



AN ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH TRACKING STORY

STRENGTHENING SUN SAFETY POLICIES AT CHILD CARE CENTERS

Door County, Wisconsin

THE PROBLEM

In Door County, Wisconsin, the annual melanoma rate (41 per 100,000 people) is nearly double the Wisconsin average (22 per 100,000 people). It's the highest rate in the state and has steadily gone up since 1995. Sunburns—especially at young ages—are a risk factor for skin cancer. To instill sun protection behaviors early, Door County Health Department staff targeted child care centers.

WHAT DOOR COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT DID

Health department staff adapted an evidence-based training for child care center staff, which included skin cancer prevention information, as well as examples of model sun safety policies for child care centers. Health department staff were able to train 56 staff at five child care centers. As a result of the trainings, the child care centers reported revising and improving their sun safety policies to reflect more of the recommended strategies.

THE PUBLIC HEALTH IMPACT

Hundreds of children are now covered under stronger sun safety policies at the child care centers where they spend much of their time. Child care center staff are also better equipped to ensure children are following sun safety strategies, such as correct application of sunscreen. Parents will know their children are sun safe even when they're away from home.



Especially during the months of April through October, we care for many of the young children in northern Door County on a daily basis. We are helping them form good habits for sun protection from toddlerhood and on. As educators, this is another important life skill we need to learn and share with our students.

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