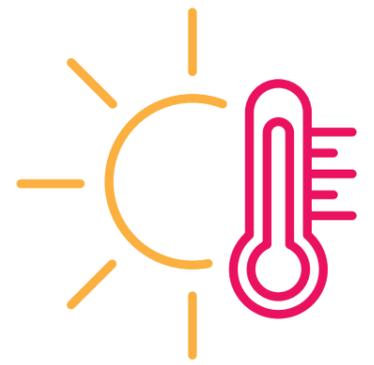


Keeping School Kids Safe During a Heatwave

Dr Liz Hanna, *Health Expert*



IN AN EMERGENCY, CALL TRIPLE ZERO (106 FOR PEOPLE WITH A HEARING OR SPEECH IMPAIRMENT) 000

- > Heatwaves kill more Australians than any other extreme weather event and those most at risk include the very young, including school children.
- > Climate change is already increasing the intensity and frequency of heatwaves in Australia.
- > Below are some key tips on what teachers can do to keep children safe during a heatwave at school. Make sure you check with your school, council or state Department of Education and Training to hear their heatwave response plan.



IN THE CLASSROOM

- > Ensure all children are trained in heat safety.
- > Rearrange activity schedule to minimise physical exertion in the heat.
- > Keep the classroom cool and well air-conditioned if possible.
- > Ensure children continue to hydrate and monitor the hydration of children with special needs.



RECESS AND LUNCHTIME

- > Make sure children stay out of the sun and where possible increase access to the coolest areas of the school buildings and grounds.
- > Ensure water is freely available to all.
- > Children should be encouraged to drink plenty of water regularly and wear a hat and sunscreen while outside.
- > Ensure school lunchboxes are stored in cool areas.
- > Dispose of spoiled food.
- > Familiarise yourself with signs of heat illnesses.
- > Watch for signs of heat-related illness and if mild, remove child from heat and initiate cooling, if more severe seek immediate medical assistance.



OUTDOOR SCHOOL SPORTS

- > Outdoor sports should be modified to increase rest periods, or postponed during extreme heat or heatwave conditions.



ALWAYS STAY HYDRATED

- > Teachers should stay hydrated and encourage others to drink plenty of water.
- > Avoid drinks containing caffeine such as coffee and tea.

MORE INFO



- > **Australian Government Heatwave Lesson Plan:** <https://schools.aemi.edu.au/heatwave/heatwave-lesson-plan>
- > **NSW government:** *Supporting students during hot weather:* <http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/gotoschool/a-z/hotweather.php>
- > **ACT government:** *Extreme heat* <http://esa.act.gov.au/community-information/calling-an-ambulance/extreme-heat/>
- > **QLD Government:** *Managing excessive heat in schools:* <http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/healthy/wellbeing-guidelines/heat.html>
- > **VIC Government:** *Extreme heat and heatwaves:* <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/environmental-health/climate-weather-and-public-health/heatwaves-and-extreme-heat>
- > **WA Government.** *Heat and health:* http://healthywa.wa.gov.au/Articles/F_I/Heat
- > **SA Government:** *Hot weather policy:* <https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/education-skills-and-learning/health-wellbeing-and-special-needs/health/hot-weather-policy>
- > **NT Government:** *Guidelines to prevent heat stress:* http://www.health.nt.gov.au/library/scripts/objectifyMedia.aspx_file-pdf/65/06.pdf