

# HACKHAM WEST CHILDREN'S CENTRE

## 2.8 SUNSMART

*With Australia having the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world with over 750,000 skin cancers treated each year and 2,000 skin cancers each day, there is significant concern to encourage SunSmart practices and lifestyle.*

*'Skin damage, including skin cancer, is the result of cumulative exposure to the sun. Children have delicate skin which places them at particular risk of sunburn and skin damage. Sun exposure during the first 10 years of life has a significant impact on the likelihood of developing skin cancer later in life. Most skin cancers are preventable by protecting skin from overexposure to the sun.' The Children's Centre, by encouraging and modelling effective and appropriate skin protection practices, can assist in lowering the risk of future skin cancer.*

*Our policy is based on the guidelines and checklist from Cancer Council SA and the National SunSmart Early Childhood Program.*

### AIM:

- *To promote among our educators, families and their children a positive lifestyle and attitude in helping to reduce skin damage, including skin cancer, as a result of overexposure to the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays*
- *To develop a whole centre approach and awareness to structuring a more appropriate outdoor learning environment and centre timetable*

### PROCEDURE:

- This policy is to be implemented throughout the year and, in particular, from the beginning of August to the end of April and at other times of the year when UV index is 3 or above.
- All children and staff- including students and volunteers- will wear appropriate hats- either broad brimmed, legionnaire or bucket style (hats need to have at least a 5cm brim for children under 5 years of age and 6cm for older children and adults). These need to be worn outside throughout the year. If a child has no hat, there will be a limited amount of spare hats available (only to be worn for that day by the child and washed afterwards). If there is no appropriate hat (inc. spare hat), child can only play in a sun-protected area.
- Babies under the age of 12 months should be kept out of the direct sunlight as much as possible and always be protected by shade, clothing and hats. Where necessary, a suitable SPF 30+ broad spectrum sunscreen should only be applied to exposed skin that is not protected by clothing or hats.
- Appropriate sun protective clothing to be worn- Promote clothing that protects as much skin as possible- such as longer shorts and skirts and tops with collars and elbow-length sleeves. Clothing that is inappropriate-such as singlet, tank or midriff tops or strappy dresses will not be allowed.
- Ensure that adequate shade is provided outdoors and staff use available areas of shade as much as possible.
- Extra care will be taken over the middle of the day when the UV levels are at their peak and outdoor activities will be scheduled outside these times where possible.
- Educators- including all staff, volunteers and students- will act as positive role models by practising SunSmart behaviour (including wearing hats, sun protective clothing and applying sunscreen).
- SPF30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen is applied 15-20 minutes prior to going outside. Sunscreen is to be applied to all exposed areas. Staff as a team will determine their own routine and program of reapplication of sunscreen after 2 hours if outdoors, into the timetable.

Reapplication may be required more often if outdoors for extended periods or during water activities.

- Appropriate information on skin protection will be incorporated in the curriculum.
- SunSmart practices are positively reinforced and promoted regularly at the centre – on enrolment of their child, all new families will be informed about the SunSmart Policy and given an appropriate centre hat (an extra hat can be purchased later if required). Parents/ guardians will be asked for signed permission for staff to apply sunscreen. They will also be asked to apply SPF30+ broad spectrum sunscreen to their child before the arrival of their child everyday at the centre. Parents will be encouraged to supply SPF30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen if their child has sensitive skin or a skin allergy.
- When the UV level drops below 3 (around May to July), the centre can relax their sun protection practice and allow children and staff to enjoy the winter sun and receive vitamin D, vital for the development and maintenance of strong, healthy bones. UV levels can be monitored via the SunSmart app or [www.myuv.com.au](http://www.myuv.com.au) during these months and sun protection used as required when the UV levels are 3 or above.
- All new staff members and volunteers are informed about the SunSmart Policy.
- Positive reinforcement of SunSmart behaviour will occur through newsletters and displays at the centre.
- The policy will be reviewed regularly (at least every 3 years by Cancer Council SA) to ensure the policy remains current and relevant.

#### EVALUATION:

This policy is viewed to be working when educators and families are working in partnership to provide a SunSmart environment.

#### SOURCES:

- Guidelines and checklist from Cancer Council SA's SunSmart early childhood policy guidelines based on the National SunSmart Early Childhood Program.

NEXT REVIEW DATE: May 2020