Hot Weather Policy- Nov 2012

Rationale

The Children’s Centre recognises that all employees (including leaders) must take reasonable care to protect their own health and safety and that of others in the workplace and that:

- all site leaders have a duty of care to behave in a manner that ensures no foreseeable harm befalls the individual(s) under their care as a result of any negligence on their part
- The requirements of the National Quality Standards are met;
  2.3.2 Reasonable steps are taken to identify and manage risks, and every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and hazards
- The service will provide a comfortable and safe environment for children
- Heating and cooling equipment provided to maintain a comfortable temperature for children

The policy will recognise that children are at greater risk of suffering from heat illness than adults. A child’s ability to respond to environmental heat and acclimatise to heat is due to physiological differences.

“Children sweat less and get less evaporative cooling than adults. In warm and hot weather they have greater difficulty getting rid of heat; they look flushed, and feel hotter and more stressed than adults”

Source “Sports Medicine Australia”;

In the case of hot weather the learning environment will be modified to reduce the risk of heat illness in young children by ensuring that:

- Adequate Shade is provided so that activities conducted in periods of hot weather can be undertaken in these areas
- Heating and cooling equipment provided to maintain a comfortable temperature for children
- All children and staff are to comply with the Centre’s Sun Safe policy
- Children are to be frequently offered water or fluids. Drinking water is to be accessible to children at all times.
- Parents are to be encouraged to dress children in clothing that minimises heat gain, in layers that can be easily removed during activity and of a type that is sunsafe.
- Parents are to be encouraged to pack food in insulated containers with a freezer brick or frozen water. Sites are to provide a cool place to store food.
Early Dismissal Clause

Contingency plans for events such as blackouts and breakdown of cooling or ventilation systems.

If the Children’s Centre has extenuating circumstances (such as no air-conditioning) on extreme hot weather days (ie days where the forecast is at least 36 degrees) and the conditions in the centre are deemed unsuitable for children, the Centre will:

- Contact all parents/caregivers to collect their child
- Ensure that children who are unable be collected are adequately supervised by staff and kept as comfortable as possible.

Update Due Nov 2013