

## Shade Strategies in NSW Playgrounds Workshop Summary

### Background

The Cancer Council NSW (CCNSW) and the Cancer Institute NSW (CINSW) partnered with the Sax Institute to explore successful strategies to increase shade in NSW public playgrounds.

The aim of this project was to develop a prioritised plan of work with invited stakeholders across a variety of sectors to improve the availability of ultraviolet radiation (UV) protective shade in NSW playgrounds that provides quality UV protection. This project builds on work undertaken by the NSW Shade Working Group to increase shade in public spaces and focuses on public playgrounds. Playgrounds are important spaces where children, caregivers and the wider community gather, and increasing shade in these priority spaces needs to be effective, acceptable and implementable.

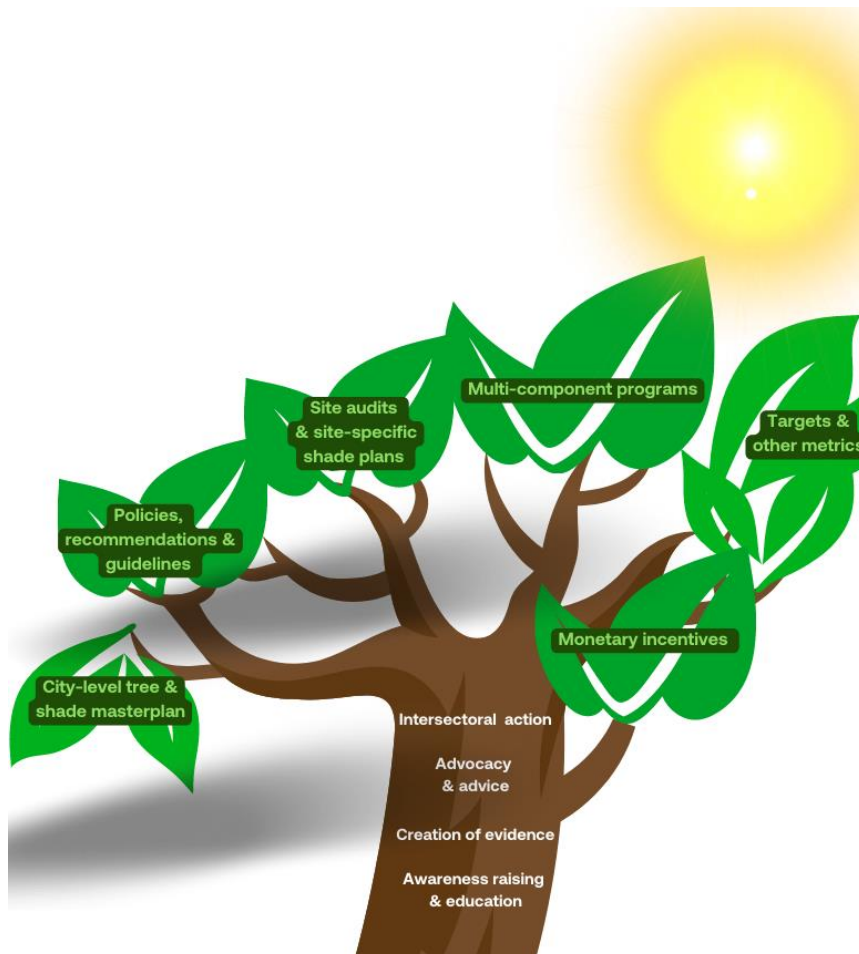
The project involved the development of a [Shade Strategies Evidence Review](#) which synthesised the national and international evidence supporting how best to increase shade in public playgrounds. This Review informed a shorter Discussion Paper, designed to support workshop participant engagement in the key discussion areas, circulated prior to the workshop. The workshop brought together participants with expertise and experience in playground settings, shade design and implementation. Insights from the workshop were incorporated into a strategic options paper which provided a framework for CCNSW and CINSW to explore and progress with interested workshop participants and other stakeholders.

This workshop summary is intended for participants, their colleagues and interested parties in NSW. Its purpose is to summarise key themes and prioritised strategies for improving shade in playgrounds across NSW that were discussed during the workshop, and potential next steps, noting a collective and collaborative effort is required across state and local government, NGOs and advocates.

### Shade strategies workshop

The workshop was held on 30 March 2023, drawing together 36 people from state and local governments, academia, health services, planning, business and not for profit organisations, together with eight people from the project team (CCNSW, CINSW, Sax Institute) to address the question: *What should the next actions be to increase shade in public playgrounds in NSW?*

A discussion paper summarising the key findings from the evidence review was provided to participants ahead of the workshop. Six types of strategies used to increase shade, with four underpinning activities, were identified from the evidence review (shown in Figure 1) and were used as a frame for the group discussions.

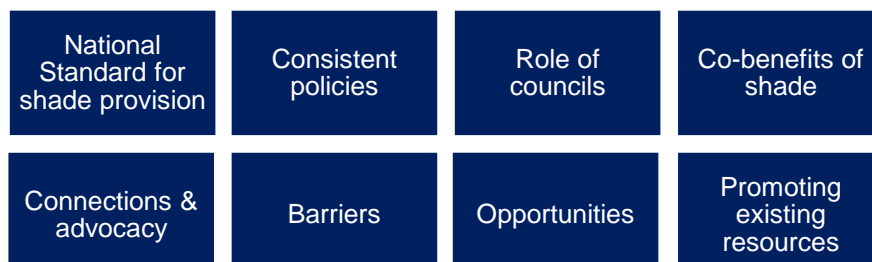


**Figure 1: Strategies used to increase shade with underpinning activities.**

### Workshop summary and themes

The workshop was opened by Ms Liz King from CCNSW and Nikki Woolley from CINSW. After providing an acknowledgement of country Clarence Slockee from Jiwah shared an Aboriginal perspective on shade in public spaces. Dr Nick Petrunoff from the Sax Institute summarised the evidence related to effective shade strategies. Then Professor George Kapelos from Toronto Metropolitan University provided an overview of the interdisciplinary approach taken in Toronto over the last twenty years to increase shade.

During the first group session, participants were split into five groups to gather information on actions and strategies that have been effective in increasing shade in public spaces, that could also be relevant for increasing shade in public playgrounds. The ideas generated in the group discussions were summarised into the eight broad areas in Figure 2, noting some overlap between ideas.



**Figure 2: Key themes from the discussions about increasing shade in public spaces.**

Each workshop group was then asked to identify the three main actions or strategies that they believe should be progressed to increase shade in NSW public playgrounds. A shortlist of four broad areas (Figure 3) was then explored in a second session to determine their feasibility, strength of evidence, any barriers and opportunities, and the roles of different stakeholders.



**Figure 3: Prioritised actions or strategies to explore.**

## Potential options

From the workshop discussion, some potential options for CCNSW and CINSW to consider progressing were generated. These activities include:

- Exploring the possibility of amending the existing Australian Standard for playgrounds to provide a target or requirement for shade.
- Continuing to build intersectoral partnerships to advocate for increased shade.
- Widely promoting and support the use of useful existing resources, including:
  - [Everyone Can Play Guideline](#) (NSW Department of Environment and Planning, 2023).
  - Greener Places Design Guide (Government Architect NSW Greener Places (2020).
  - [Guidelines to Shade and Shade Advocacy Toolkit](#) (Cancer Council NSW 2013, 2023).
  - [Benchmarking shade in NSW playgrounds](#) summary report and Action Tool (Cancer Institute NSW, 2022).
  - [Co-benefits of shade](#) (NSW Shade Working Group, 2019).
- Clearly linking actions that will increase shade with other related policies and strategies, such as those aimed at climate change, heat mitigation, heat stress, biodiversity, as well as with other groups such as child safety.
- Incorporating Aboriginal perspectives when planning and providing shade.
- Building community engagement – to drive advocacy and, understand the benefits of shade.
- Engaging with relevant government agencies to better understand opportunities for example, the Premier’s Priorities.
- Defining good quality shade – what constitutes “good quality” shade. There is a risk if there is a target that the shade may not meet the requirements of good quality shade.

## Next steps

All workshop participants and their colleagues are invited to participate and contribute to opportunities to increase the quality and quantity of shade in NSW playgrounds in their own field and sphere of influence.

Please share any shade related information or opportunities to promote shade to CCNSW at [sunsmart@nswcc.org.au](mailto:sunsmart@nswcc.org.au) and CINSW at [CINSW-SkinCancerPrevention@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:CINSW-SkinCancerPrevention@health.nsw.gov.au)

CCNSW and CINSW will be working to progress strategies identified at the Shade Strategies workshop through the NSW Skin Cancer Prevention Strategy and we will keep you posted on progress and other advances in the field.