



# Hot Weather and Sun Safe Policy

1998, 2010, 2013, 2015, 2017

## Rationale

National Quality Standard 2.3.2 requires that *Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury* (Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority).

Children are at greater risk of suffering from heat illness than adults. A child's ability to respond to environmental heat and acclimatise to heat is due to physiological differences.

Australia has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. Over-exposure to ultraviolet radiation (UVR) from the sun causes permanent damage to skin and increases the risk of skin cancer. You cannot see or feel UVR - heat or high temperatures are not an indication of UVR radiation. An UVR Index of level 3 or above can damage your skin and eyes and can lead to skin cancer. Ultraviolet radiation levels are highest between 10am and 2pm (or 11am and 3pm during daylight saving), when children are at Kindergarten and Occasional Care. Details of daily UVR levels are available in the newspaper's weather page or at <http://www.bom.gov.au/sa/uv/>

However, UVR is also the best source of vitamin D which is needed for good health and to keep bones and muscles strong. Sensible sun protection shields our skin from the sun and does not put people at risk of vitamin D deficiency.

### **Children and Heat Stress**

*Children sweat less and get less evaporative cooling than adults. In warm and hot weather they have greater difficulty getting rid of heat; they look flushed, and feel hotter and more stressed than adults. Overweight children are particularly disadvantaged exercising in warm weather.*

*Children seem to be effective at "listening to their bodies" and regulating their physical activity. For this reason, children should always be allowed to exercise at their preferred intensity. They should never be urged to exercise harder or compelled to play strenuous sport in warm weather. If children appear distressed or complain of feeling unwell, they should stop exercising.*

*In warm weather wet sponging will make children feel more comfortable. Drinks should be provided for children playing sport.*  
Sports Medicine Australia (2011)

Outdoor activities are an integral part of a child's day at Ardtornish Children's Centre and protection measures are a part of our daily routine. Families and staff are able to reduce inappropriate levels of UVR exposure by providing a safe outdoor environment and by developing their own sun-safe policy and practices.

Revision description	Next review
Minor wording and ordering changes, and clarify when hats required related to UV	May 2019

## What You Can Expect

### Clothing

- Staff will be positive role models who practice skin protection behaviours, by wearing sun safe hats and appropriate clothing for all outdoor activities. They will remind children to wear their hats.
- We encourage all adults in the care environment to use effective UVR protection.
- Children will wear sun safe hats (broad-brimmed or Legionnaire style with **no** strings, offering face and neck protection) whenever they play outdoors in terms 1 and 4 and when the UVR is high over 3.
- Children who do not have hats will not be allowed outside to play in terms 1 and 4 and when the UVR is over 3.
- Staff will provide spare hats where no other alternative is available (i.e. when a group walk is taking place and the child cannot remain behind) or with reference to an individual child's circumstances but spare hats will not be lent to children as regular practice. Spare hats will be washed after use.
- Staff will encourage children to reassess their clothing choices throughout the day to meet weather conditions
- Staff will provide spare clothing if needed

### Sunscreen

- The Kindergarten provides sunscreen that parents can assist their children to apply in the mornings
- Children will receive a reminder at lunch time to reapply sun screen
- Children coming from OSHC will have access to their sunscreen in the morning
- Staff will supervise and assist children to identify and open sun screen containers, and encourage and support children to apply sunscreen provided by their parent
- Please note that staff do not apply sunscreen to children but will assist children to apply it themselves

### Outdoor Experiences

- On very hot days (over 40 degrees C), or when UVR readings are high (see below), only indoor or veranda activities will be provided.
- Additional shade may be set up to extend the usable play space on very hot days. The need for this will be determined by children's decisions about where they will play and providing comfort and protection from the sun.
- During warmer weather staff will check the temperature of surfaces in direct contact with the sun (including rubber play surfaces and swings) to ensure that they do not present a safety risk (if a hand cannot rest on such as surface for longer than 5 seconds then it is deemed a hazard, ). If a surfaces is deemed a hazard children will be encouraged to use other equipment or directed to other areas.
- The first educator outside at the beginning of a session and after lunch will perform a safety check including surface temperatures
- If the temperature is over 36 degrees C swings will be tied back.

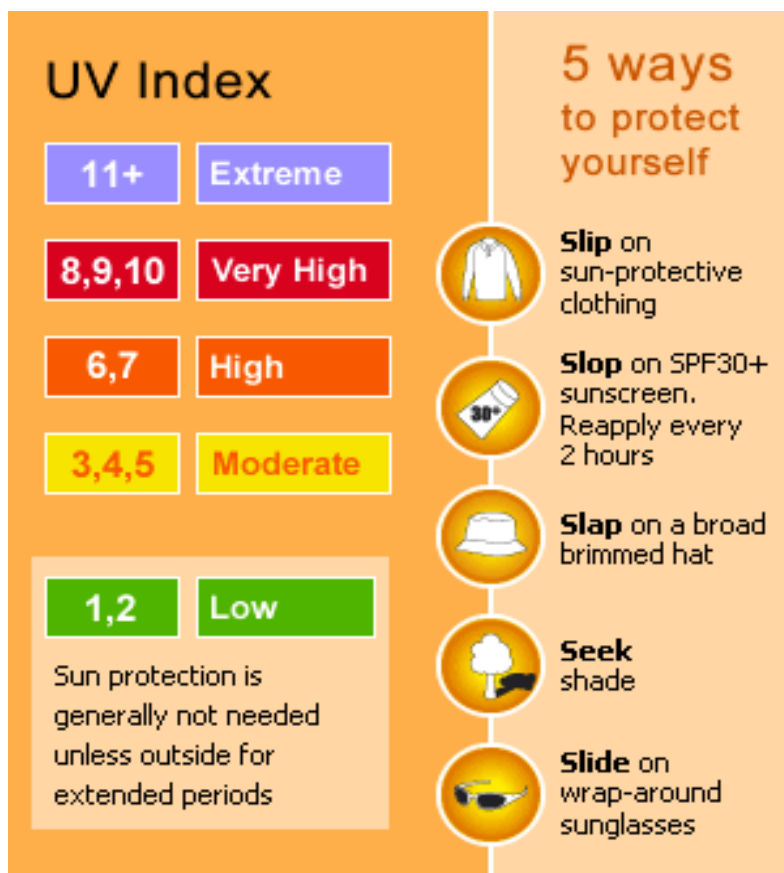
### Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Staff

- Our Centre will provide a comfortable and safe environment for children
- All staff and volunteers will take care to protect their own health and safety and that of others in the Centre.
- Staff will monitor children's wellbeing through our supervision practices and look for signs of heat stress
- Staff will encourage children to drink water more frequently by reminding them, and provide water for refilling water bottles. A spare water bottle will be provided where a child does not have their own.
- Heating and cooling equipment is provided to maintain a comfortable temperature for children
- Staff will support children to be responsible for their own possessions through conversation and the provision of storage spaces. The Centre will support families to locate lost items where possible. The Centre will not replace lost items in most circumstances.

### Curriculum

- Staff will promote sun safety with the children as part of the learning program.
- Staff will involve children in risk assessment processes relating to the weather.

## What We Expect



- Parents are encouraged to pack food in insulated containers with a freezer pack or frozen water.
- Parents will be asked to provide a **named, sun safe hat, without ties**, which shades their child's head, neck and ears.
- Parents will be asked to clothe their child in shirts and tops which protect from the sun
- Parents will be asked to apply SPF30+<sup>1</sup> broad spectrum sunscreen on their child **before** accessing Kindergarten or Occasional Care, including children's feet as shoes are removed for some play experiences.
- If your child is accessing the Centre for a full day, parents are asked to provide sun screen, clearly labelled with their child's name, that their child can apply to themselves.

(Image from Bureau of Meteorology along with the below references have been used to guide the development of this policy)

### References

Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority National Quality Standard Quality

Area 2 - Children's health and safety. Accessed 13 October 2015 <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/Childrens-health-and-safety>

Bureau of Meteorology <http://www.bom.gov.au/uv/> Accessed 12 October 2015

Cancer Council SA <http://www.cancersa.org.au/aspx/sunsmart.aspx> Accessed 13 October 2015

"Sports Medicine Australia", refer to:

<http://sma.org.au/resources-advice/policies-guidelines/hot-weather/>

Wiki answers [http://wiki.answers.com/Q/What\\_does\\_SPF\\_30\\_mean](http://wiki.answers.com/Q/What_does_SPF_30_mean) Accessed 13 October 2015

<sup>1</sup> SPF stands for sun protection factor. SPF 30 means that your skin will not burn until it has been exposed to 30 times the amount of solar energy that would normally cause it to burn. In other words, if you start to burn at 10 mins, by applying an SPF 30 sun screen, it would now take 300 mins to start burning. However, there are many limitations to this rating (time of day, skin type, uv index, sunblock brand, water, sweat etc...) Also, SPF is just the protection factor against sunburn or UVB radiation and does not have any relation to UVA radiation, which causes long term skin damage.