

Student Health and Safety: Sun Protection Policy and Procedure

1. Rationale

Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world, with two in three Australians developing some form of skin cancer before age 70. Melanoma is one of the most commonly diagnosed cancers in Victorians aged 15–29. Yet most skin cancers can be prevented by using sun protection measures at appropriate times of the year.

The sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation is the major cause of skin cancer. UV damage accumulated during childhood and adolescence is strongly associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life.

2. Purpose

This policy has been developed to ensure that students and staff are protected from over-exposure to the rays of the sun. These practices will be applied to all school activities including excursions and camps. It is implemented using mature judgement and common sense, and is particularly important throughout Term 1 and Term 4 of the school year.

3. Aims

This policy and procedure aims to:

- Increase student and community awareness of skin cancer and the importance of sun protection.
- Assist students to develop strategies which encourage responsible decision-making about skin protection
- Work towards a safe school environment
- Encourage, students, parents, teachers and staff to wear protective clothing, hats and sunscreen during high-risk times

4. Legal and Regulatory Basis for Compliance

- Occupational Health and Safety Act (Vic) 2004

5. Key Definitions

- **Ultra Violet (UV) Radiation:** Ultraviolet (UV) radiation is a type of energy produced by the sun and some artificial sources, such as solariums. The sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation is the main cause of skin cancer. UV damage also causes sunburn, tanning, premature ageing and eye damage. UV radiation isn't like the sun's light or heat, which we can see and feel. Our senses cannot detect UV radiation, so we don't notice the damage until it has been done.
- **The UV Index:** The World Health Organisation's Global Solar UV Index measures UV levels on a scale from 0 (Low) to 11+ (Extreme). Sun protection is recommended when UV levels are 3 (Moderate) or higher. The UV level is affected by a number of factors including the time of day, time of year, cloud cover, altitude, how close you are to the equator, scattering and reflection.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

ACE Employees are Responsible for:

- Familiarising themselves with and complying with this Policy and implementing procedures.
- Making reasonable efforts to provide a safe workplace for themselves, other employees and students
- Increase student and community awareness of skin cancer and the importance of sun protection.

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- Assisting students and the wider school community to develop strategies which encourage responsible decision-making about skin protection

Parents/Carers and Students are Responsible for:

- Making responsible decisions about skin protection. For example: wearing protective clothing, hats and sunscreen during high-risk times

7. Procedure

Hats

- Students should be encouraged to wear broad-brimmed hats that protect their face, neck and ears, whenever they are outside.

Sunscreen

- The school supplies SPF50 broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen for staff and students to use and students are reminded and encouraged to bring their own SPF50 broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen to school.
- Staff encourage students to use sunscreen and provide time for students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors.
- The school community is educated about the correct use of sunscreen and the level of protection it provides (apply 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapply every 2 hours, or immediately after physical activity and swimming).

Shade

- The school ensures shade is available in the school grounds.
- The school ensures shade provision is considered in plans for future buildings and grounds.
- The availability of shade is considered when planning all outdoor activities and excursions.
- Students are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside, particularly if they do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing.

Staff role-modelling and OHS

- As part of OHS UV risk controls and role-modelling, staff:
 - Wear a sun-protective hat, covering clothing and, if practical, sunglasses;
 - Apply SPF50 broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen; and seek shade whenever possible.
 - Are supported to access resources, tools and professional learning to enhance their knowledge and capacity to promote sun protection education across the curriculum.

Visitors

- Visitors to the school are asked to do the following when outdoors:
 - Wear a sun-protective hat, covering clothing and, if practical, sunglasses;
 - Apply SPF50 broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen; and seek shade whenever possible.
 - The school's UV policy is easily accessible to staff, students and parents.
 - SunSmart behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school community through a variety of channels such as newsletters, staff meetings.

Curriculum

- Students are encouraged to be involved in initiatives to promote and model sun protection measures to the whole school community.
- Programs on sun protection are incorporated into appropriate areas of the curriculum.