



EPIDEMIOLOGY

PRESCHOOL AND PRIMARY SCHOOL SUN PROTECTION POLICIES AND PRACTICE: BASELINE SURVEY IN THE SOUTH OF SPAIN

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Introduction: Children will spend extended periods outdoors, during sport and recreational activities, sometimes in exposure to maximum solar radiation. The school sun protection policies can improve the risk of skin cancer in children.

Objective: Introduce sun protective practices and policies in the preschool and primary school in Andalucía.

Materials and methods: All the preschool and primary schools in Andalucía were selected. A questionnaire was sent to the school directors, evaluating policies, sun protection methods, curriculum, and environmental shade.

Results: In total, 420 of the original 2425 schools (17.31%) answered the questionnaire. Only 8 centers had written and independent policies; 67.1% of sun protection policies didn't exist, and a further 3.6% indicated that such policy was under development. According to sun protection methods, 3.3% require the use of hats or caps, 30% allow the use of sunglasses in outdoor areas, and in 50.7% the students were actively encouraged to wear sunscreen. The shadow spaces have been evaluated at 24.3% however at 52.9% it was insufficient for most of the activities. The main obstacle for their improvement in 62.9% of schools was due to insufficient financing.

Conclusions: This is the first European survey about sun protection policies and practices carried out in preschools and primary schools. Educational interventions based on sun protection programs and policies in primary schools have shown an improvement in knowledge, attitude, and habits of children. The practices and policies in Spanish schools are insufficient in all the areas studied. Although we cannot argue that the difficulty of financing is an issue to be addressed, there are also problems of knowledge and lack of awareness of irresponsible solar exposure in childhood, both in the educational field and in



ABSTRACT BOOK

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