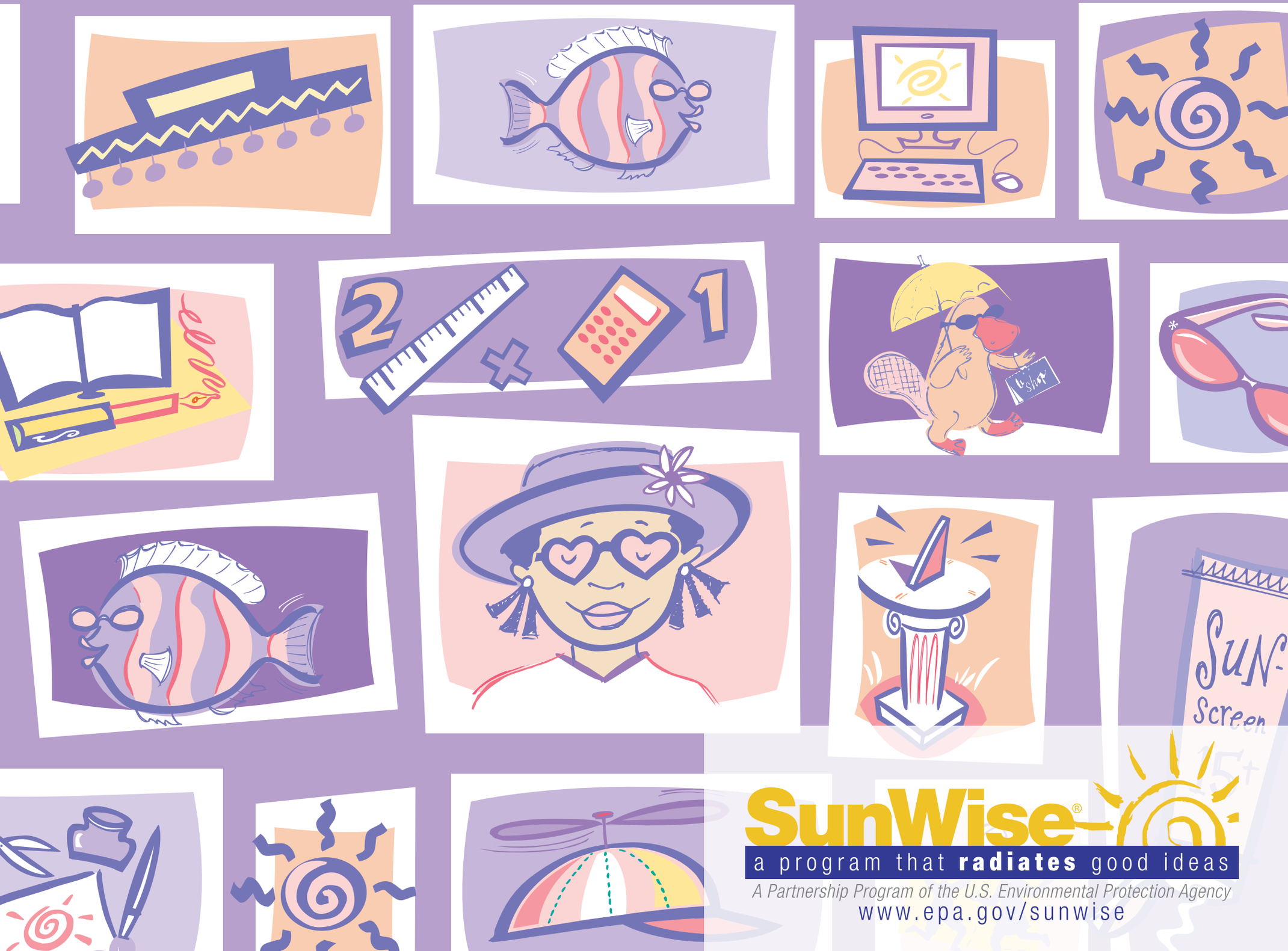
policy information



SunWise®

a program that **radiates** good ideas

A Partnership Program of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

www.epa.gov/sunwise

Becoming a SunWise School

The school day makes up a major part of a child's everyday life. The time children spend outside of the classroom, including recess, lunch, physical education classes, field trips, and after-school activities, can result in a significant amount of sun exposure, especially if it occurs during the hours of peak sun intensity from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Children need to be physically active, but must learn to protect themselves from overexposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation. Given that sun damage is cumulative, schools need to recognize that everyday exposure counts. Overexposure to the sun can cause serious health problems such as skin cancer, cataracts, and immune system suppression. Schools can play a major role in preventing these adverse health effects by:

- Instilling SunWise behaviors in students and staff through education.
- Providing a school environment that is SunWise, including both physical and policy enhancements.

Becoming a SunWise School may require changes to the school's physical environment and policies and practices. Some changes may take longer than others to implement. Some changes may involve costs, but many can be implemented with little or no cost to the school. The key is to recognize sun safety as an important health issue, and to make changes that are feasible and realistic for your school. Skin cancer and the other harmful health effects from overexposure are largely preventable, and by making these changes, positive steps are taken toward a healthier future.

The federal government has classified UV radiation as a human carcinogen, along with other cancer-causing agents such as asbestos, radon, and tobacco smoke.

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Why Being SunWise is Important for Children

School Age Focus

Skin cancer experts and researchers used to warn the public that children need to use sun protection to prevent skin cancer *later* in life. Now the experts and researchers are warning the public that children need to use sun protection to prevent skin cancer *at an early age* and *later* in life. Two recent studies find that melanoma and the two major types of nonmelanoma skin cancer—basal cell and squamous cell carcinoma—are rising dramatically in young Americans. First, the incidence of pediatric melanoma in US cancer registries increased 46 percent from 1973 to 2001 among children (age < 20 years) and young adults (age 20 to 24 years). Second, a population-based study using very complete and extensive data from Minnesota demonstrated an increase in the incidence of nonmelanoma skin cancer among young women and men, with a particularly strong increase in basal cell carcinoma in young women. The authors of both studies concluded by calling for a strong focus and emphasis on skin cancer prevention in young populations, including young adults.

Melanoma: A Teen Survival Story

As mentioned, it is important for people of all ages, young and old, to be sun safe. Kim Clark, a high school soccer star from Arizona and a volunteer for The SHADE Foundation, knows how important it is to be SunWise. Here is her story:

How old were you when you were diagnosed with melanoma?

Kim: I was 13. But I had my first mole removed when I was 9 years old. Then at 13, I was told it was Stage IV melanoma. Again, now at 14, I have had a couple more moles removed.

What was it like when the doctor told you that it was melanoma?

Kim: I was very shocked. I didn't know what melanoma meant. When you read on the Internet or in books, people don't get melanoma at the age of 13. It affected my family drastically, but we became stronger. I went through the church and talked with many of my friends and family. They all gave me a lot of support. We realized that it does happen to young kids and we need to really think about how we are protecting ourselves. I made a saying with my dad that we're going to score the goal and we're going to win the game to fight cancer.

How difficult was it to go through treatment?

Kim: I had to get 4 radiation shots for the surgery so they could find where the cancer was feeding from. The radiation shots hurt really bad. They took lymph nodes out of my underarm and a few sentinel nodes. They cut down to the muscle in my back and there is now a 5-inch scar. The results came back that they got it all, so I was lucky not to have to get chemo.

You've been playing soccer for a long time, so you've spent a lot of time outside. Was sun protection anything you ever thought about before?

Kim: I put sunscreen on, but I never really thought about if I was putting it on the right way or if I was putting on enough. I wasn't really aware of what could happen. I'd put it on because my parents told me to, but then I never reapplied it while spending hours in the sun. I never really burned and I have never used a sun-tanning booth.

How have your sun protection behaviors changed?

Kim: I've learned how to put on sunscreen the right way. An hour before I go out into the sun, I glaze it over my body and let it soak in. Then when I get to my destination, I put it on again and rub it in. I do it every hour while I'm outside. There are some special shirts that have sun protection in them that I wear under my soccer jersey and then I put sunscreen on. My parents also bought portable shade structures to use on the soccer fields so we can sit in the shade on the sidelines.

How easy is it to follow sun protection practices now?

Kim: I find it pretty easy. Easy enough that I should have done it before. Most of my friends have realized that, "Hey, we know someone who has gone through this." They have pulled together and wear sun protection. All of my friends do it.

What is your opinion on the look of being tan?

Kim: I think it looks ugly and it's kind of stupid to be doing that. I think that pale is pretty. All of my friends say that they're going to be pale with me. Some kids at school comment on how pale I am, but I just tell them that I know the consequences.

Why is it important for you to become a spokesperson for sun protection?

Kim: I want to help spread sun protection awareness to everybody. I want to let people know that it can happen to young people too.

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Becoming a SunWise School

Step One

Define Goals

Examples of some goals that you might set for your school are:

- Increase sun safety awareness in your school and surrounding communities.
- Adopt practical sun protection measures.
- Help students acquire SunWise behaviors through education about the dangers of overexposure to ultraviolet (UV) rays and measures they can take to protect themselves.
- Encourage students and staff to use broad-spectrum SPF 15+ sunscreen and wear protective clothing, appropriate hats, and sunglasses when outdoors.
- Provide a physical environment that is sun safe, i.e., with shade coverings or trees.
- Communicate with parents and community members about your school's SunWise practices.

Step Two

Evaluate Your School

The "*Evaluate Your School*" tool is located on page 5 of this policy section. This tool can be very helpful in assessing the current state of your school's sun protection practices and what you can do to make your school more SunWise. Please take a couple of minutes to take this "quiz" and add up the total number of points to obtain your score. Refer to the score key for helpful hints for what steps to take to implement SunWise practices in your school. Then advance to Step Three.

Step Three

Write an Official SunWise School Sun Safety Policy

Formalizing your school's Sun Safety Policy in writing will assist in putting your goals into action. It will also help you communicate your school's policy to staff, students, and the surrounding community.

Please note, the term "policy" throughout this document may be defined somewhat loosely. School policy can often imply official regulations. Here, we are referring to practices and procedures that are developed and adhered to within each school to benefit the health and safety of its students.

The SunWise policy section contains many helpful ideas for practical and feasible practices that your school can adopt. We realize that some may be easier to implement than others. In addition, some may require permission and/or input from school principals, the superintendent, other staff, and community members. We offer a number of suggestions to facilitate the process of involving school leaders and getting them on board with these practices, including:

- Make an appointment with the school principal to discuss sun protection practices you would like to implement in your school.
- Be prepared with background information on the importance of sun protection in general, development of sun-safe health habits, and having a sun-safe school environment.

Step Three continued

- Have support from parent-teacher organizations, other parent groups, and/or other staff members.
- Include an action plan with ideas of what practices you would like to implement, how they can be implemented, how funds can be made available, and what contacts you will likely need.

Suggested Focus Areas for Your SunWise School Sun Safety Policy

By completing and reviewing the *Evaluate Your School* tool, you are now ready to develop a school sun safety policy. Please refer to the Checklist (page 7) of this policy section. Use this Checklist as a goal-setting tool and check off which practices you will work on implementing in your school. Options include:

Environment

- Increase the number of shelters and trees to provide adequate shade on the school grounds.
- Schedule outdoor activities before 10 a.m. and after 4 p.m., especially during the months when UV radiation is most intense.
- Hold outdoor activities in shady areas whenever possible.

School Practices

- Incorporate the SunWise curriculum into the health or regular classroom curriculum. (See *Integrating Sun Protection into Lesson Plans*, page 16).
- Work with parents to provide SPF 15+, broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen for student use.
- Make sunscreen available to students.
- Find out if any students have sun sensitivities or sunscreen allergies and allow for necessary precautions.
- Allow children to wear sunglasses that block 100 percent of UVA and UVB, and hats, which will help protect the face, neck, eyes, and ears, whenever the children are outside.
- Ensure that sun safety policies are reflected in the planning of all outdoor events, including field trips.
- Provide resources and education to staff on sun protection and the SunWise curriculum.
- Sign up to receive the daily UV Index and occasional UV Alerts (visit *www.epa.gov/sunwise/uvindex.html* and click on Enviro Flash), and let children and staff know what the UV intensity is expected to be. For more information on the UV Index, please see the *SunWisdom* section.

Behavior

- Encourage staff and parents to act as role models for students by practicing sun-safe behaviors.
- Encourage the daily application of sunscreen before school and prior to outdoor activity.
- Encourage students to use available shaded areas for outdoor activities.

Look to your community to help enhance your program ideas. Local medical professionals, business people, media, and others can provide skills, information, and materials to support your SunWise School Sun Safety Policy. Also, remember to include parents in your efforts. They can help raise awareness and support in the community for future funding of environmental changes, such as planting trees or building shade structures.

Step Four

Communicate with Parents and Community Members

SunWise safety messages must be reinforced beyond the classroom in order to change policies and behaviors. Making sure that the SunWise

Step Four continued

message is reinforced in both home and community environments is a vital component in the creation of sun-safe behaviors in students. This can be achieved through active communication with parents, guardians, area news services, and other community members.

- Communicate your rationale for the policy changes and the goals that you expect to achieve.
- Use language that is inclusive and understandable to your audience (parents, staff, students, and the community at large).
- Regularly reinforce sun safety behaviors in a positive way through newsletters, parent-teacher meetings, and student/teacher activities.
- Refer to templates located in this policy section for communication outlets, including permission slips, a parent handbook, and example blurbs and articles for newsletters and nurse's notes.

The following are some other suggestions for getting students, staff, parents, and your community involved with your school's sun safety policy:

- Distribute your school's SunWise policy, as well as relevant fact sheets from the *SunWisdom* section of this Tool Kit, to staff, parents, and the local community.
- Forge partnerships with other teachers and administrators, parent organizations, local nonprofit and civic organizations, recreational programs, businesses, and the media, in particular weathercasters. Use partnerships to build support for the program and sun safety policies.
- Involve the media to the fullest extent. Distribute press releases about SunWise activities that your school is sponsoring to local media outlets.
- Encourage students, staff, parents, and other community members to sign up for EnviroFlash UV Index e-mails.
- Present a sun safety information session at a staff, school council, and/or PTA meeting.
- Network with your local businesses and encourage them to provide incentives, such as hats, sunglasses, and sunscreen, to reinforce the habits and messages of sun protection.
- Get your local community involved and excited by organizing a SunWise block party, field day, or assembly. Invite all of your students, staff, parents, and community members. Keeping your SunWise School Sun Safety Policy fresh in the minds of your community will ensure enduring SunWise behaviors and better health for all.
- Team up with organizations listed in the Resources section of this Tool Kit to help promote sun safety awareness and practices.
- Participate in and sponsor commemorative programs where donations can lead to planting trees or constructing shade structures on your school grounds.

The following pages contain examples of correspondence you might use to inform parents about your SunWise School Sun Safety Policy and alert the media to your SunWise activities. In addition, you will find a sample SunWise School Sun Safety Policy. Use these examples as starting points for your own outreach activities.

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Evaluate Your School

Use this evaluation tool by answering the following questions to determine your school's current sun protection practices. Add up the total number of points from all of the questions below and refer to the key for suggestions on how to make your school more SunWise.

Assess the use of school grounds in relation to availability and use of shade:

How many trees or shade structures are on your school grounds?

2 Many 1 Few 0 None

Are shaded areas available to students during lunch, recess, physical education, and sports?

2 Yes 1 Somewhat 0 No

Approximately what proportion of outdoor space is sheltered by structures and/or trees?

2 66–100% 1 33–66% 0 0–33%

Can the amount of shade be realistically increased in areas of high student use?

2 Yes 1 Somewhat 0 No

Are there currently any future plans for adding new trees/structures or new construction or renovations that would provide more shade?

2 Yes

1 Possibly, if can secure funding

0 Not at this time

Assess current school policies for aspects that encourage or discourage SunWise practices:

Are the students allowed to apply sunscreen in school?

2 Yes

1 Only on field trips/field days

0 No

Are teachers and nurses allowed to apply/help apply sunscreen to students?

2 Yes

1 Teachers monitor while students apply it themselves

0 No, they are not allowed

Are students allowed to wear hats on school grounds?

2 Yes, but not in the building

1 Only allowed on field days/field trips

0 No

At what time of day are outdoor activities scheduled?

2 All activities are before 10 a.m. and after 4 p.m.

1 Try to avoid 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

0 Most activities are between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Are sun safety facts and reminders often communicated with parents through the use of newsletters, nurse's notes, education pamphlets, etc.?

- 2 Yes, written forms of communication often include sun safety information
- 1 A summer reminder is usually distributed
- 0 No

Are parents or guardians included in sun safety decisions made by the school?

2 Yes 1 Somewhat 0 No

Look at current student and staff behaviors through a SunWise lens:

How many students come to school wearing sunscreen?

2 Most 1 Some 0 None

What are the sun safety behaviors of school staff and administration? Do they act as role models in the reinforcement of school policies?

- 2 Most wear sunscreen and protective clothing, seek shade
- 1 Some try to practice a few sun safety behaviors
- 0 None

Do students and staff make use of available shade during outdoor activities?

- 2 Yes, shade is mostly utilized
- 1 Somewhat
- 0 No

0–9 Points

Your school still has some work to do to make it SunWise. The SunWise Program will greatly help in the efforts to integrate sun safety into your school's daily practices. The first step is realizing that this is an important issue that affects your students' and staff's health. The next step is to raise the awareness of your school community. By using this Tool Kit to integrate a sun safety curriculum into classroom lessons and to establish sun-safe practices, your school will become SunWise. Please review the Checklist (see page 7) for many important steps that can be taken in your school.

10–19 Points

Your school has already taken some important steps toward becoming SunWise. However, by using this Tool Kit, you can improve your school's efforts even further. It may be helpful to take a closer look at your school grounds to assess where it may be possible to increase the amount of shade. Consider adding other practices noted on the Checklist (see page 7). Other ideas are to increase the amount of communication already sent to parents regarding the importance of sun safety through outlets such as newsletters, and to develop protocols for sunscreen and protective clothing, hats, and sunglasses use.

20–28 Points

Your school is doing a really good job at being SunWise. By using this Tool Kit, you can help improve the efforts even further. Besides supplying a creative curriculum, it also suggests further opportunities that your school can take to expand current practices. In addition to suggestions from above, it might be beneficial to work on fundraisers to increase the amount of available shade on the school grounds, or to try to adjust outdoor activities to occur outside the 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. time period.

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Developing a School Sun Safety Policy

Checklist

Please review the following menu of sun protection practices. Check off (✓) the selections that are most feasible to implement in your school (select all that apply).

Environment

- ❑ Increase the number of shelters and trees on the school grounds.
- ❑ Adjust schedule of outdoor activities.
- ❑ Hold outdoor activities in shady areas whenever possible.

School Practices

Incorporate the SunWise Program into the health or regular classroom curriculum (see *Integrating Sun Protection into Lesson Plans*, pages 16-18).

- ❑ Work with parents to provide sunscreen for student use.
- ❑ Make sunscreen available to students at school.
- ❑ Allow children to wear sunglasses and hats whenever they are outside.
- ❑ Ensure that sun safety policies are reflected in the planning of all outdoor events, including field trips (see *Sample Language template*, pages 11-12).
- ❑ Provide resources and education to staff on sun protection and the SunWise Program.
- ❑ Sign up for EnviroFlash UV e-mails and report the daily UV Index to the student body and staff.

Behavior

- ❑ Encourage staff and parents to act as role models for students by practicing sun-safe behaviors.
- ❑ Encourage the daily application of sunscreen before school and prior to outdoor activity.
- ❑ Encourage students to use available shaded areas for outdoor activities.

Communication

- ❑ Communicate your rationale for the policy changes and the goals that you expect to achieve with the school community.
- ❑ Regularly reinforce sun safety behaviors and facts through newsletters, a parent handbook, parent-teacher meetings, and student/teacher activities (see *Sample Language template*, pages 11-12).
- ❑ Work with parent-teacher organizations to coordinate fundraisers for sun protection initiatives and to organize educational opportunities in the community (see *Donation Letter template*, page 13).

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Sample Letter to Parents

Dear Parent/Guardian/Caregiver:
At [*School Name*], we are committed to providing your child with a healthy environment. Overexposure to the sun can cause serious health problems such as skin cancer, premature aging of the skin, and other skin disorders; cataracts and other eye damage; and immune system suppression. We know children need to be physically active, but they must learn to protect themselves from overexposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation. The amount of time children spend outside the classroom, including recess, lunch, physical education classes, field trips, and after-school activities, can result in a significant amount of sun exposure. Our school has developed sun safety practices to provide each student the support needed to be sun safe. Sun damage to the skin is cumulative. Because of these factors, we ask that you support us as we strive to make [*School Name*] a sun-safe school.

Please help us reinforce the sun safety messages that children will be learning in school by encouraging them to use and practice the following actions:

Do Not Burn
Overexposure to the sun is the most preventable risk factor for skin cancer.

Avoid Sun Tanning and Tanning Beds
UV light from tanning beds and the sun causes skin cancer and wrinkling. If you want to look like you've been in the sun, consider using a sunless self-tanning product, but continue to use sunscreen with it.

Generously Apply Sunscreen
Generously apply sunscreen to all exposed skin using a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of at least 15 that provides broad-spectrum protection from both ultraviolet A (UVA) and ultraviolet B (UVB) rays. Reapply every two hours, even on cloudy days, and after swimming or sweating.

Wear Protective Clothing
Wear protective clothing, such as a long-sleeved shirt, pants, a wide-brimmed hat, and sunglasses, when possible.

Seek Shade
Seek shade when appropriate, remembering that the sun's UV rays are strongest between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Use Extra Caution Near Water, Snow, and Sand
Water, snow, and sand reflect the damaging rays of the sun, which can increase your chance of sunburn.

Watch for the UV Index
The UV Index provides important information to help you plan your outdoor activities in ways that prevent overexposure to the sun's rays. Developed by the National Weather Service and EPA, the UV Index is issued daily nationwide. To receive daily UV forecasts via e-mail sign up for EnviroFlash at *www.epa.gov/sunwise/uvindex.html*.

Get Vitamin D Safely
Get Vitamin D safely through a diet that includes vitamin supplements and foods fortified with Vitamin D. Don't seek the sun.

Skin cancer and the other harmful health effects from overexposure are largely preventable, and by making these changes, positive steps are taken toward a healthier future.

Enclosed with this letter is a copy of [*School Name*]'s new sun safety policy. Please contact [*contact name and phone number*] if you have any questions or concerns, or if you would like further information on sun protection.

Sincerely,

[*School Contact or Official*]

Sample Press Release

[Date]
[Contact Name and Telephone Number]
[Your City, State]
[School Name]

Kicks Off SunWise Program

- [*School Name*] announced this week that it will initiate a new policy of sun protection practices to become a SunWise School. Overexposure to the sun's harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays can result not only in a painful sunburn, but can also lead to serious health problems, including skin cancer and eye damage.
- [*School Name*] believes that it is important to get involved because the school environment provides the opportunity to reach a significant number of youth at a time when health habits are still being formed.
- [*Optional: If events are planned, include*:] Locally, an event will be held in recognition of [*School Name*]'s partnership with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to become a SunWise School. There will be a [*details of event—what, where, when, contact information*]. All community members are welcome to attend.
- The SunWise Program consists of a variety of efforts that the school will undertake to encourage children and their families to be sun safe. SunWise aims to create a healthier environment by minimizing overexposure to UV radiation.

Facts about Sun-Related Illnesses

- Overexposure to the sun may lead to skin cancer, cataracts, immune system suppression, and premature aging of the skin.
- Skin cancer is more common than all other types of cancer combined, with more than 1 million new cases diagnosed each year nationwide.
- Locally, [*add recent local state statistics, visit statecancerprofiles.cancer.gov*]

Action Steps for Sun Protection

Do Not Burn

Overexposure to the sun is the most preventable risk factor for skin cancer.

Avoid Sun Tanning and Tanning Beds

UV light from tanning beds and the sun causes skin cancer and wrinkling. If you want to look like you've been in the sun, consider using a sunless self-tanning product, but continue to use sunscreen with it.

Generously Apply Sunscreen

Generously apply sunscreen to all exposed skin using a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of at least 15 that provides broad-spectrum protection from both ultraviolet A (UVA) and ultraviolet B (UVB) rays. Reapply every two hours, even on cloudy days, and after swimming or sweating.

Wear Protective Clothing

Wear protective clothing, such as a long-sleeved shirt, pants, a wide-brimmed hat, and sunglasses, when possible.

Seek Shade

Seek shade when appropriate, remembering that the sun's UV rays are strongest between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Use Extra Caution Near Water, Snow, and Sand

Water, snow, and sand reflect the damaging rays of the sun, which can increase your chance of sunburn.

Watch for the UV Index

The UV Index provides important information to help you plan your outdoor activities in ways that prevent overexposure to the sun's rays. Developed by the National Weather Service and EPA, the UV Index is issued daily nationwide.

Get Vitamin D Safely

Get Vitamin D safely through a diet that includes vitamin supplements and foods fortified with Vitamin D. Don't seek the sun.

For more information on these SunWise events or [*School Name*]'s SunWise Program, please contact *[Contact Name and telephone number/e-mail]* and visit *www.epa.gov/sunwise*.

Sample Language

Newsletters & Parent Communication

For Newsletters and Nurse's Notes

Including sun protection awareness information and action steps in school newsletters is a productive way of communicating these important messages to parents. It is suggested to use a combination of types of messages including some awareness and action messages. Focus on specific action steps that parents can take to help make their child sun safe, as well as on providing the information to explain why it is so important.

Awareness Information

- Sunburns during childhood are harmful and painful. It can take less than 10 minutes for a child's skin to burn. Childhood sunburns increase the risk for skin cancer later in life.
- Childhood burns can begin to increase the risk for skin cancer occurrence as early as the late teen years and early to mid-twenties.
- A significant amount of lifetime sun exposure occurs before age 18. Protecting skin and eyes during the first 18 years of life can reduce the risk of some types of skin cancer by up to 78 percent. Melanoma is a cancer that can affect younger people and can start as early as adolescence.
- Children learn healthy habits best at a young age. With sun damage accumulating over a person's lifetime, teaching the importance of sun safety habits at a young age is a priority.
- Your child is at the age when important health habits are still being formed. Now is the time to help your child learn necessary sun protection behaviors to protect his/her skin from the damage that can appear later in life. Prevention efforts are needed across settings targeting schools, families, and communities.

Action Steps

- On appropriate days, please apply sunscreen to your child prior to sending him/her to school. We strongly encourage that your child bring and wear a sun-protective hat for all outdoor activities. To find out what the UV intensity is predicted to be, sign up for Enviro-Flash daily UV Index e-mails by visiting *www.epa.gov/sunwise/uvindex.html*.
- We encourage children to enjoy physical activity and fresh air year-round. However, proper precautions should be taken to ensure that your child's outdoor time is a safe time. It is very important for all children to protect themselves from overexposure to the sun.
  - Limit sun exposure, especially during the sun's peak hours of 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
  - Use a sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15 every day.
  - Reapply sunscreen every 2 hours during outdoor activity.
  - Apply sunscreen at least 20 minutes prior to going outdoors.
  - Wear a hat with a wide brim to protect the face, neck, and ears.
  - Wear protective clothing, such as long pants and a long-sleeved shirt, and UV-protective sunglasses, to help protect skin and eyes.

- Encourage play in the shade.
- Watch for the daily UV Index.
- Be aware that water, sand, snow, and concrete can all reflect the sun's UV rays.
- Avoid and discourage tanning salon use.

Example Article

Most children enjoy spending time outdoors, whether it is before or after school, during recess or gym class, or on weekends. We encourage children to enjoy physical activity and fresh air year-round. However, proper precautions should be taken to ensure that when outdoors, your child is safe from the sun. Just like children need mittens and warm hats to be safe from the cold, they need sunscreen and hats to be safe from the harmful rays of the sun.

Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the United States, but it is also the most preventable. Children can learn good health habits while they are young to help them be sun safe. Excessive and unprotected sun exposure increases the risk of skin damage later in life. [*School Name*] believes that this is an important health issue; therefore we are taking some necessary steps to incorporate sun safety into our school day. If you have any suggestions or comments regarding these sun protection practices, please contact *[Contact Name and telephone number*] or your own health care provider.

For Permission Slip

In order to ensure that sun safety policies are reflected in the planning of all outdoor events, including field trips, consider adding language about sun protection to the permission slip. An example of wording on a permission slip follows:

"During this field trip/field day, your child will be outdoors for a substantial period of time. Please send your child to school with sunscreen and a hat. Your child's teacher will give him/her time to put on the sunscreen. Also, please apply sunscreen to your child before sending him/her to school."

For Parent Handbook

Most school handbooks currently contain a section on appropriate clothing suggestions for winter weather, such as coats, boots, and gloves. The suggested language below expands the clothing section to include suggestions for warm weather and sun protection.

Example: "We request that parents provide appropriate clothing and hats for their children, with attention to weather conditions—cold or warm, sunny or rainy. It is also strongly encouraged that parents apply sunscreen to their child prior to sending him/her to school on days where the weather warrants it."

For Sample Policy: Curriculum Addition

The inclusion of a sun safety program such as SunWise in health or regular classroom education is one key part of the new policy. Providing students with the necessary knowledge and skills, while creating an environment that reinforces these practices, will be most effective.

Example: "Incorporate the SunWise Program into the health or regular classroom curriculum. Included is a chart designed to assist staff in determining how this integration can be accomplished."

Donation Letter—Sample

John Smith
Town Tree Farm
111 Main Street
Town, State 00000

Dear Sir/Madam:

I am the [*insert title/position*] at [*School Name*]. The purpose of this letter is to inform you that we are committed to providing our children with a healthy and safe environment. Overexposure to the sun can cause serious health problems such as skin cancer, premature aging of the skin, and other skin disorders; cataracts and other eye damage; and immune system suppression.

We know children need to be physically active, but they must learn to protect themselves from overexposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation. Our school has developed sun safety practices to provide each student the support needed to be sun safe. Sun damage to the skin is cumulative. At [*School Name*], we recognize that everyday sun exposure matters.

Because of these factors, we're asking businesses like yours, who believe in the health and safety of the children in our communities, for donations to help our school increase the shade on our school property. Our school needs to improve sun protection for our children. The plan is to plant trees and construct shade structures to optimize the shade usage for our children and staff. These trees and shade structures will contribute to the beautification of our school environment, but more importantly, they will provide much needed shade and reduce the possible risk of skin cancer for our children.

I will give you a call in the near future to see if a donation would be possible. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please contact me at [*insert phone number*] or [*insert e-mail address*].

Thank you in advance for your consideration and support.

Sincerely,

[*Name*]

[*Title/Position*]

Sample SunWise School Policy

To assist you with the development of your SunWise School Policy, refer to the Checklist (see page 7) to select the practices that your school has chosen to implement. Adapt this template with your new school policy for inclusion in the school handbook:

At [*School Name*], we are dedicated to the health and well being of our community. Because of this, we have developed this SunWise policy to ensure that all students and staff attending our school are protected from overexposure to the harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays of the sun. This policy documents our SunWise protection practices in the areas of environment, school policies, and behavior. These practices will be applied to all outdoor school events, including recreational activities and field trips.

Objectives

The goals of our SunWise policy are:

- Increase sun safety awareness in our school and in our surrounding communities.
- Adopt practical, realistic sun protection measures.
- Help our students acquire SunWise behaviors by educating them about the dangers of overexposure to UV rays and measures they can take to protect themselves.
- Develop strategies that encourage students and staff to make responsible decisions about sun safety.
- Encourage students and staff to use broad-spectrum sunscreen and wear protective clothing, appropriate hats, and sunglasses when outdoors.
- Open a line of communication with parents and community members about our school's SunWise policy.

Environment

In the creation of a sun-safe environment for staff and students, [*School Name*] will:

- Increase the number of shelters and trees to provide adequate shade on the school grounds.
- Try to schedule outdoor activities before 10 a.m. and after 4 p.m., especially during the months when UV radiation is most intense.
- Hold outdoor activities in shady areas whenever possible.

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Policy

It is our policy that [*School Name*] will:

- Subscribe to EPA's daily EnviroFlash UV e-mails and disseminate UV Index values when appropriate.
- Include parents and guardians in creation of all SunWise school policies.
- Work with parents to provide SPF 15+, broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen for student use.
- Make sunscreen available to students and staff.
- Ensure that sun safety policies are reflected in the planning of all outdoor events, including field trips.

Behavior

Our school believes in encouraging sun-safe behaviors in our students and staff. [*School Name*] will:

- Encourage staff and parents to act as role models for students by practicing sun-safe behaviors.
- Encourage the daily application of sunscreen before school and prior to outdoor activity.
- Allow children to wear sunglasses that block 100 percent of UVA and UVB, and hats, which will help protect the face, neck, eyes, and ears, whenever they are outside.
- Encourage students to use available shaded areas for outdoor activities.

Evaluation

[*School Name*] will, in collaboration with parents, guardians, and community members, review the effectiveness of this SunWise policy each year. We will:

- Review the SunWise behaviors of students and staff.
- Assess the amount and quality of shade provided on school grounds.
- Assess the use of shade by students and staff.

References from:

Fun for Everyone, Anti-Cancer Council of Victoria, SunSmart, 1994.

The Sun Safety Activity Guide, National Safety Council.

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Integrating Sun Protection into Lesson Plans

Instructions: Sun protection can be integrated throughout all aspects of the regular classroom curriculum in each grade. Use this tool as a guide to find appropriate sun protection lessons for the classroom. Determine the skills to be used and the amount of time alotted before selecting an activity.

Grades K–2 Activities	Subjects	Approximate Time (Minutes)	Focus/Skill	Pages
A SunWise Legend	English/LA, Social Studies	15–20	Story, sun	1–3
Hot Potato with the Sun	Health, P.E.	varies	Reinforcement	5
A SunWise Beach Party	Math	15	Addition, drawing	7–8
Buy SunWise	Math	20–30	Counting, money	9–10
Speedy Sun Relay Race	P.E., Health	30	Running, game	11–12
Sunny Says	P.E., Health	20	Game	13
Watch Your Shadow	Science	2 intervals of 15 minutes each	Shadows, demonstration	15–16
The Sun Shines Around the World	Social Studies, English/LA	20–45	Geography, research, customs	17
SUPPLEMENTAL				
Wacky Paper Sunglasses	Art	20	Crafts, cutting, demonstration	19-20
SunWise Word Search	English/LA	varies	Reinforcement	21-22

Grades 3–5 and 6–8 continue on the following pages.

Grades 3–5 Activities	Subjects	Approximate Time (Minutes)	Focus/Skill	Pages
Sun Scoop	English/LA, Health	30–60	Investigating, reporting	1–2
SunWise Word Scramble	English/LA, P.E	15–20	Reinforcement	3–4
SunWise Virtual Vacation	English/LA, P.E., Social Studies, Computers	45	Internet, research, writing	5–7
The Sun Shines Around the World	English/LA, Social Studies	20–45	Geography, research, customs	9–10
Sun Myths from the Internet	English/LA, Social Studies, Computers	30–45	Internet, research, writing	11–12
SunWise Fashion Show	Health, Art	60	Presentation	13–14
UV Frisbee® Fun	Health, P.E.	30	Demonstration, game	15–16
Personal Skin Assessment	Health, P.E., Social Studies	30	Self-assessment	17–18
Sun Safety Survey	Math	20	Percentages, graphs	19–20
SunWise Word Problems	Math	40–50	Word problems	21–22
Measure Your Shadow	Math, Science, Health	3 intervals of 15 minutes each	Shadows, demonstration, graphs	23–25
Speedy Sun Relay Race	Health, P.E.	30	Game	27–28
Sun Science	Science	30	Demonstration	29–30
The Ozone and Me	Science	30	Reading, ozone, atmosphere, Earth	31–34
UV Frisbee® Science	Science	30–40	Demonstration, charting	35–37
Map a SunWise Town	Social Studies, English/LA, P.E., Art	40–50	Maps, measure, draw, writing	39–40
Be a SunWise Traveler	Social Studies, Math, Science, Computers	45–60	Computations, maps, reading	41–43
A SunWise Legend	English/LA, Social Studies	60	Creative writing, mythology	45–47
SUPPLEMENTAL				
Sunny Crossword	English/LA	10–15	Reinforcement	49–54
WordWise	English/LA	45–50	Writing	55–56
UV METER ACTIVITIES				
What Works? Effectively Blocking UV Rays	Science	40–50	Demonstration, observation	UV 3–4
Chart and Graph UV Intensity	Science, Math	40–50	Charting, measure, predicting	UV 5–6
Reflecting UV Radiation	Science, Math	30	Demonstration, predicting	UV 7–9

Grades 6–8 Activities	Subjects	Approximate Time (Minutes)	Focus/Skill	Pages
A Sunny Performance	English/LA, Art	50–60	Presentation, creative thinking	1–2
SunWise Show	English/LA, Art	2–3 classes	Creative writing, presentation, crafts	3–4
Sun Scoop	English/LA, Health	30–60	Investigating, reporting, writing	5–6
SunWise Virtual Vacation	English/LA, P.E., Social Studies, Computers	45	Internet, research, writing	7–10
Sun Mythology	English/LA, Social Studies	30–45	Creative writing, mythology	11–12
Sunsational Scientists in History	English/LA, Social Studies	30–45	Research, astronomy, writing	13–15
The Sun Shines Around the World	English/LA, Social Studies	20–45	Geography, research, customs	17–18
Why Does Winter Make Some People SAD?	Health	30–45	Comprehension, health effects	19–22
Sun-safe Beach Party	Health, P.E.	30–45	Situational	23–24
UV Frisbee® Fun	Health, P.E.	30	Demonstration, game	25–26
Personal Skin Assessment	Health, P.E., Social Studies	30	Self-assessment	27–28
Bargain Shopper	Math	45	Budget, research	29–30
Skin Cancer in Your State	Math	40–50	Percentages, ratios, graphs	31–35
SunWise Surveyor	Math	1–2 classes	Maps, dimensions	37–38
You Are the Architect	Math, Art	more than 1 class period	Drawing, creative thinking	39–40
Detecting UV Light Using Tonic Water	Science	40–50	Demonstration, writing	41–42
Gumdrop Science	Science	40–50	Demonstration, ozone, atmosphere, Earth	43–46
UV Frisbee® Science	Science	30	Demonstration, charting	47–49
Be a SunWise Traveler	Social Studies, Math, Science, Computers	45–60	Computations, maps, reading	51–53
A SunWise Legend	English/LA, Social Studies	60	Creative thinking, mythology	55–57
SUPPLEMENTAL				
SunWise Flier	Art, Computers	30–45	Computer graphics	59–61
SunWise Word Problems	Math	40–50	Word problems	63–64
UV METER ACTIVITIES				
What Works? Effectively Blocking UV Rays	Science	40–50	Demonstration, observation	UV 3–4
Chart and Graph UV Intensity	Science, Math	40–50	Charting, measure, predicting	UV 5–6
Reflecting UV Radiation	Science, Math	30	Demonstration, predicting	UV 7–9