

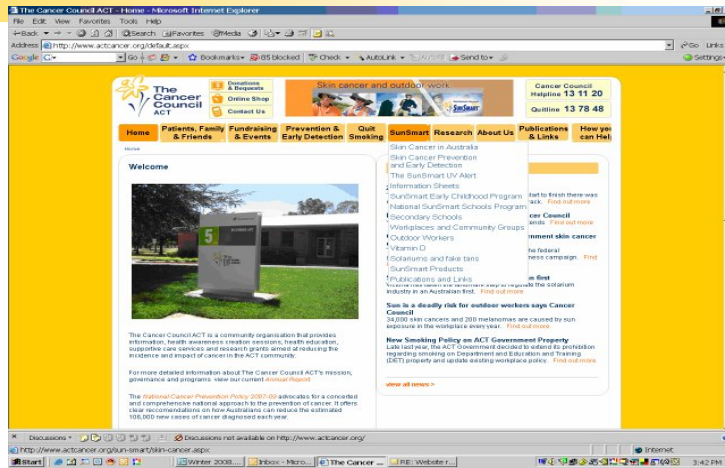
THE SUNSMART NEWSLETTER

SunSmart Schools and Early Childhood Centres in the ACT

Winter 2008



SunSmart online– view your status and much more!



Myth Busters
TRUE OR FALSE.
My child has olive skin therefore they are not at risk of developing skin cancer. (see page 2 for answer)

The **National SunSmart Schools Program** has been operating in Canberra since 1999, the **SunSmart Early Childhood Program** since 2004. Currently there are 65 early childhood services and 55 primary schools across Canberra that have been awarded a SunSmart status for their efforts toward skin cancer prevention and awareness.

ACT schools and services can now view their current SunSmart status **online** at www.actcancer.org Simply scroll down on the SunSmart menu bar located on the top of the page to the early childhood or school section. Schools *and* centres that have **not** yet joined the SunSmart program are encouraged to visit the website to learn how they too can achieve a SunSmart status.

Your sun protection policy should be comprehensive and address your school's or service's environment, behaviour and curriculum.

The SunSmart Program is a great way to promote to the wider community the importance of sun protection and that YOUR school or service leads by example.

For more information contact the Cancer Council or visit us online today.



Outdoor Play Time!

SunSmart acknowledges the benefits of healthy active outdoor lifestyles. We do not ask children to remain indoors during the entire period between 10am to 3pm everyday, ALL year round. However we do ask services and schools to take particular care during this peak UV period of the day by adopting effective sun protection measures when UV levels reach **3 and above**. However as UV levels continue to rise between October and March and reach HIGH to EXTREME levels throughout the day. Services and schools should aim to **minimise** outdoor experiences during the peak UV part of the day if and when possible as the potential for skin damage is increased.

Your sun protection policy should clearly outline that sun protection will be adopted from the beginning of August through to the end of May when daily UV levels reach **3 or above** and that extra care will be taken during the peak period of the day. The Council encourages all staff and teachers (and parents) to familiarise themselves with the daily **SunSmart UV Alert** – it is easily accessible and helps take away the guess work as to when sun protection is and is not necessary. You can view the daily SunSmart UV Alert at: www.bom.gov.au/products/UV/Canberra_NSW.shtml **OR** in the weather section of The Canberra Times.

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Since our last newsletter the Cancer Council ACT (CCA) is happy to report that another 9 local early childhood services have joined the nationally acclaimed SunSmart Program.

The Cancer Council would like to thank the following services for all their hard work and ongoing commitment toward developing and implementing effective sun protection policy and behavior.

Nipperville Learning Centre 12/11/07

AIS Caretaker's Cottage Childcare Centre 22/11/07

Stepping Stones Childcare Centre 27/11/07.

Honey Tree Childhood Centre 6/12/07

Currawong Childcare Centre 16/12/07

Gumnut Place Childcare Centre. 4/02/08

Majura Early Childhood Centre. 11/04/08

Civic Early Childhood Centre. 11/04/08

Peter Pan Early Learning Centre. 12/5/08

Over the summer period The Cancer Council's SunSmart Program also offered local services with a SunSmart status an exclusive Workplace Information Session designed specifically for childhood services.

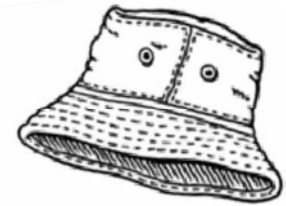
Overall 60 staff members participated in these sessions which tackled the following issues:

- why protect children from overexposure?
- Why is skin cancer so high in Australia?
- what is UV radiation?
- vitamin D
- the UV Alert
- OH&S responsibilities etc.

Staff received a certificate of participation and sample sunscreen.

The feedback was very positive and the Cancer Council will continue to offer these sessions to interested services.

To book your session contact David on 6257 9999.



A hat tip!

We are all aware that caps are not a safe option when it comes to protecting our ears, face and neck from harmful UV radiation.

Whilst 'bucket hats' are recommended by the Cancer Council, it is important that they do fit properly— thus offering maximum protection for your child.

Your child's hat should have a deep crown in relation to your child's head size. The deeper the crown the more protection the hat will offer. The hat rim should be at least 5 cm for children. Keeping in mind its size and comfort, make sure it allows the child to see and hear clearly.

So next time you reach for your child's hat, check that it is a good fit now for your child and that it does offer maximum protection from the sun!

Shade, Shade and Shade.



The best types of shade offer high UV protection, have extensive overhead or side cover and are away from highly reflective surfaces. And remember shade should also be inviting.

Good planning will help ensure effective shade. It is also important to conduct a shade audit and consult with shade developers or manufacturers who can meet the specific needs of your outdoor space.

Trees are also an effective long term solution to increasing shade in your outdoor space – especially in those more harder to reach places. Remember when choosing trees, make sure they are appropriate for your setting.

The Cancer Council (WA) has developed a new shade handbook resource kit that your service can borrow or purchase. For more information contact CCACT on 6257 9999 or visit us on-line to purchase a copy.

Effective shade provides shelter from the sun's UV radiation and can reduce overall UV exposure by about 75%.

However, even whilst in shade, UV radiation can be scattered in the air and reflected off surfaces such as buildings, sand, concrete, water and snow; hence it is still very important we apply other sun protection measures as well. Don't just rely on shade. Shade should be designed to offer the greatest coverage at not only peak UV times, but importantly, at peak usage time.

Myth Busters

FALSE

- *A natural tan offers very limited protection against skin damage— usually an average of SPF 2-4, depending on the individual skin type. For most people, to achieve that small amount of 'natural' protection means damaging their skin.*
- *Anyone, regardless of skin type, who spent his or her childhood in Australia is at a high risk of developing skin cancer.*

National SunSmart Schools Program Update

There are currently 55 primary schools in the ACT that are part of the **National SunSmart Schools Program**. Since the last newsletter 2 more primary schools have been added to the list. The Cancer Council would like to congratulate both **Aranda and Richardson Primary School** for their efforts toward developing and implementing a *comprehensive* sun protection policy.

When it comes to sun protection most ACT schools do practice positive sun protection behavior. However the SunSmart Program does ensure that YOUR school has an updated policy, access to free national resources, access to this newsletter, and other promotional material and support.

Earning a SunSmart status is also an active way for YOUR school to promote an important public health

message amongst the local community, family and friends. It demonstrates that YOUR school is committed to the future health of its students and teachers alike and that it takes sun protection seriously.

So if you cannot see the famous SunSmart sign displayed at the front of your school, you may want to discuss your school's SunSmart status – or lack off status with your principal.

Next Step: develop an active team to update and implement your school's sun protection policy and behaviour to meet national Sunsmart standards.

For more information or to download an application kit visit the website or contact David at the Cancer Council on 6257 9999.

What are you waiting for, earn a SunSmart status this year!

Participating Primary Schools—but not yet SunSmart!

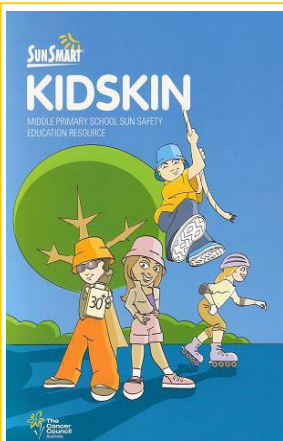
Over the past twelve months whilst we have only had two schools earn a SunSmart status, we have had a positive number of schools apply for a SunSmart status. The ACT Government and CCACT encourages ALL schools to develop and implement an up to date comprehensive sun protection policy. Doing so your school will also have the opportunity to join the **National SunSmart Schools Program**.

The following schools have made the initial step and are now encouraged to update and return their sun protection policy as soon as possible.

- Amaroo Primary School 12/02/07
- Arawang Primary School 24/11/06
- Charnwood/Dunlop Primary School 28/09/06
- St Monica's Primary School 26/11/07
- Mawson Primary School 22/01/08
- St Michael's Primary School 5/2/08

Schools would have received recommendations to assist them toward updating their current policy to meet national SunSmart standards.

If your school is not listed above or is not already part of the **National SunSmart Schools Program** then download, complete and return an application form from the website today– what are you waiting for?



NEW National Resource.

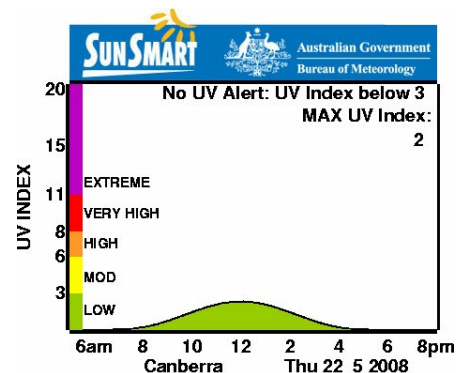
The Cancer Council has recently developed a NEW national comprehensive resource kit to assist middle primary school teachers toward sun protection education. The resource is FREE to all primary schools with a SunSmart status (or \$14.95 for those schools without a SunSmart status). To order your school a copy contact the Cancer Council on 6257 9999 or order online at www.actcancer.org

Hats Off Again

Now temperatures are dropping—what do we do about sun protection? It is important people understand that UVR and temperature are NOT related. The Cancer Council reminds all Canberrans to not become complacent *or* to overdo it during this cooler time of the year.

One way to tackle the issue is to become more knowledgeable about the daily **SunSmart UV Alert**. The UV Alert will tell us what time each day sun protection is and is *not* generally recommended. **So whilst in June and July in Canberra sun protec-**

tion is not generally recommended (due to low UV levels) – In August UV levels will again be on the rise and hence strong enough during certain times of the day to damage your child's unprotected skin.



However if you are planning a trip north this winter, going skiing or spending time around water then sun protection will still be necessary.

So start taking the guess work out of UV levels and when to and not to apply sun protection. Get into the habit of checking the daily **SunSmart UV Alert**. Remember when UV levels are **3 and above** cover up. Positive sun protection behavior should allow your body enough UV to produce adequate Vitamin D levels and minimise your risk of developing skin cancer at the same time. Now that is being SunSmart!

Teens– take it easy!

Recent research has shown a decline in the number of teens deliberately seeking a tan. Unfortunately 1 in 4 teens are still getting sunburnt over a typical summer weekend, not because they want to tan but because they are choosing not to adopt positive sun protection behaviour—basically they are not protecting themselves from harmful UV.

The recent National Sun Protection Survey found that teenage girls were more likely to deliberately tan, however boys were more likely to get sunburn as they tend to spend more time outside in peak UV times and were less likely to use sunscreen.

It was reported that 24% of adolescents aged 12-17 were sunburnt on an average weekend over the 2006/07 summer— that's roughly 397,000 teens nationwide.

If you have a teen— then you know it can sometimes be an uphill battle when it comes to getting them to apply some simple sun protection behaviour.



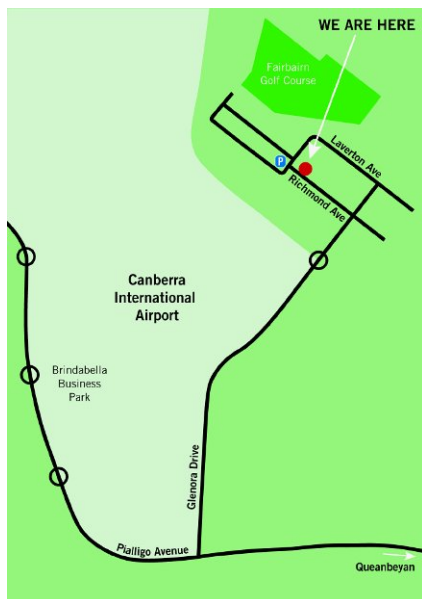
We know it can be difficult to encourage them to wear hats, to cover up those shoulders or to take care during those peak hours, let alone to stop sun-baking by the pool! However it is important that parents and teachers continue to remind our teens of the real dangers associated with too much sun! In young Australians aged 12-24, melanoma is the most common diagnosed cancer, with more than double the number of cases of any other kind of cancer.

Last year the Cancer Council developed and distributed a copy of 60 Minutes – A Sunburnt Country to ALL local high schools and colleges in the ACT. This year we are glad to offer a new updated version of this resource re-titled **Real stories about skin cancer and skin damage**. This comprehensive and sometimes confronting DVD resource is now available to ALL ACT secondary schools and colleges FREE of charge.

To receive YOUR school's copy contact David at the Cancer Council ACT today on 6257 9999 or order online at www.actcancer.org



VISIT US AT FAIRBAIRN



Cancer Council Diary

- June 1:** Hats OFF day in the ACT
- June 22:** Canada Fun Run for Cancer
- August 1:** Hats ON day in the ACT
- August 22:** Daffodil Day
- October 27:** Pink Ribbon Day
- October:** Girls Night In
- October 17:** British High Commission Ball
- November 24:** Doug Russell Golf Day
- November 16-22:** National Skin Cancer Action Week

For more information on fundraising events or to volunteer visit our website or contact us on 6257 9999 or events@actcancer.org

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