

# Parents don't protect themselves from skin cancer because they're prioritising their children's skin

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Research reveals 47% of parents surveyed forget to protect their own skin

School's out for summer and with the increased popularity of the 'staycation' parents will be looking forward to spending time outdoors with their children enjoying the Great British summer.

However figures from Cancer Research UK and NIVEA SUN released today show that 47 per cent of UK parents of children under 18 who go out with them in the strong sun in the UK (which equates to more than 3 million people) are potentially putting themselves at increased risk of [skin cancer](#) by concentrating on protecting their children's skin and often forgetting to protect their own when they're out in strong sun.

The YouGov survey found that over nine in ten (92 per cent) of UK parents surveyed make sure their child's skin is protected before protecting their own. But 80 per cent of adults with children in their household admit to getting sunburnt themselves in the UK, which can increase the risk of skin cancer.

The research, which asked around 5,200 people

about their behaviour in the sun, was commissioned by Cancer Research UK and NIVEA SUN as part of their partnership to encourage people to enjoy the sun safely by spending time in the shade, covering up and using at least SPF 15 sunscreen.

When asked about protecting their child's skin when out in strong sun in the UK, 74 per cent of parents surveyed said they always make sure sunscreen of at least factor 15 is applied, yet only 38 per cent of UK adults with children in their household surveyed always apply it to themselves.

Similarly over half (55 per cent) always make sure their child spends time in the shade, whilst only 31 per cent of UK adults with children in their household surveyed always seek shade themselves. And almost two thirds (62 per cent) of parents always ensure their child covers up with clothing or a hat, but just 23 per cent of UK adults with children in their household surveyed take these precautions themselves.

Sarah Williams, senior health information officer at Cancer Research UK, said: "Parents need to practice what they preach and take care of their skin too. It was particularly worrying to see that while out in strong sun only a quarter of parents surveyed always cover up with clothing or a hat as this is one of the best ways to protect your skin. We want to help parents set an example so that their children have a healthy attitude towards the sun. Using a combination of shade, clothing and at least factor 15 sunscreen will help protect skin from harmful UV rays that can not only cause premature ageing and wrinkles, but can also increase the risk of skin cancer."

Cancer Research UK and NIVEA SUN are working together again this year to encourage people to enjoy the sun safely with three top tips and want to

remind parents to remember their own [skin](#), as well as protecting their children's :

- Spend time in the shade if your shadow is shorter than you. If your shadow is shorter than you are, then the sun is strong. During the UK summer, the sun is at its strongest between 11am and 3pm
- Wear a hat, t-shirt and sunglasses when the sun is strong. Wide brimmed hats or foreign legion style caps are best
- Cancer Research UK recommends you use at least factor 15 sunscreen with a high star rating when the sun is strong. Apply sunscreen generously and reapply regularly to make sure you get the level of protection on the bottle.

Provided by Cancer Research UK

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