

SUN SAFETY PRACTICES IN SOUTH DAKOTA CHILD CARE SETTINGS

2020 EVALUATION REPORT



SUN SAFETY PROGRAM

The SD Department of Health (DOH) Comprehensive Cancer Control Program (SD CCCP) funded child care programs in 2020 across SD through a competitive application aimed at reducing exposure to ultraviolet radiation among infants and children. Programs requested up to \$500 to adopt a sun safety policy and implement education and environment strategies to support implementation of the policy. Due to COVID-19, there were a reduced number of applications and grantees in 2020 than in past years.

IMPLEMENTATION

Child care programs implemented statistically significant evidence-based policy, system, and environment changes that made an impact on sun safety practices that reduce exposure to UV among staff, children, and parents. Funding played a key role to support implementation of specific sun safety practices (Figures 1 - 3). Grantees received ongoing technical assistance and resources to support policy development, project implementation, and aid in reporting.

PROJECT DESIGN

The project included a multi-component approach to address sun safety policy and environment change.



Education & Training

- Training on sun safety practices approved by Department of Social Services.
- Staff received certification for completion to support annual training requirements.



Technical Assistance

- Provided by SD DOH monthly via telephone or Zoom platform.
- Assistance provided through e-mail as needed.



Resources

- Sun safety curriculums.
- Sun safety products.
- Education resources and learning activities.

5

Child Care Programs Funded

549

Infants & Children Impacted

\$3,000

Total Project Funding

RESULTS

The findings from the project identified an overall positive impact on sun safety practices in the child care facilities. Upon project completion, all five child care facilities had developed and implemented an approved Sun Safety Policy, including most of the guidelines outlined in the model policy which guided the project, [Sun Safety for Child Care Programs Model Policy](#).

ADDITION OF EDUCATION INTERVENTIONS

Education was provided by the facilities to support sun safety practices (Figure 1). Parents received a permission form for the application of sunscreen at all facilities. Children received education regarding the UV Index, sun safety practices, and engaged in daily tracking of the UV Index. Four of five facilities encouraged parents/guardians to model sun safe behaviors.



FIGURE 1: ADDITION OF EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTIONS (N=5)

	In place before funding	Implemented with funding	Did not implement
Train staff on sun safety policy and guidelines	0%	100%	0%
Train staff on proper sunscreen application*	60%	40%	0%
Train staff on proper protocols for skin allergies*	60%	40%	0%
Reinforce sun safety policy through newsletters, meetings, etc.*	0%	100%	0%
Add skin cancer education and UV protection strategies into curriculum	40%	60%	0%
Provide educational materials on sun safety to staff*	40%	60%	0%
Provide educational materials on sun safety to parents	0%	80%	20%

* Significant change for small sample size (N=5) ($p < .05$, 95% Confidence Interval not containing 1)

“Our teachers absolutely loved the many resources that were made available to help our students learn through fun and educational activities that helped to support our goal of being Sun Safe!”

[Child Care Administrator]

ADDITION OF SUN SAFETY PRACTICES

All facilities added training and reinforced sun safety practices for staff, children, and/or parents, which had largely not been in place before funding (Figure 2). Four of the five facilities provided educational materials to parents on the sun safety, with all facilities training staff on the sun safety policy and guidelines. Staff received ongoing reminders regarding the implementation of guidelines outlined in each facilities policy. All facilities reinforced the sun safety policy through newsletters and meetings, which had not been in place before funding.

FIGURE 2: ADDITION OF SUN SAFETY PRACTICES (N=5)

	In place before funding	Implemented with funding	Did not implement
Limit sun exposure between 10 am and 4 pm	40%	60%	0%
Monitor heat index and adjust schedule to accommodate	20%	80%	0%
Encourage children to seek shade when outdoors	40%	60%	0%
Offer water frequently for children during outdoor activity*	80%	20%	0%
Parent/guardian permission form for sun screen	80%	20%	0%
Encourage parents/guardians to model sun safe behaviors	20%	60%	20%

* Significant change for small sample size (N=5) ($p < .05$, 95% Confidence Interval not containing 1)

“Our preschool and elementary age students enjoyed finding out what the UV Index was daily and helping chart it. They all did amazing at making sure their sunscreen was on before we went outside and would remind their friend how “they don’t want to get a sunburn”.

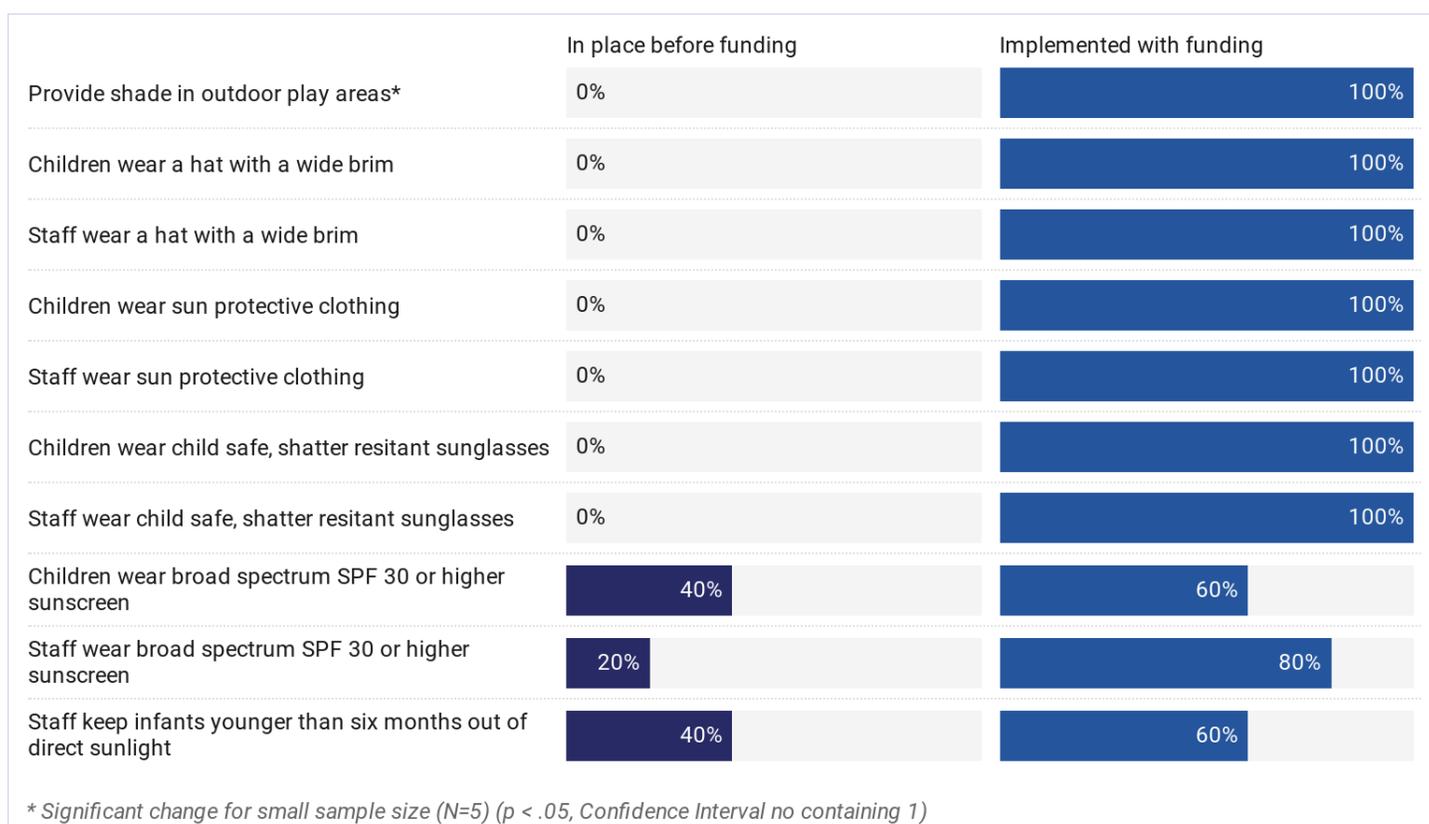
[Child Care Administrator]

ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

All grantees used funding to purchase shade structures, including umbrellas, shade canopies, and shade sails (Figure 3). Many of the environmental changes added to the facilities were the result of funding and had not been in place prior. All five childcare facilities now encourage or require the ten recommended environmental changes. Sunscreen is encouraged in three facilities and required in two. Programs rearranged existing outdoor activities and equipment to be located under shade structures. Wide brim hats were purchased and worn by some children and staff. Grantees implemented most of the environmental changes recommended in the model policy.



FIGURE 3: ENVIRONMENT CHANGES TO PROMOTE SUN SAFETY (N=5)



Note: All interventions were either in place or implemented with funding.

SUCCESS, BARRIERS & FUTURE PLANS

- **Successes** - Project data and grantee feedback highlight the positive impact this project has on policy and environment change in child care facilities. Environmental changes were well-received by staff and children, including sun hats, sunglasses, and shade structures. The project provided an opportunity to educate children, parents, and staff on sun safety practices and role modeling.
- **Barriers** - COVID-19 presented challenges to some facilities regarding the way facilities operated with a smaller number of children and increased sanitation processes. Some facilities experienced challenges with accessing supplies to support implementation of project activities, including shade structures and sun hats. Employee buy-in proved challenging for one facility regarding adoption of sun safety practices, including sunscreen and shade use.
- **Future Plans** - Overall, grantees indicated future intent to coordinate outdoor activities under shade sails, increase parental education, and continue to educate and train staff and children on sun safety practices. A continuation of the parent/guardian permission form for sunscreen will also occur. Long-term impact will continue to be measured.

A small amount of funding combined with technical assistance, access to resources, and collaboration with staff and parents highlights the short-term impact the program had on child care facilities.

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