

# REFERENCES

1. SunSmart campaign – Cancer Research UK sunsmart.org.uk 2. Data on file, Crawford Healthcare Ltd 3. Sunscreen and sun safety factsheet – Sun Awareness British Association of Dermatologists (2009) 4. Cancer Council Victoria.Sunscreen [online] 2012 [cited 20th November 2013] <http://www.cancer.org.au/preventing-cancer/sun-protection/preventing-skin-cancer/>



SUNSENSE MAKES MORE SENSE

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT BEING SUN SENSIBLE AT [WWW.SUNSENSE.CO.UK](http://WWW.SUNSENSE.CO.UK)

# GETTING EVERYBODY INVOLVED

In term time, children are in school during the peak UV hours (11am to 3pm)<sup>1</sup> five days a week – so a school sun safety policy can make a significant difference to keeping them healthy. Surprisingly, though, the majority of the schools we talked to *didn't* have one in place.<sup>2</sup>



## CREATING A SCHOOL SUN SAFETY POLICY

Creating a school sun safety policy is simple, and works best in consultation with the whole school community. We've produced specific materials to help you with this (see separate sheets), but there are some elements common to all sun safety policies, including:

### PROTECTION

Providing an environment that helps pupils stay safe in the sun.

### EDUCATION

Improving everyone's understanding of sun safety to influence behaviour.

### COLLABORATION

Working with parents, school governors and the community to reinforce awareness and promote a healthy school.

### DON'T FORGET

It's also important to think about sun safety during school-related activities such as ski trips, outdoor excursions, water sports, sports days and outdoor PE lessons, where the potential for sunburn is increased.

# PLAN A SUN SENSIBLE ASSEMBLY

It's one of the very best ways to engage with children about sun safety. Here are some tips on planning one:

## OBJECTIVES

To help children understand that, while the sun is good for us, sunburn can be harmful – but is easily avoided. Remember to keep the messages upbeat and positive.

## PREPARATION

Be interactive, and use a flip-chart, some props or a variety of picture cards (of sunscreen, T-shirts, sunglasses, hats etc).

## WE'VE DEVELOPED AN ANIMATION USING OUR CHARACTER 'SUNNY' THE KOALA

He explains what it's like to live in a very hot country and then shows children how they can protect themselves from the sun. We've also featured an award-winning rap from a children's group called the Daisy Chains. This can be downloaded together with lyric sheets from [www.sunsense.co.uk](http://www.sunsense.co.uk) – so you may want to make copies of the lyrics to hand out to the children and encourage them to join in!

## ASSEMBLY

Ask the children what it is they like best about being outside, and collect the ideas on your flip-chart. Explain that summer sometimes gets spoilt, but not just by rain; ask them what else

might spoil summer fun. Explain what sunburn is – when the skin is burnt by over-exposure to ultra-violet light from the sun – and that it not only spoils their fun, but is also dangerous and painful. Reassure them that it can be easily prevented though.

## PLAY THE ANIMATED VIDEO OF SUNNY THE KOALA

- Ask your pupils if they've ever been to a hot country like Australia – and if so, what they did actually to be sun sensible
- Remind them that it's just as important to be sun sensible when you're *not* on holiday, as you can still burn in the UK
- Ask the classes to suggest how they can be sun sensible here in the UK. Answers to look out for are:

## SPENDING TIME IN THE SHADE

Get the children to tell you where the shadiest parts of the playground are, and suggest some games to play there. A key message is that when the sun is high in the sky and their shadow is shorter than they are, they should protect their skin with sunscreen.<sup>1</sup> Also mention to watch out for reflected sunlight from snow, water or even sand, as that can also cause sunburn.

## COVERING UP WITH CLOTHING, HATS AND SUNGLASSES

Use various props appropriately: for example, perhaps you could have a dressing-up box or photos with a mix of suitable/unsuitable options

(e.g. hats that don't shade the back of the neck, tops that don't cover the shoulders). Then ask the children to vote on the best. If the school has any children in wheelchairs, highlight how they should also cover their legs if wearing shorts.

## DRINKING LOTS OF WATER

Use different size bottles to ask children how much water they should drink each day (at least 1 litre or around 6 glasses a day); explain that when it's hot and they've been running around, they will need even more than that.

## APPLYING SUNSCREEN REGULARLY

Explain that the higher the SPF (Sun Protection Factor) number, the better (with the British Association of Dermatologists recommending at least SPF 30);<sup>3</sup> and that it should be applied generously to ALL parts of the body that are exposed. Reapply every 2 hours, especially after swimming and towelling dry. Remind your pupils how and when to apply the cream. Here are some more useful tips:

- Apply SunSense sunscreen at least 15 minutes before going outdoors
- Apply more than 1/2 teaspoon (around 3ml) to each arm, face/neck<sup>4</sup>
- Apply more than 1 teaspoon (around 6ml) to each leg, front and back of body<sup>4</sup>
- Apply sunscreen evenly. Use a mirror when applying to the face
- Be careful not to miss any exposed areas

## PUT UP OUR SUNSENSE POSTERS BY THE DOORS TO THE PLAYGROUND

This will remind every child how to be sun sensible while they're outside.

## INVOLVING THE CHILDREN CAN TAKE A NUMBER OF FORMS:

- Involve the school council – they could help shape the school sun safety policy and implement it
- Host an Australia-themed Day focusing on the importance of sun safety – you could get someone to dress up as Sunny the koala!
- Learn the Daisy Chains' rap, using the lyric sheets and downloadable recording, then organise a performance in assembly
- Appoint 'Sun Ambassadors' who could hand out hats at playtime, organise games in the shade, and help to monitor the playground to make sure others are being sun sensible
- Encourage pupils to enter our competition to win your school a Surf Shack or Surf Shade

Encourage parents by sending out our letter (*see separate sheet*) and reminding them that they should apply sunscreen *before* children leave for school, with extra sunscreen in their school bag. They can also show their children how much sunscreen to use and how to apply it. It may be worth involving some parents and PTA representatives in the campaign too!