

How to implement hats in the secondary school setting

A combination of sun protection measures should be implemented in South Australian secondary schools during terms 1, 3 and 4 and when the ultraviolet (UV) radiation level is 3 and above at other times.

Along with other sun protection measures, broad brimmed or bucket hats should be worn for all outdoor activities, break times, sports days, carnivals and excursions during term 1, 3 and 4.

However, enforcing hat wearing amongst teenagers can be challenging and often falls into the 'too hard' basket.

Below are some tips and tricks that other secondary schools in South Australia and interstate have used to successfully implement hat wearing at their school. Your school may choose to implement one or a variety of the following initiatives.

- Hat wearing at primary school is a well-established practice. Harness the habit with a 'follow on' mentality for secondary school. Do keep in mind that junior students are more likely to wear hats if the senior students are also wearing them.
- Implement hat wearing in stages. For example begin with hat wearing in physical education classes and then progressively extend hat wearing into other outdoor activities and break times.
- Approach hat wearing as a student health and wellbeing issue, rather than a uniform issue.
- Discuss the similarities between Work Health and Safety (WH&S) policies in a professional workplace and your school policies that support health and wellbeing.

- Success relies upon staff role modelling hat wearing during yard duty, excursions, sporting events and other outdoor activities. Supply staff with broad brimmed or bucket hats of their choice, which they are required to wear whenever they are outside.

Remember!

Protection from UV radiation is a workplace WH&S issue.



In particular, staff who spend a large part of their day outdoors, such as teachers of physical education and agricultural studies, should role model hat wearing given that they can receive up to nine times more UV exposure than indoor workers.



Invite the SunSmart Team to present and/or work with your student leadership group.

- Allocate one staff member to be the SunSmart Coordinator to manage implementation and non-compliance.

- Reversible school hats can be designed with the school logo embroidered on one side and the student's house colour on the other side.



The style of broad brimmed or bucket hat is critical in gaining student support. Allow students some choice of hat style, surf brands are often well accepted.

Invite the SRC to narrow down the options and present to the student body to vote on. This gives students a sense of ownership and lets students know that their input is valued and acted upon.

- Conduct a logo design competition and negotiate for the winning design to be embroidered on the school hat.
- Consider embroidering senior student's preferred nickname onto their broad brimmed or bucket hat instead of having a nickname on Year 12 jumpers.
- Enlist the support of some of your most influential senior students to act as role models.
- Expect your SRC and student leaders to adopt a leadership role on this issue.
- Utilise Cancer Council's SRC resource to engage SRC and student leaders in consultation and planning for sun protection which they can present to leadership and governing council. Students could also take charge of implementing their recommendations.

- Broadcast hat reminders and daily sun protection times over the PA prior to break times.
- Reward SunSmart behaviour in the school grounds with spot prizes. Similarly present SunSmart awards at sports carnivals or special events.
- Provide a set of legionnaire hats for those students who forget to bring their own broad brimmed or bucket hat. Students are embarrassed to wear a legionnaire hat and it may be an effective way of ensuring they remember their own hat.



Direct students to areas protected from the sun if they are not wearing their hat.

- Run 'crazy hat' themed days with prizes given for the most creative and sun protective hat.
- Engage senior students from health and physical education classes or community studies to take the lead on scoping, planning and/or implementing hat wearing activities or initiatives.
- Underpin hat wearing initiatives with curriculum activities so students understand why they are being asked to wear hats. Include evidence-based information on skin cancer incidence, mortality and prevention which is available from the Cancer Council website via www.cancersa.org.au

Remember!

Hats are just one piece of the sun protection puzzle, and no single sun protection measure is 100% effective on its own.



When the UV is 3 and above, use a combination of sun protection measures such as hats, protective clothing, shade, sunglasses and sunscreen.

number of terms to make the transition easier to manage for students, families and staff.

You might like to introduce other sun protection measures slowly over a



Together, we *will* beat cancer.



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