

	Policy
	Policy Category: Health & Safety
	Date Created: September 2019
	Reviewed: 14th October 2024
	Policy Name: Sun Protection Policy

The purpose of this operational policy is to protect children from the harmful effects of ultraviolet radiation (UVR).

Position Statement

We provide a sun safe environment by being committed to protecting children and teachers from the risks of UV radiation. Our sun protection policy follows the Cancer Society's minimum criteria.

Issue Outline

Skin cancers are the most common form of cancers in New Zealand. The mortality rate from skin cancer is among the highest in the world. Sunburn, particularly in childhood and adolescence increases the risk of melanoma. Limiting ultraviolet radiation (UVR) exposure during pre-school years could reduce the incidence of skin cancers in later life.

Detail

Whilst there is no statutory obligation to have a policy and procedure to protect children from the sun, there is the general requirement to promote good health and safety and to keep children from harm. Allowing children long unprotected exposure to the sun is considered harmful and this policy/documentation is often asked for by Ministry officials during ERO reviews, etc.

We need Vitamin D for strong bones and general health. It may also protect against some auto immune conditions such as multiple sclerosis. Sunlight is one source of Vitamin D. This means some ultraviolet radiation (UVR) exposure is necessary for vitamin D production. A balance is required between avoiding an increased risk of skin cancer and maintaining adequate vitamin D levels.

Sensible sun protection behaviour should not put people at risk of vitamin D deficiency. During the daylight saving months most people get enough UVR exposure to achieve adequate vitamin D levels through incidental sun exposure outside peak the UVR times of 10am - 4pm.

Our centre will promote sun protection during peak ultraviolet radiation (UVR) periods, when the ultraviolet Index (UVI), which measures the intensity of the ultraviolet radiation (UVR) in the environment, is three or above. This is especially important when spending long periods in the sun, particularly for those with fair skin.

In most parts of New Zealand, peak UVR times are between September and April, particularly between 10am and 4pm (during daylight saving hours).

Sun Protective Hats

During peak ultraviolet radiation (UVR) periods, all teachers and children will wear a sun protective hat, a bucket hat that protects the face, ears, nose and neck. No hat, no outside play. Staff are expected to act as role models for safe sun practices.

A sun protective hat and clothing:

- is made of a tightly woven fabric which doesn't let the sun's rays through,
- shades your face, nose, neck and ears. A bucket hat offers the best protection.

- feels comfortable – cool, but firm around the headband,
- stays on in the wind,
- we require togs to be a rash shirt and shorts,

Our centre will stipulate that parents supply their child with a sun protection hat and clothing (t-shirts rather than singlets). Spare hats will be available for those parents who do not supply their child with a suitable hat.

Sunscreen

During peak ultraviolet radiation (UVR) periods, all teachers and children will apply sunscreen on any exposed areas of skin. Sunscreen will be used with other sun safety behaviours, including covering up and seeking shade.

Our centre will supply sunblock for all children and apply this 3 times a day (morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea). We will always use a high quality sunblock (SPF50+). We ask parents to apply sunblock before your child attends the centre. If a child requires a special sunblock, parents will need to supply this.

Alignment with Other Policies

Health & Safety Policies

Relevant Background (including legislation/regulation references)

Regulation 46: health and safety practices standard: general requires that every licensed service provider to whom this regulation applies to take all reasonable steps to promote the good health and safety of children enrolled in the service.

For more information go to the Cancer Society website, <http://www.cancernz.org.nz/>.

Review

Review annually or when there is a significant change in the area of the policy topic.

Authorised:	
Date:	
Review Date:	
Consultation Undertaken:	Board Members, Parents and Caregivers, staff via storypark and notice boards