

# SunSmart newsletter

for primary schools and early childhood centres

May 2010



## Introduction

Welcome to the winter edition of Cancer Council SA's primary schools and early childhood newsletter.

Being SunSmart from May to August means getting enough sun exposure to maintain the body's vitamin D levels over winter. See the article on sun exposure and vitamin D to ensure your school has a balanced policy in place for winter.

We are also pleased to deliver to primary schools the third and final edition of the Kidskin teacher's resource book.

While membership to the SunSmart Schools and Early Childhood Program continues to grow, we always welcome new members—why not use our new online application process and join today.

Jo Rayner  
SunSmart Program

## Sun exposure and vitamin D—a healthy balance

Being SunSmart means a balance between sun protection to lower the risk of skin cancer and sun exposure for the production and maintenance of vitamin D.

Current information indicates that at certain times of the year, when UV radiation is below 3, it is safe for the general population to leave hats and sunscreen off to ensure vitamin D levels are maintained.

As the UV level starts to drop in May, schools can relax their sun protection policies and let students and staff enjoy the winter sun before hats go back on again on the 1st September.

Sun protection may still be required if spending time in alpine regions, around reflective surfaces or at all day events (i.e. Sports days in early term 2).

For the majority of the population, incidental sunlight exposure during normal daily activities is enough to maintain vitamin D levels. Current recommendations are that during summer most people need only a few minutes of sun exposure everyday (outside of peak UV times) to face, arms and hands to achieve adequate vitamin D levels. During winter, 2–3 hours of sun exposure to the face, arms and hands over a week is recommended. People with naturally very dark skin require 3–6 times more sun exposure for vitamin D. People concerned about their own vitamin D levels should discuss it with their GP.

**Cancer Council SA recommends the use of the UV Alert to determine sun protection strategies for your activities from the beginning of May until the end of August.**

## New Kidskin resource for upper primary schools

To support teachers in promoting and teaching about the importance of skin protection, Cancer Council SA is pleased to be able to send a free copy of the newly developed Kidskin upper primary teaching resource to all primary schools in South Australia. This new resource is full of current information and supported by a host of engaging teaching activities.

This resource completes the set of three Kidskin resources (junior, middle and upper primary) that have been distributed to schools over the past few years. Further copies of these resources can be purchased for \$16.95 by calling **Cancer Council Helpline 13 11 20**.



## Do you need a new sign?

If you are already a SunSmart Centre or School and your SunSmart sign is starting to show signs of age, you can purchase a new sign for the special price of \$20. Simply send us a purchase order and the sign will be delivered to your site.

## Questions?

Cancer Council SA's **Cancer Council Helpline 13 11 20** is available from 8:30 am – 8:00 pm Monday to Friday to answer all your questions about cancer, teaching resources, SunSmart school/centre program or school policy issues.

Please phone 13 11 20 and speak to our friendly staff.

## Join the SunSmart Schools and Early Childhood Program

### You can now join online!

If your school or centre is doing a great job in providing a sun safe environment—then why not become a SunSmart school or centre and receive a large aluminium SunSmart sign that can be displayed to acknowledge your efforts.

If you would like to become a SunSmart school or centre you can now apply online—go to [www.sunsmart.org.au/sunsmartprogram](http://www.sunsmart.org.au/sunsmartprogram)

Fill out the appropriate application form, attach your skin protection policy and submit your application. Your application will then be assessed to ensure that it is in line with the SunSmart criteria. There are also support materials available online including sample policies and SunSmart checklists.

If you need assistance with your policy or further information, please contact **Cancer Council Helpline 13 11 20** or via email on [chl@cancersa.org.au](mailto:chl@cancersa.org.au)



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**Cancer Council  
Helpline**  
13 11 20