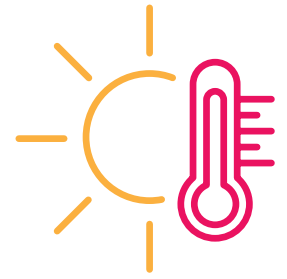


Keeping School Kids Safe During a Heatwave



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.
- › Avoid using a fan when the indoor temperature is higher than 37°C.
- › 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