



Adelong Public School **SUNSMART** Policy and Procedures

RATIONALE

Ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun can cause sunburn, skin damage, eye damage, and skin cancer. Australia has the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world. Over 434 000 people are treated for one or more skin cancers each year, with 543 people dying in 2011 (Australian Institute of Welfare Health, 2014).

There are four factors, often occurring simultaneously, which contribute to these statistics:

- the population is predominantly fair-skinned;
- ultraviolet light from the sun is of sufficient intensity to induce skin cancer in this susceptible population;
- for most of the 20th century, social values have supported the incorrect belief that a suntan is healthy and attractive; and
- lifestyle, work, school and recreational habits expose people to the sun for long periods.

Skin damage, including skin cancer, is the result of cumulative exposure to the sun. Much of the damage occurs during childhood and adolescence. Research suggests that severe sunburn is a contributor to skin cancer and other forms of skin damage, such as wrinkles, sunspots, blemishes and premature ageing. Most skin damage and skin cancer is, therefore, preventable.

Primary schools can help reduce the incidence of skin cancer and the number of related deaths by encouraging all members of the school community to take effective skin protection measures.

AIM

Our SunSmart Policy has been developed to ensure that all students and staff attending Adelong Public School are protected from skin damage caused by the harmful ultraviolet rays of the sun. It aims to promote among students, staff and parents:

- positive attitudes towards skin protection;
- lifestyle practices which can help reduce the incidence of skin cancer and the number of related deaths; and
- personal responsibility for and decision-making about harmful effects of the sun.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES FOR SKIN PROTECTION

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students attending Adelong Public School are protected throughout the year from the harmful effects of the sun. A particular emphasis on implementation will be placed on Terms 1 and 4.

1. As part of general skin protection strategies:

- 1.1. students will wear hats which protect the face, neck and ears (broad brimmed, buck or legionnaire) whenever they are outside such as before school, during recess, lunch, sport, excursions and sports carnivals;
- 1.2. students who do not have their hats with them will remain under the shaded COLA in the playground during recess and lunch. A *No Hat – No Play* strategy will be implemented;

- 1.3. students will be encouraged to apply a SPF 30+ sunscreen each day. Parents will be requested to assist in this regard and classrooms will be provided with pump packs;
- 1.4. outdoor activities will be held in areas of shade whenever possible;
- 1.5. teachers will endeavor to schedule outdoor activities before 11:am and after 2:00pm where possible; and
- 1.6. staff and parents will be encouraged to act as role models by practicing skin safe behavior, but it must be remembered that this policy is designed specifically for student protection.

2. Our School will:

- 2.1. provide school hats for purchase which are appropriate and satisfy Cancer Council guidelines;
- 2.2. provide pump packs of SPF 30+ broad-spectrum, water resistant sunscreen for students and staff;
- 2.3. incorporate information sessions and learning programs on skin cancer protection through the *Personal Development, Health and Physical Education* curriculum using the SunSafe Program;
- 2.4. limit exposure times through timetable changes where possible;
- 2.5. encourage students, staff and parents to drink frequent amounts of fluid; i.e., water, especially on hot humid days, by allowing students to have drinking water at the desks or by taking frequent lesson breaks on hot days to go outside to the bubblers for a drink;
- 2.6. on hot, humid days, and with extreme weather conditions, given that every classroom has evaporative cooling, the Principal will consider keeping all students inside the cool classroom buildings during recess and lunch breaks; and
- 2.7. reinforce SunSmart Policy in a positive way through assembly awards, random hat day rewards, Newsletter items and stickers.

3. When enrolling a child, parents will be:

- 3.1. informed of the SunSmart Policy;
- 3.2. requested to purchase a school hat for their child's use each day, clearly labeled with their child's name;
- 3.3. encouraged to provide and use the SPF 30+ sunscreen at home to support the school's efforts to make sun protection a healthy regular habit; and
- 3.4. encouraged to act as positive role models and practise skin protection behaviours themselves, particularly when attending school functions.

EVALUATION

Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the SunSmart Policy through:

- general observation of skin protective behaviour of the school community;
- random surveys of hat use in the playground;
- evaluate classroom activities involving skin cancer preventions;
- evaluate and update school resources; and
- review the SunSmart Policy every three years.

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