

Enhancing Sun Safety through Community Engagement

It is important that the school community is consulted throughout the development, implementation and review of a school's Sun Safety Strategy.

Provide opportunities for school community consultation in the development of the school's Sun Safety Strategy

Schools should:

- involve and consult their school community on specific issues such as changes to uniform, hat, sunscreen, and/or sunglasses requirements
- inform parents of the development of or changes to the school's Sun Safety Strategy and provide a mechanism for feedback
- seek parent association endorsement for the Sun Safety Strategy
- seek and encourage students to provide input on the Sun Safety Strategy, through established student representative processes.

Clearly communicate the Sun Safety Strategy to the school community

Schools should:

- include the Sun Safety Strategy in school prospectus, staff and student handbooks
- regularly communicate their commitment to sun safety and changes to existing sun safety practices to parents through school newsletters and parent meetings
- regularly communicate their commitment to sun safety and changes to existing sun safety practices to students and staff through assemblies and school notices.

Encourage the school community to support the school's Sun Safety Strategy and sun safety measures

Schools should:

- actively encourage parents/carers to comply with the Sun Safety Strategy when visiting the school or school events
- communicate to parents, carers and volunteers ways they can act as role models for students in relation to sun safety measures
- provide sun safety information, as appropriate, to parent and carers.

Consider sun safety in relation to parent association projects and activities

Schools should engage parent associations to:

- encourage compliance to the Sun Safety Strategy at all parent association run events
- support the implementation of the Sun Safety Strategy through the funding/provision of sunscreen, hats, and shade structures
- participate in and support community-wide sun safety initiatives, where appropriate.

Where appropriate, schools access external service providers to support the Sun Safety Strategy:

Schools should:

- ensure external providers do not replace the role of the teacher in the delivery of sun safety programs
- engage service providers for staff professional development, where appropriate.

Sun Safety in Secondary Schools GUIDELINES

The Queensland Government, including the Department of Education and Training, is committed to protecting students from the harmful effects of the sun in accordance with the Department's procedure HLS-PR-013: *Developing a Sun Safety Strategy*.

The *Sun Safety in Secondary Schools Guidelines* have been developed in consultation with Queensland Health to provide schools with evidence-based direction to inform the development of individual school Sun Safety Strategies.

These guidelines identify three areas of the school setting that need to be included in a whole school approach to Sun Safety. These are **Policies and Procedures; Curriculum, Teaching and Learning; and Community Engagement**.

An effective and comprehensive Sun Safety Strategy addresses a range of activities, rather than emphasising any single factor, to minimise the risks associated with ultraviolet radiation exposure. These should include the provision and utilisation of shade, appropriate uniforms, wearing of hats and sunscreen, timetabling considerations and educational programs.



In accordance with the Department of Education and Training' HLS-PR-013: *Developing a Sun Safety Strategy*, a school's Sun Safety Strategy must:

- provide effective education programs on sun safety and preventative measures
- maximise the use of available shade for outdoor activities
- provide flexible planning of activities to reduce, as far as practicable, time spent by students in the sun between 10 am to 2 pm
- include shade tree planting and caring programs
- consider sun protection when determining or reviewing school uniform designs
- require the wearing of protective clothing including appropriate hats when in the sun during the school day
- encourage the use of an SPF 30+ broad spectrum sunscreen on uncovered areas of the skin, such as face and back of the hands
- consider sun safety in relation to parent association projects and activities
- promote the importance of parents, teachers, ancillary staff and volunteers as role models for students in relation to sun safety strategies.

Policies and Procedures for supporting Sun Safety Strategies

Develop a Sun Safety Strategy in consultation with the school community

A school's strategy should address all of the following areas:

- policies and procedures
- curriculum, teaching and learning
- community engagement.

Implement the Sun Safety Strategy

Schools should:

- communicate the strategy to staff, students and the school community
- include the strategy in the induction processes for new staff and students
- develop strategies for non-compliance
- manage competing priorities such as encouraging physical activity and behaviour management issues
- review sun safety strategies on a regular basis.

Provide staff with professional development

Professional development should address:

- staff requirements under the Sun Safety Strategy
- suitable content for curriculum programs
- school expectations and benefits for teachers, ancillary staff and volunteers to act as role models for use of sun safety measures.

Minimise sun exposure and maximise use and provision of shade for staff and students between 10 am and 2 pm

Schools should:

- increase the use of existing shade structures (natural and artificial)
- increase available shade through planting and caring for shade trees
- reschedule or relocate outdoor activities occurring between 10 am – 2 pm
- provide portable shade structures for use by students, staff and spectators, where practicable, especially for activities that must be held outdoors between 10 am – 2 pm.

Review school uniform to maximise sun safety measures

Schools should:

- consult with the school community regarding uniform review or changes
- access information provided in the Queensland Cancer Fund booklet 'What makes a school uniform sun safe?' to inform uniform review
- consider including sunglasses as an accepted part of a school uniform
- consider including swimming shirts as an accepted part of a school uniform.

Require staff and students to wear protective clothing, including appropriate hats and sunglasses, when in the sun during the school day

Schools should:

- include sun safe (that is, broad brim) hats in uniform requirements
- develop strategies for non-compliance
- consider the inclusion of sunglasses as protective clothing
- encourage the wearing of swimming shirts
- provide alternative opportunities to ensure that student involvement in physical activity is not compromised by compliance strategies.

Encourage the use of an SPF 30+ broad spectrum waterproof sunscreen on uncovered areas of the skin, such as face and back of the hands

Schools should:

- provide sunscreen
- add sunscreen to equipment lists
- cater to individual student needs, such as allergies and other medical conditions that prohibit the use of sunscreen
- encourage sunscreen application at least 20 minutes prior to outdoor activity and reapplication (if required) at least every 2 hours.

Curriculum, Teaching and Learning for Sun Safety

When addressing any health issue within the curriculum it is critical to consider the role of the teacher, tailoring the program to student needs and use of interactive teaching strategies.

Develop educational programs on sun safety

Programs should:

- be developmentally appropriate and sequential across all year levels
- develop knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to make informed choices around sun safety (where possible connected to the range of health issues)
- be a core component of the Health and Physical Education curriculum.

Select appropriate resources to complement education programs

Resources should:

- be developmentally appropriate and selected to complement comprehensive curriculum programs
- be relevant to student lives
- not exaggerate or misrepresent dangers, that is, through the use of scare tactics.

Minimise sun exposure and maximise use of shade when scheduling activities

Schools should:

- schedule outdoor physical activities prior to 10 am or after 2 pm where practicable
- ensure shade (trees, permanent or portable shade structures) is available for outdoor activities especially activity scheduled between 10 am and 2 pm.

Incorporate personal sun safety strategies into classroom practice

Staff should:

- allow approximately 20 minutes before outdoor exposure for application of sunscreen prior to outdoor activities
- direct students to wear appropriate hats
- direct students to utilise shaded areas when participating in outdoor activities
- encourage additional sun safety measures such as wearing sunglasses
- adopt sun safety strategies as part of their daily behaviour, for example, ground duty, supervising sport.

Provide staff with professional development to support the development of sun safety programs

Schools should:

- provide professional development to increase staff knowledge of evidence-based sun safety practices and how to best develop comprehensive curriculum programs
- engage external service providers such as Queensland Health Population Health Units or Queensland Cancer Fund to provide professional development, if necessary.