Sun Protection
Rationale
Australia has the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world with two out of every three people developing some form of skin cancer before they are 70. Skin damage, including skin cancer, is the result of cumulative exposure to the sun. Sun exposure in the first ten years of life determines, to a substantial degree, the likelihood of skin cancer developing later in life. 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. St Joseph’s Preschool can help reduce the risk of future skin cancer by encouraging everyone at the Centre to take effective measures.

Cancer Council SA advises people protect their skin at times when the ultraviolet (UV) radiation level is 3 and above—this is when it is strong enough to cause damage to unprotected skin. For much of South Australia, UV radiation levels are 3 and above every day from September to April. The Cancer Council SA recommends that a skin protection policy be in place from 1 September until 30 April when UV radiation levels are 3 and above and it is important to balance sun protection with safe sun exposure for the production of vitamin D for bone growth and development.

We all need vitamin D to develop strong healthy bones. The best form of vitamin D for your body is the UV radiation in sunlight. Sensible sun protection does not put people at risk of vitamin D deficiency but there are times when it is actually important to be in the sun without protection.

Fair skinned people can get enough vitamin D in summer from a few minutes of sunlight on their face, arms and hands before 10 am or after 3 pm on most days of the week. In winter in South Australia, when UV radiation levels are below 3, people need about two to three hours of sunlight to their face, arms and hands over a week. – Cancer Council of SA 2010-12.

Although the Cancer Council recommends it is not necessary to wear hats and sunscreen when the UV is below 3 (May – August), children and adults at St Joseph’s Preschool will be required to wear a hat year round. As children are only at kindergarten for a maximum of 15 hours per week, it is much easier to maintain a consistent year round hat wearing policy. Children will still be able to get their required amount of sunlight out of kindergarten hours.

If you are concerned about vitamin D levels in your child, please contact your local doctor.

AIM- 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.
• Personal responsibility for and decision making about skin protection.
IMPLEMENTATION: Implementation of this policy is year round

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that all members of our Early Childhood Service are protected from skin damage caused by the harmful rays of the sun. It is an expectation that all staff, students and parents of St Joseph’s will use the following skin protection strategies:

- Children, staff and parents will be expected to wear a broad brimmed hat, legionnaire style hat, or a bucket hat whenever they are involved in outside activities. Children not wearing an appropriate hat will be expected to play under the verandah or indoors.
- Parents to apply sunblock to their own children prior to attending kindergarten.
- Children staying all day are able to have sunscreen re-applied during lunchtime by staff in Terms 1 & 4 in accordance to application instructions provided on parent consent form. The centre will supply sunscreen. We use an approved brand sunscreen that is SPF30+ water resistant Sunscreen. If your child has any allergies to sunscreen, please let staff know and supply your own sunscreen.
- Sunscreen will be applied to children staying all day during terms 2 & 3 if parents request and supply the sunscreen.
- Outdoor activities will be located in the shaded areas when possible.
- Staff will use discretion when determining outside play between the hours of 10am-3pm.
- Staff will be encouraged to role model appropriate Sun Smart strategies
- As clothing worn by children and staff needs to ensure maximum protection, safety and comfort and to be appropriate for the weather conditions, parents/guardians will be encouraged to dress children appropriately to enable them to fully engage in play activities, comfort and self-help skills, preferable with shoulders and necks covered ie avoiding strapless, backless tops/dresses, singlets etc
- Shaded areas will be increased by 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.
- Skin cancer prevention will be included in appropriate teaching activities.
- Staff will be encouraged to keep up to date with new information and resources from Cancer Council SA.
- Information about the centre’s Sun protection Policy will be given to all new staff, students and families.
- Parent/guardian will be informed of the Sun Protection Policy and sign the consent for application of sunscreen to their child/ren.

The centre remains open in extreme weather conditions as it is air conditioned and heated.
Acceptable hats as recommended by the Cancer Council SA

Philip Schultz
Principal

Anne Burke
School Board Chairperson

Dated: June 2015