

SUN SAFETY PRACTICES IN SOUTH DAKOTA CHILD CARE SETTINGS

2022 EVALUATION REPORT



SUN SAFETY PROGRAM

The SD Department of Health (DOH) Comprehensive Cancer Control Program (SD CCCP) funded two childcare programs in 2022 across SD through a competitive application aimed at advancing health equity and *equitably* reducing exposure to ultraviolet radiation among all infants and children in care, including *removing economic and social obstacles to health for children in care*. Programs requested up to \$1000 to adopt a sun safety policy and implement educational and behavioral interventions as well as environmental changes to support implementation of the policy.

2

Child Care Programs Funded

54

Infants & Children Impacted

\$2,000

Project Funding



CHALLENGES

One bad sunburn in childhood doubles the risk of skin cancer later in life. In fact, skin cancers account for three percent of all pediatric cancers. The risk for skin cancer can be greatly reduced when certain precautions are practiced. The SD Department of Health Comprehensive Cancer Control Program works to help reduce children's exposure to ultraviolet radiation.



IMPLEMENTATION

Childcare programs implemented evidence-based policy, system, and environmental changes that made an impact on sun safety practices that reduce exposure to UV in staff, children, and parents. Funding played a key role to support implementation of specific sun safety practices. Grantees received ongoing technical assistance and resources to support policy development, project implementation, and aid in reporting as outlined in the project design.



PROJECT DESIGN

The project included a multi-component approach to address sun safety policy and environmental change:

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

EDUCATION & TRAINING



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

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE



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

RESOURCES





RESULTS

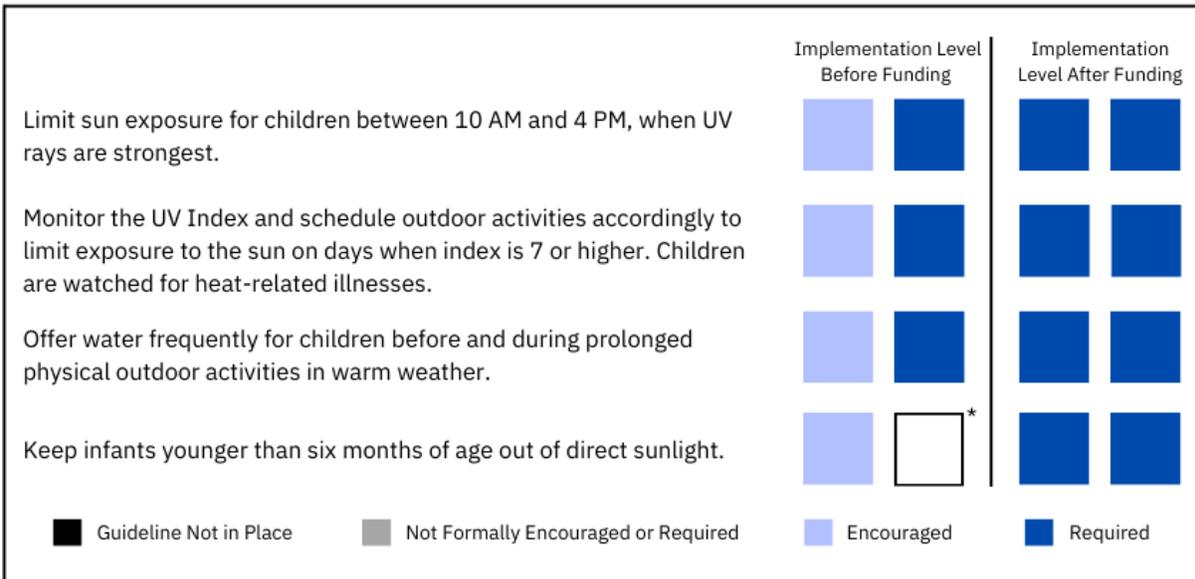
ADDITION OF SUN SAFETY PRACTICES

The two childcare programs supported through this project reinforced sun safety practices for staff, children, and/or parents, some of which had not been in place before funding. Specifically, both programs developed and implemented a childcare UV policy that outlines guidelines to support a sun safe childcare program. In addition, both programs elevated the level of implementation (encouraged or required) of some, or all the guidelines included in their childcare UV policy that had not been formally encouraged or required in their program.

PLANNING OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

Both programs had sun safety practices specific to planning outdoor activities guidelines in place prior to funding, except for the guideline, “keep infants younger than six months of age out of direct sunlight” that was not in place for one program (see Figure 1). The level of implementation of these guidelines varied between the programs prior to funding, with one program whose guidelines were encouraged and one program whose guidelines were required (based on available data). Upon receiving funding, both programs required implementation of the planning outdoor activities guidelines.

Figure 1: Planning Outdoor Activity Guidelines

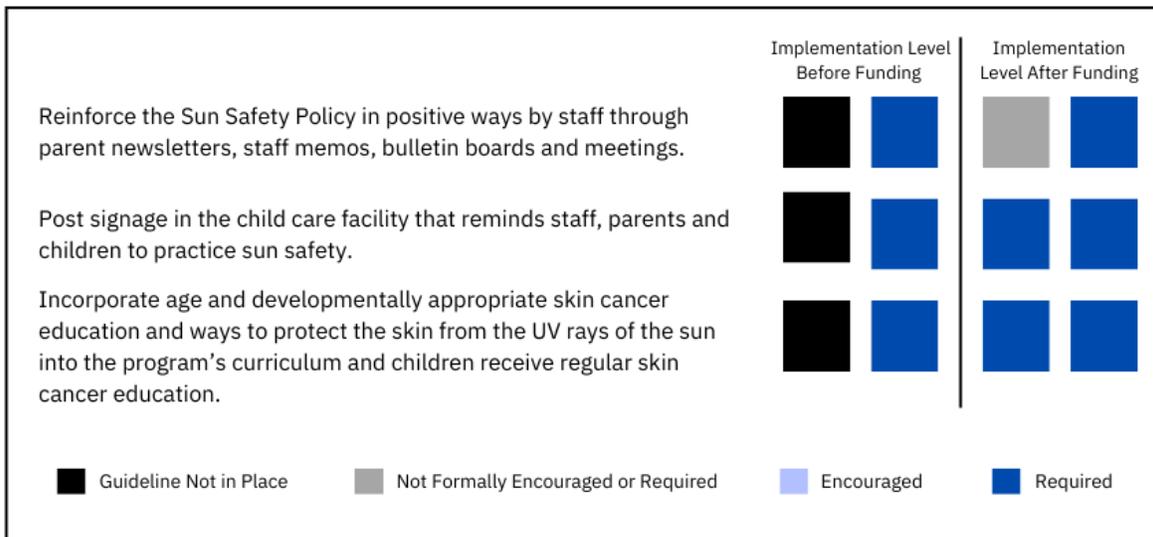


* Denotes missing data

EDUCATION

One program had sun-safety practices specific to education guidelines in place prior to funding (see Figure 2). The level of implementation for these practices was required for this program. The other program did not have practices specific to education guidelines in place prior to funding. Upon receiving funding, both programs had the education guidelines in place. Both programs required implementation of all education guidelines, except for one program who did not formally encourage or require implementation of the guideline “reinforce sun safety policy in positive ways by staff through parent newsletters, staff memos, bulletin boards and meetings.”

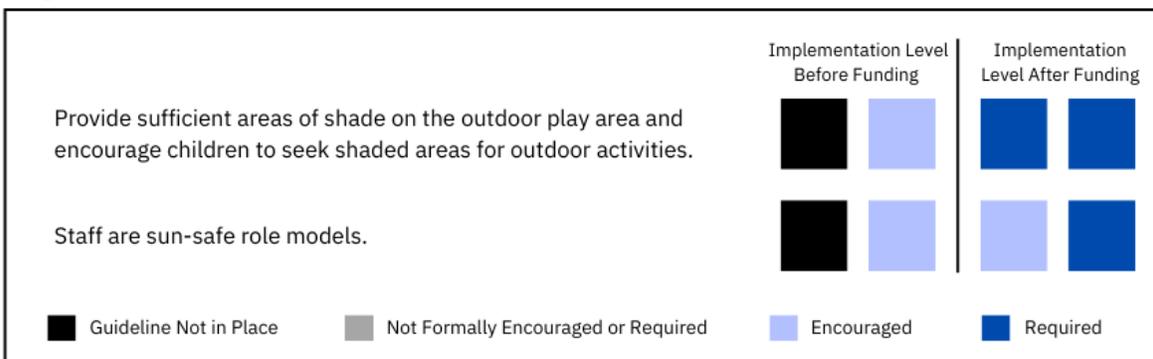
Figure 2: Education



ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

Both programs had one of the two sun-safety practices specific to environmental guidelines in place prior to funding (see Figure 3). The level of implementation for these guidelines in both programs was encouraged. Upon receiving funding, both programs outlined the environmental guidelines in their policy. Both programs required implementation of guidelines, with one program who encouraged implementation of the guideline, “staff are sun-safe role models.” Notably, both programs used funding to purchase shade structures such as shade sails and a shade canopy.

Figure 3: Environment



SUN-SAFETY EQUIPMENT

Six of the ten sun-safety practices specific to sun-safety equipment guidelines were in place by at least one of the programs prior to funding (see Figure 4). The level of implementation varied with four of the guidelines being encouraged and two being required. Both programs had the guideline, “Staff discontinues use and notifies the parent/guardian if the skin is broken or an allergic reaction is observed” in place prior to funding, with one program encouraging it and the other program requiring it. Three of the ten guidelines were not implemented in either facility prior to funding. Upon receiving funding, both programs had all ten guidelines in place with the implementation level varying between encouraged and required.

Figure 4: Sun-Safety Equipment



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Neither of the programs had sun-safety practices specific to professional development in place prior to funding (see Figure 5). Upon receiving funding, one program had all three guidelines in place that required implementation. One program, a home childcare provider, did not have in place professional development guidelines before or after funding. Staff across both programs were educated on sun safety practices and how to support a sun safe environment through training, educational materials, and staff meetings. Both programs trained staff on protocol for skin allergies. Fifteen staff were trained as a result of of the funding (see Figure 6).

Figure 5: Professional Development

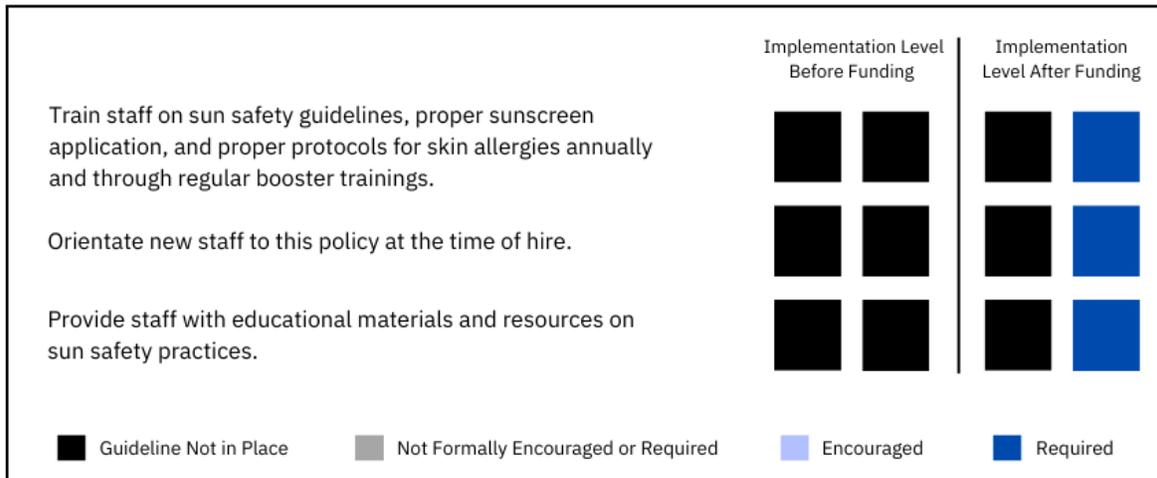


Figure 6: Number of Staff Trained



PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

Prior to receiving funding, five of the seven sun-safety practices specific to parents/guardians guidelines were in place in at least one of the programs (see Figure 7). The guidelines that were in place before funding, the implementation level varied across all three levels (not formally encouraged or required, encouraged, and required). After receiving funding, all seven guidelines were in place and implemented at various levels in both programs.

Figure 7: Parents/Guardians

	Implementation Level Before Funding		Implementation Level After Funding	
Provide parents with educational materials and resources on preventing skin cancer and sun safety practices.	■	■	■	■
Parents receive a copy of the Sun Safety Policy.	■	■	■	■
Ask parents to provide a suitable hat, sunglasses, water bottle, and sunscreen for their child’s use when outdoors in the care setting.	■	■	■	■
Encourage parents/guardians to model sun safe behaviors and practice these guidelines outside of the child care program.	■	■	■	■
Require parents/guardians of children currently enrolled and children enrolling to complete and sign the Parent/Guardian’s Permission to Apply Sunscreen Form (see page 3) and keep it on file at the program. Update this form (annually, with each new bottle of sunscreen provided).	■	■	■	■
Require a written order from a health care provider if parents request sunscreen be applied to their infant under six months of age.	■	■	■	■
Apply sunscreen to the child at least once by the parents/guardians and observe the child for a reaction to the sunscreen prior to its use in child care.	■	■	■	■

■ Guideline Not in Place	■ Not Formally Encouraged or Required	■ Encouraged	■ Required
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“I feel that only good will come of myself being awarded this grant.”

[Center-Based Child Care Administrator]



SUCCESS, BARRIERS & FUTURE PLANS

- **Successes** - Project data and grantee feedback highlight the positive impact this project has on policy change and implementation of sun-safety practices in childcare facilities. Sun-safety equipment changes were well received by children, parents, and staff, including sun hats, water bottles, and sunscreen. This project provided an opportunity to train staff on sun safety practices, as well as provide resources and information to educate children in their care. One program indicated that both the parents and children were on board with the new sun-safety practices from the beginning.
- **Barriers** - One program indicated that the staff occasionally struggled with some of the new sun-safety practices, including bringing the children's water bottles outside while they were playing or while going on a walk to the pool. Additionally, one program was not able to get the shade up until later after school had started, which limited opportunities for shade during the project period.
- **Future Plans** - Overall, grantees indicated future plans to support a sun safety environment for children in their care. Programs plan on continuing to educate the children on the importance of sun-safety and engage in sun-safety practices such as encouraging sunscreen, water bottles, and hats. Specifically, the sun-safety policy and supporting guidelines will be implemented earlier in the year.

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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