



**Cancer  
Society**

Waikato/Bay of Plenty Division  
Cancer Society of New Zealand  
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### **UnderCover Cody Spreads SunSmart Message**

UnderCover Cody the Waikato/Bay of Plenty Cancer Society's SunSmart Mascot will be launching his revamped website as part of next week's SunSmart Week (9<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> November) activities.

The new-look website: [www.undercovercody.co.nz](http://www.undercovercody.co.nz) will feature information about keeping safe in the sun as well as fun, interactive SunSmart games, the opportunity to purchase some cool new Cody merchandise such as watches and playing cards and much more...

As part of this promotion Cody will also be out and about the Waikato and Bay of Plenty visiting schools and early childhood centres spreading the SunSmart message.

Melanie Desmarais, Waikato/BOP Cancer Society SunSmart spokesperson, says it is very important all New Zealanders are aware of the dangers of the sun and the increased risk of skin cancer caused by overexposure to the sun – particularly in childhood.

“New Zealand has among the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. This is largely due to our climate, the fact that many of us have fair skin that isn't suited to such harsh conditions, our closeness to the sun in the summer months and our love of the outdoors.”

Anyone can be at risk of developing skin cancer. The risk increases as you get older – older people have generally had more exposure to the sun than younger people, which is why it is vital that young children protect themselves in the summer to reduce their risk of skin cancer as they age.

More ...

Melanie says although the most serious form of skin cancer – melanoma – is most strongly related to intermittent sun exposure, the total amount of sun exposure is also important.

“There is often a long lag time between exposure and presentation of the disease. Melanoma can occur at a young age and is the most diagnosed cancer in 15 to 44 year olds.”

She says skin cancer is by far the most common cancer affecting New Zealanders.

“There are over 1,800 new melanoma cases and about 45,000 new non-melanoma cases every year. These are cases for which the diagnosis is confirmed by laboratory tests. There are possibly another 20,000 cases of non-melanoma skin cancers each year, which are immediately treated, but are not confirmed by a laboratory.

“However, unlike many other forms of cancer, skin cancer is often visible – making it easier to detect in the early stages. Early detection is the key to successful treatment and reducing the impact of scars from surgery.

“We want everyone to learn to follow the simple SunSmart rules, especially during the peak UV hours of 11m and 4pm or when the UV is three or above:

- **Slip** on some sun-protective clothing that covers as much skin as possible
- **Slop** on SPF30+ sunscreen that is broad spectrum and water resistant. Put it on 20 minutes before going outdoors and every two hours afterwards. Sunscreen should never be used as the main or only form of defence against the sun or to extend the time spent in the sun.
- **Slap** on a hat that protects the face, head, neck and ears
- **Wrap** on sunglasses that meet Aus/NZ standards
- **Seek** shade

For more information please visit: [www.cancersociety.org.nz](http://www.cancersociety.org.nz) or contact the Cancer Society, ph 07 838 2027. For more SunSmart information visit: [www.sunsmart.org.nz](http://www.sunsmart.org.nz)

And don't forget to check out Cody's new look website: [www.undercovercody.co.nz](http://www.undercovercody.co.nz)

**Ends**

***For further information, please contact:***

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**Editor's Note:**

Undercover Cody will be visiting the following schools and early childhood education centre's during SunSmart Week 9<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> November to help children learn to be safe in the sun.

Please note: Many schools and pre-schools will be combining Undercover Cody visits.

Monday 10 <sup>th</sup> November	10.30am - Te Ranga School, Te Puke 2.30pm - Pillans Point School	9.15am - Te Pahu 11am - Nghinapouri Kindergarten 1pm - Tamahere School
Tuesday 11 <sup>th</sup>	9am Omokoroa School 1pm Omokoroa Point 2.30pm Otumoetai Primary	9am - Whitiara Kindergarten 10am - St Pius 11am - Frankton Primary School 1.30pm - Melville Primary
Wednesday 12 <sup>th</sup>	9am James Street School Whakatane 12pm Kawerau South School 2pm Putuaki School	9.30am - Koromatua UCC visit and senior talk
Thursday 13 <sup>th</sup>  Friday 14 <sup>th</sup>	9am - Ohope Beach School 11am Ashbrook School 1.30pm Opotiki school  10am - Lynmore Pre-school 12pm - Aorangi 2.30pm - Mamuku Primary School	9.30am - Hamilton Christian School  11am - Vardon School 1.15pm - Horitu School  10am - Nawton School 12pm - Hamilton West 1.30pm - Gordonton Primary