



STREAKY BAY CHILDREN'S CENTRE HOT WEATHER POLICY

Rationale:

The Streaky Bay Children's Centre is located in a rural area of South Australia that frequently receives extreme temperatures of heat in the summer months.

The building is constructed of a combination of solid brick and prefabrication cladding. The building is north/south facing with large verandahs located both north and south of the building.

The building is serviced by four split systems and one large refrigerated air conditioner. The risk of heat stress is influenced by both air temperature and relative humidity levels.

It is recognised that young children are at a 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. "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". (Sports Medicine Australia)

We will reduce the risk of heat illness to young children and staff during hot weather by:

- Providing adequate **shade** for children in hot weather with activities conducted in shaded areas.
- Children will be frequently offered **water**, with fresh water provided on tap.
- Ensuring activities are **held indoors** when air temperature levels increase, with activities held outdoors before 10am on days of extreme temperature.
- Activities provided will encourage **heat reduction** such as water play, activities in shaded areas and experiences that discourage intense activity.
- The Streaky Bay Children's Centre is a **sunsmart** centre and complies with the recommendations of the Cancer council of SA.
- **Excursions** will not be conducted on days of extreme heat.
- Parents are encouraged to **dress** children in clothing that **minimises heat gain**, is sun safe (as per sunsmart policy).
- **Lunches** (particularly meat and dairy products) will be stored in the refrigerator.
- In extenuating circumstances (such as air conditioning failure due to power loss or **breakdown of cooling** or ventilation systems) parents may be contacted to collect children when the forecast is at least 36 degrees Celsius. Staff will remain on duty to care for children who are unable to be collected.
- **Staff** will ensure that on days of hot weather children will be kept as comfortable as possible.

The Streaky Bay Children's Centre is not considered a high risk site for bush fires. Our site's **bush fire action plan**, states that school buses will not travel on catastrophic days but the centre will remain open. If there is a bush fire our safe haven is within the centre itself. If the centre is considered unsafe we will relocate to the CFS shed meeting room.