



# Parliamentary Inquiry: Environmental design and Public health

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SunSmart

Cancer Council Victoria

WHO Collaborative Centre for UV  
Radiation



## 1980 Lifesavers looked like this.....



and now.....



## Advertising looked like this.....



## And now .....



## Sun's ultraviolet radiation (UV)

- Major cause of skin damage and skin cancer
- Good natural source of vitamin D. General health, particularly bone and muscle health
- Australia and NZ are the skin cancer capitals
- More than 1,830 Australians die yearly (401 in Vic) more than the national (state) road toll
- Over 440,000 Australians (40,000 Vic) annually. 2 in 3 people with get skin cancer before 70
- Australia's most expensive cancer-\$300 m per year
- At Peter Mac 25% skin cancer patients, \$10m direct costs for management and treatment
- Tragically skin cancer is one of Australia's most preventable cancers.

## Prevention is better than Cure (and cheaper)

- More than 103,000 skin cancers were prevented in Victoria 1988 – 2003.....1000 deaths averted
- Value for money \$2.30 net saving for every dollar spent. Second most cost effective and health saving intervention
- Increased use of hats and sunscreens, reductions in sunburn and decreased desire for a tan
- Decreased rates of melanoma and non-melanoma skin cancer in young people
- 90% of all primary schools participating reaching approx 440,000 Victorian children.

## Why shade?

- Education and awareness not enough
- Mix of personal and environmental strategies is crucial- Slip, Slop, Slap, Seek , Slide
- Victorians love the outdoors, going to the beach/pool and playing/watching sport
- BUT- this is also where most people get sun damage
- **Shade alone can reduce your overall exposure to UV by 75%**
- Key settings- parks and playgrounds; schools and EC facilities; sport and recreation; pools and beaches; outdoor events and festivals.



# Not all shade is shady!



## Whose responsibility is it?

- Confusion amongst stakeholders about whose responsibility it is
- 83% of people believe that Local government is responsible for shade
- 45% of adults reported that shade was hard to find at their local park or play ground
- Harder to find shade at sports grounds especially those located in non-metropolitan areas.



VS



## Prioritising shade

- Incorporating shade into initial planning is crucial but currently little requirement for this
- As a result shade provision can be an after thought, adhoc, potentially more expensive, lower quality
- Local government: A key stakeholder in developing shade
  - Governs outdoor public spaces and facilities
  - Influences planning of the physical environment
- 20% MPHP (2009) make mention of shade or sun protection
- Learn from *Climate change* action (approx 80%).

## Schools- Secondary and Primary

- Australian adolescents -highest incidence of malignant melanoma in the world
- 12-24 years- melanoma is the most common cancer, with more than double the number of cases of any other kind of cancer
- Currently no requirement or mention of shade is the facilities schedule for schools in Victoria
- Internationally published research from Victoria shows that if you provide shade- young people will use it.



## Key recommendations

- Shade (built and natural) be mandatory in the initial planning, budget and overall design of new public outdoor facilities and master planned communities especially those spaces that cater to children and adolescents such as schools, sport and recreation facilities, parks, pools and playgrounds.
- Shade be a priority in the consideration in the allocation of funding for urban renewal projects and facility upgrades especially in non-metropolitan areas.
- State and Local Governments work together to prioritise shade- to incorporate UV protective shade in their open space planning, MPPH and/or develop a stand-alone shade strategy.



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