

Worksite UV Protection Policy Project: 2018 Findings

Integration of sun safety policies into worksites are proven strategies to influence sun safety practices in occupational settings. The Worksite UV Protection Policy for Outdoor Workers Project is an occupational UV protection effort that promoted UV protection policy, system, and environmental changes to reduce the burden of skin cancer for outdoor workers. The South Dakota Department of Health (SD DOH) partnered with the South Dakota WorkWell Partnership to implement the project focused on supporting worksites with adoption of a worksite UV protection policy guided by the [Worksite UV Protection Model Policy](#)¹, as well as implementation of sun safety interventions to support adoption of the policy. Aligning with the South Dakota Cancer Control State Plan 2015-2020, the SD Comprehensive Cancer Control Program (SD CCCP) released a funding opportunity to worksites across SD in March 2018 aim at reduced exposure to ultraviolet radiation among outdoor workers. Applicants could request up to \$1,000 to implement a sun safety policy and support evidence-based strategies. The worksite awarded funding serves 44 staff in the Rapid City, SD area. The SD CCCP provided technical assistance to support policy development, implementation of strategies, and project reporting.

Summary of Grantee Project

The YMCA Giraffe Park Day Camp (YMCA), a worksite that supports parks and recreation in Rapid City, SD, promoted a sun safe worksite through adoption of a worksite UV (ultraviolet) protection policy and implementation of strategies to support the policy between May 2018 and September 2018. The program implemented eight UV protection practices they had not implemented prior to funding, with six of the eight UV protection practices now encouraged or required as part of the policy.

Multi-Component Approach

The SD DOH supported the YMCA Giraffe Park Day Camp to implement a multi-component approach to address sun safety policy, environment, and systems changes. The approach included training and education, technical assistance, and evidence-based resources to implement a project plan that included strategies to support worksite wellness. The project was guided by the *Colorado Sun Safe at Work program*², the *Sun-Safe Worksite Guide*³, the *Steps to Wellness: A Guide to Implementing the 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for American*⁴, and the *Worksite UV Protection Model Policy*¹.

South Dakota Comprehensive Cancer Control Program

The South Dakota Cancer Control Program (SD CCCP) aims to improve cancer outcomes by connecting individuals and statewide organizations working in cancer control through the SD Cancer Coalition. The SD CCCP develops the state cancer plan¹, which guides priority efforts in cancer control statewide. Funding opportunities released annually support activities of the state cancer plan in the areas of cancer prevention, early detection, and cancer survivorship. Individuals and organizations interested in making a difference in cancer prevention and control are encouraged to join the SD Cancer Coalition:

www.cancersd.com/join-us.

Policy Adoption

The worksite was required to adopt a worksite UV protection policy, modeled after guidelines included in the *Worksite UV Protection Model Policy*¹.

Policy Guidelines and Intervention Strategies

The YMCA identified guidelines from the Model Policy feasible to implement for the project, including evidence-based strategies that support the policy. Strategies identified were designed to create policy, system, and environment changes and provide opportunities not already offered to employees related to UV protection, such as provision of sunscreen, educational approaches for staff, activities designed to influence employee behaviors, and evaluation of the policy.

Training and Education

The YMCA program administrator received sun safety training and education from DOH modeled after resources included in the *Sun Safe Colorado at Work* program², the *Sun-Safe Worksite Guide*³, and the *Steps to Wellness: A Guide to Implementing the 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans*⁴. Two webinars were conducted, focused on the following:

1. Introduction to the project, skin cancer risks, and strategies to ensure worksite capacity to implement wellness initiatives focused on the UV project.
2. Policy development and implementation and employee engagement.

In addition, the program administrator provided education to staff regarding the policy, sun safety practices, and employee role modeling.

Technical Assistance and Resources

DOH staff conducted monthly conference calls and provided support via email to the YMCA to help guide development and implementation of their project plan and worksite UV protection policy. DOH staff helped ensure progress with implementation of the project plan and addressed strategies for success and barriers to implementation. Educational resources were also made available via the online file management program, Box, to support ease of access to resources and implementation of evidence-based strategies.

Outcomes

Evaluation measures were established to assess the effectiveness of the worksite UV protection policy project to reduce the burden of skin in outdoor workers and answer the following questions:

- *What are the worksites current sun safety policy, practices, and environment?*
- *Did the worksite adopt a worksite UV protection policy?*
- *Does the worksite encourage or require UV protection practices or environmental changes?*

Policy Adoption

The YMCA developed and adopted a worksite UV protection policy that encouraged adoption of the sun safety guidelines outlined in their policy. The guidelines included in their policy were selected for their ability to implement and enforce with staff in the program. Some of the guidelines were identified as required elements for implementation, including employees work in shaded areas when outdoors, carry and use of sunscreen and lip balm with a SPF15+, employee adherence to the worksite UV Protection Policy guidelines, employee report of sun related injuries and annual evaluation and revision of sun safety programs, policies and procedures. The other policy guidelines were encouraged, but not required.

Project Plan and Intervention Strategies

The worksite identified and implemented strategies to support adoption of their worksite UV protection policy as part of the project plan. The YMCA identified some guidelines that were already being implemented prior to participating in the project, however, the program updated their existing policy guidelines to expand on those guidelines as well as identified additional guidelines to implement. Intervention strategies implemented to support these strategies were targeted at YMCA staff, as well as campers in the program. The YMCA provided hats to staff with the project funding. In addition, training was provided to camp staff about the sun safety practices and sunscreen policy, as well as communicated the Worksite UV Policy guidelines to staff at new staff training and orientation in June 2018. Orientating training also includes safety first and CPR procedures to inform staff how to report sun related injuries to an immediate supervisor.

Project Report

Outcomes reported by the YMCA program administrator indicated that staff awareness increased regarding the effects of the sun on more than just the skin, campers also observed staff serving as good role models by making sure that they were properly protected from the sun and the children modeled the staff without having to be told. In addition, the successes observed by program staff included less UV exposure and sunburns, increased awareness of face and lip protection, children modeled staff's sun safety practices, and campers wore hats and applied lip balm. In addition, staff instituted "balm checks" to hold each other accountable for having and applying UV proactive lip balm throughout the day.

The webinars and technical assistance provided to YMCA administrators were identified as "very useful", as well as project resources provided to support the project (e.g. sun safety resources, sun safety products). The letter template available to support promotion of the project to staff, was indicated as "somewhat useful".

The YMCA plans to implement a portion of the camp training in the future to discuss the importance of UV protection. The YMCA also plans to provide a hat, lip balm, and sunscreen to staff; provide regular education on the UV Index and effects of UV exposure; as well as track and report the UV Index daily.

Worksite UV Safety Survey

The YMCA administrator completed a survey before implementation of the project, as well as upon completion of the project. The survey assessed the program for the existence of a UV protection policy and implementation of policy, practice, or environmental changes as part of the project.

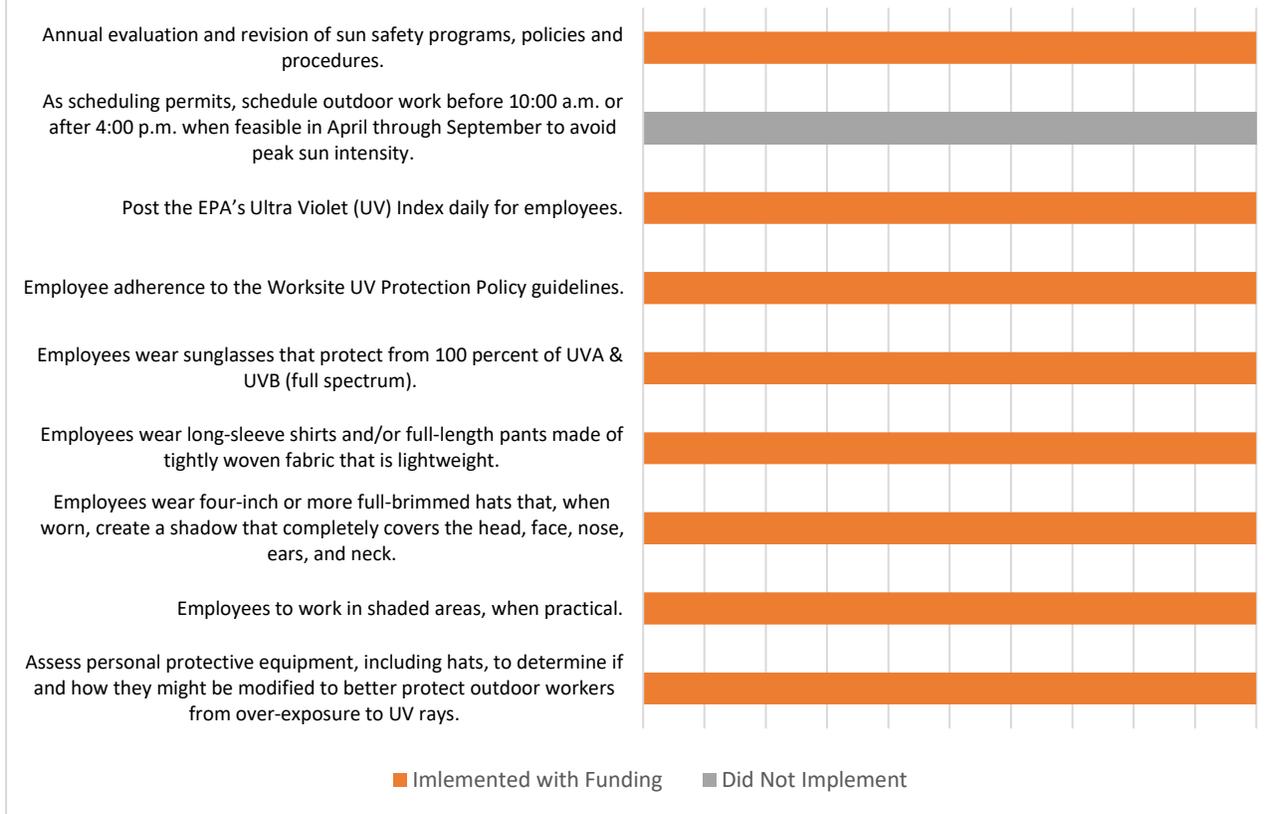
UV Protection Policy

The YMCA already had a UV protection policy in place upon the start of the project, however, it was expanded as a result of the project. Expansion included strengthen of their UV protection policy and provision of education to staff on the newly enhanced UV protection policy.

Implementation of UV Practices

As result of the funding, the YMCA implemented eight UV practices or environmental changes that were not in place prior to funding (Figure 1). The YMCA did not have the following guideline in place prior to funding and did not implement it with funding: *As scheduling permits, schedule outdoor work before 10:00 a.m. or after 4:00 p.m. when feasible in April through September to avoid peak sun intensity.*

Figure 1: Implementation of UV Protection Practices



The YMCA had eight UV protection guidelines and practices in place prior to funding, which many were expanded upon to encourage or require staff to implement as a result of the project, including:

1. Provision of personal sun protective equipment (e.g. sunscreen and lip balm SPF 15+, sunglasses, long-sleeves, long pants, and sun protective hats) for employees
2. Annual sun safety training for employees
3. Annual sun safety training for supervisors to role model and reinforce the use of sun-protective equipment for employees
4. Communication and reinforcement of Worksite UV Protection Policy guidelines to staff through outlets such as employee orientation, e-mail or newsletters
5. Carry and use of sunscreen and lip balm, SPF15+
6. Employees report sun related injuries to supervisors
7. Provide shaded outdoor break areas
8. Provide permanent or temporary shade structures for off-site jobs when feasible.

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The worksite UV protection policy project successfully supported the YMCA Giraffe Park Day Camp to promote a sun safe worksite through implementation of policy, system, and environmental approaches. Strategies implemented to support adoption of a worksite UV protection policy showed small improvements in uptake of sun protective equipment and certain sun safety practices. Guidelines that were previously not formally encourage or required, are now encouraged or required within the YMCA's UV protection policy. Specifically, use of sunscreen and lip balm SPF 15+ by staff, employee adherence

to the Worksite UV Protection Policy guidelines, employee report of sun related injuries, and annual evaluation and revision of sun safety programs, policies and procedures is now required. Additional efforts to support a comprehensive policy that supports policy and environment changes will help ensure a sun safe worksite.

Notable outcomes from the YMCA program to inform future projects include:

- **Provide ongoing education to employees.** Educating staff through an ongoing basis helps to reinforce the policy guidelines and value of sun safety practices. In addition, consider providing education from an external source to ensure timely delivery of education.
- **Reinforcement and role modeling by worksite management.** Reinforcement by worksite managers is an important piece to promoting sun safety practices.
- **Identify strategies unique to worksite to engage staff.** Regardless of the size of a worksite, improvements in sun safety practices can occur.
- **Track the UV Index.** Adopt a strategy to track the UV Index daily to inform staff and the public, as appropriate. This provides an opportunity to educate on sun safety practices unique to location.
- **Implement policy, system, and environmental changes regarding sun safety.** Changes include making shade available to outdoor workers at job sites and outdoor break areas, including providing a canopy, umbrella, tent, or shade structure, make personal sun safety equipment readily accessible, and engage employees in ongoing communication to promote sun safety practices. Provision of personal sun protective equipment is recommended where feasible, including wide-brimmed hats.
- **Access to resources and technical assistance.** Provide access to resources and technical assistance to help project sites develop a quality policy and implement a comprehensive project.

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References:

¹South Dakota Department of Health, *Worksite UV Protection Model Policy*. Retrieved from <http://goodandhealthysd.org/workplaces/policies/> ²Klein Buendel. *Sun Safe Colorado at Work*. Retrieved from <http://work.sunsafecolorado.org/>

³Klein Buendel. *Sun-Safe Worksite Guide*. Retrieved from <http://sdhw.info/pdfs/WorksiteGuide02.pdf>

⁴Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Steps to Wellness: A Guide to Implementing the 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans in the Workplace*. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; 2012.