

Two Wells Primary School Skin Protection Policy

Rationale

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.

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 many years 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.

The Cancer Council South Australia recommends people protect their skin at times when the ultraviolet radiation (UVR) level is 3 (3-5 is the moderate range) and above – this is when the UVR level is strong enough to cause damage to the skin. With this in mind, the guidelines for South Australia are that a skin protection policy be in place from the beginning of September until the end of April. The Cancer Council recommends that particular care should be taken between 10am – 3.00pm, when the UVR levels are at their highest.

Schools are ideally placed to reduce the incidence of skin cancer and the number of related deaths by encouraging all members of the school community to use effective skin protection.

Aims

The aims of the Two Wells Primary School Skin Protection Policy are to promote among children, staff and parents:

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

Implementation

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that all members of our primary school are protected from skin damage caused by the harmful rays of the sun.

It is an expectation that all staff and students (encouraging parents) of Two Wells Primary School will use the following skin protection strategies:

1. Take particular care if in the direct sun between the hours of 10am and 3pm and when the ultraviolet radiation level is 3 (moderate) and above, outside of these time.
 - 1.1 All outdoor activities will be held in shaded areas.
 - 1.2 Whenever possible, all outdoor activities will be scheduled before 10am, conducted indoors, or in the shaded areas of the school.
 - 1.3 Students will not play outside at lunchtime when the temperature is 36 degrees or more. Indoor activities will be provided. At recess (on these particular days) students will be restricted to outside shade areas.
2. Use the shade of trees, shelter shed or portable shade when outdoors.
 - 2.1 The further provision of shade areas will appear as a priority when planning outdoor activities.
3. Wear appropriate clothing that protects the skin.
 - 3.1 Students and staff will be expected to wear a broad brimmed hat, legionnaire style hat, or a bucket hat with a deep crown and a brim width of 6cms whenever they are involved in outside activities. Children without a hat or wearing an inappropriate hat will be expected to play in the shade.
 - 3.2 Parents will be encouraged to wear appropriate hats when involved in school activities.

- 3.3 Students and staff will wear hats all year round for all outdoor activities. Hats are not expected to be worn before school. In the winter months this will provide some sun to maintain vitamin D levels in children.
4. Students will be encouraged to apply a broad-spectrum, water resistant sunscreen with an SPF of 30+ to clean, dry skin, 15 – 20 minutes before going outdoors for lunch or curriculum activities. Sunscreen should be applied every two hours if outdoors for a prolonged period of time (i.e. sports day, excursions, camp), or more frequently if involved in water activities (aquatics) or perspiring.
 - 4.1 Adequate time must be allowed for students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors.
 - 4.2 Parents will be encouraged to supply sunscreen for their children, although there will be bulk sunscreen available in all classrooms.
 - 4.3 Sunscreen application will be encouraged before going out to lunch or any outdoor activity between 10am and 3pm.
5. Reinforcing the SunSmart message in all school activities and in general school procedures is an important strategy in the adoption of the skin protection behaviours.
 - 5.1 Staff are expected to role model appropriate SunSmart strategies in all activities.
 - 5.2 Skin cancer prevention will be included in Health and Personal Development lessons each year.
 - 5.3 Staff will be encouraged to keep up to date with new information and resources through contact with The Cancer Council of South Australia.
 - 5.4 Information about the school's SunSmart Policy will be given to all new staff, students and families.
6. The Two Wells Primary School Skin Protection Policy will be reviewed on a yearly basis.
 - 6.1 Policy issues will be discussed with staff, SRC and the Governing Council.