

## Hot Weather Policy

### 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 a policy which outlines the risks and identifies action plans. Sports Medicine guidelines provide recommendations about young children's exposure to weather conditions outlining considerations for both ambient temperature and humidity.

### Aims

The aims of the Elsie Ey Children's Centre for Early Childhood Development and Parenting 'Hot Weather Policy' are to promote amongst children, staff and parents:

- Positive attitudes towards environmental conditions.
- Lifestyle practices which can help reduce the incidence of heat stress and heat related health conditions.
- Personal responsibility for, and decision making about, own 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 policy is primarily required during Terms 1 and 4 as average temperatures in Adelaide and the surrounding areas are more likely to be above 35C. The policy applies all year round.

1. When the ambient temperature is over 36C children will play in areas covered by shade.
2. When temperatures exceed 38C at site location children will remain inside. Site temperature is defined as the temperature at Roseworthy as listed on the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) website, checked at half hourly intervals.
3. On days where the forecast temperature exceeds 34C, before children play in areas with rubber play safe and metal climbing equipment staff will conduct a touch test to ensure surfaces are safe for children to use. (If an adult can hold their hand on a surface for a slow count to 10 the surface is safe for use)
4. Due to the use of evaporative air-conditioning systems within the site families may choose to pick their children up early in periods of extreme weather conditions such as 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. Children who would normally attend Stepping Stone Hewett childcare at the end of the kindy day may return earlier to the childcare centre. Staff will try to find a space with air-conditioning for the remaining children to access.
6. On days where temperatures exceed 35C 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, for example "Your cheeks look red", "You're hot, it's time to go inside and get a drink of water and slow down".
8. Humidity levels will influence the period of time children spend outside during times of high humidity.