



Waikerie Children's Centre  
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Waikerie SA 5330  
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## HOT WEATHER POLICY

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### **PURPOSE**

At Waikerie Children's Centre we aim to keep everyone safe at all times and, in particular, during periods of hot weather. Reasonable steps will be taken to identify and manage risks, and every reasonable precaution will be taken to protect children, educators, families and visitors from heat illness or burn injuries from the heat of the sun whilst in the centre.

This policy recognises that 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.

"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".

*Source "Sports Medicine Australia"*

### **Crucial to this policy is:**

- All employees, including leaders, must take reasonable care to protect their own health and safety and that of others in the centre.
- All employees ensure strategies are in place to reduce the risk of heat illness or burn injuries. Staff are to be given the opportunity to have a break from outside duties' on hot days to relieve heat stress. The onus is on the staff member to request a break to protect their own health and that of others.

**Legislation:** This policy relates to the following National Law and Regulations:

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: 99 Section 167 – Protection from harm and hazards
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: 99 Regulation 100 – Risk assessment must be conducted before excursion
- 99 Regulation 113 – Outdoor space–natural environment
- 99 Regulation 114 – Outdoor space–shade
- 99 Regulation 168: Policies and procedures (2)(a)(ii)–sun protection

### **National Quality Standards**

This policy relates to the following National Quality Standards:

Quality area 2.3.2: Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury.

Quality Area 3.1.1: Outdoor and indoor spaces, building, furniture, equipment, facilities and resources are suitable for their purpose.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

### **We will:**

- Provide a comfortable and safe environment for all children, educators and families.
- Provide heating and cooling to maintain a comfortable temperature for all children and educators.
- Seek sun protection advice from the Cancer Council of South Australia.
- Adhere to our Skin Protection Policy.
- Recognise the risk of heat stress is a factor of both air temperature and relative humidity levels.
- During hot weather, check all outdoor surfaces in the yard ensuring children are not at risk of contact burn injuries, as per the Heat and Equipment Policy.

### **STRATEGIES TO REDUCE THE RISK OF HEAT ILLNESS WILL INCLUDE:**

**Shade:** During periods of hot weather, activities will be conducted or modified in shaded areas or for morning sessions. Portable shade structures will be used where there is insufficient shade.

**Drinks:** Children and educators will be required to bring a drink bottle containing water and will be reminded to drink regularly. Educators will top up children's water bottles with filtered water as necessary. Outside drink fountains will always be available as a water source. Ice cooling blocks, Esky and a fridge are available for keeping drink bottles cool. Visual drink/bottle signs are placed around the centre as a reminder to drink water.

**Clothing:** Parents are encouraged to dress children in clothing and wear hats that minimises heat gain, in layers that can be easily removed during activity and in clothing that adheres to our Sun Protection Policy. Our No Hat /No Play outside rule will be applied in these circumstances.

**Food:** Parents are encouraged to pack food in insulated containers with a freezer brick or frozen water. The centre also has a refrigerator that is available for food storage.

### **EARLY DISMISSAL**

As the Waikerie Children's Centre has effective cooling through a refrigerated cooling system we will remain open for normal operating hours.

Waikerie Children's Centre will continue to operate when the Riverland Fire Ban district is classified as "Catastrophic" by the Bureau of Meteorology.

**If power supply to the centre is affected causing a power outage for an extended period of time, parents will be called to collect their children to minimise the stress of heat related exposure.**

#### **SOURCED FROM:**

☞ Sports Medicine Australia

[www.sma.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2009/05/beat-the-heat-2008-email-version.pdf](http://www.sma.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2009/05/beat-the-heat-2008-email-version.pdf)

☞ DECD Guidelines for Developing a Preschool Hot Weather Policy

[www.decd.sa.gov.au/childrensservices/pages/earlychildhoodreform/interactions](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/childrensservices/pages/earlychildhoodreform/interactions)

☞ National Quality Standards - Standard 2.3.2 Children's Health and Safety

☞ Cancer Council of SA, refer to: [www.cancersa.org.au/asp/sunsmart.aspx](http://www.cancersa.org.au/asp/sunsmart.aspx)