Katherine Isolated Children's Service Incorporated
(K.I.C.S)

Sun Protection, Clothing and Comfort Policy

Policy Number 2

Policy statement

- Effective sun protection is important in ensuring a child feels comfortable and safe from harm in an Early Childhood service environment.
- The service defines 'comfort' as a state of reassurance, satisfaction, ease, and free from anxiety or pain.
- In this service the term 'clothing and footwear' encompasses:
  - sun protective clothing, including hats and swimwear;
  - clothing acceptable for messy play;
  - appropriate clothing for changing weather conditions and temperature of play environments;
  - safe footwear for play experiences such as climbing and running.
- It is understood by staff, children and families that there is a shared responsibility between each other that the Sun Protection, Clothing and Comfort Policy and procedures are accepted as a high priority.
- In meeting the service's duty of care, it is a requirement that management and staff implement and adhere to the service's Sun Protection, Clothing and Comfort Policy.

Rationale

- Too much exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun causes sunburn, skin damage and increases the risk of skin cancer.
- Sun exposure in the first 15 years of life contributes significantly to the lifetime risk of developing skin cancer. Australia has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world.
- Skin cancers account for 80% of all new cancers diagnosed in Australia each year.
- Melanoma is the most diagnosed cancer for 15 – 44 year olds.
- This policy is followed all year round in the NT as the UV radiation levels are always high, very high or extreme during peak UV periods (10am – 3pm).
- In order for children to actively enjoy a Playgroup they must be able to move freely and comfortably in their clothing and not be concerned about getting dirty.

Strategies and practices

- All students and staff use a combination of sun protection measures throughout the day to ensure they are well protected. Particular care is taken between 10 am and 3 pm when UV levels reach their peak.

Shade

- K.I.C.S Playgroups are held under shade to the best of the Field Teams efforts.
- It is expected that venues hosting a Playgroup have suitable shaded area to hold the Playgroup. This may include (but is not limited to) a shady tree, bower shed, verandah, etc.
- If necessary, the Field Team will move tables and equipment over the course of the Playgroup as the shade shifts and moves.

Clothing

- All styles of staff uniforms will include collars that protect the neck, and sleeves. Shorts and skirt lengths will extend as close to the knee as possible. Staff uniforms are to be made of close weave fabric, preferably 100% cotton. Rash vests or t-shirts will also be worn when swimming outdoors.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to dress children in suitable clothing such shirts with collars, sleeves and mid length shorts.

Hats

- Staff are required to wear hats whenever outside; bucket or broad-brimmed are preferred over caps..
- Parents/carers are encouraged to ensure children come to a Playgroup with a hat.
- Staff will encourage children to wear their hats at all times.

Sunglasses

- Staff are welcome to wear sunglasses- preferably Australian Standard 1067 (Sunglasses: Category 2, 3 or 4). Sunglasses must not have mirrored lenses.

Sunscreen

- SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen is available for staff and children's use at Playgroups. Sunscreen is best applied at least 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapplied every two hours as required.

Clothing for messy play and having fun

- Children are to be dressed in clothing that gives them full range of movement, are able to get dirty and have fun in.
- Parents are welcome to bring along an apron or 'art shirt' for their child/ren to use, however, it remains the parent's responsibility to put on, take off, and to clean.

Clothing for NT weather conditions

- Given the NT's at times extreme weather conditions, it is expected that staff and children are dressed appropriately.
- Staff may cover uniforms with jumpers and jackets as necessary in the colder months.

Safe footwear for playgroups

- K.I.C.S encourages children to wear shoes at Playgroups. It remains the parent's responsibility should their child remove their shoes.
- Staff are to wear closed in shoes or boots at all times during Playgroup, set up and clean up times.
- During wet play sessions staff and children may remove their shoes. It is acknowledged that staff and children/parents are each responsible for their choices regarding footwear.

Policy review

- The service will review the Sun Protection, Clothing and Comfort Policy and procedures, and related documents every 12 months.
- Families are encouraged to collaborate with the service to review the policy and procedures.
- Staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be encouraged to be actively involved.

Sources and further reading

- The Cancer Council NSW. (2006). *SunSmart childcare: A policy guide for service providers*. Sydney: Author.
- UNICEF (n.d.). *Fact sheet: A summary of the rights under the Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Retrieved January 18, 2007, from http://www.unicef.org/crc/files/Rights_overview.pdf

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Signatures	Name_____	Position _____
	Signature _____	
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