

March 2005



Welcome to the first edition of the Early Childhood News Bulletin for 2005.

This summer has been much cooler than normal though the ultraviolet radiation (UVR) levels have still remained in the very high to extreme category. It is important to remember that skin damage can still occur during cooler weather and many people do get burnt during cooler temperatures, as they tend to stay out in the direct sun for longer.

This has implications for the planning of outdoor activities - though the temperature may be cooler it is still important for teachers and carers to plan outdoor activities to be under shade as much as possible particularly between 10.00 am and 3.00 pm from the beginning of September until the end of April.

If you have any questions about skin protection or would like some assistance in updating or developing your skin protection policy, please contact me on 8291 4149 or email cmcnamara@cancersa.org.au

Carmel McNamara
Primary Schools Project Officer

Skin protection policy - things to check for when updating your policy

A skin protection policy should be reviewed every two years, not only to ensure that it is relevant to its respective early childhood community but so that the information it contains remains accurate and current. It is important to keep up to date with existing knowledge as information can change with new research. Sometimes when a policy is reviewed there are a few things that get over looked. Please check to see if some of the following points are included in your current policy and make the necessary adjustments:

- If you have a Rationale at the beginning of your policy, it should include: *Australia has the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world, with skin cancers accounting for around 80% of all new cancers diagnosed each year in Australia.* It could also include *At least 1 in every 2 Australians will be diagnosed with skin cancer in their lifetime.*
- A comprehensive skin protection policy should be in place from 1 September until 30 April.



- *No Hat No Play* could read *No Hat Play in the Shade* - The Cancer Council South Australia strongly advocates for regular physical activity, conducted safely if outdoors.
- Appropriate hat styles - a broad brimmed hat, a legionnaire style hat or a bucket hat with a deep crown and a brim width of 6cms for school aged

children and adults and 5cms for preschoolers.

- The sunscreen listed should be SPF 30+ (and not 15+) broad spectrum and water resistant.
- Sunscreen should be applied 15 - 20 minutes before going outside and then re-applied regularly (around every 2 hrs) if outside for an extended period of time. This needs to be included in your policy.
- Note that the Anti-Cancer Foundation has changed it's name to The Cancer Council South Australia - an updated policy needs to reflect this.

SunSmart Centre - is your early childhood service part of the SunSmart Program?

If your kindy or centre is doing a great job in providing a sun safe environment for your students and staff, why not become a SunSmart Centre. It is a very straight forward process, involving answering a questionnaire and returning it with a copy of your skin protection policy. Your application will then be assessed to ensure that it is in line with the national standard criteria.

If you need any assistance in developing a skin protection policy or updating your current one, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Once an early childhood service has gained SunSmart status they receive a large aluminium SunSmart Centre sign to display in a prominent spot. This lets the wider community know that their service is committed to providing a sun safe environment.

Congratulations to the following early childhood sites for gaining SunSmart Centre status

Walkley Heights Child Care Centre - Walkley Heights
Willunga Preschool - Willunga
Unley & Parkside CCC (Young St) - Parkside
Unley & Parkside CCC (Arthur St) - Unley
Naracoorte Child Day Care Centre Inc - Naracoorte
Renmark Children's Centre - Renmark
Pooraka Community Child Care Centre - Pooraka
Athol Park Child & Family Centre - Athol Park



A shady playground at Grove Kindy

Sunscreen

I have often been asked to provide information for newsletters. Here is some information about sunscreens to include in newsletters or parent information.

Key points about sunscreens

- Sunscreen does not offer complete protection against the sun. Hats, clothing and shade should also be used.
- A thick coating of zinc cream does block out the UV totally. It works by reflecting the rays. As it is thick and completely coats the skin it is only appropriate for small areas such as noses, ears and lips.
- All brands of Broad Spectrum sunscreen with a SPF 30+ which comply with the Australian/New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 2604 provide effective protection when applied correctly.
- Using a SPF 30+ rather than a SPF 15 sunscreen halves your risk of sunburn for the same length of time in the sun. SPF 30+, however, should not be used to increase the amount of time you spend in the sun.

- Sunscreens should be applied to clean, dry skin 20 minutes before exposure to the sun. They should be applied liberally - eg about one teaspoonful of cream for one arm.
- Sunscreens can be applied as a moisturiser under make-up.
- Babies under one year old should not be exposed to the direct sun. When taking babies outdoors avoid doing so between 10.00 am and 3.00 pm if possible. Natural protection, that is hats, clothing and shade, is best. However small amounts of sunscreen can be applied to areas that cannot be protected with clothing.

Look for a sunscreen labelled:

- **SPF 30+**
- **Broad Spectrum**

A water-resistant sunscreen is recommended when activity is likely to result in heavy sweating or for water-sports.

Remember - Sunscreen does not offer complete protection against UV radiation. Even if a sunscreen is reapplied regularly, a small amount of UV still reaches the skin. It is still possible for the skin to be sun damaged even with sunscreen protection if exposed to the sun repeatedly for prolonged periods.

For further information about sunscreen go to <www.cancersa.org.au>.

Parent's Jury - a parent network website

The Parents Jury is a web-based network of parents that offers a forum for parents to voice their views on children's food and physical activity issues and to collectively advocate for the improvement of children's food and physical activity environments (eg, reduced marketing targeted at young children, more healthy choices for school canteens and making neighbourhoods safer and more child-friendly).

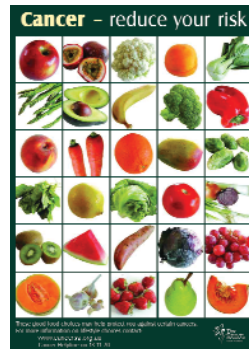
The Parents Jury is an initiative of Diabetes Australia - Vic, The Cancer Council Victoria and the Australasian Society for the Study of Obesity, who have provided initial and ongoing financial, administrative and technical support to establish The Parents Jury. It was launched on-line in August 2004 and receives no sponsorship from the food industry, the weight loss industry or the exercise/fitness industry.

For further information have a look at the Parent's Jury website at <http://203.202.189.13/tpj_index.asp> or email <enquiries@parentsjury.org.au>.

DECS Healthy Eating Guidelines Workshops -

To support the implementation of the *eat well sa* Healthy Eating Guidelines, DECS will be holding free workshops across the state during March and April. The aim of these workshops will be:

- To provide an overview of the Guidelines for schools and preschools.
- To discuss the implementation of the Guidelines with schools and preschools.
- To provide information about the Commonwealth government's \$1500 grants supporting health eating in schools.



Who should attend: **Schools and preschools:** Key staff leading the sites Healthy Eating Policy Committee. **Health services:** key staff who work with schools and preschools, dietitians and nutritionists. All teachers will receive a half-day professional development certificate for their attendance at the information seminar.

For further information visit <www.decs.sa.gov.au/speced/pages/default/eatwellsa>.

Enquiries to Karen Dewis (DECS), (08) 8226 1773 <dewis.karen@sa.gov.sa.gov.au> or Patricia Carter, (08) 8226 6504 <patricia.carter@health.sa.gov.au>.

Hospital admissions for sunburn in children triple in a decade - a concerning trend

The number of children under the age of 12 admitted to South Australian public hospitals suffering from sunburn has more than tripled over the last ten years, according to Department of Health figures.

High UV radiation levels over summer mean that unprotected skin can be burnt in as little as 15 minutes. As children's skin is much more sensitive and delicate than that of adults, irreparable damage can occur within a very short time.

Department of Health records show that the number of children aged 0-12 years admitted to public hospitals with sunburn in the past 10 years has risen from four in the summer of 1993/94 to 14 last summer (2003/04).

The number of children treated for sunburn in the Paediatric Emergency Department at the Women's and

Children's Hospital (WCH) has more than doubled in the last four years. Thirteen children were treated for sunburn during the summer of 2000/01 compared to 27 children last summer (2003/04).

While sunburn is an extreme form of UV radiation damage, even tanning without burning can cause skin cell damage that can lead to premature ageing and skin cancer.

The Cancer Council strongly encourages that all children are well protected with clothing, hats and SPF30+ broad-spectrum sunscreen when outdoors, particularly between 10am and 3pm. Sunscreen should be applied to areas of the skin not covered by clothing - but shouldn't be relied on as the only form of protection. The use of shade when outdoors is also recommended. Teachers, parents and carers have an important part to play by leading by example and role modelling positive skin protection behaviours.

Resources

These are available from The Cancer Council. Contact the **Cancer Helpline 13 11 20** or visit the website <www.cancersa.org.au>. To borrow videos contact the Resource Centre on (08) 8291 4165.

New Resources

The Early Childhood SunSmart Poster Set has been developed to help early childhood services promote sun protection for young children and their families.

- The set comprises six A3 size colour photograph posters depicting infants, children and adults being SunSmart in typical early childhood settings.
- The posters are laminated and include information about sun protection and ideas for discussion and play with young children printed on the back.
- The posters can be used for display or as a focus for group discussion.



Be a SunSmart role model

Play SunSmart

Sun protection for babies

The Early Childhood Poster Set is available to purchase for \$20 (including postage) plus GST. If you require further sets please contact the Resource Centre on 8291 4165.

Safina and the Hat Tree is a real life journey of a pre-school teacher who has been diagnosed with cancer. She engages the children honestly and sensitively as she confronts this illness with the help of her family, dog Reuben and her sense of humour.



Is someone within your community dealing with cancer? Talking about cancer with children is one of the most difficult issues for parents or teachers to address. This book is a very useful tool to begin talking about cancer to young children and is available for purchase from the Resource Centre on (08) 8291 4165 for \$15.00 including postage and GST.

Skin cancer information sheets - two information sheets on skin cancer and melanoma. Teacher use.

Sun related information sheets - nine information sheets on a range of topics from UV radiation to sunscreen. Teacher use.

Slip! Slop! Slap! poster, postcards, booklabels - featuring a SunSmart message.

Be SunSmart with Sid - a fun pamphlet with SunSmart information and games.

Cover up your kids - an information pamphlet for parents.

Playing it safe in the sun with Sid Seagull poster and teacher resource book - full of teaching activities, worksheets and stories. Teacher use.

New Sid Seagull posters - two great new Sid Seagull posters. For classroom use, R-7.

Sun days, fun days (video) - follow Rosie, Matt and their friends over a week as they have fun outdoors. They show that protecting themselves from the sun is easy, cool and something we all should do everyday. (Cost \$40 or can be hired.)

For cancer information and support contact the **Cancer Helpline on 13 11 20**.

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