

Anula Primary School Sun Safety Policy

Rationale

Anula School is a values-based learning community that has well being and connectedness at the core of its operations. Being sun safe is one aspect of the long term well being of students. Australia has the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world with 140,000 new cases and 1,000 deaths each year.

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.
- Social values have supported the belief that a suntan is healthy and attractive.
- Lifestyle, work, school and recreational habits in the Northern Territory expose people to the sun for long periods of time. Darwin has the highest UV rays in the country.

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 aging. Most skin damage and skin cancer is, therefore, preventable. This is important in young children who have sensitive and easily damaged skin.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that ALL children attending Anula School are protected whenever possible from skin damage caused by the harmful ultraviolet rays of the sun.

Aim of the Policy

The aims of this policy are to promote amongst the students, staff and parents/carers:

- Positive attitudes towards skin protection
- Lifestyle practices which can help reduce the incidence of skin cancer and the number of related deaths, e.g. hats, sunscreen, suitable clothing
- Personal responsibility of their own skin protection
- Helping others to understand the need for skin protection
- Awareness of the need for possible environmental changes within the community to reduce the level of exposure to the skin e.g. plant trees, put protective shade up.

Implementation

As part of the general skin-protection program:

Students:

- Should wear suitable hats which protect the face, neck and ears such as a broad-brimmed hats, bucket hats, or legionnaire hats whenever they are outside e.g. walking to and from school, sports, outdoor excursions and activities;
- Should apply sunscreen that is SPF 30 (or higher), broad-spectrum and water-resistant 20 minutes before heading outdoors and re-apply every 2 hours.
- Who do not have their hats with them will be asked to play in an undercover area of the school;
- Who do not have their hats for sports activities/PR will remain in the shade
- Will be encouraged to use available areas of shade for outdoor play activities especially on very hot days;
- Should be encouraged to make full use of the 'bubblers' especially on very hot days.

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Staff

Will be asked to act as role models and are encouraged to:

- Wear protective hats and appropriate clothing during outdoor activities;
- Use sunscreen whenever appropriate;
- Seek out shade whenever possible;
- Time outdoor activities to avoid hours of peak radiation levels between 10am – 3pm all year round. Note: UV levels in NT are above 3 (high to extreme) all year round hence sun protection is needed daily.
- Ensure that adequate shade is available for use at outdoor events.

Anula School Community Council will:

- Ensure that the school hats sold by the school are appropriate and satisfy Cancer Council guidelines;
- Ensure that adequate shade is available for use at sporting carnivals and outdoor events;
- Provide shelters and shade trees as required;
- Provide funding to resource programs on skin cancer prevention for use in the school curriculum;
- Reinforce the Sun Safety program in a positive way through the newsletter and council meetings and activities

When enrolling a child, **parents** will be:

- Informed of the Sun Safety policy;
- Requested to purchase a school hat or to provide an appropriate hat for their child's use;
- Encouraged to provide sunscreen for and to teach their child how to use sunscreen that is SPF 30 (or higher), broad spectrum and water resistant type.
- Encouraged to set an example by practicing skin-protection behaviour themselves.

Resourcing

- Sunscreen supply to each learning area of the school and front office
- Education Officer – Cancer Council to address staff and students

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Monitor skin protective behaviours in the school e.g. hat use, use of shade, use of sunscreen;
- Monitor the effectiveness of the classroom program activities involving skin protection;
- Monitor outdoor activities times e.g. sports, swimming, gardening, excursions;
- Review policy against Sunsmart's "Challenges" document after one year
(http://www.sunsmart.com.au/downloads/schools/primary/being_sunsmart_challenges)

References

Jingili School Sunsafe Policy
Cancer Council

For further information: http://www.bom.gov.au/products/UV/Darwin_NT.shtml
<http://www.sunsmart.com.au>