

# SunSmart workplaces: Education

*Small changes can mean big protection in education and care settings.*

Staff working in education - including teachers, outdoor education staff, sports teachers, playground supervisors, early childhood educators, and maintenance staff - often spend long hours outdoors during the school day. As outdoor workers - people who perform paid or unpaid duties outside as part of their role - they are regularly exposed to hazards such as ultraviolet (UV) radiation. Over time, this ongoing exposure can increase the risk of skin cancer.

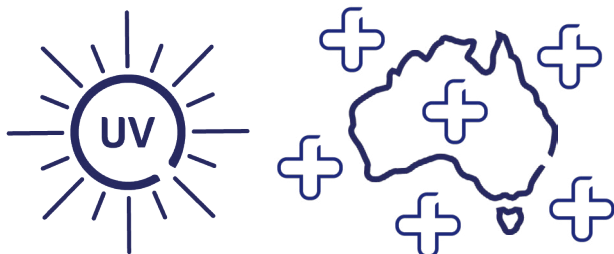
Under work health and safety laws, education workplaces have a responsibility to provide a safe environment and minimise health risks for staff, including UV exposure. Taking practical steps to improve sun safety - such as adjusting schedules, providing protective equipment, and promoting sun-safe behaviours - not only helps protect educators, but also sets a positive example for kids and supports a healthy, proactive workplace culture.



Sun safety shouldn't be reserved for special events or excursions - it's just as critical during everyday outdoor activity like playground supervision and outdoor learning. Make it part of daily practice, not just event planning.

## Why sun safety at work matters

Exposure to UV radiation is a leading cause of skin cancer in Australia.



Every year in Australia it's estimated that over **200** melanomas and **34,000** other skin cancers are caused by **UV exposure in the workplace**.

In education and care settings, educators may spend time outdoors during:

- playground duty or yard supervision
- outdoor teaching and learning activities
- sport and physical education classes
- excursions and camps
- supervising outdoor events, assemblies or performances
- maintenance, groundskeeping or gardening work.

Education and care settings also play an important role in modelling sun-safe behaviours for kids, helping them learn about habits that protect their health for life. Learn more at the [SunSmart schools and early childhood centres website](#).



# Small steps to create a more SunSmart workplace

Sun safety at work is a shared responsibility that starts by the workplace creating a supportive environment. Simple adjustments to routine, planning and communication can significantly reduce UV exposure for educators and kids.

## Look at how the day is organised

- ✓ Schedule outdoor classes, sport and events **earlier in the morning or later in the afternoon** where possible.
- ✓ **Rotate playground supervision duties** so that educators are spending shorter periods of time outdoors during peak UV times.
- ✓ **Consider shade options** for common areas where staff supervise students.

## Make sun safety part of everyday practice

- ✓ **Require sun-safe clothing**, such as wide-brimmed hats, long sleeves, long pants/bottoms and UV protective sunglasses.
- ✓ **Provide SPF 50+ sunscreen** in staff areas or outdoor learning spaces.
- ✓ **Include sun safety reminders** in staff briefings or planning discussions.

## Top tips for your workplace

- ✓ **Review your current practices** using an [online assessment](#).
- ✓ **Develop or update your SunSmart policy** to guide consistent action across the workplace.
- ✓ **Share information** and encourage staff to **contribute ideas** that make sun safety easier in their daily routines.



## Create a healthier education environment

Check out the [SunSmart Workplaces toolkit](#) for practical, ready-to-use resources to reduce UV risk at work. The toolkit provides templates, risk assessment guides, and sun safety resources to help you make smart changes.



Visit [www.cancercouncil.com.au/sunsmart-workplaces](http://www.cancercouncil.com.au/sunsmart-workplaces) for more information.

