

## Policy introduction & purpose

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 the age of 70. Too much of the sun's UV radiation 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 (Cancer Council Australia).

This policy aims to:

- protect all children and educators from the harmful effects of ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun.
- ensure the outdoor environment provides shade for children, educators, and staff to minimise unsafe UV exposure.

## Our policy in action

Weldon will work in compliance with the Cancer Council NSW SunSmart Program to ensure children's health and safety is always maintained in the Program.

This policy applies to all activities on and off-site.

## Monitoring UV Levels

**Sun protection is required when UV levels reach level 3 or above.**

All Weldon programs will monitor the UV levels daily through one or more of the following methods:

- using the smartphone SunSmart app available at iTunes App Store and Google Play store
- viewing the Bureau of Meteorology website [www.bom.gov.au](http://www.bom.gov.au)
- visiting [www.myuv.com.au](http://www.myuv.com.au)

## Outdoor activities

Our programs will use a combination of sun protection measures **whenever UV Index levels reach 3 and above**. This will include:

- Limiting outdoor activities (frequency and duration) that occur between 11 am and 3 pm from October -March and/or set up in shaded or verandah spaces.
- In April, May, August, and September outdoor activities can take place at any time. However, from 10 am–2 pm sun protection is required
- In June and July when the UV index is mostly below 3, sun protection is not required. Extra care is needed for children who have very fair skin
- All sun protection measures (including recommended outdoor times, shade, hat, clothing, and sunscreen) will be considered when planning excursions and activities
- Program excursions, on-site activities, and activities are cancelled or modified in the event temperatures exceed 35 degrees

### Approved Provider responsibilities:

#### Shade

- Provide sufficient natural, portable, or man-made shade, particularly in high use areas
- Encourage shaded areas to be used for play experiences
- Monitor play experiences throughout the day and move as required to remain in the shade
- Regular risk assessments and reviews will be made of the outdoor area to assist in planning for further shade requirements
- children will still be required to wear hats, protective clothing, and sunscreen if playing under the natural or portable shade
- children who do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing are asked to choose a shady play space or a suitable area protected from the sun.

#### Hats

Educators, staff, and children are required to wear sun-safe hats that protect their face, neck, and ears.

- Children without a sun-safe hat will be asked to play in an area protected from the sun (e.g. under the shade, veranda, or indoors) or can be provided with a spare hat
- A sun safe hat is a:
  - legionnaire hat
  - bucket hat with a deep crown and brim size of at least 5cm (adults 6cm)
  - broad-brimmed hat with a brim size of at least 6cm (adults 7.5cm)

**Please note: Baseball caps or visors do not provide enough sun protection and therefore are not recommended**

#### Clothing

- When outdoors, educators, staff, and children will wear sun-safe clothing that covers as much of the skin (especially the shoulders, back, and stomach) as possible. This includes wearing:
  - loose-fitting shirts and dresses with sleeves and collars or covered neckline
  - longer style skirts, shorts, and trousers
- Children who are not wearing sun-safe clothing can be provided with spare clothing or will be asked to play under shade or an area protected from the sun.

**Please note: Midriff, crop, or singlet tops do not provide enough sun protection and therefore are not recommended**

#### Sunscreen

As per Cancer Council Australia recommendations

- Staff and children will apply SPF30 or higher broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapply every 2 hours or more frequently if washed or wiped off.
- Permission to apply sunscreen is included in the enrolment form.
- Where children have allergies or sensitivity to sunscreen, parents are asked to provide an alternative sunscreen. Cancer Council Australia recommends usage tests before applying a new sunscreen.
- To help develop self-help skills children from three years of age are given opportunities to apply their own sunscreen under the supervision of staff. Educators will support children under the age of three to apply sunscreen
- Educators and children are required to wash their hands before and after applying sunscreen. Educators are to wash hands in between each child when supporting them to apply sunscreen.
- Sunscreen is stored appropriately and use by date is monitored.

### Babies

Recommendations for babies from the Cancer Council Australia include:

- Babies under 12 months will not be exposed to the direct sun when the UV Index is 3 or above
- Physical protection such as shade, clothing, and broad-brimmed hats are the best sun protection measures.

If babies are kept out of the sun or well protected from UV radiation by clothing, hats, and shade, then sunscreen needs only be used occasionally on very small areas of a baby's skin. **The widespread use of sunscreen on babies under 6 months old is not recommended.**

### Risks for Summer Play

Australia has a hot climate and inevitably playground equipment and surfacing can heat up rapidly and retain heat. Many playground surfaces and equipment can exceed temperatures greater than 50°C and if young children come into contact with these surfaces, they can be burned severely within seconds.

#### Nominated Supervisor, Responsible person responsibilities:

- ensure risk assessments are conducted to identify any potential hazards to children during summer months that could cause harm or injury to children. Risk minimisation control measures will be put in place to protect children. Potential hazards could include:
  - hot equipment- slides, poles, guardrails, any metal surfaces
  - hot surfaces- rubber and synthetic grass, walkways, concrete surfaces
  - sunburn
  - access to bodies of water (filled water troughs/containers/trays/pools)
- use a thermometer or their hand to test surface temperature and make an informed decision about permitting children to play on the equipment or in the outdoor space. If the surface temperature is determined to be too hot or is recorded as at or above 50°C it is recommended by Kidsafe Australia that children **do NOT play on the surface**
- ensure children wear shoes when playing in the outdoor area

### Role Modelling

Weldon acknowledges that children are more likely to develop sun-safe habits if they are role-modelled and demonstrated by adults around them. Occupational UV exposure is also a WH&S issue. All educators, staff in the Program will therefore be required to role model appropriate sun protection behaviour by:

- Wearing a sun-safe hat (see Hats)
- Wearing sun-safe clothing (see Clothing)
- Applying SPF30+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors
- Using and promoting shade
- Wearing sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard 1067 (optional)
- monitoring the UV Index and Daily Sun Protection times throughout the day
- submitting the Sun Safety Policy to the Cancer Council every three years to maintain SunSmart status (optional).

Families and visitors are encouraged to role model positive sun-safe behaviour.

### Education and Information

- Sun protection will be incorporated regularly into learning programs
- Sun protection information will be promoted to all staff, families, and visitors
- Further information is available from the Cancer Council website:  
[www.cancercouncil.com.au/sunsmart](http://www.cancercouncil.com.au/sunsmart)
- The Sun Safety Policy will be made available to all Educators, Staff, Families, and Visitors to ensure a comprehensive understanding of keeping sun-safe.
- When enrolling their child/ren in a Weldon program, parents will be required to give permission for educators to apply sunscreen to their child
- Information about Sun Safety will be included in our Parent Handbook

### Links to other policies

- Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness
- Clothing and Accessories for children
- Infectious diseases
- Providing a Child Safe Environment
- Family Participation and Communication
- Supervision
- Work Health and Safety

### Sources

- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority.
- Bureau of meteorology. Home page (for UV Index): <http://www.bom.gov.au/uv/>
- Cancer Council: <https://www.cancer.org.au/>
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2018).
- Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2011)
- Guide to the National Quality Standard. (2017).
- Kidsafe NSW Playground Safety. (2020).
- Revised National Quality Standard. (2020).