

Queensland has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. Two out of every three Queenslanders will develop some sort of skin cancer in their lifetime. Research suggests that a least two-thirds of all melanomas occurring in Australia could be prevented if children were protected from the sun during their first 15 years.

Skin damage, including skin cancer, is the result of cumulative exposure to the sun. Research shows that severe sunburn contributes to skin cancer and other forms of skin damage such as sunspots, blemishes and premature ageing. Most skin damage and skin cancer is therefore preventable.

Ultraviolet (UV) levels are highest during the hours that children are at school. It is also recognised that winter sun contributes to skin damage.

With this in mind, CHI.L.D. Association realises the need to protect children's skin and educate them about Sun Smart behaviour, thus reducing the risk of skin damage from exposure to the sun.

POLICY

The purpose of this Sun Smart policy is to ensure that all children accessing CHI.L.D. Association services are protected from the harmful effects of the sun throughout the year.

The policy aims to:

- Provide ongoing education that promotes personal responsibility for skin cancer prevention and early detection;
- Provide environments that support Sun Smart practices;
- Create an awareness of the need to reschedule work commitments and outdoor activities to support Sun Smart practices.

PROCEDURE

CHI.L.D. Association will continue to:

- inform parents of the Sun Smart policy when they enrol their child;
- provide a copy of the Sun Smart policy statement for families, when appropriate;
- increase the amount of shade in the school grounds, where possible, by erecting sunshade structures and planting trees;
- incorporate education programs that focus on skin cancer prevention into the school curriculum;
- encourage all teachers and staff to act as positive role models for children in all aspects of Sun Smart behaviour;
- seek ongoing support from parents and the school community for the Sun Smart policy and its implementation, through newsletters, parent meetings etc;
- ensure that all students and staff wear hats that protect the face, neck and ears;
- ensure that all students and staff wear SPF 30+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen, when involved in outdoor activities;

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- encourage students without adequate sun protection to use shaded or covered areas at recess and lunch times;
 - review the school dress code to conform with the Queensland Cancer Council guidelines;
 - ensure that, wherever practicable, outdoor activities take place before 11 am or after 1 pm;
 - ensured that adequate shade is provided at sporting carnivals and other outdoor events;
 - have SPF 30+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen on the school book list or accessible, wherever practicable, at school; and
 - review the Sun Smart policy annually.

Staff will continue to:

- practise Sun Smart behaviour, as described above;
- enforce a 'no hat, no play' rule;
- supervise children's application of sunscreen (SPF 30+ 20 minutes prior to outdoor activity); and
- direct children to play in shaded areas where possible.

Parents/carers will continue to:

- provide a Sun Smart hat for their child and ensure that they wear it to and from school. The Queensland Cancer Council recommends the following hats:
 - 8-10 cm broad-brimmed;
 - legionnaire-style;
- ensure that their child applies SPF 30+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before leaving for school;
- ensure that their child's clothing provides adequate protection from UVR. The Queensland Cancer Council recommends clothing that has the following features:
 - dark-coloured;
 - collars and sleeves;
 - closely woven fabric;
 - natural fibre;
- act as positive role models by practising Sun Smart behaviour; and
- support the school's Sun Smart policy and help to design and regularly update the policy.

Students will continue to:

- be aware of the school's Sun Smart policy;
- take responsibility for their own health and safety by being Sun Smart;
- comply with Sun Smart rules and guidelines by wearing suitable hats, clothing and sunscreen, as well as suitable sunglasses, if appropriate;
- apply SPF 30+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors;
- use shaded or covered areas when outdoors;

- act as positive role models for other students in all aspects of Sun Smart behaviour;
- help to design and regularly update the Sun Smart policy; and
- participate in Sun Smart education programs.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

REVIEW

First implemented in 2003

Reviewed in 2006

REFERENCES

- DEECD School Policy & Advisory Guide (SPAG) Sun & UV protection (2011)
- DEECD Health, Safety & Workcover
- Catholic Education Commission of Victoria (CECV) Occupational Health & Safety Guidelines
- Independent Schools Victoria (ISV) Compliance Framework
- Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF)
- Building Quality Standards Handbook (BQSH): Section 7.5.5 Shade Areas
- Education and Training Parliamentary Committee Inquiry into Dress Codes and School Uniforms in Victorian Schools -Government Response
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- Radiation Protection Standard for Occupational Exposure to Ultraviolet Radiation (2006)
- Safe Work Australia: Guidance Note for the Protection of Workers from the Ultraviolet Radiation in Sunlight
- Cancer Council Queensland website