

Mini Beast Bite or Sting First Aid Policy

Quality Area: 2: *Children's Health and Safety*

Standard: 2.1 *Each Child's health is promoted*

Element: 2.1.1: *Each Child's health needs are supported*

Purpose

This policy aims to clearly define:

- The risk of mini-beast bite/sting in the Bush Kinder space
- Procedures for preventing bites and stings
- The appropriate medical response to mini-beast bites/stings

Policy Statement

1. Values

Heathmont East Preschool is committed to:

- Providing a safe and healthy environment for children, staff and volunteers participating in the Bush Kinder program
- Being respectful of wildlife in and around the Bush Kinder space
- Facilitating appropriate communication and education to staff, parents/guardians and children to minimise the risk of injury through bites and stings during Bush Kinder sessions.

2. Scope

This policy applies to parents, staff, committee members, authorised persons, volunteers and students on placement working at Heathmont East Preschool.

3. Background and Legislation

Background

Heathmont East Preschool's Bush Kinder program is conducted in HE Parker Reserve in a patch of bush known as Lobelia Swamp managed by Maroondah City Council. Because the variety of natural and introduced flowers will of course be visited by bees, the dampness of the locality also highlights the possibility of leeches.

Legislation and standards

Relevant legislation may include but is not limited to:

- Education and Care Services National Law 2010

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- National Quality Standard
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007
- Wildlife Act 1975

4. Definitions

Australian Venom Research Unit (AVRU) is an internationally recognised interdisciplinary research unit focused on the problem of venomous injury in Australia and the Asia-Pacific. Located within Melbourne University, the Australian Venom Research Unit aims to provide world-class expertise on the problem of Australia's venomous creatures, their toxins and the care of the envenomed patient.

Pressure Immobilisation Bandage (also known as Compression Bandage): Bandage used for the purpose of applying pressure to the site of a wound such as a snakebite and to the affected limb. Refer definition below of Pressure Immobilisation Bandaging.

Pressure Immobilisation Bandaging: The principle of pressure-immobilisation bandaging as a first aid measure is to prevent the spread of toxins through the body. This is done by applying enough pressure to compress the lymph vessels, and by preventing movement of the affected limb. Correct application of the technique can buy valuable time to get the patient to medical assistance. [Refer to Attachment 1 for correct application of pressure immobilisation technique.]

Victorian Poisons Information Centre (VPIC): Located at the Austin Hospital, the role of the VPIC is to provide the people of Victoria with a timely, safe information service in poisonings and suspected poisonings. For members of the public this includes telephone assessment, advice on first aid, with or without referral to a doctor or hospital. Information is given to health professionals about formulations of products and management of poisoned patients.

Heathmont East policy and procedures

Heathmont East Pre-School is responsible for:

- Supplying a First Aid Kit on site at Bush Kinder to administer first aid in response to bites/stings or for any other purpose.
- Following all procedures as set out in the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy (including notice of notifiable incidents, appropriate record keeping in the event of an incident, maintain first aid kit etc)
- Encouraging parents, through this policy, to teach children prevention behaviours outside of Bush Kinder (for example, on family walks in Nature)

Nominated supervisor, Teachers, educators and other staff is responsible for:

- Continually practicing and educating children on bite/sting prevention behaviours while at Bush Kinder, without fostering an unnatural fear or paranoia of mini-beasts.
- Wearing adequate clothing and stout shoes (not sandals/thongs)
- Reassuring any patient and encouraging them to remain calm and still.
- Following procedures as set out in the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy including contacting parent/guardian, calling ambulance etc

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- Teaching children on an ongoing basis safe mini-beast sting/bite prevention behaviours outside Bush Kinder, for example, on family walks in the Nature
- Reading and being familiar with the policy
- Bringing relevant issues to the attention of both staff and committee

Evaluation

To assess whether the policy has achieved the values Heathmont East Preschool will:

- Seek feedback regarding this policy and its implementation with parents of children participating in the Bush Kinder program. This can be facilitated through discussions and the annual centre survey.
- Ask staff to share their experiences and observations in relation to the effectiveness of this policy.
- Regularly review the policy and centre practices to ensure they are compliant with any new legislation, research or best practice procedures.

Sources and other related policies

Sources

- Bites & Stings web resource, Victorian Poisons Information Centre, Austin Health (www.austin.org.au)
- Australian Venom Research Institute (University of Melbourne) www.avru.org

- Naturewalking Victoria Snakebite web resource (<http://www.Naturewalkingvictoria.org.au>)
- Royal Childrens hospital information sheet - Bites and Stings, 2018

Kindergarten policies

- Excursion & Service Events Policy
- Bush Kinder Extreme Weather Policy (Bush Kinder Specific)
- Bush Kinder Identification and Visibility Policy (Bush Kinder Specific)
- Bush Kinder Snake Awareness Policy (Bush Kinder Specific)
- Bush Kinder Dog Awareness Policy (Bush Kinder Specific)
- Bush Kinder Mini Beast Sting or Bite First Aid Policy (Bush Kinder Specific)
- Bush Kinder Play Benefits and Risk Policy (Bush Kinder Specific)
- Bush Kinder Medical Emergency Policy (Bush Kinder Specific)
- Occupational Health & Safety Policy
- Incident, Illness, Trauma & Illness Policy
- Supervision of Children Policy
- Child Safe Environment Policy

Attachments

Attachment 1: Mini-beast bites/ stings and treatment and photo identification

Attachment 2: Pressure Immobilisation Bandaging Fact Sheet

Authorisation

This policy was approved and passed by the Heathmont East Preschool Committee of Management and adopted by Heathmont East Preschool on:

5/6/2024

Authorised by: Alison Uldrich [President]

Authorised by: Sarah Black [Nominated Supervisor]

Review Date: June 2027

ATTACHMENT 1

Ants

Any child or staff who has previously had a serious allergic or anaphylactic reaction to an ant bite will have a medical action plan - Staff to follow the plan.

If an adult or child has been bitten by an ant and have NOT previously had a serious reaction to ant bite you should follow these steps:

- Wash the bitten area with water (Staff)
- Apply a cold pack to the area to relieve pain and swelling (Staff)
- Write up incident report and notify parents at pickup.
- Monitor patient -

Even if they have never been bitten by an ant before, watch for the following symptoms, they may indicate a serious allergic or anaphylactic reaction, which requires urgent medical attention by calling 000:

- red blotches on the skin or an itchy rash over the body
- swelling in parts of the body away from the stung area, especially the lips and around the eyes
- feeling faint, light-headed or dizzy
- breathing difficulties such as wheeze or shortness of breath
- chest tightness.

Dangerous ants in Victoria:

- Jumper or Jack Jumper Ant (*Myrmecia pilosula*)
- Bull or Bulldog Ant (*Myrmecia pyriformis*)
- Green-head Ant (*Rhytidopenera metallica*)

Bees

Any child or staff who has previously had a serious allergic or anaphylactic reaction to a bee sting will have a medical action plan - Staff to follow the plan.

If an adult or child has been stung inside the mouth or throat: ring 000 for an ambulance.

If an adult or child has been stung by a bee (but less than 10 stings in an adult and less than 5 stings in a child) and have NOT previously had a serious reaction to bee sting you should follow these steps:

- Remove the sting from the skin AS SOON AS POSSIBLE using the flick method.(flick off sting from skin)
- Wash the stung area with water
- Apply a cold pack to the area to relieve pain and swelling
- In most cases this will be the only treatment required, some people may have swelling that persists for a couple of days
- Fill out incident report and notify family when appropriate. Monitor for:

Even if they have never been stung by a bee before, watch for the following symptoms, they may indicate a serious allergic or anaphylactic reaction, which requires urgent medical attention by calling 000:

- Red blotches on the skin or an itchy rash over the body
- Swelling in parts of the body away from the stung area, especially the lips and around the eyes
- Feeling faint, light-headed or dizzy
- Breathing difficulties such as wheeze or shortness of breath
- Chest tightness.

Bees in Victoria

- European Honey Bee (*Apis mellifera*) stings are the cause of major problems
- Native Australian Bee stings only occasionally, very rarely needs medical attention.

Avoiding Bee Stings

- Don't wear perfume as it may attract bees
- Remove clover from lawns as it attracts bees.

Spiders

The female redback spider (*Latrodectus hasselti*) is the major significant venomous spider in Victoria. She is very unlikely to cause life-threatening envenomation. Redbacks usually live outside in dry sheltered spaces such as cubby house, sheds, and the undersides of

shelves. Bites occur when contact is made with the spider in its web, as they rarely leave their web.

Any child or staff who has previously had a serious allergic or anaphylactic reaction to a spider bite will have a medical action plan - Staff to follow the plan.

If an adult or child has been bitten inside the mouth or throat: ring 000 for an ambulance.

If an adult or child has been bitten by a spider and has NOT previously had a serious reaction you should follow these steps:

- Wash area with soap and water
- Apply Ice pack
- Notify parents to collect child and to seek urgent medical care
- Monitor patient for symptoms:
 - Headache
 - Lethargy, malaise
 - Nausea and vomiting
 - Myalgia and neck spasm may occur

If symptoms present call 000 immediately.

- Fill out incident report.

Caterpillars

Many species of caterpillars can cause painful, itchy and inflamed skin reactions when hairs they shed become embedded in the victim's skin.

Often the hairs are brittle and break away above the skin surface. These hairs can cause eye injury if they get into the eye.

First Aid

Decontamination:

- Remove hairs by applying and removing adhesive tape to the area.
- Seek medical attention immediately if there is stinging in the eye(s).
- Treatment:
 - Apply a cold pack to the area for relief of burning, pain and itching.
 - Antihistamine medication or cortisone cream may be needed for persistent symptoms (ask your pharmacist or doctor).
 - Seek medical attention immediately if there are caterpillar hairs in the eye(s).

- Fill out incident report and notify family when appropriate.
- Monitor child for signs of an allergic reaction and call 000 if necessary.

A severe allergic reaction, they may show the following signs of anaphylaxis:

- a widespread rash (hives) or severe itching
- coughing, wheezing or choking
- difficulty breathing and swallowing
- difficulty talking and/or hoarse voice
- swelling of the lips or tongue
- fainting
- becoming pale and floppy (young children).

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Leeches

Leeches cause unwarranted fear in many people. When they latch onto skin, their bite is almost painless. They introduce an anticoagulant so that they can feed on the victim's blood. When the leech becomes grossly swollen it falls off.

The symptoms from leech bite that may warrant medical attention are infected bite site and leech allergy.

First Aid

Removal of the leech:

- Application of salt, salt water or vinegar to an actively sucking leech will cause it to fall off. A leech will usually fall off after 20 minutes of attachment without any treatment.
- DO NOT pull the leech off as the skin may be torn and ulceration may follow or parts of the jaw may remain and set up infection.
- After the leech has been removed, wash with soap and water
 - Apply a cold pack if there is significant pain or swelling
 - Apply pressure if there is bleeding from the bite
 - Fill out incident report and notify family when appropriate.

Even if the patient has never been bitten by a leech before, watch for the following symptoms, they may indicate a serious allergic or anaphylactic reaction, which requires urgent medical attention by calling 000:

- Red blotches on the skin or an itchy rash over the body
- Swelling in parts of the body away from the bitten area, especially the lips and around the eyes
- Feeling faint, light-headed or dizzy
- Breathing difficulties: wheeze, shortness of breath, chest tightness.

Wasps

Any child or staff who has previously had a serious allergic or anaphylactic reaction to a wasp sting will have a medical action plan - Staff to follow the plan.

If an adult or child has been stung inside the mouth or throat: Ring 000 for an ambulance.

If an adult or child has been stung by a wasp (but less than 10 stings in an adult and less than 5 stings in a child) and have NOT previously had a serious reaction to wasp sting you should follow these steps:

- Wash the stung area with water
- Apply a cold pack to the area to relieve pain and swelling
- Staff to fill out incident report and notify family when appropriate.
- Even if they have never been stung by a wasp before, watch for the following symptoms, they may indicate a serious allergic or anaphylactic reaction, which requires urgent medical attention by calling 000:
 - Red blotches on the skin or an itchy rash over the body
 - Swelling in parts of the body away from the stung area, especially the lips and around the eyes
 - Feeling faint, light-headed or dizzy
 - Breathing difficulties such as wheeze or shortness of breath
 - Chest tightness.

Wasps in Victoria

- Paper wasps (*polistes humulis*, *polistes tasmaniensis*)

- European wasp (*vespula germanicus*) - introduced species and is a significant menace. They can be aggressive if disturbed and cause a significant incidence of serious allergic or anaphylactic reactions.

Avoiding Wasp Stings

- Do not disturb a wasp nest, get expert advice for safe removal of a nest.

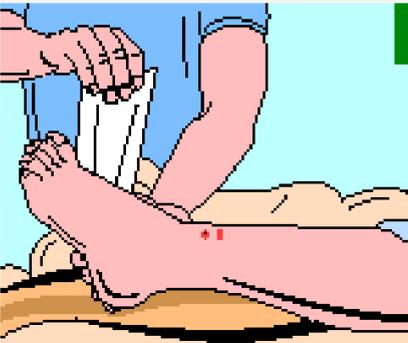
Attachment 2

Pressure Immobilisation Bandaging Fact Sheet

Source: Australian Venom Research Unit, University of Melbourne (www.avru.org)

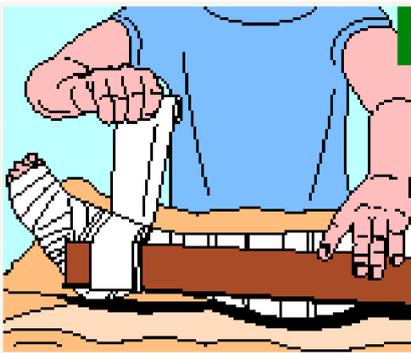
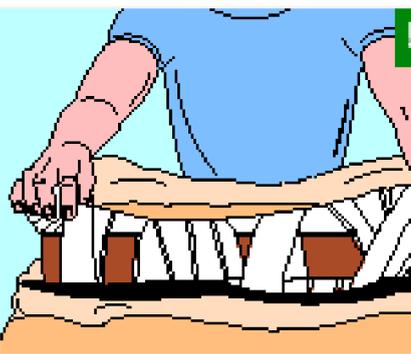
The principle of pressure-immobilisation bandaging as a first aid measure is to prevent the spread of toxins through the body. This is done by applying enough pressure to compress the lymph vessels, and by preventing movement of the affected limb. Correct application of the technique can buy valuable time to get the patient to medical assistance.

First Aid for Bites to the Lower Limb

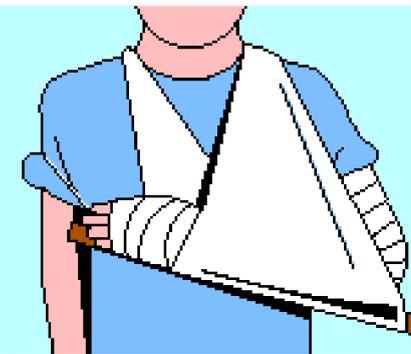
	<p>As soon as possible, apply a broad pressure bandage from below the bite site, upward on the affected limb (starting at the fingers or toes, bandaging upward as far as possible). Leave the tips of the fingers or toes unbandaged to allow the victim's circulation to be checked. Do not remove pants or trousers, simply bandage over the top of the clothing.</p>
	<p>Bandage firmly as for a sprained ankle, but not so tight that circulation is prevented. Continue to bandage upward from the lower portion of the bitten limb</p>

	<p>Apply the bandage as far up the limb as possible to compress the lymphatic vessels.</p>
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	<p>It is vital to now apply a splint. Bind a stick or suitable rigid item over the initial bandage to splint the limb. Secure the splint to the bandaged limb by using another bandage, (if another bandage is not available, use clothing strips or similar to bind). It is very important to keep the bitten limb still.</p>
	<p>Bind the splint firmly, to as much of the limb as possible, to prevent muscle, limb and joint movement. This will help restrict venom movement. Seek urgent medical assistance now that first aid has been applied.</p>

First Aid for Bites on the Hand or Forearm

	<p>1 As soon as possible, apply a broad pressure bandage from the fingers of the affected arm, bandaging upward as far as possible. Bandage the arm with the elbow in a bent position, to ensure the victim is comfortable with their arm in a sling. Leave the tips of the fingers unbandaged to allow the victim's circulation to be checked. 2 Bind a splint along the forearm. 3 Use a sling to further prevent limb movement.</p>
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Jack Jumper

Green Headed ant



Bull ant



Red back Spider

Honey Bee



Paper Wasp



European wasp



Leech

