

# Sun safety and the school uniform.

## **Sun protection is everyone's responsibility.**

### **1: Sun safety and the school uniform**

A presentation for parents / carers

### **2: Sun protection is everyone's responsibility**

Here in Australia, sun protection needs to be everyone's responsibility. We experience some of the highest ultraviolet (UV) levels in the world, so if we want our children to have a healthy future, we need to equip them with good sun protection habits now.

### **3: 2 in 3 image**

Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in Australia.

Two in three people who grow up here will be diagnosed with some form of skin cancer in their lifetime. And the main cause of this is overexposure to UV radiation.

In New South Wales, we experience UV levels high enough to damage unprotected skin most months of the year. This means that even in winter, if children are outside, they're at risk.

### **4: 95% of skin cancers are preventable**

But it's not all bad news. We know that 95% of skin cancers are preventable if we regularly follow SunSmart behaviours.

These behaviours are the key to reducing everyone's skin cancer risk – both at school and outside it.

### **5: The importance of being SunSmart**

First, I'd like to share why sun safety is important to me. It's because... [\[Please insert your reasoning. For example, this could be a story about someone you know, your own experience of skin cancer, a fact that stood out to you that made you want to champion the project, or wanting to look after your own children.\]](#)

School hours are at the time of day when UV levels are at their highest. So as teachers, parents and carers, it's vital that we educate our children and ourselves about good sun protection behaviours.

My goal as the SunSmart champion at our school is to embed these SunSmart behaviours into our school culture. I want SunSmart hat wearing to become second nature. Partly so we don't have to remind the students all the time, but mostly because protecting your children's skin from exposure to UV is the simplest way to reduce the risk of skin cancer.

Sun protection programs in schools are supported by the World Health Organisation. There is clear evidence showing that if we minimise UV exposure during the first 15 years of life, we greatly reduce the risk of students developing skin cancer when they are older.

So we need to start these sun protection habits now.

As teachers, we need to encourage, normalise and reinforce SunSmart behaviours in our school. And as parents and carers, we hope you will do the same at home.

It starts with Slip, Slop, Slap, Seek and Slide.

#### **6: SLIP, SLOP, SLAP, SLIDE, SEEK shade**

SLIP on sun protective clothing.

SLOP on SPF 30 or higher broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen.

SLAP on a broad-brimmed hat.

SEEK shade.

And SLIDE on sunglasses.

We should encourage this behaviour every day because we know it works.

#### **7: We're doing well, but we can do better**

Research shows the number of children and young adults being diagnosed with melanoma has decreased.

This reduction has been attributed to sun protection efforts, including Cancer Council's SunSmart program in primary schools. The program began in 2008 and provides a comprehensive approach to improving children's sun protection behaviours.

However, there is still more that can still be done to reduce children's cancer risks, which is why we are making sun protection a priority.

#### **8: SunSmart hats are essential**

SunSmart hats are key when it comes to protecting children – and ourselves.

Your children have their faces exposed to damaging UV radiation every day. Ears, temples, lips and the nose are among the most common parts of the body where skin cancer develops later in life.

And the sun's rays don't just damage skin – they can cause permanent damage to children's eyes as well. A SunSmart hat can reduce the amount of UV radiation reaching your child's eyes by 50%.

So a SunSmart hat is one of the easiest and most effective forms of sun protection.

And if you see kids outside without a SunSmart hat, remind them that if they've forgotten their hat, they should play in the shade.

### **9: What is a SunSmart hat?**

What is a SunSmart hat?

SunSmart hats are broad-brimmed, bucket and legionnaire-style hats. They protect the face, back of the neck, ears and eyes.

Baseball caps are not SunSmart because they don't protect the ears, cheeks or back of the neck.

### **10: Be a hat hero**

I know it can be a challenge to ensure that your kids wear SunSmart hats. That's why Cancer Council NSW has created Hat Heroes. Hat heroes face up to the challenge of the sun and create great habits for life. So, every one of us should be a hat hero, including you as parents and carers.

Your kids look up to you. And by being a hat hero yourself and leading the way with your own sun safety, you can inspire your children to be SunSmart when they step outside. So please, pick up a SunSmart hat and wear it when you step outside, even when it's cloudy.

### **11: Our plan**

After looking at what we currently do in our school, the leadership team and I have come up with a plan to help us reach our SunSmart goals.

[\[Insert Plan here. Please talk about your approach and what resources you will use at the school, which you will have decided when you completed your action plan.\]](#)

### **12: How the plan might affect you**

As a part of our plan to reach our SunSmart goals, you may notice a few changes as we move forward.

[\[Please insert any changes parents and carers can expect, for example rule changes, uniform requirements and so on. If there are no changes to share, delete this slide.\]](#)

### **13: What you teach children today, will decide their tomorrow**

So now that we know the damage UV rays can do, and how easy it is to prevent 95% of skin cancer cases, we need your help to step up to the challenge, be hat heroes and protect our kids.

### **14: Thank you**

Thank you.