



Sunbed habits of children and young people in Denmark 2010

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Danish title: “Børn og unges solarievaner 2010 – en kortlægning”

Summary

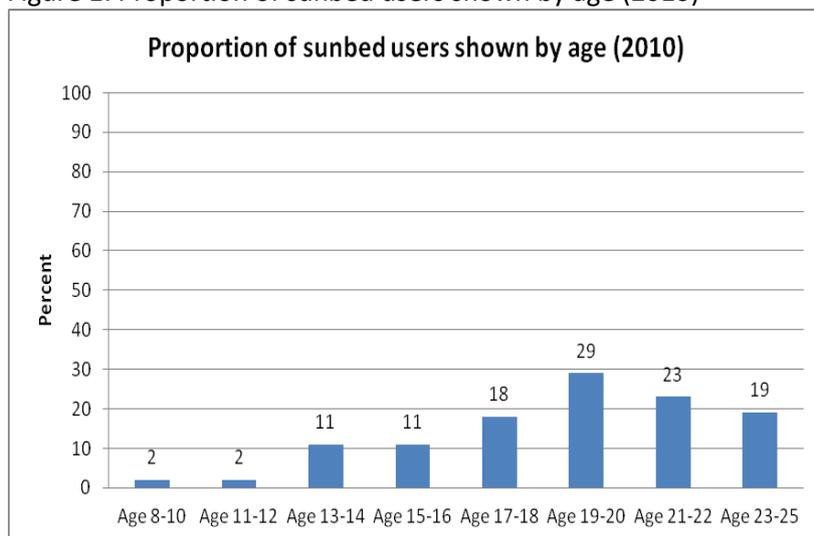
This report examines the sunbed habits of Danish children and young people, as well as the attitudes of mothers aged between 40 and 50 towards sunbeds and towards their 12-18 year old children’s use of sunbeds. The report is based on data from three surveys carried out at the end of 2010¹. In these surveys children, young people and mothers of children aged 12-18 were asked about their use of sunbeds, their knowledge of the risks associated with using sunbeds and their attitudes towards sunbed use. The mothers surveyed were also asked about their children’s use of sunbeds.

The Danish Cancer Society has no figures on the number of sunbeds currently in private, public and commercial use in Denmark. In the spring of 2011, the former Danish Minister of Economic and Business Affairs Brian Mikkelsen, working with a health care committee, estimated that there are approximately 4000 sunbeds in Denmark.

Sunbed use among children and young people in 2010

The survey shows that children as young as 8 years old use sunbeds. The proportion of sunbed users increases throughout the teenage years and peaks with 19-20 year olds. In this group 29% have used a sunbed within the past year. Girls use sunbeds more than boys and young people living in the Copenhagen region use sunbeds less than young people in other areas of Denmark (figures not shown on the diagram).

Figure 1: Proportion of sunbed users shown by age (2010)

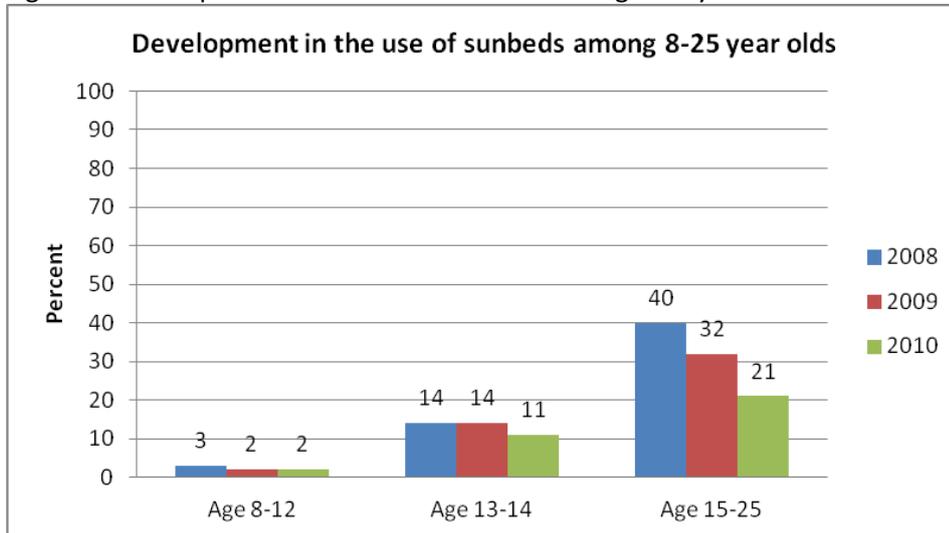


¹ In the three surveys, data was collected from 1,093 8-14 year olds, 1,002 15-25 year olds and 1,010 40-50 year old mothers with children aged 12-18.

Development in the sunbed habits of children and young people 2008-2010

While sunbed use among 8-14 year olds has not changed significantly in the period between 2008 and 2010, sunbed use among 15-25 year olds has been halved from 40% in 2008 to 21% in 2010. In particular, girls and 15-20 year olds use sunbeds less (figures not shown on the diagram).

Figure 2: Development in the use of sunbeds among 8-25 year olds²



Young people's knowledge and experience of the risks of sunbed use

Almost all young people know that using sunbeds increases the risk of skin cancer and melanoma. However, one in four sunbed users does not believe that the health risk applies to his or her sunbed use. This can be due to the fact that many young people believe that sunbeds are only harmful when used frequently.

Among non-sunbed users seven out of ten say they do not use sunbeds because of the health risks.

Influence of friends and family

Young people who have friends or family who use sunbeds, are more likely to use sunbeds than young people who do not socialise with other sunbed users. To a large degree, sunbed use is a social activity. Almost two thirds of young sunbeds users state that they go with other people when they use sunbeds.

Mothers' attitudes towards children and young people's sunbed use

Almost half of the 40-50 year old mothers (48%) who have children who use sunbeds are against their children using sunbeds. Among mothers of non-sunbed using children, two thirds (66%) state that their child is not allowed to use a sunbed. Three out of four of all 40-50 year old mothers (76%) support a ban on sunbed use for children and young people under 18 years old.