



Section: Operations

Policy: Adverse Weather Conditions

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Policy

This policy is intended to protect PLASP children from adverse effects associated with exposure to solar ultraviolet radiation, (UV) exposure to air pollutants, extreme heat and exposure to extreme cold.

Procedure

HOT WEATHER GUIDELINES

Each child who receives child care for six hours or more in a day spends time outdoors for at least two hours each day, weather permitting, unless a physician advises otherwise in writing.

During hot summer weather, Program Staff will access the website www.weather.gc.ca for the UV index, air quality and heat alerts.

Staff and children should **reduce** outdoor activities between 11:00am-3:00pm when there is a heat or air quality warning.

Staff should **remain indoors** during any of the following weather conditions as indicated in the charts below:

- temperature is **31 or higher**
- humidity is **40 or higher**
- UV index is **7 or higher**
- air quality is **6 or higher**

Children will be provided with water to drink during their outdoor time.

Parents of school age children will be encouraged to send children to the program with a broad spectrum SPF 30+ sunscreen, sunglasses, hats and protective clothing. With written permission from the parent, PLASP staff will assist children in applying sunblock before their time outdoors.

Early Learning and Child Care Centre parents are asked to apply sunscreen on their children prior to dropping off in the morning.

Prior to going outside, PLASP will provide, and PLASP staff will apply a broad-spectrum SPF 50 sunscreen to children in the Early Learning and Child Care Centres with written permission from the parent.

While outdoors, Program Staff will utilize shaded areas, if available.

UV INDEX

Environment and Climate Change Canada's UV Index		
UV Index	Description	Sun Protection Actions
0-2	Low	- Minimal sun protection required for normal activity. - Wear sunglasses on bright days. If outside for more than one hour, cover up and use sunscreen. - Reflection off snow can nearly double UV strength. Wear sunglasses and apply sunscreen.
3-5	Moderate	- Take precautions – cover up, wear a hat, sunglasses and sunscreen – especially if you will be outside for 30 minutes or more. - Look for shade near midday when the sun is strongest.
6-7	High	- Protection required – UV damages the skin and can cause sunburn. - Reduce time in the sun between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m., and take full precautions – seek shade, cover up, wear a hat, sunglasses and sunscreen.
8-10	Very High	- Extra precautions required – unprotected skin will be damaged and can burn quickly. - Avoid the sun between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m., and take full precautions – seek shade, cover up, wear a hat, sunglasses and sunscreen.
11+	Extreme	- Take full precautions. Unprotected skin will be damaged and can burn in minutes. Avoid the sun between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m., cover up, wear a hat, sunglasses and sunscreen. - White sand and other bright surfaces reflect UV and increase UV exposure. - Values of 11 or more are very rare in Canada. However, the UV Index can reach 14 or more in the tropics and southern U.S.

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HEAT WARNING GUIDE

Heat warning regions and associated triggers (region, intensity and duration)		
Heat warning region	Condition	Duration
Extreme Southwestern Ontario	*Tmax ≥ 31°C and Tmin ≥ 21°C or Humidex ≥ 42	2+ days
Southern Ontario	Tmax ≥ 31°C and Tmin ≥ 20°C or Humidex ≥ 40	2+ days
Northern Ontario	Tmax ≥ 29°C and Tmin ≥ 18°C or Humidex ≥ 36	2+ days

* Tmax represents maximum daily temperature. Tmin represents minimum nighttime temperature.
 **A heat warning is for a two day event and an extended heat warning is for a 3+ day event.

AIR QUALITY INDEX

Health Risk	Air Quality Health Index	Health Messages	
		At Risk Population*	General Population
Low Risk	1-3	Enjoy your usual outdoor activities.	Ideal air quality for outdoor activities.
Moderate Risk	4-6	Consider reducing or rescheduling strenuous activities outdoors if you are experiencing symptoms.	No need to modify your usual outdoor activities unless you experience symptoms such as coughing and throat irritation.
High Risk	7-10	Reduce or reschedule strenuous activities outdoors. Children and the elderly should also take it easy.	Consider reducing or rescheduling strenuous activities outdoors if you experience symptoms such as coughing and throat irritation.
Very High Risk	Above 10	Avoid strenuous activities outdoors. Children and the elderly should also avoid outdoor physical exertion.	Reduce or reschedule strenuous activities outdoors, especially if you experience symptoms such as coughing and throat irritation.

EXTREME COLD WEATHER

Environment & Climate Change Canada issues an Extreme Cold Weather Alert when the temperature or wind chill is forecasted to reach -30 degrees Celsius for at least two hours.

Exposure to Extreme Cold

Infants and young children (0-5 years) are more at risk of cold-related illnesses than older children and adults.

Children need to be supervised while outside during cold weather, with special attention to infants and toddlers who do not move as much and may not be able to tell educator they are experiencing cold injuries.

In general, when properly dressed there are little to no health concerns when the **windchill is between 0 and -9 degrees Celsius.**

When the **windchill is between -10 and -27**, the risk of hypothermia and frostbite increases when outside for more than 30 minutes especially without proper protection. This will depend on the length of time outside, the temperature/windchill, the protective clothing and the age of the children.

The Canadian Pediatric Society recommends **keeping children indoors at -27 windchill** or colder and **reducing the amount of time outdoors at -15C** or colder.

When the **windchill is between -28 and -39**, there becomes a higher risk of frostnip, and frostbite as exposed **skin can freeze in 10 to 30 minutes**.

WIND CHILL HAZARDS

Wind chill hazards and what to do			
Wind chill	Exposure risk	Health concerns	What to do
0 to -9	Low Risk	Slight increase in discomfort	- Dress warmly - Stay dry
-10 to -27	Moderate risk	- Uncomfortable - Risk of hypothermia and frostbite if outside for long periods without adequate protection.	- Dress in layers of warm clothing, with an outer layer that is wind-resistant. - Wear a hat, mittens or insulated gloves, a scarf and insulated, waterproof footwear. - Stay dry. - Keep active
-28 to -39	High risk: exposed skin can freeze in 10 to 30 minutes	- High risk of frostnip or frostbite: Check face and extremities for numbness or whiteness. - High risk of hypothermia if outside for long periods without adequate clothing or shelter from wind and cold.	- Dress in layers of warm clothing, with an outer layer that is wind-resistant - Cover exposed skin - Wear a hat, mittens or insulated gloves, a scarf, neck tube or face mask and insulated, waterproof footwear - Stay dry - Keep active

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WIND CHILL INDEX

Wind chill index (temperature in °C)					
Wind speed (km/h)	Estimating wind speed - what to look for	0	-5	-10	-15
10	Wind felt on face - wind vane begins to move	-3	-9	-15	-21
20	Small flags extended	-5	-12	-18	-24
30	Wind raises loose paper, large flags flap and small tree branches move	-6	-13	-20	-26
40	Small trees begin to sway and large flags extend and flap strongly	-7	-14	-21	-27

*Environment & Climate Change Canada