Sun Safety in Schools

Rate of New Melanoma Cases in Virginia

2017 – 2021

Rate per 100,000 people

No data	7.5 – 15.4	15.4 – 20.8	20.8 – 25.7	25.7 – 31.6	31.6 – 68.1

"The project provided resources to help decrease UV exposure during the school day by providing our two elementary schools with sun shade structures on the playgrounds and sunscreen dispensers throughout the district. We hope to see that future skin cancer rates for our area will decrease from the additional information being taught to our students and from the resources provided."

– Sara Kelly, School Nurse

Melanoma, a cancer of the skin, has a greater burden in certain localities across Virginia, including along the I-81 corridor.

The city of Buena Vista, located in Virginia's Blue Ridge Mountains, experiences higher rates of new melanoma cases, known as incidence, compared to other Virginia localities. In an effort to help lower this rate, the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), the University of Virginia (UVA) Cancer Center, and the Cancer Action Coalition of Virginia (CACV) partnered with Buena Vista City Public Schools (BVCPS) to implement a comprehensive sun safety program. The program included implementation of the SunBeatables educational program in elementary schools, distribution of sunscreen dispensers and sunscreen refills, and sample sun safety school recommendations as outlined in the Sun Safety in Schools Toolkit.

The program's success reflects the support from BVCPS' school nurse, school district administrators, and physical education teacher/staff.

Program Highlights

Services provided to Buena Vista City Public Schools:

2 Sunshade Structures

23 Sunscreen Dispensers

92 Sunscreen Refill Bags

92,000 Potential Sunscreen Dispensations (Approximately)

Sunbeatables Educational Program

Sun Safety in Schools Toolkit

"It was great seeing students excited to learn about sun safety and how they can protect themselves from the sun because it may not be something they would learn about or understand the importance of otherwise."

– Brian Loy, Physical Education Teacher

1,037 Students with Access to Sunscreen Dispensers

511 Students with Access to the Sunshade Structures

VDH Virginia Department of Health

UVA Health UVA Cancer Center An NCI-Designated Comprehensive Cancer Center

CACV Cancer Action Coalition of Virginia