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### **Acceptability and feasibility of a brief schoolbased psychoeducational intervention to promote sun-safe behaviours and skin cancer awareness in Scottish adolescents**

Dombrowski, Stephan; Quigley, Jo; Skinner, Rebecca; O'Carroll, Ronan; Stoddart, Iona; Kyle, Richard; Hubbard, Gill

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# SUNSAFE INTERVENTION



## KEY FINDINGS FROM A PILOT STUDY

Stephan U Dombrowski, Gill Hubbard, Richard Kyle, Rebecca Skinner,  
Ronan O' Carroll

April 2016

# Sunsafe Key Findings

Overall aim: We wanted to find out if evidence based lessons about sun safety improved students' awareness about the dangers the sun and how to protect themselves from these.

## The Study

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*Students in 2 schools received two 50 minute lessons about sun safety*

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- This study was conducted in three schools in the Scottish Highlands with students aged 12-14 years (average age 12.5 years), 97% of students classified themselves as white ethnicity and 53% were male.
- In the early autumn of 2015, students in 2 schools received two 50 minute lessons about sun safety (intervention schools) and students in the other school did not receive these lessons (control school).
- Overall, 443 students completed an initial questionnaire about sun safety (baseline finding) and 299 completed the questionnaire approximately 3 weeks later (201 from intervention schools, 98 from the control school).
- We compared if there was a difference in sun safe awareness between students in the intervention and control schools.

# Baseline Findings

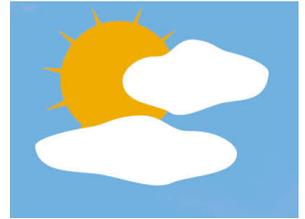
## Sun Safety Awareness

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*98% of young people know that sunscreen should be worn in the sun*

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- Young people have reasonable knowledge about sun safety getting 70% of facts correct
- 98% of young people know that sunscreen should be worn in the sun
- Less than half of young people knew that:
  - it can be important to wear sunscreen even on cloudy days
  - you should limit being in the sun during the hours of 11am and 3pm
  - sunbathing only for a couple of weeks a year increases the chance of getting skin cancer
- 1 out of 5 students knew that change in a mole is a sign of skin cancer
- Young people can name one sun protection behaviour on average



## Sun Safety Practice

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*1 in 3 young people never or rarely use sunscreen*

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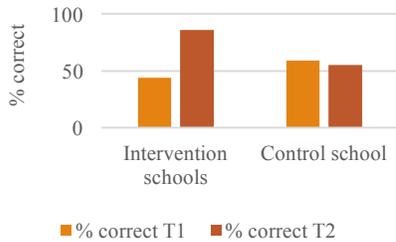
- Most young people (44%) said they very rarely sunburn and tan easily
- 1 in 10 young people would use a sunbed to get a tan
- 1 in 4 young people would engage in risky sun behaviours to get a tan
- 1 in 10 young people use sunscreen every time they go into the sun



- 1 in 3 young people never or rarely use sunscreen
- Over half of young people got sunburnt last summer
- Half of the young people never or rarely re-apply sunscreen

## After just two 50 minute lessons

Can be important to wear sunscreen even on cloudy days



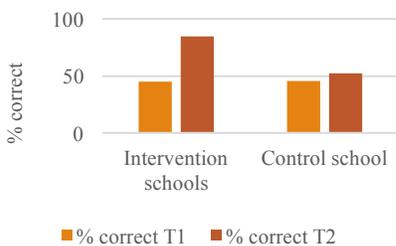
- Young people's knowledge about sun safety increases by 15% to 82%

- All young people now know that sunscreen should be worn in the sun



- Twice as many young people now know that it can be important to wear sunscreen on cloudy days

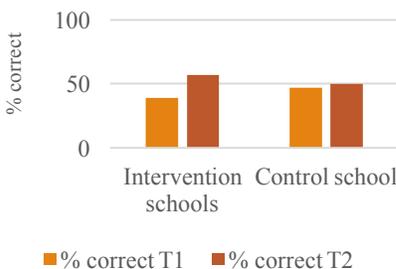
Limit being in the sun during 11AM and 3PM



- Almost twice as many young people now know that you should limit being in the sun during the hours of 11am and 3pm

- There was a 20% increase in young people who knew that sunbathing only for a couple of weeks a year increases the chance of getting skin cancer

Sunbathing a few weeks a year increases chance of skin cancer

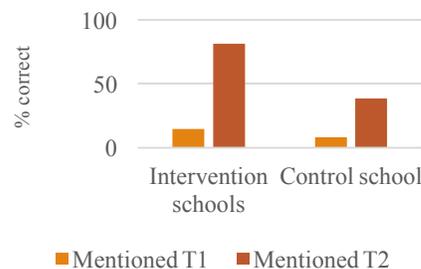


- 4 out of 5 students knew that change in a mole is a sign of skin cancer

- Young people know at least one more sun protection behaviour they could do



Mentioning moles as warning signs for skin cancer



- Young people are now more confident that they can spot signs of skin cancer

- Young people now have more plans to use sunscreen

## Implications for policy and practice

*A national roll out of the programme can be recommended*

1. Major public awareness campaigns of sun-safety are needed, even in countries that have a lot of clouds and are cooler
2. Campaigns are needed to increase sunscreen use – young people know they should use it but many fail to do so
3. School-based interventions increase sun-safety and skin cancer awareness, therefore a national roll out of the programme can be recommended

## Future research

- An evaluation of how to translate this increased awareness on the dangers of the sun into changes in sun safety behaviour is now urgently required

For further information please contact:

Stephan U Dombrowski, PhD, CPsychol  
 Senior Lecturer in Health Psychology; HCPC registered Health Psychologist  
 University of Stirling  
 School of Natural Sciences, Division of Psychology  
 Cottrell Building, Room 3A107  
 Stirling, FK9 4LA

Tel.: +44(0)1786 467844

Email: [s.u.dombrowski@stir.ac.uk](mailto:s.u.dombrowski@stir.ac.uk)

Twitter: [@sdombrowski](https://twitter.com/sdombrowski)