



SUN & HEAT PROTECTION POLICY

Statement

Galloping Gumnut mobile children's service is aware that Australia has one of the highest incidences of skin cancers in the world with most skin damage occurring during early childhood and adolescence. Our summers produce long periods of extreme heat conditions which can impact on everyone's health. Ultraviolet (UV) cannot be seen or felt. It is not like the sun's light which we see, or the sun's warmth (infrared radiation) which we feel. Our senses cannot detect UV, so it can be damaging without us knowing. Limiting children and babies' exposure can reduce their risk of developing skin cancer and help prevent freckles, moles, and painful sunburn.

Objective

The service will make every effort to provide protection from unnecessary and lengthy exposure to the ultraviolet (UV/UVB) rays of the sun, for the prevention of sun damage and heat related illnesses.

Educators will familiarise themselves and follow the recommendations outlined in this Policy.

The service will provide ongoing education and training around sun and heat protection.

Relevant Legislation

- (Education and care national regulations) – Under the Children (Education and care services) National law (NSW) – Division 2 – Policies and Procedures
- The Children (Education and Care Services) Supplementary Provisions Regulations 2012.

Implementation

UV Index Ratings

A high **UV Index reading of 3 to 7 means high risk of harm** from unprotected sun exposure and that you need protection. It is recommended that for these ratings, protection against skin and eye damage is needed and to reduce time spent outside in the sun (between the hours of 10am and 3pm), to utilise shaded areas, wear sun protective clothing, a wide-brimmed hat, and **UV-blocking sunglasses**. **Sunscreen should always be used** when playing outside. Educators will utilise the cooler times earlier in the morning for outdoor activities when the UV levels are naturally lower. For readings 7 and above, it is recommended to avoid being outside on these days.

Sun Safety

Sun protection measures are recommended when the **UV Index is 3 and above**. UV radiation is not related to how hot or cold it is, sunburn can still occur on cool or cloudy days.

1. Educators will check the UV Index through the SunSmart app on the phones/iPads, and follow the recommended guidelines outlined by the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) (see appendix 1).
2. While outdoors, all children and adults should be wearing appropriate clothing (longer-style shorts and skirts, and T-shirts and dresses with sleeves, collars, or covered necklines) and a hat for protection (preferably a broad-brimmed, bucket or legionnaire hat). The Service may be able to provide spare hats if needed. Educators will role model sun protection behaviours.
3. Outdoor experiences and equipment will be set up, optimising available shaded areas at venues.
4. Outdoors, babies need to be kept well shaded at all times and covers for prams and strollers at all times.
5. The Service provides 30+ sunscreen which should be applied 20 minutes before going outside and reapplied as necessary (recommended every 2-4 hrs as per SunSmart guidelines). Families who have indicated on their child's enrolment form that they do not wish to use the Service's sunscreen, are required to supply their own.
6. Current trends and information regarding sun protection will be provided to families throughout the year.

Heat Waves & High Temperatures

1. All Educators must hold a current First Aid Certificate in an Education and Care Setting as required by legislation and be familiar with symptoms of heat illnesses such as heat stress and heat stroke, and respond appropriately.
2. Educators will check the SunSmart app on the phones/iPads for the day's predicted temperatures. Educators will arrange the outdoor programme to suit the cooler morning temperatures.
3. Educators are to ensure that water is always available and should remind and encourage children to regularly drink water.
4. If needed, in extended heat events, Educators will use heat reduction strategies (for example, providing each child with a wet cloth to help bring their body temperature down).
5. In the situation where there is going to be heat wave conditions, Educators will ensure that they maintain a cool, ventilated environment. Air conditioning will be used if it is available, and depending on individual venues, windows and doors will be opened to allow cooling and ventilation.
6. In the event of an extreme heat weather event, while these procedures would be implemented by Educators, the session may need to be cancelled and/or children may have to be collected by an authorised person and taken to a cooler environment.

Links to the NQF

When educators create environments in which children experience mutually enjoyable, caring, and respectful relationships with people and the environment, children respond accordingly. When children participate collaboratively in everyday routines, events, and experiences and have opportunities to contribute to decisions, they learn to live interdependently.

Concept 2.1.1	<i>Children's wellbeing and comfort</i>
Concept 2.1.2	<i>Health Practices and procedures</i>
Concept 2.2	<i>Children's safety and protection</i>
Concept 2.2.2	<i>Incident and emergency management</i>
Concept 2.2.3	<i>Child Protection</i>

Related Policies & Documents

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accident, Illness & Injury Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Providing a Child Safe Environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Child Protection Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Severe Weather/Natural Disaster/Road Closure
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Daily Safety Checklists/Start of the Term Checklists	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Venue Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• First Aid Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work Health & Safety Policy

Monitoring

1. Updating of this Policy where necessary and in accordance with any legislative changes.
2. Identifying areas of concern early, and addressing problems immediately, where appropriate.
3. This Policy will be reviewed biannually.

References

- Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) www.bom.gov.au
- Climate Council retrieved from www.climatecouncil.org.au
- Dr Liz Hanna, retrieved from <https://www.climatecouncil.org.au/uploads/1f35ac5d6abdd932233d4b1d9a44721b.pdf>
- Early Childhood Australia. (2016). Early Childhood Australia's Code of Ethics. Retrieved from <http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/our-publications/eca-code-ethics/>
- NSW Department of Education retrieved from <https://education.nsw.gov.au/student-wellbeing/health-and-physical-care/sun-safety>
- Skin Cancer Council retrieved from (<http://www.cancervic.org.au/preventing-cancer/be-sunsmart>
- SunSmart. (<http://www.sunsmart.com.au/tools/interactive-tools/free-sunsmart-app>)