

Media Release – For immediate release
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More Bay of Plenty Schools SunSmart Accredited

Fourteen more Bay of Plenty schools have become SunSmart accredited in time for SunSmart week.

Teaching SunSmart behaviours to keep children safe in the sun is the key reason schools want to be recognised by the SunSmart Schools Accreditation Programme. The accreditation process acknowledges the effort a school is making to implement a comprehensive sun protection policy.

The accreditations come in time for SunSmart Week, November 8-14, which signals the start of summer and reminds people to Slip, Slop, Slap and Wrap to protect themselves from the sun.

Melanie Desmarais, Waikato/Bay of Plenty Cancer Society health promotion manager, says the effort the schools put in to ensure they are proactive in the prevention of skin cancer is fantastic.

“New Zealand has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world and it is widely recognised that over exposure to the sun and harmful UV rays play a significant role in this.

“This programme has been developed to encourage SunSmart behaviour among schools to reduce children’s exposure to UV radiation and their risk of developing skin cancer later in life.”

To achieve accreditation, schools must implement a SunSmart policy during terms one and four that encourages SunSmart behaviours such as wearing hats, cover-up clothing and sunscreen and seeking shade during peak UV hours of 11am to 4pm.

It also includes creating a SunSmart environment that promotes the provision and use of shade as well as rescheduling outdoor activities outside peak UV times.

Curriculum content on how to be SunSmart is also part of the programme which is reviewed every three years. Accreditation is open to all primary and intermediate schools in the country.

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“For many families sun protection might play an important role when selecting a school.”

The programme has been shown to be the most effective of its kind and is recommended by the World Health Organisation as the “Gold Standard” schools’ sun protection programme.

The accreditation process is undertaken through the SunSmart schools website which provides materials and policy information, along with assistance from a school’s local Cancer Society.

The latest Bay of Plenty schools to have achieved SunSmart Accreditation are:

- St Patricks Taupo
- Rangitaiki School Taupo
- Kawerau North School
- Te Kura Toitu o Te Whaiti-nui-a-To Rotorua
- Tewhuia Murupara
- Kura Hirangi Turangi
- Selwyn School Rotorua
- St Josephs Matata
- Murupara Primary School
- Te Kura Mana Maori O Te Orini
- Otonga Road School Rotorua
- Whakamaramara School Tauranga
- Tauranga Adventist School
- Waimana School

For more information, please visit: www.sunsmartschools.co.nz.

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For further information, please contact:

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Editor’s Note:

The Waikato/Bay of Plenty Division of the Cancer Society of New Zealand Inc is a non-profit organisation that receives no direct financial support from the Government. We are funded by bequests and donations from the public as well as fundraising activities.

We are committed to minimising the impact of cancer in our communities by providing:

- Quality support services for people affected by cancer
- Education to promote early detection and help reduce the risk of cancer
- Free information and resources on cancer
- Support for research into the causes, prevention, detection and treatment of cancer

