

Policies & Procedures



Skin Protection

Introduction

Australia has the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world with 380,000 new cases and 1,800 deaths recorded each year. Two out of three Australians will develop skin cancer at sometime in their life.

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

1. The population is predominantly fair-skinned.
2. Ultraviolet light from the sun is of sufficient intensity to induce skin cancer in this susceptible population.
3. For most of this century social values have supported the belief that a suntan is healthy and attractive.
4. 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.

We believe we have a responsibility to 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.

Aims

The aims of the Skin Protection Policy are to promote among students, staff and parents:

- positive attitudes towards skin protection
- personal responsibility for and decision-making about skin protection
- lifestyle practices which can help reduce the incidence of skin cancer and the number of related deaths
- awareness of the need for environmental changes in schools to reduce the level of exposure to the sun.

Implementation Strategies for Skin Protection

This policy is for implementation throughout Terms 1, 2, 3 and 4.

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that all children attending our school are protected as far as possible from skin damage caused by the harmful ultraviolet rays of the sun.

1. As part of general skin-protection strategies:

- 1.1. Children will wear school uniform hats which provide protection for head and face while playing outside at recess and lunch times, during physical education lessons and all other outdoor excursions and activities including out of hours sport practices and outdoor activities.
- 1.2. School uniform hats must be kept at school at all times but if circumstances arise when children do not have a hat to wear they must stay in the shade.
- 1.3. During Terms 1 to 4 school uniform hats must be worn as specified in paragraph 1.1 above.
- 1.4. Children will be encouraged to use available areas of shade for outdoor play activities.
- 1.5. Considering UV radiation levels when playing outdoor activities; extra care is to be taken between 10:00am and 3pm, when UV levels are at their peak.

- 1.6. Staff will be encouraged to act as role models by practising skin protection behaviour:
 - Wearing protective hats and appropriate clothing for all outdoor activities
 - Using a SPF 30+, broad spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen for skin protection and is to be reapplied every 2 hours if outdoors for longer periods of time.
 - Seeking shade whenever possible.

2. Our school will:

- 2.1. Provide as many shelters and shade trees as possible.
- 2.2. Provide SPF 30+, broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen for staff and student use, whenever possible.
- 2.3. Incorporate programs on skin cancer prevention in its curriculum.
- 2.4. Reinforce regularly the Skin Protection Policy in a positive way through newsletters, parent meetings, student and teacher activities.
- 2.5. Maintain a supply of Anti-Cancer Foundation Information Sheets for distribution to families as needed.
- 2.6. Inform prospective parents when enrolling children that our policy requires the purchase of a uniform hat.