

# WODEN EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRE

## SUN PROTECTION POLICY

### **POLICY STATEMENT:**

Woden Early childhood Centre is committed to ensuring best practices in sun safety for its children, families and staff. The Centre provides sunscreen and ensures its use as recommended by the Cancer council. By providing hats to children and staff we ensure that one is always available to be worn outdoors. Hats and sunscreen provided by families for their child's use at the centre are also used if they meet the standards outlined in this policy.

This policy supports inclusive practices at Woden Early Childhood Centre. Please refer to the Inclusion Policy.

### **RATIONALE:**

*The cancer council tells us that each year in Australia over 1600 people will die due to skin cancer. Your skin can burn in as little as 10-15 minutes in the summer sun; the longer your unprotected skin is in the sun, the quicker your skin will burn and the greater your risk of developing skin cancer. When UV levels are 3 or above skin damage can occur, especially amongst young children whom have sensitive skin.*

*It is known that 'Skin damage, including skin cancer, is the result of cumulative exposure to the sun. Much of the damage occurs during childhood and adolescence. Research suggests that severe sunburn is a contributor to skin cancer and other forms of skin damage such as wrinkles, sunspots, blemishes and premature ageing. Most skin damage and skin cancer is, therefore, preventable.' The staff and management committee are committed to ensure they provide a safe outdoor environment for the children.*

*The centre recognises its duty of care to Children and staff therefore the purpose of this policy is to ensure that all children and staff are protected from skin damage caused by the harmful ultraviolet rays of the sun throughout the year.*

*It is now the recommendation of the Cancer Council ACT, that during the winter months of June and July when UV levels are minimal excess sun protection is not required in Canberra. This is to reduce the risk of Vitamin D deficiency in the ACT region. Therefore sunscreen will not be applied during these months and hats do not have to be worn.*

*As recommended in the ACT this policy is implemented from the 1<sup>st</sup> August to the 31<sup>st</sup> May as this is the time of year when UV levels in Canberra reach 3 and above for part or most of the day, strong enough to damage unprotected skin and hence sun protection is generally recommended.. During Daylight savings time particular care is taken to minimise time spent outside as much as possible between . Particular care is taken between 10 am and 2 pm (11 am and 3pm daylight savings time- which includes minimising time spent outside).*

### **SCOPE:**

This policy applies to all staff, families, students and volunteers at the Centre.

**RELEVANT LEGISLATION:**

*Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000*

**QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM:** principle 6.5

**LOCATION OF INFORMATION:**

This information is provided verbally and in cd form for staff, students and volunteers during induction. **The sun policy is mentioned in the staff handbook**

**Source Documents**

ANTI-CANER COUNCIL OF VICTORIA ( 1992) "*Sun Smart - Everyone Everywhere 's Covered in Skin "*

CARLTON SOUTH. VIC

CANCER COUNCIL NSW "*Sun smart Advice for Early Childhood Centres*".

NORTHERN TERRITORY ANTI CANCER FOUNDATION (1991) "*Fact Sheet - Sun Screens and Sun Protection Factors*". CASUARINA. NT

[www.actcancer.org.au](http://www.actcancer.org.au)

Key Resources, David Wild, The Caner Council,

**LINKING POLICIES**

inclusion

health illness and exclusion

safety

policy development and review

**POLICY REVIEW**

This policy is reviewed on a biannual basis both by the centres staff and then by families. Once the Policy has been reviewed and changes are made it goes to the management committee for ratification. Please refer to the Policy development and review policy.

**Date endorsed by Committee:** 24.3.09

**Date to be reviewed:** 24.3.10

## SUN PROTECTION STRATEGIES

- This Centre supplies hats for Staff, Toddler, Intro and Pre School Children. Staff actively encourage children to wear a hat outdoors. It is expected that all children and staff wear a hat outdoors. Children are encouraged to seek shade or play indoors if not wearing their hat.
- If parents prefer they may supply hats as long as they are sun safe. Alternatives to Legionnaire style hats recommended by the cancer council are Bucket hats (with a downward brim of 6 cm, 5 for babies) or broad brimmed hats (8-10 cm brim)
- The Centre provides SPF 30 + broad spectrum water resistant sunscreen as recommended by the ACT Cancer Council which is applied to all children exposed to direct sunlight with parental permission. Families are asked to supply their own sunscreen if their child has a skin sensitive to the Centre's.
- Staff will assist children to liberally apply sunscreen 20 minutes before any outdoor activity; sunscreen will be re-applied every 2 hours. Staff are aware that sunscreen should not be used to extend time outside or as the only form of sun protection.
- Staff, students and families are encouraged to act as Sun smart role models through sun screening themselves, wearing hats, sunglasses (meeting Australian standard 1067:1998.and carry a label stating EPF 10) seeking shade and dressing appropriately for all outdoor activities.
- It is recommended to avoid direct sunlight for babies less than 12 months. Sunscreen should only be applied sparingly to areas of skin not protected by clothing or hats where necessary. We understand that for newborn babies the best protection is total avoidance from direct sunlight as their skin is more delicate, therefore the need to apply sunscreen should not arise. The Australasian College of Dermatologists recommends the use of sunscreen at any age where there is unavoidable exposure to the sun and states that sunscreen is safe to use on babies. Families will need to provide appropriate sun hats as stated above for Babies in order to ensure the hat fits.
- The nursery provides a shade cloth to cover the bulk of the outdoor play area for babies which is graded at 90% U.V protection. There is also a permanent shade structure over the nursery sand pit. The shade cloth over the grass area is removed during the winter months to allow for vitamin D absorption and maintenance of the grass area.
- Staff will support the use of sunglasses if supplied by families. However they are not responsible for them if lost or damaged. Sunglasses should comply with the Australian Standard 1067:1998.and carry a label stating EPF 10.
- Whilst every effort is taken to protect children from the harmful effects of U.V rays parental help is expected by providing appropriate clothing e.g. cotton clothing covering all limbs. The cancer council recommends collars, long

shorts and sleeves made of tightly woven fabric etc as these offer better protection.

- The outdoor environment is one that provides plenty of shade through large leafy trees and large shade covers. Staff actively encourage the children to seek shade at peak UV times – this includes setting up environments in shade rather than sun.
- Staff check the uv index for Canberra each day before children go outside by visiting the website [www.bom.gov.au/products/UV/Canberra\\_NSW.shtml](http://www.bom.gov.au/products/UV/Canberra_NSW.shtml). Staff ensure that they follow sunsafe practices when the uv index is above 3. Indoor or verandah experiences are offered to replace physically active play when the UV index is high or extreme.
- The staff will incorporate sun and skin protection awareness activities in their programs with children. Education on sun protection is included in conversation, stories and games.
- Staff shall ensure children are provided with adequate cool water to drink to help prevent heat stroke.
- Staff shall ensure children are protected from the sun whilst at all centre events including excursions, through the use of hats, clothing, sunscreens and sunglasses. They will also ensure that there are shady areas for the children to sit and rest. Staff will be mindful at all times of the cancer councils recommendations

Slip on sun protective clothing Slop on SPF 30+ broad spectrum sunscreen Slap on a hat Seek shade Slide on sunnies
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- The sun policy is implemented for all outdoor activities when UV levels reach 3 and above which includes excursions taking place in the local area. Hence a combination of the 5 sun protection measures will be considered for such experiences.
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- In the event where a child suffers from the effects of the sun, first aid must immediately be administered and the parents notified.
- Child care staff can help reduce the incidence of skin cancer and the number of related deaths by encouraging all members of the community to take

effective skin-protection measures.

- The Management Committee are aware of the importance of providing shade to children. This will be seen as a priority in any planning or changes to the outdoor environment.

References:

National Childcare Accreditation Council Source Book Quality Area 5  
Principles 6.5

ANTI-CANER COUNCIL OF VICTORIA ( 1992) *"Sun Smart - Everyone  
Everywhere 's Covered in Skin "*.  
CARLTON SOUTH. VIC

CANCER COUNCIL NSW *"Sun smart Advice for Early Childhood Centres"*.

NORTHERN TERRITORY ANTI CANCER FOUNDATION (1991) *"Fact Sheet -  
Sun Screens and Sun Protection Factors"*. CASUARINA. NT