

CDC Partners Promote Sun Safety for Youth: North Carolina Sun Sense Initiative



School Partners in Skin Cancer Prevention

In 2002, CDC released the *Guidelines for School Programs to Prevent Skin Cancer*, which outlined seven guidelines that schools can use to reduce skin cancer risk among students. These guidelines provide resources and suggestions for how schools can work to improve sun safety practices in seven major areas: policy, environmental change, education, family involvement, professional development, health services, and evaluation. To foster implementation of these guidelines, the CDC's Division of Cancer Prevention and Control and the Division of Adolescent and School Health made funds available to states with the Coordinated School Health Program (CSHP) to conduct pilot skin cancer prevention activities. Beginning in late 2003 through early 2007, the Department of Education in three states—Colorado, Michigan, and North Carolina—were awarded funds to pilot activities for addressing the seven skin cancer guidelines. Each state was required to develop a partnership with their respective state Comprehensive Cancer Control program to draw from the expertise of each program and promote sun safe behaviors among youth.

Goals

1. Establish policies that can reduce exposure to ultra violet (UV) radiation.
2. Establish synergistic campaigns and strategies that educate school-aged children, school staff, and caregivers about skin cancer protective behaviors.
3. Increase the quality of surveillance and evaluation data of school-aged children, and the knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs of caregivers.
4. Evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of strategies to reduce youth exposure to UV radiation

Activities

Skin Cancer Guideline	Activity
Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Funded 20 local education agencies and community organizations who were required to conduct sun safety projects that included policy work.• Partnered with the NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources Division of Environmental Health to promote a new state law restricting tanning bed use by persons aged 18 years and younger.
Environmental Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partners installed shade structures and planted trees in school/playground areas.• Funded a Health Education Center, visited by approximately 200,000 students per year, to build two shade structures on play areas and include permanent sun safety education messages on the playground.
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Integrated sun safety objectives into the middle grades' standard course of study.• Partnered with County Parks and Recreation Department to implement the Recreational Camp Sun Sense Program for youth attending municipal day camps, and staff working there.
Family Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partnered with NC Parent Teacher Association (PTA) to pass statewide resolution to promote skin cancer prevention in schools, and provided funding to 10 PTA Healthy Schools projects.• Developed sun safety informational materials including fact sheets, press releases, and notes to parents about sun safety measures for field day events.
Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trained teachers across the state on Sunny Days, Healthy Ways curriculum.• Presented information on sun safety at state conferences and meetings for educators and school administrators.
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Added sun safety questions to various evaluation instruments including the <i>Youth Risk Behavior Survey</i>, <i>Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System</i>, <i>NC School Health Education Profiles</i>, and the <i>2005 and 2006 Child Health Assessment and Monitoring Program Survey</i>.

Primary Partners

- North Carolina Department of Public Instruction
- North Carolina Comprehensive Cancer Control Program

Resources

North Carolina Healthful Living Standard Course of Study:

<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/curriculum/healthfulliving/scos/2006healthscopesequence.pdf>*

North Carolina Healthy Schools: <http://www.nchealthyschools.org>*

CDC Skin Cancer: <http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/skin/>

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