

# [CHILD CARE CENTRE'S NAME]'s Sun Safety Policy

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## Sun Safety Policy Statement:

It is important for children to be outside for their physical, social, cognitive and emotional developmental needs. It is also important that children (and staff) enjoy the sun safely when outdoors. [CHILD CARE CENTRE'S NAME] will provide a safer environment for our children and staff by reducing ultraviolet (UV) radiation exposure from the sun during outdoor activities. By adopting this policy, [CHILD CARE CENTRE'S NAME] aims to reduce UV radiation exposure by practicing appropriate sun protection strategies. This policy will be implemented all year round, but with particular emphasis during the months of April to September, when the sun's UV radiation is strongest.

## Rationale:

Every time skin is exposed to UV radiation from the sun, the body's skin cells change. These changes build up over time and can lead to skin cancer. Too much UV radiation can also lead to eye cancer, cataracts, and weakening of the immune system.

Exposure to UV radiation in childhood is a major risk factor for developing skin cancer later in life. Skin cancer (melanoma and non-melanoma combined) is on the rise and is one of the most commonly diagnosed cancers in Canada. Fortunately, it is also one of the most preventable cancers through sun protection practices.

## Collaboration:

The policy will be implemented in collaboration with the Child Care Centre, staff, and parents/caregivers. Everyone will work together to achieve a sun safe environment through the following activities:

### 1. Parent/caregiver communication

- When enrolling their child, parents/caregivers will be informed of the [CHILD CARE CENTRE'S NAME]'s sun safety policy and provided information on sun safety practices.
- Parents and caregivers will be informed about the importance of, and strategies for, preventing skin cancer.
- Communication will include, but will not be limited to, details of the centre's policy relating to hats, sun-protective clothing, sunscreen usage, and sunglasses.
- The policy will be reinforced in positive ways through parent letters/newsletters, staff memos, bulletin boards, and meetings.
- Signage will be posted that reminds staff, parents/caregivers, and children to practice sun safety. Families will be urged to reinforce sun-safe behaviors outside the facility.

### 2. Planning of outdoor activities

- Activities will be planned as much as possible around the peak UV radiation periods (11a.m. to 3 p.m., April through September).

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- Activities will be held in the shade where possible, and breaks from the sun will be built into outdoor activities.

### 3. Shade

- All attempts will be made to plan activities in shade when the UV Index is 3 or higher.
- [CHILD CARE CENTRE'S NAME] will provide sufficient shade in their outdoor space. This shade may be from natural (trees and shrubs), built (shade from buildings, awnings, gazebos, shade sails), or portable (portable tent canopy, umbrellas, tarps) forms of shade, or a combination of these.

Priority spaces for shade include:

- Climbers and play equipment.
- Sand and water play areas.
- Seating and gathering spaces.

### 4. Hats and protective clothing

- When outside in weather when the UV Index is 3 or higher, parents/caregivers are encouraged to send their children with appropriate sun safe clothing, hats that cover the ears, face and neck, and sunglasses.
- Sun safe clothing includes:
  - A wide-brimmed hat (2-3 inches all around) or a legionnaire style hat to protect the face, neck and ears. Baseball hats are not recommended because they do not protect the neck or ears. Children without a sun-safe hat will be required to play in an area protected from the sun (e.g. under shade or indoors) or will be provided with a spare hat.
  - Tightly woven, loose clothing that covers as much of the skin as possible.

### 5. Sunglasses

- Parents/caregivers will be encouraged to provide shatter resistant UVA/UVB wraparound sunglasses for their child to provide added protection from direct and reflected UVR.
- Use of sunglasses will be encouraged all year round, including in the winter.

### 6. Sunscreen and lip balm

**Parents/caregivers are:**

- Required to provide permission for staff to apply sunscreen to their child.
- To provide a sunscreen that is water resistant, with broad spectrum protection, and an SPF of 30 or higher, if their child is allergic to the centre's offered brand/type.
- Asked to send their child to the centre with sunscreen already applied on days where the UV Index is planned to be 3 or higher (generally April to September)

**Staff are:**

- To apply (and reapply as needed) a 30 SPF or higher water resistant broad spectrum sunscreen to the child's skin that is not covered by clothing 20 minutes prior to going outdoors.
- Use of sunscreen will be encouraged all year round, including in the winter.

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## 7. Sun protection and babies

- Babies under 12 months should not be exposed to direct sunlight and will remain in full shade when outside.
- Babies are required to wear sun-safe hats and clothing.
- Sunscreen may be applied to babies over 6 months of age on areas of the skin that are not covered by clothing such as the face and the backs of hands. It is also important to avoid the sun and use shade and clothing.

## 8. Increasing awareness with children

- All children (through educational sun safety activities) will be made aware of the importance of sun protection and sun safety practices such as: seeking shade, covering up with clothing, wearing hats and sunglasses, and using sunscreen.

## 9. Protecting staff from ultraviolet radiation exposure

[CHILD CARE CENTRE'S NAME] supports sun protection for its staff to reduce UV radiation exposure through a comprehensive approach to sun protection, which includes:

- **Engineering controls:**
  - The centre will provide shade through natural (trees), built (shade from buildings, awnings, gazebos, shade sails), and portable (portable tent canopy, umbrellas, tarps) forms of shade, or a combination of these.
  - Efforts will be made to modify reflective surfaces where possible.
- **Administrative controls:**
  - The centre will notify staff and post the daily UV index in the centre,
  - The centre will conduct risk assessments for UV radiation exposure.
  - The centre will schedule outdoor activities outside of peak UV radiation periods (usually 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., April to September).
- **Personal protective equipment:**
  - The centre will provide and encourage use of: sunscreen, sun protective clothing, hats, and sunglasses.
- **Training and awareness:**
  - The centre will display sun safety information on display boards
  - Leadership models sun safe behaviours and provides sun safety education to staff.
- **Policy:**
  - The centre will implement, communicate and enforce a sun safety policy.

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## Monitoring and review of policy:

- [CHILD CARE CENTRE'S NAME] will review the effectiveness of this policy on an annual basis and will make revisions as needed.
- Staff and parents/caregivers will be notified of policy updates.

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Created (date): \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewed (date): \_\_\_\_\_ Next review date: \_\_\_\_\_