

Hot Weather Procedure

Rationale

The environment in South Australia can pose risks related to heat exposure and dehydration particularly for young children. Therefore it is important to develop procedures which outline the risks and identifies action plans. Sports Medicine guidelines provide recommendations about young children's exposure to weather conditions including considerations for both ambient temperature and humidity.

Aims

The aims of the Nuriootpa Community Children's Centre 'hot weather procedure' are to promote among children, staff and families:

- Positive attitudes towards environmental conditions.
- Lifestyle practices which can help reduce the incidence of heat stress and heat related health conditions.
- Responsibility for, and decision making about personal regulation of exposure in hot weather.
- Awareness of the need for environmental changes in our centre to reduce the level of sun exposure.

Implementation

This procedure is primarily required during August - April as average temperatures in Adelaide and the surrounding areas are more likely to be above 35°C.

1. When the ambient temperature is over 36°C children will play in areas covered by shade.
2. When temperatures exceed 38°C at the site location children will remain inside.
3. On days where the forecast temperature exceeds 34°C staff will conduct a touch test to ensure rubber play safe and metal/plastic climbing equipment surfaces are safe for children to use, before children play in these areas. Equipment will be considered safe if an adult can hold their hand on the surface for a slow count to 10.
4. Families might choose to pick children up early in periods of extreme weather conditions – heat waves.
5. In the event of air-conditioning malfunction on a day where temperatures exceed 35C families will be contacted and provided with the option of picking their children up early.
6. On days where temperatures exceed 35°C children will be encouraged to drink water at regular intervals.
7. Staff will discuss physical signs with children to support children's understanding of their own body's responses to heat. Eg "your cheeks look red, you're hot, and it's time to go inside and get a drink and slow down".
8. Humidity levels will influence the period of time children spend outside during times of high humidity.

Related Policies/Procedures

- Skin Protection Policy
- Inclement Weather Procedure

Endorsed August 2015
Next Review August 2017