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. At least 1 in every 2 Australians will be diagnosed with skin cancer in their lifetime. Most skin cancer and skin damage is the result of cumulative exposure to the sun and mainly occurs during childhood and adolescence. Children of all nationalities & skin types have very sensitive skin that will burn easily. Children with fair or pale skin are most likely to burn but even children with dark skin can suffer sun damage. Sun protection during childhood & adolescence means life long reduced risk. Skin cancer is preventable. Preschools are ideally placed to help reduce the incidence of skin cancer by developing good habits in and an understanding of the effects of the sun by the children at the centre. Our Centre’s philosophy ensures the child’s right to be safe at the Centre.

The aims of our policy are to promote amongst children, staff and parents:
- Positive attitudes towards skin protection.
- Lifestyles practices that help reduce the incidence of skin damage.
- Awareness of the need for environmental changes in our Centre to reduce the level of exposure to the sun.

IMPLEMENTATION

Our policy is implemented all year round. However children will wear hats in term 1 and term 4 (during summer months)
- All children and staff will wear hats outside all year.
- Children without hats need to play inside or on the verandah (please consider this can be very difficult for a child who is staying for a full day).
- Hats must be either broad brimmed, legionnaire or bucket. (baseball caps, visors, beanies and hoods are not considered appropriate sun safe hats.
- Brims on broad brimmed hats should be at least 7.5cm wide. These hats reduce the amount of ultraviolet radiation reaching the face and eyes by up to 50%
  - Legionnaire style hats should have a flap that meets the side of the front peak to provide protection to the side of the face
  - A bucket hat should have a deep crown so it sits low on the head and have a brim of at least 6 cm.
- Parents are to apply sunblock to their own children. (children staying all day are able to have sunscreen reapplied by the centre, please make it known to staff if you wish this to occur. If your child has sensitive skin please provide appropriate sunscreen).
- Outdoor activities will be located in the shaded areas when possible.
- Staff will act as role models for the children.
- Shaded areas will be increased by the tree planting and shade coverings.
- Staff will incorporate sun and skin awareness activities into our teaching programs.
- Staff and children can wear protective eye wear, ie sunglasses, if they choose.
- Children are encouraged to drink water frequently on hot days.

References: Cancer Council South Australia.
The Cancer Council Helpline – 131120
Website-www.cancersa.org.au

Endorsed by W.L.S.K Governing Council.
19/06/06