



SUSSEX NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE Inc.

SUNSMART POLICY

Rationale

A healthy balance between too much and too little ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun is important for health.

Too much UV from the sun can cause sunburn, skin damage, eye damage and skin cancer. Australia has one of the highest incidences of skin cancer in the world. Two in three Australians will develop some form of skin cancer before they reach the age of 70. Over exposure to the sun during childhood and adolescence is known to be a major cause of skin cancer.

Too little UV from the sun can lead to vitamin D deficiency. Vitamin D regulates calcium levels in the blood. It is also necessary for the development and maintenance of healthy bones, muscles and teeth. To ensure a healthy balance between too much and too little UV is maintained, sun protection is used from the beginning of September until the end of April and whenever the UV Index level reaches 3 and above. From May until August, sun protection is not used unless the UV Index reaches 3 and above.

Aim

Scallywags Children's Centre SunSmart policy has been developed to ensure that all children and staff maintain a healthy balance between too little and too much ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun.

Our sun protection strategies

All children and staff use a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV Index levels reach 3 and above. Particular care is taken between 10am and 2pm (11am and 3pm daylight saving time) when UV Index levels reach their peak during the day.

Sun protection measures are not used from May until August unless the UV Index level reaches 3 and above.

The centre's SunSmart practices consider the special needs of infants. Babies under 12 months are kept out of the direct sun.

Managing the physical environment - shade

- The management committee makes sure there is sufficient shelters and trees providing shade in the centre grounds.
- The availability of shade is considered when planning excursions and outdoor activities.
- Children are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside. Children who do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing are asked to play in the shade or a suitable area protected from the sun.

Protective behaviors and practices

Clothing

- When outside, children are required to wear loose fitting clothing that covers as much skin as possible. Tops with elbow length sleeves, and if possible, collars and knee length or longer style shorts and skirts are best. (Please note: Singlet tops do not offer enough protection and are therefore not recommended.)

Hats

- All children are required to wear hats that protect their face, neck and ears, i.e. legionnaire, broad-brimmed or bucket hats. (Please note: Baseball caps do not offer enough protection and are therefore not recommended)

Sunglasses [SUGGESTED]

- Children and staff are encouraged to wear close fitting, wrap around sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard 1067 (Sunglasses: Category 2,3 or 4) and cover as much of the eye area as possible.

Sunscreen

- SPF 30+, broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen is available for staff and children's use. Sunscreen is applied at least 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapplied every two hours when outdoors.
- Children with naturally very dark skin are not required to wear sunscreen.

Role modeling

Staff act as role models by:

- Wearing sun protective hats and clothing, and sunglasses when outside
- Applying SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen
- Seeking shade whenever possible

Sharing information about sun protection

- The children learn about skin and ways to protect their skin from the sun
- The sun protection policy is reinforced through staff and children's activities, and the centre displays
- Staff and families are provided with information on sun protection through newsletters, noticeboards and meetings

When enrolling their child, families are:

- Informed of the centre's sun protection policy
- Asked to provide a suitable hat for their child
- Asked to provide their child with suitable outdoor clothing that is cool and covers as much skin as possible
- Asked to provide SPF 30+, broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen for their child
- Required to give permission for the staff to apply sunscreen to their child
- Encouraged to practice SunSmart behaviours themselves when at the centre

Review

- Management and staff monitor and review the effectiveness of the SunSmart policy every two years and revise the policy when required
- Next policy review: December 2010