

Melanoma Awareness Campaign 2007–08
Dark Side of Tanning

November 2008



The NSW Government agency dedicated to the control and cure of cancer through prevention, detection, innovation, research and information.



cancer
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NSW



Dark Side of Tanning

Skin cancer is largely preventable by protecting the skin from damaging ultraviolet radiation (UVR).

Over exposure to UVR from the sun can lead to sunburn and tanning in the short term and to premature skin ageing, non-melanoma skin cancer and melanoma in the long-term.

Australia has the highest incidence of melanoma, the most dangerous form of skin cancer, in the world for both males and females.¹ In 2005, melanoma was the most common cancer in females aged 15–29 years and males aged 25–54 years, and the fourth most common cancer in all men and women in NSW. Over the past 30 years, melanoma incidence has been increasing and is expected to continue increasing for decades to come, unless Australians improve their sun protection behaviour.²

The Cancer Institute NSW places emphasis on melanoma and skin cancer awareness as part of its Cancer Prevention Program. It aims to reduce the annual risk of sunburn, promote sun protection behaviour and reduce the incidence of melanoma and other skin cancers.

In 2007–08, the Cancer Institute NSW developed and implemented a new melanoma awareness campaign called the *Dark Side of Tanning*. The campaign aimed to increase awareness of the dangers of melanoma and tanning by challenging the misconception that a tan looks healthy. It prompted youth and young adults to reconsider their sun protection behaviour, the damage caused by unsafe exposure to the sun and their need for greater sun protection.



Campaign Objectives

- Increase understanding of the severity of melanoma as a health issue.
- Reduce pro-tanning attitudes.
- Increase understanding of the health consequences of unsafe exposure to the sun.
- Increase the proportion of people frequently using sun protection, including use of a range of sun protection measures.

The World Health Organization recommends people practice sun safe behaviour by:



Avoiding the sun around midday, (between 11am and 3pm daylight savings time), when UVR is at its peak.



Wearing protective clothing.



Wearing a broad-brimmed hat.



Wearing sunglasses.



Using a broad spectrum waterproof sunscreen SPF30+ and reapplying every two hours.³



Target Audience

The target audience for the campaign was youth aged 13–17 years and young adults aged 18–24 years.

Campaign Strategy

The *Dark Side of Tanning* campaign ran from 22 November 2007 through 29 February 2008 and employed a range of communication strategies across NSW. The main advertising medium was a 30-second television commercial, which was launched in late November 2007 to coincide with National Skin Cancer Action Week and the beginning of summer. Following a two week break in early December, the advertisement ran continuously from mid-December through late February.

In addition to television, the campaign was supported by other broadcast media including cinema, radio, print and outdoor advertising (billboards, buses and shopping centres).

A campaign website (darksideoftanning.com.au) was developed and a digital strategy implemented to drive traffic to the website, including online display advertising and Google Paid Search. Printed resources including fact sheets and posters were also available.

Evaluation

The campaign was evaluated through online tracking research that measured awareness, knowledge, attitudes and behaviour in relation to tanning, sun exposure and melanoma or other skin cancers, as well as campaign advertising performance. A pre-campaign measure was conducted over three weeks prior to the launch (n=405) and weekly tracking (n=100 per week) was conducted from the first week of the campaign for 13 weeks (n=1,314). A total of 1,719 surveys were completed by NSW residents aged 13–44 years. Quotas were set for age (25 per cent each for 13–17 yrs, 18–24 yrs, 25–34 yrs and 35–44 yrs), gender (50 per cent female, 50 per cent male) and location (60 per cent metro and 40 per cent rural). The data were post-weighted by age, gender and location to reflect the NSW population.

A significant decline in secondary school students (12–17 years) sun protection behaviour was observed between 1993 and 2005 – the proportion of students who had a high level of sun protection between 11.00am and 3.00pm on sunny days during the previous summer declined from 62.6 per cent in 1993 to 51.6 per cent in 2005.⁴

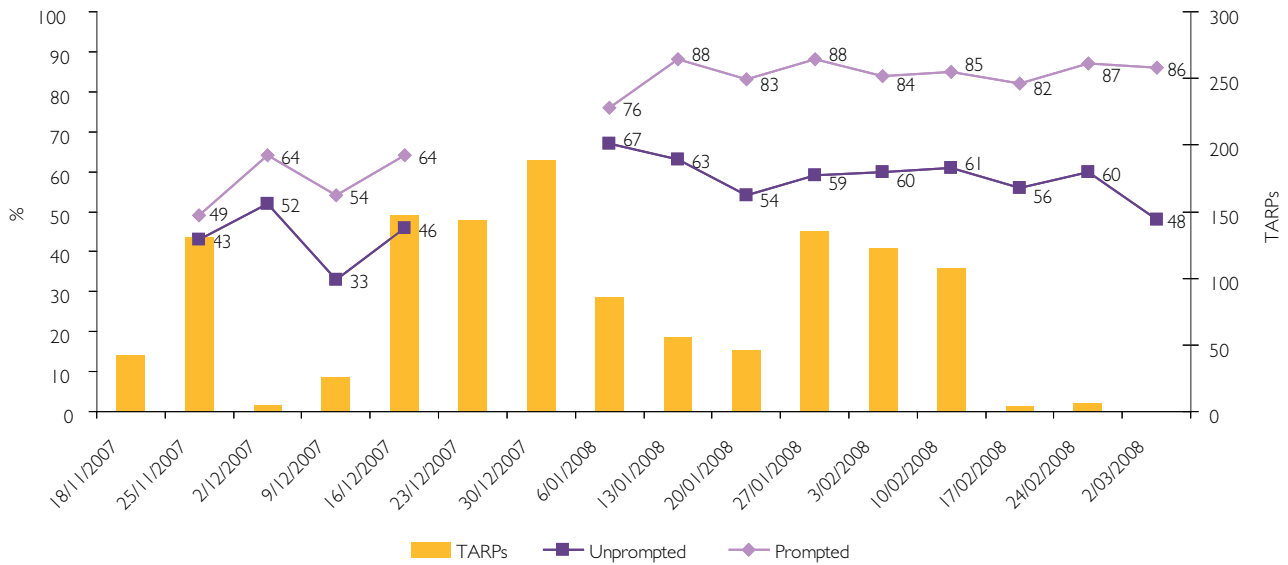


The Dark Side of Tanning advertisement features a young woman tanning on a beach and through animation demonstrates how overexposure to UVR damages skin cells even before signs of burning. It shows how melanoma can spread through the body.

Results:
Recognition

Proven recall (unprompted awareness) of the *Dark Side of Tanning* advertisement peaked at 67 per cent over the campaign period. Prompted awareness peaked at 88 per cent and was highest among females (Figure 1).

Figure 1 Recognition of the *Dark Side of Tanning* advertisement (unprompted and prompted)

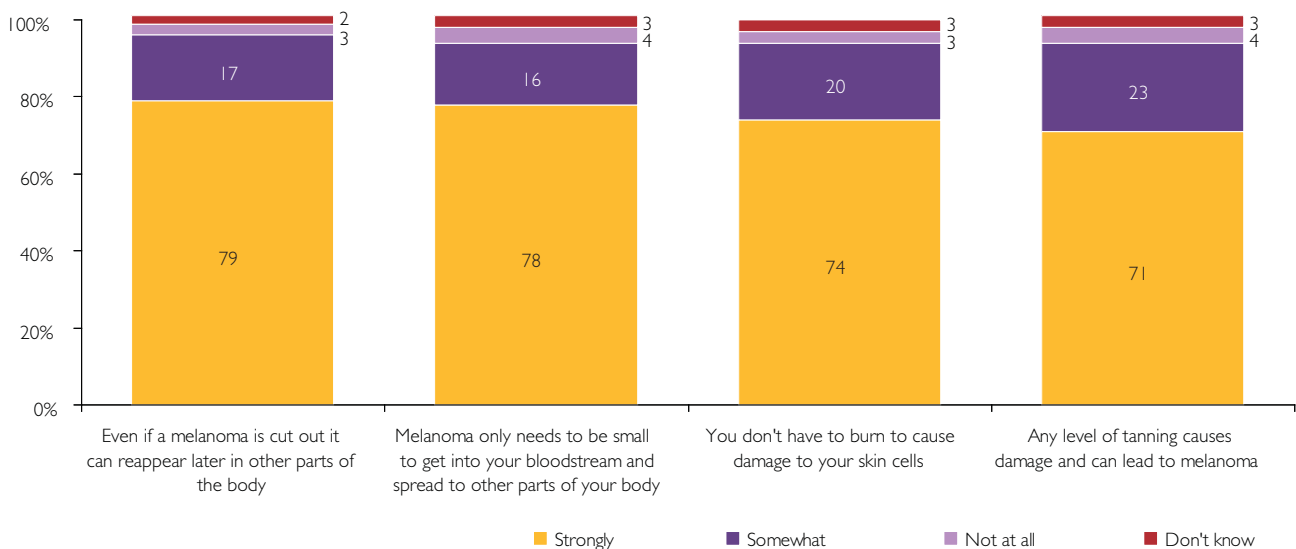


Base: Tracking n=1314; No interviewing w/c 23&30/12/2007

Message Takeout

The *Dark Side of Tanning* advertisement strongly communicated its key messages with nearly universal agreement that it 'strongly' or 'somewhat' gave the impression that 'melanoma only needs to be small to get into your bloodstream and spread to other parts of your body' (94 per cent); 'you don't have to burn to cause damage to your skin cells' (94 per cent); 'any level of tanning causes damage and can lead to melanoma' (94 per cent) and 'even if a melanoma is cut out it can reappear later in other parts of the body' (96 per cent) (Figure 2).

Figure 2 Prompted message takeout from the *Dark Side of Tanning* advertisement



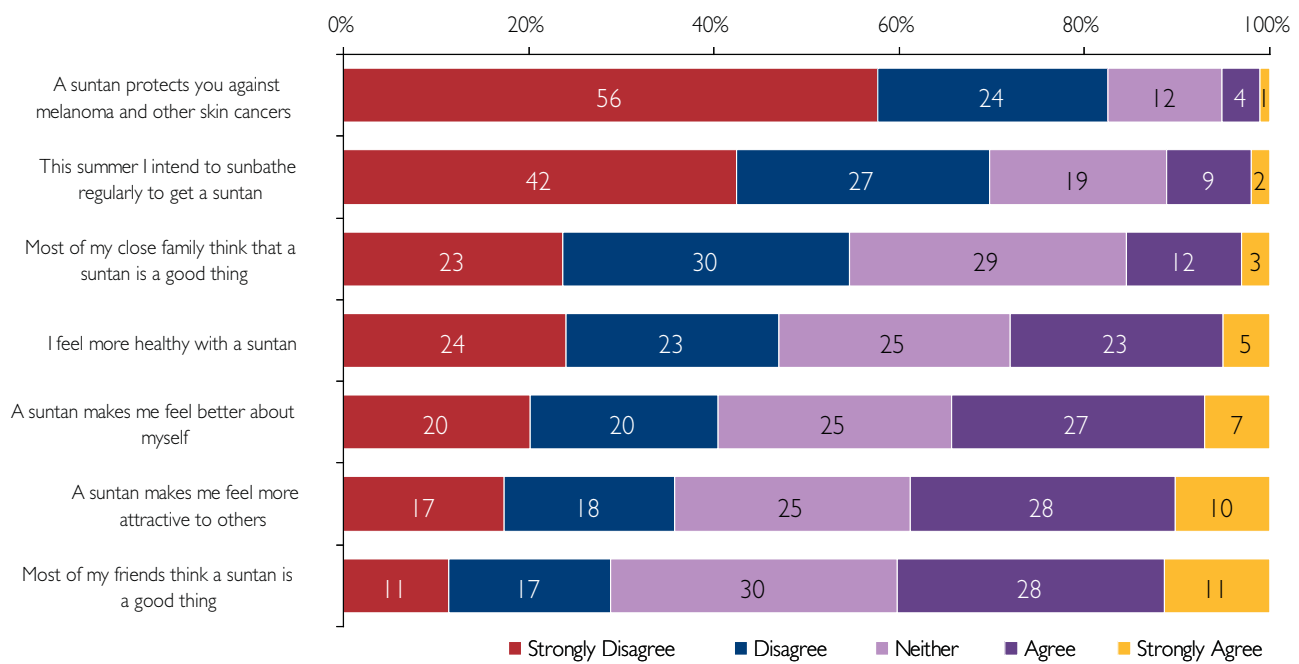
Base: Seen DSOT (Tracking) n=1006

Tanning

Half of all respondents reported they like to get a tan, and of those most preferred a light (33 per cent) or moderate tan (58 per cent). Respondents' attitudes toward tanning were assessed through a series of seven statements and a pro-tan score was calculated⁵ (**Figure 3**). Nearly four in ten respondents agreed that 'most of their friends think a suntan is a good thing' (39 per cent) and 'a suntan makes them feel more attractive to others' (38 per cent). Just over a third also agreed that 'a suntan made them feel better about themselves' (34 per cent).

From 2006–07 (39 per cent) to 2007/08 (33 per cent) a six per cent decline has been observed in the proportion of respondents who are pro-tan. Males and those aged 18–24 years were more likely to be pro-tan.

Figure 3 Tanning attitudes – Seven Pro-Tan statements



Base: Tracking n=1314

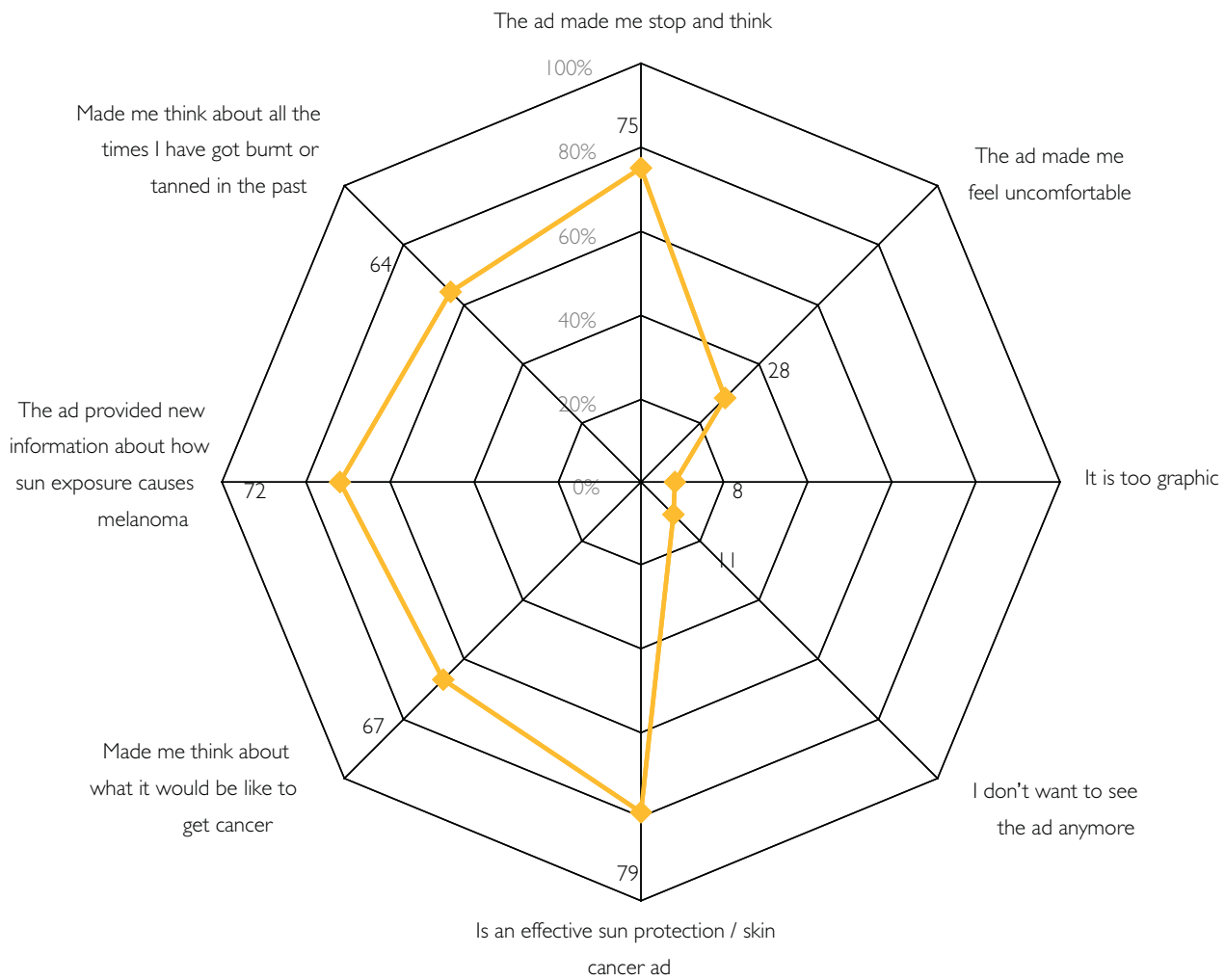
Behaviour – action or intention

Six in 10 respondents (62 per cent) indicated that they had or intended to increase their level of sun protection as a result of seeing the *Dark Side of Tanning* advertisement. A similar proportion (63 per cent) indicated they were a little less or a lot less likely to suntan as a result of seeing the ad.

Involvement Diagnostics

Most respondents agreed (strongly agree + agree) that the *Dark Side of Tanning* advertisement 'is an effective sun protection/ skin cancer ad' (79 per cent), that 'the ad made them stop and think' (75 per cent) and that 'the ad provided new information about how sun exposure causes melanoma' (72 per cent) (Figure 4).

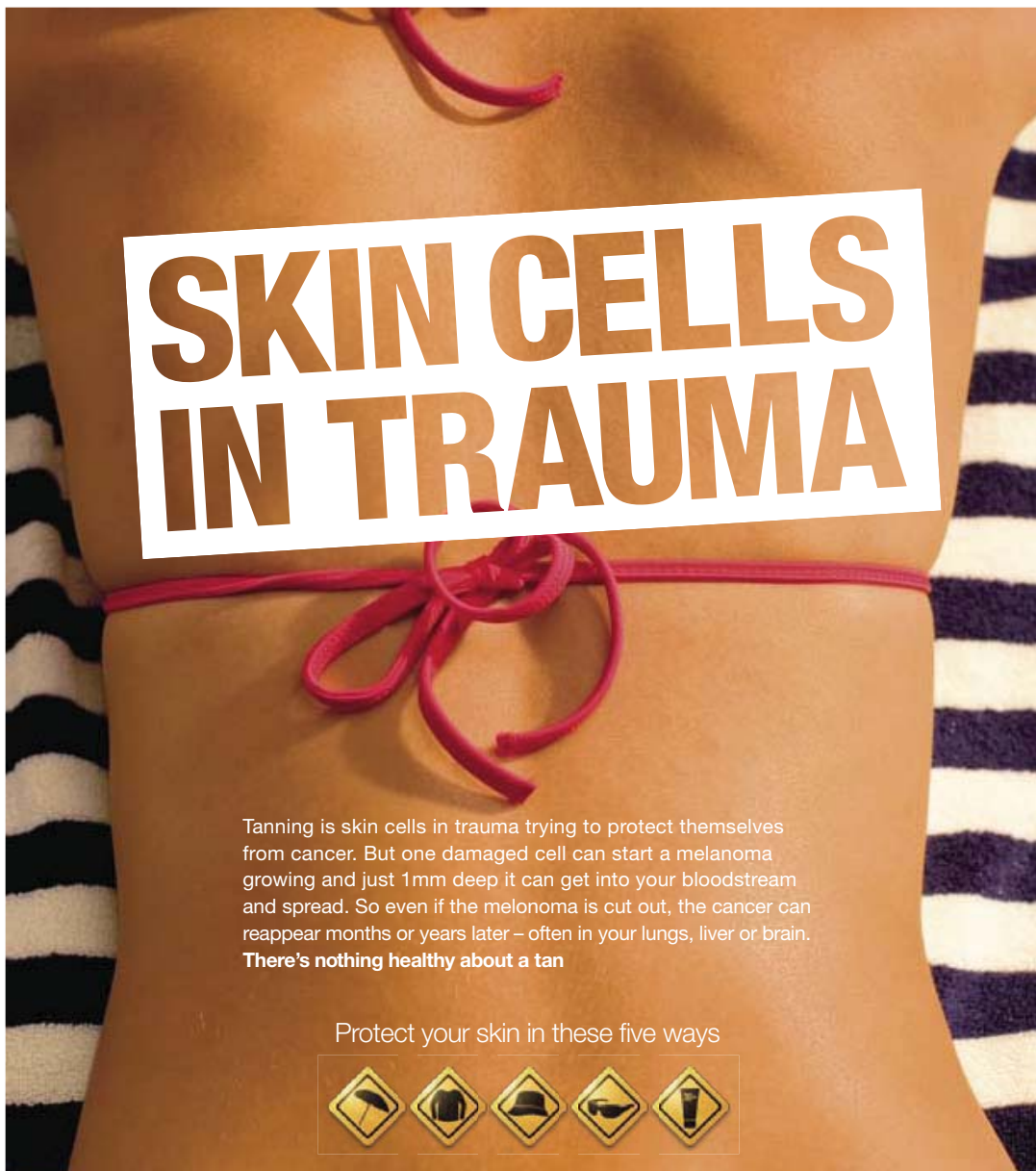
Figure 4 Involvement diagnostics for the *Dark Side of Tanning* advertisement



Base: Seen DSOT (Tracking) n=1006

Conclusions

The *Dark Side of Tanning* campaign achieved good recognition and was successful in achieving its objectives. The ad strongly communicated its key messages relating to the severity of melanoma and the health consequences of unsafe exposure to the sun. The ad successfully challenged pro-tanning attitudes and prompted a behavioural response in relation to increasing sun protection and reducing the likelihood to suntan.




**SKIN CELLS
IN TRAUMA**

Tanning is skin cells in trauma trying to protect themselves from cancer. But one damaged cell can start a melanoma growing and just 1mm deep it can get into your bloodstream and spread. So even if the melanoma is cut out, the cancer can reappear months or years later – often in your lungs, liver or brain.

There's nothing healthy about a tan

Protect your skin in these five ways



1. Australian Institute of Health & Welfare 2006, Australia's Health 2006, AIHW, Canberra, AIHW cat. no. AUS 73.
2. Tracey E, Baker D, Chen W, Stavrou E, Bishop J. Cancer in New South Wales: Incidence, Mortality and Prevalence, 2005. Sydney, Cancer Institute NSW, November 2007.
3. World Health Organization 1994, Protection Against Exposure to Ultraviolet Radiation.
4. Centre for Epidemiology and Research. New South Wales School Students Health Behaviours Survey: 2005 Report. Sydney: NSW Department of Health, 2007.
5. Henry G.F.M, Reeder A.I, Gray A. Attitudes towards suntanning 1994-2003. Conference Paper.

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