



3 in 5 Aussie teens exposed to excess UV

New grants from eftpos will help protect 10,000 teens across the country

Thursday 15 September 2016: New research released today by Cancer Council Australia has revealed that nearly two thirds of Australian teenagers are out in the open during peak UV times and are at risk of harmful excess sun exposure. The research coincides with eftpos' announcement of its next round of funding in its Shade for Secondary Schools program.

eftpos will provide funding for an additional 18 high schools across Australia who will have a sun shade constructed on their grounds to help protect pupils from harmful UV rays. This brings eftpos' total funding for the program to \$1.25 million.

Managing Director at eftpos, Mr Bruce Mansfield, said that the company had decided to extend the program after the first round of grants proved to be overwhelming popular and continued to align with the company's ethos of helping Australians with their everyday.

"During the initial round of applications we had 381 schools across Australia apply for shade grants," Mr Mansfield said. "We initially provided 45 schools with shade grants, helping protect 28,000 children. We are delighted to be able to offer further funding to schools who missed out in the first round of grants."

"At eftpos we consider ourselves to be the everyday helper and that couldn't be truer when it comes to helping to protect our kids from the potentially damaging Australian sun. We are proud to be Australian and along with that comes a desire to educate people how to be safe in our climate."

Cancer Council CEO, Professor Sanchia Aranda said the Secondary School Shade grants helped provide students with excellent UV cover at school, but would also help educate teens about how they can better protect themselves from the sun on weekends.

"Cancer Council's National Sun Protection Survey found that only one in five teenagers outdoors during peak UV on weekends spent most of their time in the shade, which is recommended to reduce skin cancer risk."

"Teenagers at risk on weekends were in locations such as sports grounds, parks and beaches, where many teens reported having no access to shade. We want our young people being active and out and about, but during summer activities, like organised sports, teenagers tell us that shade can be difficult to find."

"Our skin is like a memory bank and remembers all the damage it has received over the years. Once the damage is done, it can't be undone and much of the sun damage to our skin that causes skin cancers in later life occurs in during our teenage years."

"That's why it's important to provide shade to teenagers wherever possible, encourage them to avoid peak UV exposure whenever they can and promote other measures, such as wearing sun-protective clothing, sunscreen and sunglasses," Professor Aranda said.

Professor Aranda said skin cancer was the most preventable of all prevalent cancers in Australia, the most costly for the health system. It is also the most common cancer type in Australians aged 15-29 years old.

"By generously funding more shade structures in secondary schools, eftpos is helping to reduce the overall amount of excess UV exposure teenagers receive – which is important, especially in view of our new research."



“We still need to do a lot more to reduce weekend exposure, however the additional commitment from eftpos will be of practical benefit to thousands of Australian teens, five days a week.”

A full list of successful schools can be found at: www.cancer.org.au/shade-for-schools/

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Notes to Editors:

The 2013-14 National Sun Protection Survey was conducted via phone over the summer of 2013-14. A total of 6,349 Australians were interviewed, including 1,061 adolescents aged 12 to 17. Conducted every three to four years by Cancer Council, the survey provides a perspective on sun protection behaviours.

Key findings of the National Sun Survey included:

- 75% of teenagers doing activities in public parks/gardens said shade wasn't available
- 68% of teenagers doing activities at sports grounds/centres said that shade was not available
- 50% of teenagers doing activities at the beach, lake or river said shade was not available.
- 61% (or 3 in 5) of teenagers were at least half the time out in the open during peak UV on weekends, the remaining 39% were either indoors or mainly in the shade.
- Of those teenagers who stayed mostly out in the open during their weekend activities, 68% said that it wasn't possible to do their weekend activities in the shade. The main reason given was lack of shade available for their activities.