

# Sun Safety Guidelines

## A Planning Guide

For

Implementing Sun Protection Strategies

Reviewed February 2012

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## **Duty of Care for Students:**

In general, duty of care refers to the need to protect students against foreseeable harm. Sunburn is a foreseeable outcome of exposure to the sun and there is now considerable evidence linking UV exposure, particularly during childhood and adolescence, to the development of skin cancer.

Any activity that involves students being outdoors for any period of time should be seen as potentially placing them at risk of sunburn, skin cancer and other skin damage. It should also be remembered that skin damage may occur without any sign of sunburn.

## **Goals:**

To increase student, teacher and community awareness of skin cancer and other skin damage caused by UV radiation.

To assist students to develop strategies that protect their skin from UV radiation.

To encourage all members of the school community to protect their skin from UV radiation at all times, particularly at high-risk times such as lunchtimes, sporting events, and outdoor excursions.

To ensure that parents/guardians are informed of the School Board's Sun Safety Policy and Procedural Document.

To work towards a school environment that supports sun protective practices for students and staff.

## **Background:**

Skin cancer is the most common type of cancer in Canada. In 2003, more than 75,000 Canadians were diagnosed with skin cancer- a preventable disease (1). This epidemic shows no signs of slowing down and the number of people affected continues to climb every year. While the cause of many cancers remains unknown, the reason for this most common cancer is too many sunburns and too much sun exposure over many years.

One in seven children born today will develop a form of skin cancer during his or her lifetime (2). A significant part of a person's lifetime exposure to UV comes before the age of 18, therefore, protecting our children from the sun will go a long way in helping to prevent skin cancer later on in their lives. People with a history of one or more blistering sunburns during childhood or adolescence are two times as likely to develop melanoma than those who did not have such exposures(3). Studies indicate that protection from ultraviolet (UV) exposure during childhood and adolescence reduces the risk for skin

cancer (3), supporting the need to protect young people from the sun beginning at an early age.

Schools have the potential to reduce students' UV exposure and future risk of developing skin cancer because:

- students are at school and often outside during the high-risk period, between 11:00 and 4:00, five days a week
- the crucial period for sustaining damaging levels of UV exposure occurs during the child's school years; and,
- schools, in partnership with families and their communities, can play a significant role in reducing UV exposure and changing behaviour through policy, education and role modeling.

School staff can play a major role in protecting children and adolescents from UV exposure and the future development of skin cancer by instituting policies, changes to the school environment, and educational programs that can reduce skin cancer risks among young people. Schools and the community can work together to develop plans that are relevant and achievable.

References:

1. Canadian Dermatology Association, SunFACTS, 2003.
2. SunSense guidelines and your risk of skin cancer, May 26, 2004, Canadian Cancer Society, (online) [www.cancer.ca](http://www.cancer.ca)
3. MMWR, Morbidity & Mortality Weekly Report, Guidelines for School Programs to Prevent Skin Cancer, April 26, 2002, Vol. 51/No.RR-4.

## **Definitions:**

### **High-risk period**

The sun's UV rays are strongest between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. Whenever possible, limit exposure to the sun during these hours.

### **Shade**

Natural: Trees and hedges, shade from buildings.

Stand-alone structures: Such as tarpaulins and canopies can be used. Gazebos are a permanent structure that can also provide shade.

### **Skin cancer:**

A tumour arising in the skin that is caused by uncontrolled cell division, classified as either melanoma and non-melanoma skin cancers (basal and squamous cell carcinoma).

#### **Malignant melanoma (melanoma)**

Malignant cancer of melanocytes (cells in the upper skin layer that produces the pigment melanin). It usually has an irregular outline and patchy colouring. This is the rarest, but most dangerous type of skin cancer that often spreads to other organs.

#### **Squamous cell carcinoma (SCC)**

A scaly or plate-like malignant tumour of the skin that sometimes spreads to other organs. It is the second most common form of skin cancer.

#### **Basal cell carcinoma (BCC)**

The most common type of skin cancer, which originates from basal cells in the skin. It usually appears as a red lump or scaly area and rarely spreads to other organs.

### **Sun Protective clothing**

A hat with a wide brim (3-inch brim) offers good sun protection for eyes, ears, face and the back of your neck. Sunglasses that provide 99% to 100% UVA and UVB protection will greatly reduce eye damage from sun exposure. Tightly-woven, loose-fitting clothes will provide additional protection from the sun.

### **Sun protection factor (SPF)**

A laboratory measure that grades how much UV a sunscreen can block. Liberally apply a broad spectrum (UVA and UVB protection) sunscreen of at least SPF 15 or higher, 15 to 30 minutes before going outside. Reapply every two hours, especially after vigorous activity or sweating. Don't forget to use an SPF 15 or higher lip balm.

### Ultraviolet (UV) Radiation

Part of the solar emissions that include light, heat, and UV radiation. UV region covers the wavelength range 100-400 nm and is divided into three bands: UVA, UVB, and UVC. All three bands are classified as a probable human carcinogen.

### UV Index (UVI)

The UV index is a measure of the strength of the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays. UV rays can cause sunburns, eye cataracts, skin aging and skin cancer. The higher the UV Index number, the stronger the sun's rays, and the greater the need to take precautions to protect your skin.

What does UV Index mean?		
UV Index	Category	Sun Protection Actions <i>(in )</i>
0 - 2	Low	Minimal protection for normal activity
3 - 5	Moderate	Cover up. Wear hat, sunglasses, sunscreen if outside for 30 min.
6 - 7	High	Protection required. Reduce time in sun between 11AM and 4PM
8 - 10	Very High	Take full precautions and avoid sun between 11AM and 4PM
11+	Extreme	Take full precautions and avoid sun between 11AM and 4PM

Proper sun protection includes wearing a broad-rimmed hat, a shirt with long sleeves and wrap-around sunglasses or ones with side shields. Choose sunscreen with 15+ SPF (sun protection factor) that offers protection against both UV-A and UV-B rays. Apply generously before going outside and reapply often, especially after swimming or exercise.

Check the following site for your local UV index  
[http://www.msc.ec.gc.ca/education.uvindex/observations/observationmap\\_e.html](http://www.msc.ec.gc.ca/education.uvindex/observations/observationmap_e.html)

## CANADIAN SUN SAFETY GUIDELINES (1)

### **Minimum sun exposure.**

- ❑ Plan your outdoor activity before 11:00 a.m. or after 4 p.m., when sun rays are the weakest. Consult the UV Index for daily forecasts of ultraviolet radiation intensity.
- ❑ Practice sun protection behaviours when you are outdoors between April through September, between 11:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. every day.
- ❑ In winter, practice sun protection behaviours during periods of extended exposure, and/or when you are near fresh/bright snow.
- ❑ When visiting warmer climates, remember that ultraviolet radiation is more intense there and sun protection is especially important.
- ❑ There is no such thing as a “healthy” tan. Tanning parlours and sun lamps are not a safe way to tan.

### **Seek shade.**

- ❑ Seek shade, especially from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- ❑ Work towards creating shade in the form of shelters, canopies and trees.

### **Cover up.**

- ❑ Wear clothing to cover your arms and legs.
- ❑ Wear a hat with a wide brim to shade your face and neck.
- ❑ Wear sunglasses that absorb ultraviolet radiation.

### **Use sunscreen.**

- ❑ Sunscreens should be used in conjunction with shade, clothing, hats and sunglasses, not instead of them.
- ❑ Sunscreens are not intended to lengthen the time spent in the sun, but to reduce exposure and provide some protection from sunburn when people need to be in the sun.
- ❑ Use a sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher that has both UVA and UVB protection.

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(1) From the National Workshop sponsored by Health Canada and Environment Canada, with support from the Canadian Cancer society. The recommendations are documented in *Chronic Diseases in Canada, Public Education Messages for Reducing Health Risks from Ultraviolet Radiation*, (Winter 1995, pp 33-36,) written by Mills, C., and Jackson, S.

# **RESPONSIBILITIES**

## **Responsibilities of the School Board:**

Review policy in the policy review cycle.

Encourage staff to wear a broad brimmed hat, other sun protective clothing and sunscreen whenever outdoors.

Encourage schools to take advantage of educational materials on sun safety and to participate in the Sun Safety educational information sessions, held by the Health Units.

## **Responsibilities of the School Principal:**

Review the Sun Safety Procedural Document with school staff at the beginning of each school year and in the early spring.

Inform the School Council of the Sun Safety Procedural Document

Actively promote sun protection in the school newsletters, at assemblies, school council meetings and staff meetings.

On outdoor excursion permission forms that are sent home to parents/guardians, ask that parents/guardians supply their children with suitable clothing, hats and sunscreen.

Ensure sun protection strategies are incorporated into outdoor events. Consider avoiding peak UV radiation periods, wear a hat and sunscreen, and seek or provide shade when possible.

When the UV index is 8 or higher, take full precautions and seek shade when outside, limiting direct sun exposure between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Encourage staff members to act as role models by wearing appropriate hats and clothing outdoors, using sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher, and seeking shade whenever possible.

Encourage the school to work towards increasing and/or maintaining shade on its grounds.

### **Responsibilities of Teachers:**

Incorporate sun protection and skin cancer prevention material into appropriate areas of the school curriculum.

Actively promote sun protection prior to and during outdoor activities, sports and excursions.

Encourage students to wear a hat which protects their face, neck and ears whenever they are outside.

Encourage students to reapply sunscreen 20 minutes prior to outdoor activities.

### **Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians:**

Ensure your child comes to school wearing sunscreen SPF 15 or higher when the UV Index is 3 or higher.

Provide your child with sunscreen of SPF 15 or higher for re-application while at school or during school related activities. Ensure that your child comes to school with sun protective clothing.

## **IMPLEMENTATION:**

### **All-day events**

Severe sunburn is likely when students are outside for long periods of time. The risk of skin damage on sports days and all-day excursions is high. Planning for outdoor events should incorporate a range of sun protection strategies that operate throughout the day.

### **Consider the following strategies**

#### **Prior to the event:**

- Visit the venue to work out how much shade will be required.
- Organize portable shade structures – some cancer organizations and local agencies hire or lend tents. [a canopy is available through the Perth District health Unit, call 271-7600].
- Consider sharing the purchase of portable shade structures with neighbouring schools.
- Work out the best way to structure the day to maximize shade.
- Inform students, parents and staff that sun protection will be a priority and outline strategies to be undertaken.
- Encourage spectators to bring umbrellas to supplement planned shade.
- Recommend that broad-brimmed hats and long-sleeved clothing be worn by all spectators and participants when not competing.
- Promote a hat competition as part of the sports day.
- Promote the sun protection message in all printed information about the day.

#### **On the day:**

- Provide enough shade for spectators.
- Ensure shade is available where food and drinks are provided.
- Provide shade for the competitors at the marshalling areas.
- Provide shade for all officials where possible.
- Encourage students, staff and parents to wear clothing that covers most of their skin.
- Consider including creative events to reinforce the sun protection message – conduct a mad hatter's competition or a tug of war between teams wearing different styles of hats.
- Give regular reminders about sun protection and reapplication of sunscreen.

## **Shade**

Shade is the key element of a school's UV risk reduction strategy. The school development plan should aim to increase the amount of shade available in the school. Consult with Senior Administrators and School Council to develop long-term shade strategies for the school grounds. Consider temporary shade structures as a short-term measure.

It is recommended that existing shade is assessed before planning additional shade and that a list of priorities be developed. Shade should be established in high-risk areas first. Shade should also be considered in the planning of outdoor events, whether held on the school grounds or at external venues.

### **Shade priority**

Shade is required for outdoor areas where members of your school community congregate, but some areas will have a higher priority than others. You should focus on:

- areas where outdoor activities are likely to occur or that students use during breaks between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- where outdoor activities occur and/or where people are likely to be watching outdoor activities for more than 10 minutes.

### **Assessing your shade**

Using a site plan, mark where shade is available at peak UV times and mark areas where students congregate. Then compare the two. On the basis of this comparison, develop a list of priorities for change.

### **Some strategies for increasing shade at your school should include:**

- Maximize existing shade
- Plant trees in clusters to increase the shade area.
- Move seats and tables to areas of shade.
- Erect portable shelters in exposed areas.
- Rent shade structures for large outdoor events.

Check the following website for more information:  
[www.yorku.ca/fes/envedu/ecoschools.asp](http://www.yorku.ca/fes/envedu/ecoschools.asp)

## **Clothing**

Ideally, sun protective clothing should cover as much skin as possible.

The amount of protection provided by clothing is influenced by fabric characteristics and garment design and fit. A closely-woven fabric provides the best protection. Dark colours block more UV and hence give more protection than light colours, however they may be hotter to wear.

Loose clothing is cooler and if a fabric is stretched it may provide less protection. Collars help to protect the neck. Shirts with longer sleeves and longer shorts provide better protection for the limbs.

## **Hats**

A broad-rimmed hat offers the best protection for the head and neck. For adults, a brim of at least 8 cm is recommended. Baseball caps are not recommended as they do not offer adequate protection to the back of the neck and ears.

## **Sunglasses**

Like skin, eyes can be damaged by UV. When worn with a broad-brimmed hat, sunglasses can reduce the amount of UV reaching the eyes by up to 98 per cent (compared with a reduction of about 50 per cent for sunglasses alone).

## Sunscreen

A sunscreen works by reducing the amount of UV reaching exposed skin. This means that sunscreen does not totally block UV from reaching the skin. No sunscreen gives complete protection, so it must be used in combination with other sun protection strategies. Sunscreen should never be used to deliberately increase the time spent in the sun.

The sun does not need to feel hot to damage skin and eyes. The damage is caused by UV, which is not seen or felt.

### Labelling

Sun Protection Factor (SPF) is a measure of the level of protection a sunscreen provides against sunburn. The higher the SPF, the more protection a sunscreen provides. A sunscreen product can only be labeled with an SPF number when it complies with the Canadian standard. The use of sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher is recommended.

Broad spectrum means the sunscreen provides protection against the two types of UV that reach the earth's surface (UVA and UVB).

### Applying sunscreen correctly

Sunscreen must be applied correctly to be effective.

- Where possible, allow students to apply sunscreen at least 20 minutes before going outside.
- Apply to clean, dry skin. Leave a film of sunscreen on the skin – it should not be rubbed in.
- Apply evenly and generously.
- Reapply every two hours – more often if the skin is wiped, washed or sweaty.
- *Always* use sunscreen in combination with other sun protection strategies.

**Note:**

Always test for allergic reaction when first using sunscreen. Apply a small amount on your inner forearm for 2-3 days consecutively. Check for adverse reaction.

If applying more than one substance (eg. Insect repellent) on your skin, always put the sunscreen products on first and wait 30 minutes after applying. Then apply the second substance. Combination sunscreen/insect repellent products are not recommended.

## Curriculum Activities

It is important that environmental and behavioural elements of an UV risk reduction policy are supported through curriculum programs. Students should not only understand how and why they need to protect their skin, but also have the opportunity to explore related issues, such as self image and peer pressure, which influence decision-making in relation to UV exposure.

### Curriculum activity ideas:

The activities listed below are starting points – ideas that can be developed further and adapted according to objectives, time available, student interests and abilities – rather than comprehensive lesson plans. They are arranged under headings according to specific objectives (some may achieve more than one objective, depending on how they are developed by the teacher).

### To raise student awareness about UV risk at school and elsewhere:

- Conduct an individual UV risk assessment – students records their own activities over a typical week; assesses when and where they are at risk; the kinds of activities they are involved in at the time; current risk reduction strategies (if any); and possible risk-reduction strategies, either that they could implement personally or that could be implemented by the school, or both. Note that risk levels would change according to time of year/day. Begin by brainstorming a list of factors that might contribute to UV risk level, for example, presence of shade and reflective surfaces, time of day, clothing worn during activity, etc., and discuss how these factors are likely to affect risk. This activity could be repeated for weekend activities, for example, students monitor their UV risk over a typical weekend or weekend day.
- On the basis of the risk assessment, discuss issues relating to UV risk reduction in different situations, for example, whose responsibility is to implement the various strategies. Which factors influence their decisions to protect/not protect themselves from the sun? Do these factors vary according to different circumstances? What information/factors would influence them to behave differently if they are currently not protecting themselves adequately?
- Develop a sun protection plan for particular outdoor events. This may include making suggestions about timing of activities, appropriate dress, temporary shade and strategies to encourage spectators to be protected from the sun.
- Develop a UV risk reduction plan for a favourite recreational activity. This could be an activity that students participate in, for example, if they are members of clubs involved in outdoor activities, or for activities in which they would like to participate. The plan might also be for a specific event that students might be involved in outside school. Again, the proposed strategies should be realistic and practical, but also encourage students to be as creative as possible.

- Develop a quiz for other members of the school community, for example, parents and younger students, to assess their knowledge about an aspect(s) of UV risk reduction. It should include correct answers and an appropriate scoring system.
- Design a game to teach younger students about sun safety. The activities should be appropriate to the age of students for whom the game is designed, but encourage students to make it as interesting and challenging as possible.

**To raise the awareness of the wider school community about UV risk reduction:**

- Develop an education campaign about one or more relevant issues. This might be a general education campaign, or focus on a specific aspect of UV risk or skin protection, for example:
  - The nature of UV, peak times, the fact that it can't be seen or felt, it is not related to temperature, effect of UV on the skin, etc. and the implications of this for risk reduction strategies.
  - Appropriate use of sunscreen. This should include correct application and reapplication, meaning of terms such as SPF, broad spectrum and water-resistant and the appropriate role of sunscreen in reducing risk of overexposure to UV.
  - Skin cancer and other damage resulting from exposure to UV, for example: why and how UV causes this damage, statistics, types of skin cancer and other damage.
  - The importance of early detection – how to check the skin and what to look for, what to do if concerned about a spot, etc.

Education campaigns may incorporate one or more of posters, releases for the school newsletter, a presentation for other students or staff, etc. The campaign may be developed as part of health, art, science, etc.

**To assess and improve the availability of attractive shaded areas within the school grounds:**

- Conduct observational studies of the areas in which students congregate at peak UV periods, particularly lunchtime. Students would need to draw a map of the school grounds, and consider questions such as how many students use shade, which shaded areas are more/least used, what students who are out in the sun are doing, etc. These studies would need to be repeated at different times during the lunch break and on different days.
- Survey the student population in relation to current shade availability and possible improvements, for example: Do they use current shaded areas? Why/not? Where do they believe new shaded areas should be created? What kinds of areas should they be?
- Develop proposals for shaded areas according to usage patterns identified by the observational study. Students may be also able to design shade appropriate for the area.

**To encourage responsible decision making by students about personal strategies to reduce their risk of excessive UV risk:**

- Students role play, in pairs, one of the following roles (then swap and play the other).  
*Person A:* Invite your friend to the beach, or pool to see who is there and work on his/her tan.  
*Person B:* You are new to the area and want to meet more people your age. You have skin that burns easily and have doubts about accepting your friend's invitation.

As a class, discuss how students felt in each of the two roles. Questions for discussion might include:

- Were you able to resist your friend's invitation, and if so, how did you feel?
  - What tactics did your friend use to attempt to persuade you, and how did those tactics make you feel?
  - What are the reasons for and against accepting the invitation? Which reasons are most important? Why? Would those reasons always be the most important?
  - How did you feel while you were trying to persuade your friend to accept the invitation? What could you do to help your friend meet people without placing them in this position?
  - What strategies could be used by Person B to make friends without compromising his/her health?
- Create and conduct role plays like the one above, but using different scenarios related to UV risk reduction, for example, in relation to hat wearing and sunscreen use and avoiding being in the sun during the peak UV periods.
  - Ask students to brainstorm as many behaviours as they can that reduce the risk of skin damage due to sun exposure.
    - Allocate each behaviour to small groups (about two to three students), and ask each group to discuss and list factors that make the behaviour easier and more difficult.
    - Ask the groups to develop at least one strategy to address each of the factors that make that behaviour more difficult.
    - As a class, discuss these strategies – which are most likely to be effective? Which strategies would students use? What are the main reasons that they would continue to behave in a way that increased their risk of sunburn despite knowing the risk?
  - Develop a series of Dear Doctor (or similar) letters describing scenarios relating to sun protection, and ask students to develop responses. Scenarios could include my friend thinks I look better with a tan; I know I should wear a hat but my friends give me a hard time when I do; Our sports events are always scheduled for the middle of the day and I burn easily; Our playground has no shade. Alternatively, students can develop their own scenario and swap them with a partner – then respond to the scenario developed by their partner.

**To encourage students to be pro-active in identifying sources of UV risk and in developing strategies, both personal and more broadly, to reduce risk:**

- Students choose a local facility at which outdoor activities are conducted, and:
  - make an assessment of when and under what circumstances users of that facility are at risk of excessive UV exposure
  - develop some strategies to reduce UV risk for users that could be implemented by the management of the facility
  - develop some recommendations for strategies that could be employed by users of the facility.

This might involve finding out who uses the facility and when, and visits to the facility at different times to assess shade availability. It could be done in small groups, with different groups allocated a different user group to consider.

**Organization of outdoor lessons and breaks**

UV radiation peaks during the two hours either side of when the sun is directly overhead. About sixty per cent of the day's UV is received during this time. To reduce student and staff exposure to UV, review timetables to minimize time spent outdoors during peak UV periods.

## Sample Sunscreen Letter to Parents/Guardians:

Dear Parent,

At *(name of school)*, we want to keep your child sun safe! Did you know that sunburns experienced in childhood have been linked to the development of skin cancer later in life? Overexposure to the sun's harmful ultraviolet rays may lead to skin cancer, cataracts, and other related illnesses. These can be prevented by practicing the following behaviours consistently when the UV index is 3 or higher

- Wearing sunscreen of a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of 15 or higher
- Limiting sun exposure during peak hours of 11 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Covering up with long-sleeved shirts, hats, lip-balm and sunglasses
- Seeking shade whenever possible

In our effort to be sun safe we want all of our children to wear sunscreen throughout the day and to come to school with a hat, long-sleeve shirt (when suitable), and sunglasses. Please label each with your child's name.

We ask that you apply the first coat of sunscreen before your child arrives at school. **It is important that you test the sunscreen for skin allergies before applying it to the child.**

At midday, we will have them apply another coat of sunscreen. Each child should bring to school his or her own bottle of sunscreen with an SPF 15 or higher. Please label the sunscreen with your child's name. Please label the sunscreen with your child's name.

Please help us protect your child from sunburns. What you do now can make a big difference for your child later in life. If you have any questions, please contact the school.

Sincerely,



PERMISSION/ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FOR EDUCATIONAL EXCURSIONS and ATHLETIC/CO-CURRICULAR PARTICIPATION

THIS FORM MUST BE READ AND SIGNED BY A PARENT/GUARDIAN OF A PARTICIPATING STUDENT. STUDENTS 18 YEARS OF AGE AND OLDER MAY SIGN ON THEIR OWN BEHALF.

\_\_\_\_\_, of the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board is arranging: (Name of School/Program)

\_\_\_\_\_ (description of activity, location, dates and mode of transportation)

Elements of Risk

Educational excursions and programs, such as the event described above, involve certain elements of risk. Accidents may occur while participating in these activities. These accidents may cause injury. By choosing to permit your child to participate in the activity, you are assuming the risk of an accident occurring.

The chance of an accident occurring can be reduced by carefully following instructions at all times while engaged in the activity.

The Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board does not provide any accidental death, disability, dismemberment, dental, or medial expenses insurance on behalf of the students participating in this activity.

NOTE TO PARENT(S):

- 1. If volunteer drivers are used, I give permission for my son/daughter to travel with a volunteer driver. Yes [ ] No [ ]
2. Students are not permitted to drive other students.
3. Appropriate sun protection must be provided for outdoor excursions.
4. Please return this form in its entirety.

Please list any medical conditions or procedures (e.g. diabetes, asthma, allergies, etc.) that pertain to your son/daughter.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Permission and Acknowledgement

I have read the above and give \_\_\_\_\_ (name of student)

permission to participate in the \_\_\_\_\_ to be held on or about \_\_\_\_\_

My child is provided with the appropriate sun protection for this activity Yes [ ] No [ ]

Signature of parent/guardian/adult student: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Resources:

1. **Living with Sunshine: A primary Teaching resource on Sun protection for grades 1, 2, and 3.** [published by - Canadian Dermatology Society and Canadian Cancer Society]
2. **SunSafe Project: Curriculum Materials for Educators.**  
[published by the Norris Cotton cancer Center, Lebanon, New Hampshire. May be downloaded from [www.dartmouth.edu/~sunsafe/index.htm](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~sunsafe/index.htm)]
3. **The Children's UV Index Sun Awareness Program.**  
[published by Environment Canada/Health Canada]  
Contact: [www.msc-smc.ec.gc.ca/uvindex](http://www.msc-smc.ec.gc.ca/uvindex)]
4. **Activity Booklets:**
  - a. Let's Play Safe in the Sun! [Canadian Cancer Society]
  - b. Rayguard's Be Sun Smart! [Canadian Cancer Society]
5. **Posters:**
  - a. UV RAYS [Environment Canada]
  - b. I'M SUN SAVVY [Environment Canada]
6. **Information sheets:**
  - a. Are You Getting the most From Sunscreen? [Perth District Health Unit]
  - b. Practice safe Sun! [Perth District Health Unit]
  - c. Sun safety [Health Canada]
  - d. Babies, children and sun safety [Health Canada]
7. **Flyers/Bookmarks**
  - a. SunSense [Canadian Cancer Society]

## APPENDIX 1

### Sun Myths



You may know that sun protection is important but there are certain beliefs about the sun that are misunderstood.

**Myth: In order for sunlight to cause skin cancer, you must get a sunburn.**

**FACT:** People who burn may be more likely to get skin cancer than those who do not. However, sun damage builds up with each exposure so even if you do not burn, sun damage is still taking place.

**Myth: Tanning makes you look healthy and attractive.**

**Fact:** No tan is a healthy tan. Over time, tanned skin becomes more wrinkled, saggy, leathery, and blotchy. For those who still feel they must have a tan, the Canadian Dermatology Association recommends the use of self-tanning creams, applied at night, followed with a sunscreen of SPF #15 or higher. Self-tanning creams do not provide sun protection.

**Myth: A tan can protect you from sun damage.**

**FACT:** A tan is the sign of damage or injury to your skin. Having what people call a base tan does not offer protection against further sun damage. A dark tan on fair skin only offers an SPF (Skin Protection Factor) of 4. There is no such thing as a safe tan.

**Myth: You need a strong dose of natural sunlight to maintain good health.**

**Fact:** It is true that a small amount of sunlight has health benefits (UVB rays help produce vitamin D in the skin). However, only a few minutes of sunlight a day are necessary for development of enough vitamin D. Most Canadians meet their daily requirement of vitamin D through their diet.

**Myth: Sun damage is only temporary. By resting your skin between sun exposures, the damage is erased.**

FACT: Sun damage is cumulative. The skin can repair superficial damage like the redness and soreness of a sun burn, but the underlying damage remains. Over the years with each exposure to the sun, the damage builds up. It may take 10 to 30 years to be apparent.

**Myth: The sun cannot hurt you if it is cloudy or foggy.**

FACT: Clouds and fog do not offer complete protection from sun exposure. Up to 80% of the sun's rays can penetrate light clouds, mist and fog.

**Myth: You cannot get sunburned in the shade.**

FACT: You can get sun damage in the shade if you are near reflective surfaces like water, snow, sand and concrete. UVA rays can also penetrate glass (like the windshield of a car).

**Myth: A high SPF sunscreen is all you need to protect yourself from the sun.**

FACT: Sunscreen on its own does not offer complete protection from sun damage. Just because you have generously applied a high SPF sunscreen does not mean that you are protected for longer exposure in the sun. Sunscreen is not as effective as reducing your time outside between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. seeking shade or wearing protective clothing.

**Myth: Sunscreen can cause blindness if you accidentally rub it in your eyes.**

FACT: Sunscreen cannot cause blindness. Should you accidentally get sunscreen in your eyes, simply flush them with water for 10-15 minutes. If redness, stinging and swelling do not go away, see your doctor.

**Myth: People with dark skin are already protected from the sun.**

FACT: Everyone, regardless of their skin type needs to practice sun safety. Darker skin may have more natural protection than lighter skin, but it still needs protection from sun exposure.

**Myth: As long as your body is submerged in the water, you're safe from the sun.**

**FACT:** You can still get a sun burn even if you are underneath the water. When swimming or snorkeling for a long period of time, it is best to wear clothing that covers your arms, back and upper thighs and wear waterproof sunscreen on all exposed areas. Up to 50% of the sun's rays can bounce back at you off the water.

**Myth: You cannot get hurt by the sun in winter.**

**FACT:** Skiers, snowboarders and tobogganers can also be exposed to extra UV rays because they reflect off snow. Up to 50% of the rays can bounce back off snow, especially at higher mountain elevations where there is less atmosphere to protect you.

## APPENDIX 2

### Heat Illness

The body normally cools itself by sweating and radiating heat through the skin. But under some conditions – high temperatures and humidity or vigorous exercise in hot weather sweating may not be enough. The body’s internal heat can build up to dangerous levels resulting in heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke. If not treated quickly heat exhaustion can progress to heat stroke, which requires immediate emergency medical care and can be fatal.

Signs and Symptoms	Treatment
<b>Heat Cramps</b> – may occur during or after vigorous exercise in extreme heat.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Severe cramps in muscles of leg, arm, abdomen</li> <li>▪ Possible heavy sweating</li> <li>▪ Extreme thirst</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Move to cool place</li> <li>▪ Fluids</li> <li>▪ Massaging cramped muscles may also help</li> <li>▪ Seek medical attention if cramps are not gone within an hour</li> </ul>
<b>Heat Exhaustion</b> – more severe heat illness. Occurs when person is in a hot environment and has not been drinking enough.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Intense thirst, fatigue, weakness</li> <li>▪ Cold clammy skin</li> <li>▪ May also have headache, dizziness, nausea/vomiting</li> <li>▪ Fast, shallow breathing</li> <li>▪ Increased sweating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Move inside or to cool place</li> <li>▪ Loosen clothing</li> <li>▪ Give fluids</li> <li>▪ Rest lying down with feet up</li> <li>▪ Splash with cold water</li> <li>▪ Seek medical help</li> </ul>
<b>Heat Stroke</b> – the most severe form of heat illness. Body temperature raises rapidly, sweating mechanism fails, and the body is unable to cool down. <b>Is a life threatening emergency-prompt medical treatment is required.</b> Heat stroke can cause death or permanent disability if emergency treatment is not provided.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Severe headache</li> <li>▪ Dizziness or weakness</li> <li>▪ Confusion, disorientation</li> <li>▪ Hot dry skin</li> <li>▪ Temperature 40°C/105°F or higher within 10 minutes</li> <li>▪ Loss of consciousness</li> <li>▪ Seizure</li> <li>▪ Can be fatal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Call 911 or take to hospital emergency immediately</b></li> <li>▪ While awaiting or during transport :</li> <li>▪ Move to shade or cool area</li> <li>▪ Offer fluids</li> <li>▪ Cool body rapidly in a tub of water, cool shower, spray with garden hose, or wrap in wet sheet</li> </ul>

#### Sources of Information:

Canadian Medical Association – First Aid Manual

Nemours Foundation – [www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org)

Health Canada – [www.hc-sc.gc.ca](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca)

## Appendix 3

### SUN SAFETY WEB SITES

#### THE UV INDEX

Meteorological Service of Canada	<a href="http://www.msc-smc.ec.gc.ca/education/uvindex/">www.msc-smc.ec.gc.ca/education/uvindex/</a>
U.S. Environment Protection Agency	<a href="http://www.epa.gov/sunwise/">www.epa.gov/sunwise/</a>
United States Climate Prediction Center	<a href="http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/stratosphere/uv_index/">www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/stratosphere/uv_index/</a>
World Health Organization	<a href="http://www.who.int/uv/intersunprogramme/activities/uv_index/en/">www.who.int/uv/intersunprogramme/activities/uv_index/en/</a>

#### THE OZONE LAYER

British Antarctic Survey	<a href="http://www.antarctica.ac.uk/met/jds/ozone/">www.antarctica.ac.uk/met/jds/ozone/</a>
Experimental Studies Division of Environment Canada	<a href="http://www.exp-studies.msc-smc.ec.gc.ca/">www.exp-studies.msc-smc.ec.gc.ca/</a>
The Ozone Hole Tour	<a href="http://www.atm.ch.cam.ac.uk/tour/index.html">www.atm.ch.cam.ac.uk/tour/index.html</a>

#### SHADE

These two Web sites offer grant money to increase shade in school play grounds

Toyota - Evergreen Learning Grounds National Grant	<a href="http://www.evergreen.com">www.evergreen.com</a>
Tree Canada Foundation	<a href="http://www.treecanada.ca">www.treecanada.ca</a>

#### HEALTH SITES

American Academy of Dermatology	<a href="http://www.aad.org/">www.aad.org/</a>
Canadian Dermatology Association	<a href="http://www.dermatology.ca/">www.dermatology.ca/</a>
Health Canada: Smart Summer Fun	<a href="http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/english/feature/summer/air_sun/index.html">www.hc-sc.gc.ca/english/feature/summer/air_sun/index.html</a>
Melanoma Patients' Information Page	<a href="http://www.mpip.org/index.html">www.mpip.org/index.html</a>
The Anti-Cancer Council of Victoria (Australia)	<a href="http://www.sunsmart.com.au">www.sunsmart.com.au</a>
The Skin Cancer Foundation	<a href="http://www.skincancer.org/">www.skincancer.org/</a>
Suggested Web sites about Sun Safety	<a href="http://www.cancer.ca/ccs/internet/standard/0,3182,3172_273145_374425_langId-en,00.html">www.cancer.ca/ccs/internet/standard/0,3182,3172_273145_374425_langId-en,00.html</a>
Your Cancer Risk: The Source on Cancer Prevention	<a href="http://www.yourcancerrisk.harvard.edu/">www.yourcancerrisk.harvard.edu/</a>
ACER - Association for Canadian Education Resources	<a href="http://www.acer-acre.org">www.acer-acre.org</a>

## **APPENDIX 4**

### **SCHOOL ANNOUNCEMENTS/NEWSLETTER INSERTS**

- Day 1 Be sun safe. Remember to protect your skin from the sun by slipping on a shirt, slapping on a wide-brimmed hat and slopping on some sun screen every time you are going to spend some time in the sun. Protect the skin you're in...
- Day 2 Be sun safe. Make your own shade by wearing a wide-brimmed hat and some sunglasses that block the sun's ultraviolet rays. Protect the skin you're in...
- Day 3 Be sun safe. If you are playing outdoors and your shadow is shorter than you are, be sure to play in the shade as much as you can. Protect the skin you're in...
- Day 4 Be sun safe. Sun burns damage skin. Wear a sunscreen with SPF #15 or higher. Apply generously, and re-apply often, especially after sweating or swimming. Protect the skin you're in...
- Day 5 Be sun safe. Wear loose-fitting, tightly woven, light-weight clothing that covers your arms and legs. Wear sunscreen on exposed areas – including the tops of your feet, your ears and your nose. Protect the skin you're in...

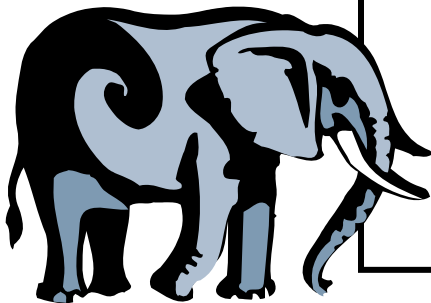
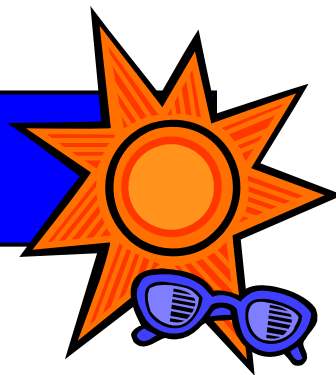
### **SCHOOL NEWSLETTER INSERT**

It is important that children's skin is protected. Most people receive 80% of their lifetime sun exposure before age 18 and one bad sun burn in childhood doubles their risk of skin cancer. The Canadian Cancer Society recommends that we limit sun exposure between 11 am and 4 pm. We also need to teach our children to seek or make their own shade using trees, buildings, clothing, hats, and sun glasses. Slather on sunscreen with a SPF15 or higher and don't forget sensitive areas such as the nose and the tops of the ears. Re-apply often. If you would like more information about sun safety, visit [www.cancer.ca](http://www.cancer.ca) or contact: Perth District Health Unit at (519) 271-7600. Listowel area residents call 1-877-271-7348; Huron County Health Unit 1 877-837-6143 or (519) 482-3416.



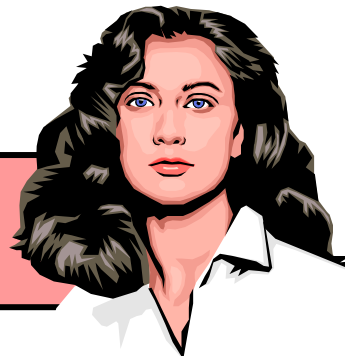
Be sun sensible! Wear a broad-brimmed hat and cover your arms and legs when out in the sun!

UV rays can contribute to cataracts, which impair vision. Wear UV rated sunglasses on



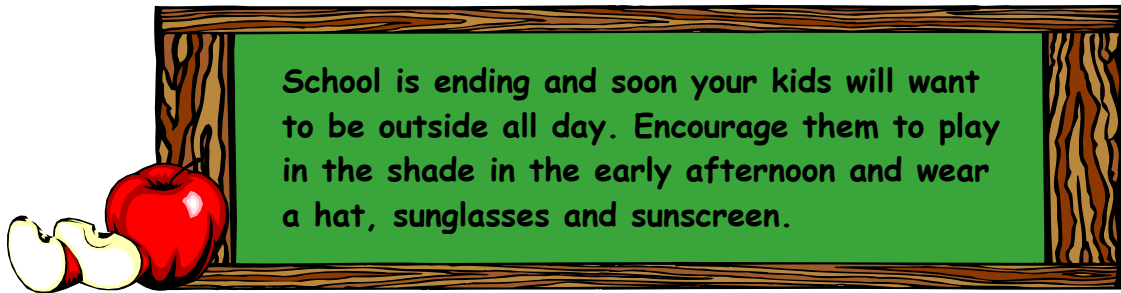
Your skin is like an elephant... it never forgets its UV exposure. Excess amounts of ultraviolet rays is the main cause of skin cancer.

Most skin cancers occur on areas of the skin, which have been exposed, to the sun over a long period of time.





**In selecting activities for your kids over the summer, choose ones that do not require long stretches in the**



School is ending and soon your kids will want to be outside all day. Encourage them to play in the shade in the early afternoon and wear a hat, sunglasses and sunscreen.

Most of our UV exposure occurs before the age of 18. Proper sun protection for kids and teenagers will lead to healthier skin throughout their lives.

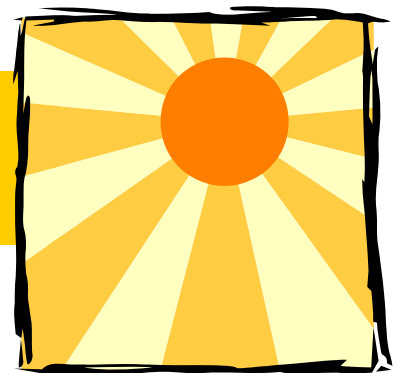


The first and often the worst burn of the year occurs on Victoria Day weekend. Make sure you start the summer right and protect your skin this weekend.

When looking into summer camps, ask them what the staff does to minimize sun damage to the campers.



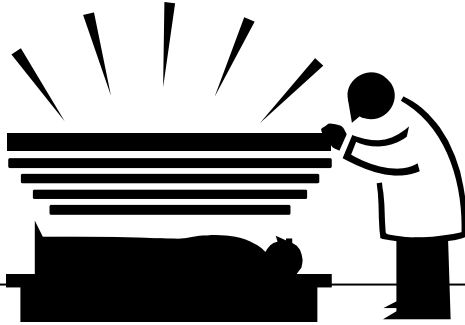
After a long cold winter indoors it is tempting to spend hours out in the sun. Make sure you protect your skin and your



### Skiers protect your skin.

Did you know?

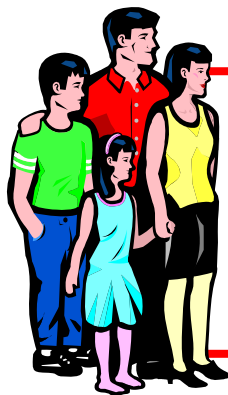
The **INTENSITY** of UV rays is greater at higher altitudes. Snow **REFLECTS** the UV rays and increases the amount of rays striking your exposed skin.



**Tanning Parlours are not recommended.**

Tanning beds, booths and lamps emit harmful UVA and UVB rays. The same rays emitted by the sun. Harmful effects are burning, premature aging, and ultimately skin cancer can develop.

An increase in altitude can increase U.V. Wear a hat, sunglasses and sunscreen when heading to the slopes.



**PARENTS,**

Skin cancer is on the rise! Children are at the highest risk of developing some form of skin cancer. **BE A ROLE MODEL!** Protect yourself and your children against the sun's damaging rays.

# NEWSLETTER INSERTS



Here Comes the Sun

**SLIP** on clothing - to cover arms and legs

**SLAP** on a wide brimmed hat

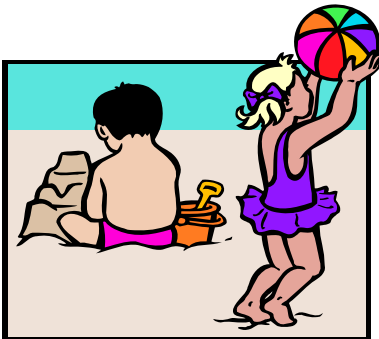
**SLOP** on sunscreen



Summer: This summer, hand out in the shade. It's cool! Your skin will thank you for years to come.

## Teach Kids the Shadow Test

It's important to stay out of the sun when it is directly overhead and the rays are the strongest. Teach children the shadow test - If their shadow is shorter than they are it's time to come inside or find shade.



One in seven children born today will develop skin cancer in their lifetime – practice sun safe behaviours.

Always use sunscreen before you go outside.

Carry it with you and put it on every 2 hours



**Fall:** Beware of cloudy days.