

**LA TROBE UNIVERSITY
COMMUNITY CHILDREN'S CENTRE**

SUN PROTECTION STATEMENT

This statement is designed to assist all children and adults¹ (OH&S) whilst in attendance at the Centre to be sun smart and sun safe. This statement is developed around the information provided to the Centre from SunSmart Victoria. Children can choose to play outdoors, but they must be protected from over-exposure to the sun's ultraviolet radiation (UVR), which causes sunburn, skin damage, eye damage and, in the long term, skin cancer. The Cancer Council Victoria is stating that 'Your lifetime tally of UV radiation exposure together with the number of severe sunburns, especially during childhood, increases your risk of skin cancer. From May to August, UV Index levels are usually low (below 3). Sun protection is not needed unless in near highly reflective surfaces such as snow or outside for prolonged periods of time'. We as a community want to ensure that we reduce these risks as much as is practicable.

SunSmart Victoria states:

'In Victorian from September to April, when the UV Index is 3 and above, most people need sun protection. Particular care should be taken during the middle of the day when UV Index levels are most intense'. "In Victoria, the sun's UV rays (the part of the sun which can damage the skin) are most intense from the beginning of September until the end of April especially during the middle of the day. From May to August, the UV radiation index levels in Victoria are usually low (Below 3). Therefore, sun protection measures are not necessary during these months unless you are in the alpine regions, or near highly reflective surfaces like snow or water."

SunSmart Victoria suggests that children can be outdoors from September 1 to April 30 inclusive at any time. However, Centre Personnel do need to be mindful of the peak UV times (10.00am to 2.00 pm - EST and 11.00am to 3.00pm - Daylight Saving Time) and schedule activities accordingly. For example, concentrate activities in shaded areas and have breaks from the sun. Staff need to use their professional judgment.

During this period the following sun protection measures must be taken:

- Both children and adults must be protected from the sun, at all times, with sun protective hats and clothing, sunglasses (suggested) if possible and sunscreen (**Refer to Clothing Statement**).
- All babies under 12 months are kept out of direct sunlight
- The application of SPF 30+ broad spectrum **20 minutes before** going outside, to clean dry exposed skin of both children and staff is a requirement. Sunscreen will need to be re-applied every 2 hours (staff record the actual time each sunscreen application is applied for each child on the sign in & out document under the section titled 'Sunscreen AM /PM') or more often if children/adults are swimming or sweating a lot. The Centre's Enrolment package will include a section for families to sign to authorise the application of sunscreen every 2 hours during periods of peak UV radiation (index levels above 3) times.
- Children have the option of playing indoors or playing in the shade areas e.g. under the UV shade structures, trees or shaded veranda areas. Children who do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing and when suitable items cannot be accessed from the Centre's 'spares' are directed to play in the shaded areas protected from the sun e.g. under the UV shade structures, trees or shaded veranda areas

¹ Adult – is defined as parents, families, staff, management, students and volunteers, regardless of age gender, who access the Children's Centre for any reason.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

- 1. With parental consent, children with naturally very dark skin are not required to wear sunscreen.**
- 2. Children with allergies or parental objections to the application of sunscreen are to wear appropriate sun protection clothing (Refer to Clothing Statement) and play in shaded areas during peak UV times (10.00am to 2.00 pm - EST and 11.00am to 3.00pm - Daylight Saving Time).**
- 3. If ever unsure about the UV Index levels from May to August and whether sun protection measures should be in place, check the UV Index levels on the internet www.sunsmart.com.au . Follow the links to *Find out today's UV Alert*.**
- 4. It is important for parents to supply appropriate protective clothing, hat and sunscreen (30+ and free of nut products) for their child. This will assist in avoiding a possibly unhappy situation from occurring for both children and adults.**
- 5. Children often copy those around them and learn by imitation. Research shows that if adults adopt sun protection behaviours, the children in their care are more likely to do the same.²**

Physical Environment (shade provision, outdoor play and outdoor equipment):

The Children's Centre Committee ensures there are a sufficient number of shelters e.g. the UV shade structures, trees or shaded veranda areas provided in each garden area; and continually assess the shade coverage of the outdoor play environment seeking avenues to improve the conditions if required. Staff are required to consider the availability of shade when planning for outdoor play experiences. Staff will ensure that outdoor equipment that is not fixed is utilized in the shade areas at all times of the day. Outdoor play equipment that is fixed will be monitored for usability (dependent upon shade) throughout the day by all adults.

Staff when organizing excursions will need to consider the availability of shade. Excursions should be planned for non-peak UV radiation hours of the day.

Maintaining hydration levels:

Infants and children's body/water ratio mass is significantly different from that of adults, therefore the risk for dehydration from outdoor play and hot weather is high and can be dangerous. Water will be offered to children throughout the day regardless of indoor or outdoor play settings. Children and adults are required to bring a named water bottle/teat bottle/sipper cup to the Centre and are encouraged to access water to drink throughout the day.

Cooled boiled water may be offered to infants and young children after bottle feeds if children show signs of continued thirst. Staff will monitor and document (via Daily Feedback Sheets) the input/output of infants and young children's fluids.

Vitamin D:

SunSmart Victoria also indicates that during the cooler months (May to August); it is important to have some exposure to UV radiation for vitamin D production. Vitamin D is necessary for bone, joint, muscle and neurological function. To ensure children and staff receive the required amounts of vitamin D during the months May to August hats do not need to be worn (From May – Put Sun Hats Away!) and sunscreen does not need to be applied unless UV Index levels reach 3 and above (Staff are encouraged to access the daily SunSmart UV Alert to find out daily UV Index levels).

Education:

Management and Centre staff are to actively promote skin protection methods to children and families. This will be accomplished via the "Health" section on the Educational Curriculum (weekly). Also, resources such as the Sun Smart Poster Kits will be utilised for this purpose. Management will provide updated information on sun protection via displays, flyers, WEB sites and current tip sheets.

It is of the view of SunSmart Victoria that children from 3 years of age should be encouraged to apply their own sunscreen under supervision of staff.

² Dobbinson S, Fairthorne A, Bowles K-A, Sambell N, Spittal M, Wakefield M. *Sun protection and sunburn incidence of Australian children: summer 2003-04*. Melbourne: Centre for Behavioural research in Cancer, Cancer Council Victoria, July 2005 unpublished

OH&S:

The *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* requires that employers must provide and maintain, so far as is reasonably practicable, a working environment that is safe and without risk to health for all employees and any contractors they employ. If you work outdoors and your workplace doesn't offer any sun protection measures, raise the issue with your health and safety representative or manager. Legislation also states that employees must cooperate with their workplace's sun protection program

Links to other documents:

Information for Users and Conditions of Enrolment – Centre Information Manual; Staff and Family Induction checklists; Enrolment Form; Sign in & out documents: Daily Feedback Sheet; Nutrition Statement; Development of the Educational Curriculum; Clothing Statement: Water Statement

Reference:

SunSmart (Victoria) Sun Protection – Save your Skin – Information Sheets – 2011: OHS legislation and UV radiation – 3. PREVENTION 3.2 Employer and Employee Responsibilities p5: Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 Sections 21 and 23: main Duties of Employers Section 25: Duties of Employees: www.worksafe.vic.gov.au >Laws and Regulations > Acts and Regulations: La Trobe University Occupational Health & Safety Policy: Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: Education and Care Services National Regulations: Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005, Part 2: Principles for Children: AS/NZS 4486.1:1997 – Playgrounds and Playground Equipment Part 1: Development, installation, Inspection, maintenance and operation Shade/Sun protection (Appendix A)

Approved 22 February 1994: Amended 30 April 1996: Amended 10 November 2003 (Sun Smart Early Childhood Bulletin – Sept 2003): Amended 3 May 2006 Minute 359.7 ii.: Amended 30 April 2008: Approved 28 May 2008 Minute 377.13 ii.: Amended 24 March 2009: Approved 27 August 2009 Minute 388.7 iii .c. Amended 26 August 2011: Approved: 31 August 2011 Minute 404.1
L:\Childrens\Centre\Centre Manual\2012\Sun Protection Statement 2011.docx