



# Report on the Danish sun safety campaign and volunteers 2011

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## **Summary**

This report outlines the work done by volunteers for the 2011 sun safety campaign run by the Danish Cancer Society and the philanthropic foundation TrygFonden. It also follows up on objectives set for three areas of the campaign in which volunteers are heavily involved: the Local Sun Week, sun stands and events, and the Local Sunbed Week.

In 2011 a total of 774 volunteers took part in the Local Sun Week, sun stands and events, and the Local Sunbed Week. It is estimated that the volunteers spent 6,063 hours working for the sun safety campaign, corresponding to over five man-years.

In addition to the volunteers mentioned above, other volunteers have also contributed to the various activities of the sun safety campaign. These include dermatologists who volunteer their services and ambassadors, such as DJ KATO who supported the campaign by playing free of charge and communicating the sun safety message on his website. The efforts of this group of volunteers are not described in this report but the sun safety campaign is highly appreciative of their involvement.

## **The Local Sun Week**

During the Local Sun Week in May 2011, 289 volunteers took the sun protection message to 243 childcare institutions (205 kindergartens and 38 after-school clubs). This was the first time that the Local Sun Week also included visits to after-school clubs, which was considered a success by the volunteers and the after-school clubs. In addition to raising awareness of sun protection for children and their carers, the aim of the Local Sun Week is to use the volunteers' visits to motivate the institutions to adopt a sun policy. The objective for the Local Sun Week was to encourage at least 50% of the institutions without a sun policy to adopt or plan to adopt one following the visit. In 2011 this objective was achieved.

## **Sun stands and events**

343 volunteers personally communicated the sun protection message to around 18,000 Danes at 99 sun stands and local sun events during the summer (town parties, on beaches etc.). In addition to the sun stands and events which the volunteers arranged themselves, the sun safety campaign had a number of centrally organised events - including sun lounges at four music festivals, and events at zoos and theme parks. The objective for the sun stands and events focus area was to have 150 sun stands and events organised by volunteers over the summer but this was not achieved. A probable reason for this is that compared with previous years there were more centrally organised events and volunteers chose to participate in these events instead of arranging local sun stands and local sun events. Another contributing factor was the flooding at the Danish Cancer Society main office in

Copenhagen in July 2011. This caused the IT system to shut down making it difficult for many volunteers to order materials for sun stands and events.

### **The Local Sunbed Week**

The original objective with the Local Sunbed Week was for volunteers to work to make municipalities remove sunbeds from public buildings. As only 18 municipalities (out of 98) continue to have sunbeds in public buildings, the volunteer efforts in 2011 were used to focus on the damaging effect sunbeds have on health. For example, volunteers were given the opportunity to send letters to the parents of young people of confirmation age explaining why young people should not use sunbeds leading up to their confirmation or the non-religious 'non-firmation'. A total of 48 volunteers communicated the risk of sunbeds at 11 volunteer events during the Local Sunbed Week. The objective of this focus area was to hold at least 10 volunteer events during the Local Sunbed Week and this was achieved.

### **General**

In total, 16 out of the 22 objectives for using volunteers in the sun safety campaign were achieved in 2011, while three objectives were partially achieved.

The vast majority of volunteers enjoyed their volunteer work and are willing to volunteer again. 97% of volunteers who participated in the Local Sun Week agreed or completely agreed with the statement: "Participating in the Local Sun Week was an overall positive experience". For volunteers who participated in the Local Sunbed week, this figure was 92%.

The activities of volunteers created much media coverage. For example, in connection with the Local Sun Week, there were 93 incidences of media coverage: 62 from local newspapers, 26 from online news sites, four from radio and one from local TV. These figures show that volunteers are good at contacting local media and communicating a local angle to their work. The media coverage created by the volunteers is supplemented by the coverage generated by the sun safety campaign office. This results in more stories in the media which greatly benefits the sun safety cause.

While the work of the volunteers in 2011 corresponds to over five man-years, paid employees at the Danish Cancer Society and the sun safety campaign (including employees in the Sun Office and the Danish Cancer Society's regional consultants) spent under half that time on development, coordination and evaluation of the campaign's volunteer work. This shows the value of the volunteers' contribution to the campaign work. Were it not for volunteers, the sun safety campaign would not be able to spread its message as extensively as it does.

One of the most important factors for the success of the volunteer work is the volunteers who take on a coordinating role in local work. These volunteers, called campaign leaders, are responsible for coordinating local efforts including contact to other participating volunteers and to the Danish Cancer Society. The role of campaign leader requires good organisational skills and independence. This group of volunteers has a different role to that of typical volunteers. As shown in the report, the campaign leaders in the sun safety campaign manage this role well and continue year after year. This is greatly appreciated by the sun safety campaign team.