



SunSmart Awareness Weekend Playbook



This booklet focuses on a weekend dedicated to raising awareness of the importance of sun protections throughout the year.

SunSmart Awareness Weekend Information

What is the SunSmart Awareness Weekend?

The SunSmart Awareness Weekend is one weekend of your choosing, typically held at the end of September or beginning of October, which focuses on bringing awareness to skin cancer prevention, and protecting the “Skin You’re In”. These will include activities such as providing education and information through announcements, social media and through signs placed at the fields, parks, and schools, making all teams that play during that weekend wear the color orange to show support of the cause, in addition to a football game, which will bring the entire community together.

Purpose of this Resource

It provides you with information to use to make your SunSmart Awareness Weekend a success!

Information in this booklet includes:

- Skin Cancer Information
- Information on Athletes
- Coaches
- Educational and Awareness Messaging
- PA Announcements: In-school, games, etc.
- SunSmart Bowl
- Shade Structures
- Community Service Opportunities

For more information visit: livesunsmart.org

Add Facebook, twitter and instagram logos

Importance of Sun Protection

Skin cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in the United States, and most cases are preventable. Some people are at higher risk of skin cancer than others, but anyone can get it. The most preventable cause of skin cancer is exposure to ultraviolet (UV) light emitted from the sun. Further, skin cancer is highly curable when detected early making early intervention a key component to survival.

Recommendations

Exposure from the sun can happen on a cloudy day or on a sunny day, therefore, it's important to take precautions and wear the appropriate clothing/accessories. Encourage your students, children, co-workers, etc., to follow the following recommendations:

- Wear a hat with a wide brim, to shade the face and neck, but does not reduce your visibility
- Wear broad spectrum (UVA and UVB) protective sunglasses
- Apply a daily broad-spectrum with SPF 15. Apply 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapply every two hours or immediately after swimming or sweating
- Seek shade during your breaks, when possible, but especially between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m., when the intensity of the sun's UV rays is greatest.

Why Focus on Athletes?

Athletes spend many hours in the mid-day sun, which is a major risk factor for all skin cancers, including the most serious, melanoma. Whether on the slopes, in the water, on the track, or on the field, outdoor athletes receive more ultraviolet radiation (UV) exposure than the general public for many reasons, including:

- Intense practice and competition schedules spent outside in the sun.
- Sweating may also contribute to UV-related skin damage because it increases an athlete's photosensitivity of the skin, leading to the risk of sunburns.
- Sunscreen comes off when you sweat or get wet in the water. Remember to reapply!
- UV radiation reflects off most training grounds of athletes, including water, sand, concrete, light-colored surfaces and snow. Even when wearing a hat, UV radiation will reflect off the playing surface and can damage the skin.
- Winter and alpine athletes receive even more sun exposure not only due to the reflection from snow and ice covered surfaces, but also because harmful rays are less able to be absorbed by the atmosphere due to the higher altitude.
- Weakening of the skin's immune system is another factor that may affect athletes. Very intense athletic training, such as preparation for marathons, has been reported to temporarily impair the immune function. This impaired immune function may be associated with an increased risk of some types of skin cancer, including melanoma.

The Live SunSmart Foundation has had the support of the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association with the Team SunSmart Initiative. This program specifically focuses on athletes and the use of sunscreen, during practices or when playing in a game. The purpose is to educate every high school athlete and all coaches and athletic trainers on the importance of applying sunscreen and re-applying often when participating in outdoor activities.

During the SunSmart Awareness Weekend, Live SunSmart encourages all school and club sports teams to participate in wearing the color orange to their practices or games. This can include wearing orange shoelaces, bracelets, sweatbands, or ribbons. This, along with all the other activities taking part during this weekend will continue to bring awareness to the importance of skin cancer prevention and sun protection.

Coaches

Another piece of the SunSmart Weekend is to ensure the coaches are educated on the topic of sun protection and the importance of it.

All coaches can participate in an online training, which can be accessed on the SunWise website:

<https://www.neefusa.org/sunwise> . This will provide Coaches with information on Ultraviolet Radiation and why it's an important issue to address with youth and how to teach youth about how to best stay safe in the sun.



Encourage all coaches to keep the UV Index in mind when scheduling practices and games, not solely for the SunSmart Awareness Weekend, but all year long. If coaches have a smart phone, suggest they download the Ultraviolet – UV Index app to stay informed on the level and what precautions to take. Also, encourage the school/club sports teams, to provide an up-to-date UV Index on the school/team website. This will provide spectators, coaches, and athletes with information on how to protect themselves while at a game, practice, or watching the game.

Educational and Awareness Messaging

Fields and parks that are accessed by club or local sports teams should have awareness signs, particularly focused on athletes.

Appropriate signage should be posted in all parks and recreational facilities including.

There are three (3) topics, including:

1) Educational

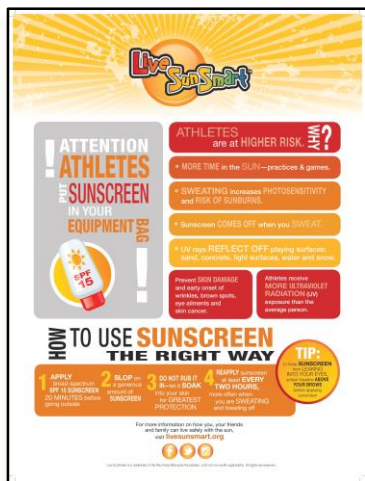
e.g. How to properly apply sunscreen,

2) Awareness

e.g. UV Zone signage alerting the guests of risks of overexposure to UV rays

3) Fun “Do You Know” type facts

This component is one of the most critical elements, as these features are the ones are tangible and visible to the public and will help to change the mindset of the residents of the municipality, who often visit the parks. These constant reminders will become a part of the environment of the community and will support the notion of sun protection every single day of the year, not just in the summer months.



For information or to view park signs, visit livesunsmart.org/library.

In addition to the importance of signage throughout locations where athletes practice and play games, a newsletter can be created to introduce facts about skin cancer and about the idea for the weekend. Some statistics that can be included are the following:

- One in five Americans will develop skin cancer in their lifetime.
- Melanoma is the most common form of cancer for young adults 25-29 years old and the second most common form of cancer for young people 15-29 years old.
- Over the past 33 years, more people have been diagnosed with skin cancer than ALL other cancer combined.
- Of the seven most common cancers in the US, melanoma is the only one whose incidence is on the rise.
- Just one blistering sunburn increases your risk of skin cancer by six times.
- Skin cancer afflicts everyone- no matter their age, gender, color or ethnicity.
- Tan skin is damaged skin. Even if you don't burn, you are still at risk. Cumulative effects of sun exposure put us at higher risk of cellular damage, early wrinkling, age spots, actinic keratosis, and skin cancer.

This newsletter should also contain information on the online certification training that all coaches and those that work with youth can access on **the SunWise website:** <http://cfpub.epa.gov/sunwiserec/>.

Educational and awareness messaging should not stop after the weekend is over. Continue providing the community with information about being safe in the sun. Create a press release that will include photos from the event, in addition how this event has informed the community about how to be SunSmart. The press release should then be sent to the local newspaper and/or the local patch website. It should also be posted on the participating school team's websites, to make the information accessible to all who frequent the websites.

PA Announcements

Announcements providing educational tips and reminders are a key piece of bringing awareness to the importance of sun protection. While during the morning announcements in a school or during halftime at the football or soccer game, announcements can be made to remind spectators to either reapply sunscreen, or to think about the importance of sun protection every day of the year.

Schools

- The UV index* today is _____. That means you are at (insert high/medium/low here – see chart below) risk for overexposure to the sun and that you need to wear sunscreen. Yes—even now!

UV Index	Description	Recommended Protection
0-2	Low risk to the average person	Wear a hat and broad-spectrum UV protected sunglasses.
3-5	Little risk of harm from unprotected sun exposure	Wear a hat and broad-spectrum UV protected sunglasses.
6-7	High risk of harm from unprotected sun exposure	Wear a hat and broad-spectrum UV protected sunglasses. Wear long sleeves and pants, preferably with UPF, to cover your body.
8-10	Very high risk from unprotected sun exposure	Wear a hat and broad-spectrum UV protected sunglasses. Wear long sleeves and pants, preferably with UPF, to cover your body.
11+	Extremely high risk of unprotected sun exposure	Take all precautions possible

- Remember you should Look SunSmart by wearing a hat, long sleeves and sunglasses whenever possible.
- Did you know that up to 90% of the visible changes to your skin commonly thought to be caused by aging are actually a result of unprotected sun exposure – you don't want premature wrinkles – keep your good looks and youthful appearance – apply sunscreen all year round
- Skin cancer affects everyone – regardless of your race, color, age, gender or ethnicity – we all need to apply a broad spectrum SPF 15 sunscreen every day.
- Sunscreen is not just for the beach. Put your sunscreen 20 minutes before you go outside and make sure to use sunscreen even on cloudy, hazy or foggy days. Follow the instructions on the bottle for applying and reapplying sunscreen. For even better protection, play in the shade, cover up with loose clothing and wear a hat.

- Even your eyes need protection too. The sun can damage your eyes, so protect them and wear sunglasses with both UVA and UVB protection.
- Don't forget about your face and neck! Wear a wide brim hat that can help shade and protect your skin!
- Did you know that ultraviolet rays (UVR) are the sun's 'invisible' burning rays and they can cause sunburn? The UV Index tells you how strong the sun's rays are! The higher the number in the UV Index, the stronger the sun's rays and the easier it is to burn. Make sure to limit your time in the sun when the UV index is 3 or greater and stay protected by wearing sunscreen, sunglasses, protective clothing, and a wide brim hat!

Sporting Events/Games

- Sunscreen comes off when you sweat. Remember to reapply!
- It's been two hours, have you reapplied your sunscreen yet?
- The Live SunSmart Foundation reminds everyone that you should apply your broad spectrum sunscreen of SPF15 at least every two hours or more often when sweating – even late in the day – EVERY DAY!
- Even your eyes need protection too. The sun can damage your eyes, so protect them and wear sunglasses with both UVA and UVB protection.
- Don't forget about your face and neck! Wear a wide brim hat that can help shade and protect your skin!

SunSmart Bowl

In addition to providing messaging throughout the weekend in schools and at sports games, host a football game on a Friday or Saturday of your choosing, as a part of the SunSmart Awareness Weekend. Typically, the event is held in September or October.

Prior to the SunSmart Bowl Event:

Educational and awareness messaging through daily announcements is important to promote the event, but also to bring awareness to the importance of sun protection.

As a part of the SunSmart Awareness Weekend, encourage spectators from both teams to wear orange and “Orange Out” the game. Perhaps there could be an incentive for all wearing orange or a reduced admission fee to those participating in the “Orange Out” piece. Flyers or email blasts can be sent to all the staff members, parents and students within the participating schools. Inform the local paper or blogs about the weekend date. In addition, use social media networks to inform and build interest in the weekend. Message for Tweets and Instagram are provided below:

Facebook/Instagram:

It takes only one blistering sunburn, especially at a young age, to more than double a person’s chance of developing melanoma later in life. Let's make sunscreen application a normal pre-game routine and a staple in every athlete’s equipment bag! #SunSmartWeekend

Did you know winter and alpine athletes receive even more sun exposure not only due to the reflection from snow and ice covered surfaces, but also because harmful rays are less able to be absorbed by the atmosphere due to the higher altitude? Let's make sunscreen application a normal pre-game routine and a staple in every athlete’s equipment bag! #SunSmartWeekend

The incidence of people under 30 developing melanoma is increasing faster than any other demographic group, soaring by 50% in women since 1980. Let's make sunscreen application a normal pre-game routine and a staple in every athlete’s equipment bag! #SunSmartWeekend

Twitter:

Athletes: enjoy a healthy outdoor lifestyle by applying sunscreen pre-game & reapplying often.
#skincancer #SunSmartWeekend

In ages 15-29 melanoma is the second most common cancer. Athletes, don't forget sunscreen!
#skincancer #SunSmartWeekend

Most melanoma is caused by exposure to UV rays. Athletes, you're outside more than the avg person. Don't forget sunscreen! #SunSmartWeekend

1 in 5 Americans will develop #skincancer in their lifetime. Athletes apply pre-game & reapply often.
#SunSmartWeekend

During the SunSmart Bowl:

A sample agenda from the Montclair, NJ game is provided below, which includes recognition of dignitaries, informational handouts, and a trophy presentation to the winning team.

- PRE GAME RECEPTION 10:30 A.M. – 12:30 P.M. – MULTI PURPOSE ROOM
- INFORMATIONAL HAND OUTS – 12 NOON UNTIL CONCLUSION OF GAME
- PRE GAME INTRODUCTIONS 12:45 – ON THE FIELD (DIGNATARIES)
- CERMONIAL COIN TOSS 12:55 – ON THE FIELD
- KICK OFF – 1PM
- POST GAME – TROPHY PRESENTATION TO THE WINNING CAPTAINS AND COACH ON THE FIELD (ATHLETIC DIRECTORS AND FOUNDATION REPS)

Before the football game has begun, make an announcement about sun protection and skin cancer prevention, using some of the PA announcements listed in this playbook.

An example announcement is: “Good afternoon/evening and welcome to the SunSmart Bowl! We would like to thank all of the spectators, athletes and coaches who participated by wearing the color orange to support and bring awareness to skin cancer prevention. Skin cancer is the most commonly diagnosed and most cases are preventable. Ways we can protect ourselves by wearing sunscreen, protective clothing, sunglasses, and seeking shade when necessary. The Live SunSmart Foundation reminds everyone to “Have fun in the sun by being active AND by being SunSmart.”



In addition, during timeouts or halftime, other announcements can be made to raise and promote skin cancer awareness.

To go along with the “Orange Out” theme, athletes should wear something orange, whether it be wristbands or shoe laces, and for the cheerleaders, wearing orange bows in their hair. This will continue the theme from the spectators to the athletes on the field/sidelines.

At the event, provide spectators with information on sun protection, for example, a flyer on how to properly apply sunscreen. Posters including SunSmart messages should be displayed during the event to continue to provide important messages to those in attendance.

For more information or to download flyers/posters, visit livesunsmart.org/library.

Shade Structures

Shade is a protective measure to stay safe in the sun. If the parks/fields the athletes are practicing and playing on are not shaded areas, consider purchasing tents to cover those on the sidelines or on the bleachers.

Under this canopy, provide a SunSmart table filled with information about skin cancer prevention and how to stay safe in the sun. In addition, if you are unable to put shade canopies over the bleachers or benches, put some up around the event and create “shade spaces.” This will provide spectators with the option of being shaded by the sun.



Community Service Opportunities

As for many schools, community service is a component of the curriculum. This weekend those opportunities should be geared towards the community and the topic of sun protection. Some of these opportunities could include:

- Park cleanup, including trimming bushes, pulling weeds
- Assisting with tree plantings with the public works department
- Work with the local girl/boy scout troop or younger sports team and provide information to them about being sunsmart
- Volunteer to work a bake sale at the SunSmart Bowl

