

SUN SAFETY POLICY



Related Quality Area	QA2: Children’s Health and Safety
Related Policies	Clothing Policy Physical Environment Policy (Work Health and Safety Policy)

Australia has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. Research has indicated that young children and babies have sensitive skin that places them at particular risk of sunburn and skin damage. Exposure during these early years of life can greatly increase the risk of developing skin cancer in later life. Early Childhood Centres play a major role in minimising a child’s UV exposure as children attend during times when UV radiation levels are highest.

PURPOSE

To protect all children and staff from the harmful effects of ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management and visitors to the Centre.

IMPLEMENTATION

Nightcliff Family Centre (NFC) is a member of the Cancer Council NT ‘SunSmart’ Program.

Sun protection times are a forecast for the time of day UV levels will reach 3 or above. At these levels, sun protection is recommended for all skin types and the policy areas should be implemented. In the Northern Territory, sun protection is required all year round as UV levels regularly reach 3 or higher.

Given Darwin’s climate, the Nightcliff Family Centre (NFC) enforces a combination of sun protection measures for all outdoor experiences to ensure the health and safety of children, staff and visitors are paramount.

Outdoor Play

- Ultraviolet (UV) radiation is the invisible killer that you can't see or feel. UV radiation can be high even on cool and overcast days. This means you can't rely on clear skies or high temperatures to determine when you need to protect yourself from the sun.
- Based on the above statement we now rely on the UV Index and Daily Sun Protection Times to manage outdoor play and sun protection.
- The UV Index is reported daily by the Bureau of Meteorology. The alert identifies times during the day when the UV level is 3 or above and sun protection is needed.
- When children are on excursions all sun protection practices are planned, organised, understood and available.

Shade

- All outdoor activities will be planned to occur in shaded areas. Play activities will be set up in the shade and moved throughout the day to take advantage of shade patterns.
- The Centre will provide and maintain adequate shade for outdoor play.
- Shade options can include a combination of portable, natural and built shade.
- The adequacy of current and proposed shade structures should always be considered during the design process when the Centre is planning building upgrades.
- Shade does not guarantee total protection, so hats, protective clothing and sunscreen should still be used.

Hats

- All children and staff are required to wear hats that protect their face, neck and ears (legionnaire, broad-brimmed or bucket style). Peak caps and visors are not considered a suitable alternative.
- Children without a sun-safe hat will be asked to play in an area protected from the sun (e.g. under shade, veranda or indoors) or can be provided with a spare hat. In some circumstances children may miss out of outside play if they do not have the correct hat and/or sun-smart clothing.

Clothing

- When outdoors, staff and children will wear sun-safe clothing that covers as much of the skin (especially the shoulders, back and stomach) as possible.
- This includes wearing: Loose fitting shirts and dresses with sleeves and collars or covered neckline, longer style skirts, shorts and trousers.
- Children who are not wearing sun-safe clothing can be provided with spare clothing or will be required to play under the verandah or in the shade.
- Midriff, crop or singlet tops do not provide enough sun protection and therefore are not recommended.

Sunscreen

- NFC encourages all families to apply sunscreen on their children before or when arriving at the Centre.
- Staff and children will apply SPF30+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen before going outdoors.
- Sunscreen is applied after morning tea and after sleep/rest time. These times slightly vary but are approximately 9/9:30 am and 2/2.30am.
- To help develop independent skills ready for school, children from three years of age are given opportunities to apply their own sunscreen under the supervision of staff and are encouraged to do so.
- Permission to apply sunscreen is included in the Centre enrolment form.
- Where children have allergies or sensitivity to the sunscreen, parents are asked to provide an alternative sunscreen, or the child is encouraged to play in the shade. Cancer Council recommends usage tests before applying a new sunscreen.
- Sunscreen is stored in a cool, dry place and the use-by-date is monitored.

Babies

- Babies under 12 months are kept out of the direct sun when UV levels are 3 or higher.
- They will wear sun-safe hats and clothing and small amounts of SPF30+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen may be applied to their exposed skin.
- All babies at NFC are aged over 6 months. If they are kept out of the sun or well protected from UV radiation by clothing, hats and shade, then sunscreen needs only be used occasionally on very small areas of a baby's skin.

Role Modelling

Staff will act as role models and demonstrate sun safe behaviour by:

- Wearing a sun-safe hat and clothing
- Applying SPF30+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen before going outdoors.
- Using and promoting shade.
- Encouraging families and visitors to role model positive sun-safe behaviour.
- Monitoring the UV Index and Daily Sun Protection Times.
- Regularly monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of the Sun Safety Policy
- Submitting the Sun Safety Policy to the Cancer Council as required to maintain SunSmart status
- Educators will keep children indoors/undercover for the hottest time of the day, between 11 am-2:30/3 pm

Education and Information

- Sun protection will be incorporated regularly into learning programs.
- Sun protection information will be promoted to staff, families and visitors.
- The Sun Safety Policy will be made available to all Educators, Staff, Families, and Visitors of the Centre to ensure a comprehensive understanding of keeping sun safe.

SEVERE HEAT

Severe heat or heatwaves are periods of unusually hot weather. Climate change is resulting in more intense heatwaves in Australia and presents an extreme risk to the health and safety of children. Babies and young children can dehydrate quickly which can cause heat-related illnesses including heat stroke and heat exhaustion.

Active heatwave warnings are indicated within the Australian Warning System (AWS) and range from Advice to Emergency Warning. Risk management measures must be implemented and managed to ensure children remain safe and healthy during a severe heat event.

POLICY REVIEW: This policy will be reviewed by the Director and Management Committee triennially unless there are any regulatory or legislative requirements and/or any feedback from staff, parents and the community.

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Judy Rondon	Director	SEPTEMBER 2022
POLICY REVIEWED	SEPTEMBER 2022	NEXT REVIEW DATE	SEPTEMBER 2024
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No changes or Additional information added • Sources checked for currency • Spell check 		

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Judy Rondon NFC Educators		
POLICY REVIEWED	SEPTEMBER 2024	NEXT REVIEW DATE	SEPTEMBER 2026
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sources checked for currency • Spell check • Additional information added to policy regarding managing severe hot weather • 		