



Sun and Heat Protection Policy PP01V01

Effective date of Policy: December 2020

Date of next review: December 2021

Be Heard Philosophy

As a part of our mission to provide the highest level of care to our children, we create a safe and healthy environment. This includes children and staff gaining adequate supervised exposure to UV rays with sun protection measures in place

AIM: To ensure all children, and staff are protected from too much UV exposure. This policy provides guidelines for implementing this aim.

1. Internal References

Related Policies:

- Clothing Policy

2. Responsibility

- Staff
- Families
- Students and Volunteers

3. Implementation

PRINCIPLES

To assist with the implementation of this policy, staff and children are encouraged to access the local sun protection times via the free SunSmart app or at sunsmart.com.au.

Too much of the sun's UV can cause sunburn, skin an eye damage and skin cancer. Exposure to the sun's UV during childhood and adolescence is associated with an increased risk of skin cancer in later life. Infants and toddlers up to four years of age are particularly vulnerable to UV damage due to lower levels of melanin and a thinner stratum corneum (the outer most layer of skin). UV damage accumulated during childhood and adolescence is associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life. Too little UV from the sun can lead to low vitamin D levels.

Be Heard has a duty of care to ensure that all persons are provided with a high level of some protection during the hours of Be Heard's operation. Sun protection times and UV levels will be monitored daily. When the UV level reaches 3 or higher, Sun protection measures will be used, regardless of the time of day or season. Sun protection measures will be considered when planning excursions.

Staff, management and families understand that there is a shared responsibility that the sun and heat protection policy and procedures are accepted and followed. Be Heard's duty of care requirements under the Occupational Health and Safety Act require that management and staff implement, and follow Be Heard's Sun and Heat Protection Policy, and ensure a level of protection to all persons who access our programs.

PROTECTIVE BEHAVIOURS AND PRACTICES

Monitoring UV Levels

Sun protection is required when UV levels reached Level 3 or above. Our service will monitor the UV levels daily through one or more of the following methods:

- using the smart phone SunSmart app
- using the SunSmart widget available at www.cancer.org.com
- viewing the Bureau of Meteorology website www.bom.gov.au
- visiting www.myuv.com.au

HATS

Children are encouraged to wear a hat provided by families when outdoors during the sun protection times, however we also acknowledge sensory preferences and that wearing a hat is not always possible. Be heard does not want to inflict any frustration or distress onto families or children. If staff believed that for younger children hats and needed to be worn all year to provide consistency in children's learning to wear them, they may recommend these practises where possible.

All children are encouraged to wear hats, where possible to do so that protect their face, neck and ears, i.e., legionnaire, broad-brimmed or bucket hats.

Due to the risk of children becoming entangled in hat cords and choking, Be Heard recommends that the cords be removed from hats.

CLOTHING

Children are recommended to wear loose fitting clothing that covers as much skin as possible when outside. It is recommended that clothing be made from cool, densely woven fabric. Tops with elbow length sleeves, and if possible, collars and knee length or longer style shorts and skirts are best. Staff will liaise with families to understand any sensory preferences and what clothing is preferred, and what may cause distress or frustration.

SUNGLASSES

Where practical, children are encouraged to wear close fitting, wraparound sunglasses that meet the Australian standard 1067 [sunglasses: category 2, 3 or 4] and cover as much of the eye area as possible.

SUNSCREEN

SPF 30+ or higher broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen is recommended to be supplied by families. We encourage families to apply sunscreen at least 20 minutes [where possible] before going outdoors and reapply every two hours if outdoors. It is the family's responsibility to monitor the expiration date of the sunscreen and replenish when necessary. If when applying sunscreen, a child presented with an allergic reaction Be Heard will stop applying the sunscreen, notify the family and request a family to provide suitable sunscreen for the child to use. Children who are able to apply their own sunscreen, should be encouraged to do so, under supervision. This fosters responsibility and independence. If a child does have a visible skin disease e.g., eczema or open skin wound, or a cold/ virus their sunscreen should be applied using gloves.

MANAGING THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

An audit of available shade is conducted regularly to determine the current availability and quality of shade. Management makes sure there is a sufficient number of shelters and trees providing shade in the outdoor area. The availability of shade is considered when planning all outdoor activities and excursions. Children are encouraged to choose and use available areas of shade when outside. Staff will monitor fixed outdoor play equipment for usability throughout the day.

FAMILY OBLIGATIONS

Read and understand the Sun Protection Policy as explained in the family information pack. Provide a suitable sun protective hat, covering clothing and sunscreen for their child. Applies sunscreen to their child/children 20 minutes before staff arrived where possible to do so

BE HEARD PROCEDURES

Communicate with staff about any required changes that any child may have from usual practise as it relates to the child.

Ensure that when enrolling a child, families are:

- informed of the be heard sun protection policy

Reinforce the sun protection policy for staff and provide for children's activities.

Provide staff, and families with information on sun protection and vitamin D through family newsletters, family Handbook etc.

As part of OHS UV risk measures, when the UV is 3 in above, we recommend staff and visitors to wear a suitable sun protective hat, covering clothing and, if practical, sunglasses when outside and to apply sunscreen, and seek shade whenever possible.

Ensure sun protection practises consider the special needs of infants and that babies under 12 months are kept out of direct sun when the UV index is 3 or above. Physical protection such as shade, clothing and broad brimmed hats are the best sun protection measures.

If babies are kept out of the sun or well protected from UV radiation by clothing, hats and shade, then sunscreen need only be used occasionally on very small areas of baby skin. The widespread use of sunscreen on babies under six months old is not recommended.

Ensure that the infants outdoor play environment utilises as much dense shade as possible. Ensure staff have all the supplies needed to implement this policy in case the families forget to have the necessary items.

HEATWAVE DEFINITION AND PROCEDURES

A heatwave is generally defined as a period of abnormally and uncomfortably hot weather that could impact on human health, community infrastructure and services. The Department of Health and Human Services will issue a heat health alert if it is expected that temperatures in a certain region will exceed the heat health temperature threshold. A heat health temperature threshold is the lower temperature limit or 'tipping point', above which heat related illness and death increased substantially amongst vulnerable groups.

The average temperature for any given day is the average of the forecast daily maximum temperature and the forecast overnight temperature [which is the daily minimum for the following day]. In Victoria, the heat health temperature threshold is between 30 to 34 degrees depending on the region.

Young children have been identified as a vulnerable group who are likely to be most affected by heat.

During a heatwave our Staff will:

- Ensure children stay out of the direct sun during the hottest part of the day.
- Ensure children and staff drink plenty of water throughout the day, even if it is not requested.
- Limit or restrict outdoor based activities. Spending the majority of time within air-conditioned buildings.
- Block out direct sunlight and heat with sheer blinds, opening windows only there is a cool breeze.
- Make sure food that requires refrigeration is properly stored.
- Encourage families to not leave children, adults or animals inside parked cars.
- Assess children at regular intervals for any signs of heat cramps, heat exhaustion or heat stroke.

BE HEARD PROCEDURES

Ensure all children use a combination of sun protection measures during the sun protection times, whenever UV index levels reach 3 in the above. Particular care is taken between 10:00 AM and 2:00 PM [11:00 AM and 3:00 PM daylight savings time] when UV index levels reached their peak during the day. Children and staff may be outside during these times when adhering to all aspects of this policy. Sun protection measures are required whenever the UV index level reaches 3 and above. Consider the provision of shade when planning outdoor play spaces.

Maintaining hydration levels by ensuring that at all times a child can access water. Monitor to ensure all children are drinking appropriate amounts of water to prevent dehydration. Cold bottled water may be offered to infants and young children after bottle feeds if children show signs of continued thirst.

Role model sun protective behaviours by wearing appropriate clothing, hat, and sunglasses [if practical], seeking shade and applying SPF 30+ sunscreen 2 hourly. Staff students and volunteers must comply with the sun protection policy as it applies to the children and themselves as employees.

To help develop independent skills ready for school, support children from three years of age to apply their own sunscreen under the supervision of staff to support the children's learning, include some protection and vitamin D topics into the learning and development program. Reinforce the sun protection policy for children through staff and children's activities and displays.

4. Sources and References

- Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).
- Bureau of meteorology. Home page (for UV Index): <http://www.bom.gov.au/uv/>
- Cancer Council. (2019). UV alert: <https://www.cancer.org.au/preventing-cancer/sun-protection/uv-alert/>
- Cancer Council. Home page: <https://www.cancer.org.au/>
- Cancer Council. Preventing cancer: Sun protections: <https://www.cancer.org.au/preventing-cancer/sun-protection/>

5. Review

Date Reviewed	Modifications	Next Policy Review Date
December 2020	Creation of Policy	December 2021

IMPORTANT NOTICE AND DISCLAIMER

This is an important notice to all Families, staff, contractors, and other users of this Policy.

1. This Policy has been prepared by Be Heard based on the information available as at the issue date. Be Heard reserves the right to vary this Policy at any time, including to take into account any changes to the legislation and legislative instruments that may apply from time to time.
2. While all reasonable care is taken in preparing this Policy, Be Heard does not make any warranty about or accept any responsibility for whether the Policy complies with, accurately interprets or adequately implements all legislation and legislative instruments that may apply from time to time.
3. To the greatest extent permitted by law, Be Heard disclaims all liability to any person in respect of anything, and of the consequences of anything, done or omitted to be done by any such person in reliance, whether wholly or partially, upon any information presented in this Policy.