



Sunny
Days
Healthy
Ways

Sun-Safe
School Guide

klein
buendel

Becoming a sun-safe school

School plays a major role in children's daily lives. As an institution of learning, it can provide opportunities for developing and reinforcing lifelong positive health habits.

Children spend four to seven hours at school each day—including one to three hours outdoors for recess, lunch, physical education classes, field trips, and after-school activities. Depending on the climate and season, outdoor school activities may result in a significant amount of sun exposure. Research indicates that most people receive as much as 25 percent of their total lifetime sun exposure during their first 18 years.

Overexposure to ultraviolet radiation from the sun is the primary cause of skin cancer. With more than one million new cases each year, skin cancer is the most common and preventable cancer in the United States.

Schools can play an integral role in skin cancer prevention efforts by:

- Promoting sun-safe behaviors among students and staff
- Providing sun-safe environments, schedules, and activities
- Teaching sun safety as part of comprehensive school health
- Adopting the CDC's National Skin Cancer Prevention Guidelines for K-12 Comprehensive Health Education

This guide includes ideas to help make your school sun safe by:

- Assessing your school's current sun safety policies
- Promoting sun-safe lifestyle habits among students and staff

- Designing sun-safe school environments
- Implementing sun-safe policies
- Teaching sun safety in the classroom
- Building sun safety partnerships with parents, staff, and the community

School administrators and parent groups may wish to target specific areas where behavior, policy, or environmental change is feasible and realistic. This booklet is intended to be a guide; choose the recommendations and action steps that meet your school's needs and circumstances.



Adopting sun safety practices doesn't have to be costly. In fact, many policy and lifestyle changes can be implemented with little or no cost to the school. Sun safety should be practiced by students, parents, and staff year-round. A sun-safe school doesn't have to develop overnight. Policies and environmental changes may be introduced gradually over time.

Sun safety is the development and practice of positive health habits to reduce exposure to ultraviolet radiation and protect the skin and eyes from sunburn and permanent damage.