated with UV exposure.
- The dress code for children, educators and staff 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.

Sun hat, such as legionnaire, broad-brimmed or bucket-style

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.

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.

- Reinforcing this policy by providing information on sun protection (available on the SunSmart website) to service users via newsletters, noticeboards, meetings and websites etc
- Ensuring the daily sun protection times on the SunSmart website are accessed to assist with the implementation of this policy
- Applying sunscreen ([refer to Glossary](#)) 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)
- Storing sunscreen in a cool place and monitoring the expiry date, including sunscreen supplied by parents
- Ensuring that children without appropriate sunhats or clothing for sun protection play in the shade or in a suitable area protected from the sun
- Encouraging children to seek shade when playing outside and utilise shaded areas for outdoor equipment that is not fixed during the times specified in the *Current Environmental Context* of this policy
- Encouraging parents to encourage children to wear sunhats when travelling to and from the service
- Ensuring that sun protection strategies are a priority when planning excursions
- Co-operating with their employer with respect to any action taken by the employer to comply with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*

Parents

- Providing authority 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](#))
- Applying sunscreen to their child before the commencement of each session during the times specified in the *Current Environmental Context* of this policy

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- Providing, at their own expense, an alternative sunscreen to be left at the service if their child has a particular sensitivity to the sunscreen provided by the service
- Providing a named, SunSmart approved sunhat ([refer to Glossary](#)) for their child's use at the service
- Encouraging children to wear sunhats when travelling to and from the service
- ensuring children wear appropriate clothing (as listed above) for sun protection. Sunglasses are (optional)
- Ensuring spare sunhats are laundered after each use

Note: Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures

Learning and skills

- Sun protection and the importance of vitamin D to a healthy body are incorporated into the learning and development program.
- The SunSmart policy is reinforced through educator and children's activities and displays.

Engaging children, educators, staff and families

Educators, staff and families are provided with information on sun protection and vitamin D through family newsletters, service handbook, noticeboards and the service's website:

When enrolling their child, families are:

- Informed of the service's SunSmart policy
- Asked to provide a suitable sun protective hat, covering clothing and sunscreen for their child
- Required to give permission for educators to apply sunscreen to their child
- Encouraged to use SunSmart measures themselves when at the service

As part of OHS UV risk controls and role-modelling, educators, staff, and visitors:

- Wear a suitable sun protective hat, covering clothing and, if practical, sunglasses
- Apply sunscreen
- Seek shade whenever possible

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 at sunsmart.com.au.

SunSmart policy updates and requirements will be made available to educators, staff, families, and visitors.

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