

Montessori Works

Background

Australia has one of the highest incidences of skin cancer in the world. Of all new incidents of cancer diagnosed in Australia each year, 80 per cent are skin cancers. Given that children in childcare attend during peak ultraviolet (UV) radiation times and that they spend much of their day outdoors, childcare has a major role in minimising children's UV exposure. When UV levels reach 3 or above, unprotected skin can be damaged and UV levels can reach 3 or above during most months of the year. Further, childcare provides the ideal opportunity to instil in children long-term positive SunSmart habits.

Policy statement

The Service takes every reasonable precaution to protect children and staff from the harmful effects of exposure to the sun while they are at the Service or at any event organised by the Service.

The *Sun Protection Policy* is consistent with the Cancer Council's SunSmart recommendations for outdoor environments, clothing, sunscreen, scheduling of activities, and ongoing education for the children, families and staff at the Service.

Strategies and practices

- To assist with the implementation of this policy, educators and children are encouraged to access and display the daily local sun protection times (available from the SunSmart widget on the service's website, the free SunSmart app, myUV.com.au or at Bureau of Meteorology).

The sun protection times are a forecast from the Bureau of Meteorology for the time of day UV levels are forecast to reach three and above.

Sun protection times

UV levels vary across Australia and throughout the year. This listing highlights when UV is typically three and above in each state / territory. There may be times UV levels are three and above outside these periods.

Please check the daily local sun protection times and UV levels to be sure you are using sun protection when it is required for your location.

- **ACT**
August to end of May.
Wherever practicable, outdoor activities should be minimised between 11am and 3pm in summer.
- **NSW**
All year.
Extra care is taken during the peak UV radiation times and outdoor activities are scheduled outside of these times where possible.
- **NT**
All year.

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Wherever practicable, outdoor activities should take place before 10am and after 3pm, when UV levels are lower

- **SA**

August to end of April.

Extra care is taken during the peak UV radiation times and outdoor activities are scheduled outside of these times where possible.

- **TAS**

September to the end of April.

Active outdoor play is encouraged throughout the year provided appropriate sun protection measures are used when necessary.

- **VIC**

Mid-August to the end of April.

Active outdoor play is encouraged throughout the day all year provided appropriate sun protection measures are used when necessary.

- **WA**

All year.

Active outdoor play is encouraged throughout the day all year provided appropriate sun protection measures are used when necessary.

- **QLD**

All year.

Wherever practicable, outdoor activities should take place before 10am and after 3pm, when UV levels are lower.

The sun protection measures listed are used for all outdoor activities **during the daily local sun protection times**.

A combination of sun protection measures are considered when planning all outdoor activities such as excursions and water play.

- The Service participates fully in the Cancer Council's SunSmart Program and accesses, and follows, the Program's resources and advice.
- The *Sun Protection Policy* is explained to parents when they enroll their child in the Service, and their attention is specifically drawn to their responsibilities under this Policy. The *Sun Protection Policy* is available for parents to read at the Service and is summarised in the Parent Handbook which is given to all parents at the time of enrolment.
- The sun safety message is promoted and positively reinforced amongst families through notice boards, newsletters, information nights, educator-parent meetings, the website and providing them with up-to-date SunSmart materials.
- Educators promote sun safety awareness in children by including it in daily routines and intentional teaching such as role-modeling, discussions, songs, stories, games, and SunSmart resources (for older children).
- The Service's outdoor playground is adequately shaded. The built and natural shade features are continuously evaluated for effectiveness and, if required, additional shade structures are built and trees planted.

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- Whenever possible, play-based learning activities are set up and moved to take advantage of shade patterns.
- Children are encouraged to choose and use available areas of shade when outside.
- In consultation with the service's committee, shade provision is considered in future plans and upgrades.
- A shade assessment is conducted regularly to determine the current availability and quality of shade.
- In addition to being guided by the routines and children's interests, educators take into account UV levels and local sun protection times and requirements.
- It is recommended that all children and educators wear a bucket, broad brimmed or legionnaire's hat on the outdoor playground so they can move freely between shaded and unshaded areas. Children's brim sizes are 5cm for bucket and 6cm for broad brimmed. Educator's brim sizes are 6cm for bucket and 7.5cm for broad brimmed. Peak caps and visors are not considered a suitable alternative.
- The Service has iPads in all rooms. Each iPad has the SunSmart app downloaded with the auto alert function activated. Educators check the app for sun protection times and UV rating times each morning and follow the app's directions when implementing sun protection strategies and programming outside play.
- Educators follow the instructions according to the UV ratings listed below:
 - 1,2 – Children and educators wear a broad brimmed hat when outside
 - 3,4,5,6,7 – Children and educators wear a broad brimmed hat and apply SPF 30+ (or higher) sunscreen when outside
 - 8,9,10 – Children and educators wear a broad brimmed hat, apply SPF 30+ (or higher) sunscreen and play undercover when outside
 - 11+ – Children and educators play indoors only.
- Children and educators adhere to the Sun Protection Policy on excursions. Refer to the Service's *Excursion and Incursion Policy*.
- All staff model positive SunSmart behaviour to the children by:
 - wearing broad-brimmed or legionnaire styled hats and appropriate clothing for all outdoor activities
 - using SPF 30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen
 - seeking shade whenever possible
 - wearing sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard (AS/NZS1067).
- Choosing Sun Protective Clothing
 - The more you cover the safer
 - Stay away from see through, sheer type clothing. If you can see through it, so can UVR
 - Layering clothing can help protect against sunburn
 - The darker the clothes the more they help protect from UV

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- Wet clothing offers less protection against UVR. Wear dry clothing or clothing that dries quickly
- Opt for UVR blocking clothing wherever possible when out in the sun for long periods of time
- The Service supplies 30 (or higher) broad-spectrum water resistant sunscreen for children and staff. The sunscreen is available in each room and in the outdoor play area. Parents are advised upon enrolment about the use and brand of sunscreen. Parents are required to notify the Service in writing if their child is allergic to sunscreen, and to supply an alternative clearly labeled with the child's name.
- Sunscreen is applied in accordance with the manufacturer's directions (which state to apply at least 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapply every two hours (or after sweating, towel drying or swimming)).
- To help develop independent skills ready for school, children from three years of age are given opportunities to apply their own sunscreen under supervision of staff and are encouraged to do so.
- Sunscreen is stored in a supervised, cool place, out of the sun and the expiry date is monitored.
- Where children have allergies or [sensitivities to sunscreen](#), parents are asked to provide an alternative sunscreen or children are encouraged to play in the shade.
- Cancer Council recommends a [usage test](#) before applying a new sunscreen.
- Any child who does not bring the hat provided is expected to use one from the Service's set of spares kept for the purpose, or to play in the shade. If the spare hat and clothes supply is exhausted, the children without hats or suitable clothing will be required to play indoors in shaded areas.
- Educators ensure children wear clothes with adequate protection from UVR when playing outdoors. Any child who does not have suitable clothing is expected to wear clothing from the Service's set of spares kept for the purpose, or to play in the shade. Also if the spare clothes supply is exhausted, the children without suitable clothing will be required to play indoors or in shaded areas. The Cancer Council recommends loose fitting clothes with collars and sleeves, closely woven natural fibre fabric, and of a dark colour.
- Water is offered to children frequently throughout the day regardless of whether they are indoors or outdoors.
- Educators liberally apply broad spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of 30 to all exposed areas of children's skin 15-20 minutes before the children go outside, and initial the [Sunscreen Application Chart](#) to that effect.
- Educators reapply sunscreen every two hours if children are outdoors for a prolonged period, or more frequently if the children are perspiring or involved with water play. Older children apply their own sunscreen under supervision.

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- If parents supply their child with sunglasses that are wrap-around and/or are close fitting (that meet AS 1067-EPF 10 is best), educators will ensure children wear them during outdoor play.
- Educators are kept up-to-date with SunSmart recommendations.

Additional safe resting practices for babies

- SunSmart practices consider the special needs of infants. All babies under 12 months are kept out of direct sun when UV levels are 3 or higher. The best sun protection can be achieved when a combination of physical sun protection measures such as shade, clothing and hats are used. For those small areas of exposed skin not protected by clothing or hats, apply sunscreen to infants six months and older. The widespread use of sunscreen on babies under 6 months old is not recommended.



Educators monitor fluid intake of babies and document it in the parent communication charts.

Responsibilities of parents

- To bring the hat provided to their child by the Service each time their child attends the Service, and to ensure the hat is clearly named and kept clean.
- To dress their child in SunSmart clothing, including spares, each time the child attends the Service.
- Sunsmart clothing is made of fabric such as cotton and covering as much skin as possible and is loose fitting.
- To model positive SunSmart behaviour to the children when at the Service.
- To notify the Service in writing if their child is allergic to sunscreen, and to supply an alternative sunscreen clearly labelled with the child's name.

Procedures and forms

- Sunscreen Application Chart

Links to other policies

- Clothing Policy
- Educational Program Policy
- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Excursion Policy

Links Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, National Quality Standard 2011

Regulation	113	Outdoor Space: Natural environment
Regulation	114	Outdoor shade
Regulation	168(2)(a)(ii)	Policies and procedures: sun protection

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NQS	QA2.1.1	Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation
NQS	QA 2.1.2	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented
NQS	QA 2.1.3	Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child
NQS	QA 2.2.1	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard
NQS	QA 3.1.1	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child
NQS	QA 4.2.2	Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships
NQS	QA 6.1.2	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing
NQS	QA 7.2.3	Educators, co-ordinators and staff members' performance is regularly evaluated, and individual plans are in place to support learning and development

Sources

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Guide to the National Quality Framework 2018 (September 2020 Update): Section 4 – Operational Requirements <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-09/Guide-to-the-NQF-September-2020.pdf>
- ARPANSA [Radiation Protection Standard for Occupational Exposure to Ultraviolet Radiation](#) (2006)
- Safe Work Australia: [Guide on exposure to solar ultraviolet radiation \(UVR\)](#) (2019)

Australian Standards:

- AS 4174:2018 Knitted and woven shade fabrics
- AS/NZS 1067.1:2016, Eye and face protection - Sunglasses and fashion spectacles
- AS/NZS 4399:2020, Sun protective clothing - Evaluation and classification
- AS/NZS 2604:2012 Sunscreen products - Evaluation and classification
- Australian Government Therapeutics Goods Administration (TGA) – Australian regulatory guidelines for sunscreens: 4. Labelling and advertising – directions for use of the product
- AS/NZS 4685.0:2017, Playground equipment and surfacing - Development, installation, inspection, maintenance and operation.6.2.1 General considerations, 6.3.9 Shade and sun protection, Appendix A Shade and sun protection

Further reading and useful websites *(Consistent with the approach of the National Quality Framework, the following references have prioritised efficacy and appropriateness to inform best practice, and legislative compliance over state or territory preferences.)*

- Cancer Council Australia – <http://www.cancer.org.au>
- Cancer Council New South Wales – <https://www.cancercouncil.com.au/>
- SunSmart NSW – <http://www.sunsmartnsw.com.au/programs/programs-ech/>

Please note: *Certain health conditions and medications mean some people are more sensitive to UV radiation and need to use sun protection at all times regardless of the UV levels. Please make sure your policy includes the particular needs of these children and staff at your service. For further information visit [Cancer Council Australia's website](#).*

Policy review

The Service encourages staff and parents to be actively involved in the annual review of each of its policies and procedures. In addition, the Service will accommodate any new legislative changes as they occur and any issues identified as part the Service's commitment to quality improvement. The Service

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consults with relevant recognised authorities as part of the annual review to ensure the policy contents are consistent with current research and contemporary views on best practice.

Version Control

Version	Date Reviewed	Approved By	Comments/Amendments	Next Review Date
1	8 January 2018	Dr Brenda Abbey (Author)	Updated to changed NQF requirements 1 February 2018. Service to modify policies to its specific needs.	
2	6 September 2019	Dr Brenda Abbey (Author)	Updated references.	
3	29 November 2020	Dr Brenda Abbey (Author)	Updated references.	
4	30 December 2020	Dr Brenda Abbey (Author)	Updated references.	
5	May 2022	ACA NSW	Updated references Added points to safe practices for babies Added points about sunscreen application Added points about protective clothing Added points about utilising shaded areas Added points about UV Protection Times in different states.	
6	August 2022	Susan Chahwan	Adapted ACA NSW policy	