

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, the research results indicate that the campaign has been effective, particularly among teenagers.

The campaign TVC has continued to achieve high reach, with 94% of teenagers and 90% of young adults having seen the advertisement at least once. In addition, frequency has improved further over time, with 67% of 14-17 year olds and 56% of 18-24 year olds reporting that they had seen the TVC six or more times. Reactions to the TVC continued to be favourable, with no signs of wear-out.

Recall of other campaign elements was lower, but nevertheless strong for these media. The print and outdoor advertisements have performed particularly well, especially among teenagers. Notably, 75% of teenagers said that they had seen the print advertisement entitled, "There is a lot more to treating skin cancer than removing a mole".

The results suggest that the campaign has had a dramatic, positive effect on awareness of sun protection methods. The salience of sunscreen has decreased slightly, while unprompted awareness of the other sun protection methods highlighted in the campaign advertising has improved markedly, particularly for sunglasses and shade. For example, unprompted awareness of shade increased from 26% prior to the first phase of the campaign to 53% in February 2008 among teenagers, and the corresponding figures were 35% and 53% among young adults. The campaign has therefore been very successful at meeting one of its key objectives. Not only were improvements achieved after the first phase of the campaign, but the results suggest that the second phase of the campaign has built upon and extended these gains.

There appear to have been several significant increases in the use of sun protection methods across both teenagers and young adults. The timing of the surveys is likely to have had some influence, with people being more inclined to report adopting sun protection behaviours when asked during the hotter season. However, some of these behavioural changes are likely to at least partly have been brought about by the campaign, particularly when improvements have occurred between the surveys conducted at the same time of year. In addition, the majority of participants have indicated that the campaign influenced them to adopt more forms of sun

protection, more often. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that some of the behavioural change observed has at least partly been brought about by the campaign.

Burning and deliberate tanning appears to have decreased, particularly among 14-17 year olds. It is difficult to assess the impact of the campaign in these areas, given that seasonal variation in tan-seeking and burning could be expected, and also because February 2008 was wet in several states. Even so, there was a small but significant decrease in the incidence of burning between November 2006 and November 2007 (when there was limited variation in the weather) among adolescents, in addition to the observed decrease from February 2007 to February 2008. The number of teenagers who reported that they had not been burnt during the last fortnight increased from 44% in November 2006 prior to the first phase of the campaign, to 52% the following November.

Similarly, among teenagers, deliberate tanning dropped from 42% in February 2007 to 29% in February 2008. Although the difference in weather between February 2007 and February 2008 is likely to have contributed to this drop, the fact that deliberate tanning dropped from 39% in November 2006 prior to the first phase of the campaign to 33% in November 2007 among 14-17 year olds does suggest that the campaign has made some impact.

Consistent with behavioural improvements, there were found to be changes in the target audience's attitudes towards tanning. Specifically, in February 2008, larger proportions of teenagers and young adults disagreed that it is safe to tan gradually, as long as one does not get burnt, when compared with previous rounds of research. This suggests that the second phase of the campaign has been more successful at communicating a message about the dangers associated with tanning. Campaign activity in specific states, as well as the media attention generated by Claire Oliver's death, are also likely to have contributed to this attitudinal change.

There is also evidence that the second phase of the campaign has made some progress on communicating a message about the risks associated with cumulative exposure. Comparing November 2007 and February 2008, the proportion of teenagers who disagreed with the statement, "Small amounts of sun exposure without protection are healthy and won't lead to skin damage" increased. Similarly, disagreement with this statement was greater among young adults in February 2008 than in any of the previous rounds of research. To some extent, it would be desirable for people to agree with this statement, from the point of view of avoiding Vitamin D deficiency. However, agreement with this statement may also suggest limited recognition of the risks associated with cumulative exposure, depending on what people regard as "small amounts of sun exposure". Hence, the changes which have been observed do suggest that the messages about cumulative exposure in the second phase of the campaign have made some impact.

Further improvements were observed in a number of other attitudes targeted by the campaign. The campaign appears to have been successful at increasing the perceived severity of skin cancer. The developmental qualitative research showed that this was an important objective, primarily because many people in the target audiences regarded the negative consequences of exposure to the sun as being primarily cosmetic and easily resolved. Prior to the first phase of the campaign, 17% of teenagers did not agree with the statement, "Skin cancers can kill". There was found to be an increase in agreement among 14-17 year olds after the first phase of the campaign, and by February 2008, agreement with this statement reached 88%, which was similar to the level of agreement among young adults. These results indicate that, as a result of the campaign, more teenagers recognise that skin cancer can be fatal. Furthermore, the February 2008 results show that both target audiences were less likely to perceive skin cancer treatment as a simple procedure than they were in each previous round of research. This is a pleasing outcome, given this was a central message of the campaign.

Not only was there an increase in the number of participants who perceived skin cancer to be severe, 14-17 year olds were more likely to see themselves as personally susceptible to it in February 2008 compared with the previous summer and prior to the first phase of the campaign. This suggests that the campaign has had some success in challenging the view that skin cancer only affects older people.

The results also suggest that there is now less widespread acceptance of sunscreen as an adequate form of protection on its own. There was significantly higher disagreement among teenagers in February 2008 with the statement, "When used properly, sunscreen is an adequate protection on its own", compared with previous rounds of research. Among young adults, disagreement increased comparing each of the pre- and post-media results. These results suggest that sustaining attitudinal change regarding the need for more comprehensive sun protection is challenging, and the audience may need to be reminded of this message frequently. Even so, the improvements observed in the post-campaign measures are encouraging.

Not only has the campaign increased the adoption of sun protection measures, it appears to have had the unintended effect of increasing young adults' intentions to have their skin checked by a doctor. When asked in November 2007 and February 2008, a slightly greater proportion of 18-24 year olds said that they intend to have their skin checked by a doctor in the next year, compared with the baseline data. Hence, the campaign appears to have had a small influence on early detection intentions among this age group. This is presumably a consequence of the fact that the campaign raises the issue of skin cancer removal and raises the perceived severity of skin cancer if not detected early.

Despite these improvements in awareness, behaviours and attitudes, there is still significant scope for further change. Consistent use of sun protection was not high, with the proportion of

teenagers and young adults indicating that they used a specific form of sun protection either always or usually being generally well below half. Reflecting this, the proportions reporting sunburn during the last fortnight continues to be extremely high (53% for teenagers and 63% for young adults), despite some evidence of improvement in the incidence of burning.

Although the campaign appears to have generated significant improvements in awareness, attitudes and has contributed to some behavioural progress, there is still significant scope for more change. Given this, further investment in sun protection messages is warranted.

There has been pleasing progress on attitudes towards tanning, with disagreement among 14-17 year olds that 'it is safe to tan gradually, as long as you don't get burnt' increasing from a third to just under half. This is mirrored in what appears to have been a reduction in deliberate tanning, with rates dropping by 13% among teenagers and 7% among young adults between February 2007 and February 2008. This is likely to be a result of the campaign working in synergy with other (state) campaign messages. Even so, many still see tans as safe, with over half (53%) of teenagers and 46% of young adults, failing to reject the idea that it is safe to tan gradually. There continues to be 29% of teenagers and 39% of young adults who report actively seeking a tan. Hence, subsequent campaigns may need to focus more specifically on widely-held misconceptions about the safety of tanning.

Another message which may need further attention is the risk associated with cumulative exposure. There does appear to have been some progress made, as mentioned above, with both key audiences being more likely to associate small amounts of unprotected exposure with the potential for skin damage after the second phase of the campaign. However, there are a number of indicators which suggest that many Australians continue to see cumulative exposure as unharmed. For example, tans are still widely perceived to be healthy. Also, despite some improvements in the adoption of various sun protection methods in specific situations, the extent to which people adopt comprehensive sun protection across a broad range of situations is still limited. The new print and radio advertisements which were added to the second phase of the campaign are likely to have yielded the observed improvements, but these media were secondary and had lower recall than the TVC. These gains could be expected to be built upon if the risks associated with cumulative exposure received more emphasis in any future campaigns.