



AN ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH TRACKING STORY

LEADING A SUN SAFETY CAMPAIGN

Calumet County, Wisconsin

THE PROBLEM

Calumet County Public Health recognized that melanoma—the most dangerous form of skin cancer—is increasing in their community. According to their 2017 Environmental Health Profiles, their rate of melanoma was nearly 1 1/2 times the state average. To address this problem, public health staff decided to focus on children and the value of establishing good behaviors early in life. Studies show that one blistering sunburn in childhood more than doubles risk of melanoma later in life.

WHAT CALUMET COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DID

Calumet County Public Health staff implemented a multilevel outreach campaign. They reached out to several child care centers and youth organizations. These efforts led to staff at three childcare centers completing [Sunbeatables®](#) sun safety training and implementing formal sun safety policies. These policies include sunscreen requirements for children, limits to sun exposure time, and the use of hats and sunglasses. Calumet County staff also added sun safety information in the mailings that go to all newborns in their county and offered free sunscreen to low-income families who use the agency's diaper bank. To reach their target audience, staff completed in-person workshops using Sunbeatables® resources with over 150 children ages 8-14. They shared sunscreen and sun safety information at city pools and parks, outdoor events, day camps, and nature centers. Earned media stories, social media posts, and articles in partner newsletters bolstered the visibility of the campaign and expanded their reach.

THE PUBLIC HEALTH IMPACT

Because of this campaign, hundreds of children are now covered under their child care center's new sun safety policy. During the summer, children in Calumet County had easy access to sunscreen at the places they needed it most: parks, pools, day camps, and nature centers. Cost can be a barrier to sun safety for low-income families, but by adding sunscreen to their diaper bank, public health staff removed this obstacle. During this project, staff created partnerships with key agencies—including the Brillion Public Library and Salvation Army—that they continue to work with on new initiatives.

EXPLORE MELANOMA DATA:
dhs.wisconsin.gov/epht

WISCONSIN ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH TRACKING PROGRAM
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