Skin Cancer Prevention
The SunSmart Program
Sue Heward

**Sun’s ultraviolet radiation (UV)**
- Major cause of skin damage and skin cancer
- More than 2000 Australians die yearly, more than the national road toll
- Over 750,000 Australians (3.2%) are treated for skin cancer each year – over 2,000 people each day.
- 2 in 3 people will get skin cancer before 70
- Australia’s most expensive cancer. $700m estimated for NMSC.
- Natural source of vitamin D. General health, particularly bone and muscle health
- Link between vit D & conditions i.e. colon cancer, heart disease, diabetes – more evidence required

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**Case study: Victoria**

- Every week: 790 Victorians are diagnosed with a new skin cancer.
- Every month: 34 Victorians die from skin cancer.
- Every year: 2,466 Victorians diagnosed with melanoma
- 40,000 basal and squamous cell carcinomas are treated in Victoria each year – that’s more than 100 new cases every day.

(Canstat 2014 Canstat launch 23 September 2015)

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SunSmart - Celebrating 30 years Protecting Victorians

[YouTube Video Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2jXsMFmbwPY)
Foundations for skin cancer prevention

Research and Evaluation
Consistency and Continuity in Funding
Broad Population Reach
Evidence Based Practice
Support in Targeted settings
High Profile Paid and Unpaid Media and PR
Strong Community Engagement

Adapted from Montague, Borland & Sinclair, Health Education & Behavior, Volume 28, Number 3, June 2001

Evaluation framework

Changes in long term health outcomes
- Reductions in skin cancer incidence trends, mortality and sunburn incidence

Changes in intermediate health outcomes
- Healthy lifestyles and attitudes such as improvements in population wide measures of sun-protective behaviours including hats, sunscreen, attempted a suntan.
- Healthy settings and environments such as primary school and early childcare measures of wearing sun protective hats, sunscreen and reapplication; Government solaria legislation/regulation.

Changes in impact measures
- Awareness and knowledge and social norms (tanning desirability)
- Health public policy and organisational change: workplaces, primary schools and early childcare centres.

Monitoring of process indicators

Changes in melanoma incidence

(Victorian Cancer Registry 2014)

Changes on behaviour: sunscreen

Heward S. (2016 under review)
How do we stack up

- Population data shows that between 1988 and 2010 Victorians:
  - wearing hats on summer weekends have increased from 18% to 44%.
  - preference for no suntan has increased from just 18% to 45% (in young people).
  - desire for a moderate-dark tan has dropped from 75% to 34% (in young people).
- Bang for buck
  - 43,000 skin cancers prevented & 1,400 deaths averted between 1988 and 2011 in Victoria.
  - $2.20 net saving for every dollar spent in the program from 1988 to 2011.
- Settings
  - More than 620,000 Victorian primary school students and children below five years old participate in the SunSmart primary school and early childhood program.
  - 90% of schools have a sun protection policy, compared with 17% before the program was introduced in 1993.

Where are we now?

- 50% Passive recreation & activities around the home
- 29% Activities at the beach, water or pool
- 21% Outdoor sport & active recreation

Incidental tanning

- 70%
- 60%
- 50%
- 40%
- 30%
- 20%
- 10%
- 0%

Attempted a suntan
Had suntanned skin

Summer 2015

UV. It all adds up.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d1RO3Zv-d34&feature=player_profilepage
Key messages

- Pragmatic and realistic
- Most people don’t know the difference between heat and UV
- Do they care?
- On - off message: Sun protection times and call to action
- Where will be get the most bang for buck given the prevention $$-population approaches

A last note

- Skin cancer prevention is all about managing a balance:
  - Driving forces eg: policies and practices being in place in key settings, sunscreen being tax deductible, solarium legislation, campaigns
  - Restricting forces eg: media promoting “healthy tan”, managing personal vit D levels, lack of appropriate investment in prevention
- Treatment $9.20 - $10.39 per capita vs prevention $.36c.
- Remember your audience

Mobile and digital messaging

- Accessible
- Easy to understand
- Focus on sun protection times