

Sun protection intervention effectiveness in primary and secondary school settings



WHAT DID WE DO?

Cancer Council NSW commissioned the Sax Institute to review the effectiveness of sun protection interventions in primary and secondary school settings as a first step in identifying where new strategies could be used to improve sun protection engagement and outcomes amongst NSW primary and secondary schools.



PURPOSE

The purpose of the review was to synthesise evidence on sun safety in school settings to help guide how SunSmart is delivered in NSW.



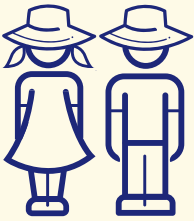
WHAT WAS INCLUDED?

- Populations of primary to high school age, their parents, carers and teachers
- Reported on outcomes or measures of sun protection
- Publications within the last 10 years
- Studies based in Australia, New Zealand, the US, and the UK
- Additional studies identified by CCNSW

HOW MANY ARTICLES WERE INCLUDED?*

46**total studies****10****in primary school settings****23****in secondary school settings****10****in both primary and secondary school settings****3****in community settings**

*Review included 43 peer-reviewed and 3 reports from grey literature.



PRIMARY SCHOOLS

WHAT WORKED?

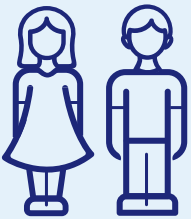
- Policy implementation support (encouraged through champions, stakeholder involvement, and clear communication)
- Education in classroom lessons
- Engaging and interactive activities:
 - Interactive curriculum (such as a practical outdoor UV experiment)
 - Actively involving students and providing appropriate incentives

encouraged behaviour change and increased awareness and knowledge

- Pre-service teacher training

IMPLICATIONS?

- Sun protective behaviours occur in many Australian primary schools but may be limited to school setting.
- Policy implementation support is a promising strategy (such as an implementation coach working with a principal)



SECONDARY SCHOOLS

WHAT WORKED?

- Curriculum-based interventions (including nurse-delivered education plus young adult skin cancer survivor testimonial)
- Gamification to improve melanoma identification
- Providing shade
- Technology enabled activities:
 - Mobile app-based education
 - Photo-aging software, UV photos and appearance-based education
 - UV meters placed around school plus brief education

IMPLICATIONS?

- The review found more studies conducted in secondary schools than primary school.
- Most studies focused on behavioural interventions.
- It's important to involve students in program implementation
- The most promising interventions in secondary schools are those that include appearance (often linked to technology) and environmental strategies such as shade provision.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR SUNSMART IN NSW

There's an opportunity to develop a more compelling and personally relevant approach to sun protection for primary schools and engage secondary schools in sun protection efforts.

This could be accomplished through:

- Building a stronger rationale for sun safety
- Using a clear theoretical underpinning
- Engaging in funding, educational, and discretionary program partnerships
- Advocating for sun protection in the educational sector
- Offering implementation support to schools
- Providing rewards and recognition
- Considering equity in support and availability of resources