MEDIA RELEASE

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02 November 2026

‘Sun safe habits last a lifetime’: National Skin Cancer Action Week theme unveiled as Australia celebrates 45 years of Slip! Slop! Slap! and Sid Seagull



Image| Cancer Council Australia CEO Jacinta Reddan and Cancer Control Policy, Director David Martin. Credit: Cancer Council Australia

Cancer Council Australia has unveiled *Sun safe habits last a lifetime* as the theme for National Skin Cancer Action Week (15–22 November 2026), encouraging Australians to make sun protection part of everyday life and pass those habits on to future generations.

The announcement comes as Australia marks 45 years of Slip! Slop! Slap! and Sid Seagull, one of the country's most recognised public health campaigns. To celebrate the milestone, Cancer Council Australia has introduced Little Sid Seagull designed to help carry the sun safety message to a new generation.

YouGov polling data shows Sid Seagull continues to resonate, with four in five Australians agreeing Sid Seagull has nostalgic appeal and can educate new generations about sun safety. 64% say campaigns like those featuring Sid make them more likely to use sun protection.

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While forty-five years of prevention efforts have contributed to declining melanoma rates among men and women under 40, two in three Australians will still be diagnosed with a form of skin cancer in their lifetime, and there are more non-melanoma skin cancer diagnoses than all other cancers combined.

Cancer Council Australia CEO Jacinta Reddan said the new campaign theme reflected the importance of turning awareness into lifelong behaviours. “For 45 years, Sid Seagull has helped Australians remember how to protect themselves from the sun. While we've made progress, the job's not done,” Ms Reddan said.

“We know that exposure to ultraviolet radiation from the sun is the main cause of skin cancer, and research has found that 50% of lifetime UV exposure happens before age 20, showing that sun protection habits established today can help lower your risk of skin cancer tomorrow. Studies also tell us that children are 12 times more likely to use sunscreen and three times more likely to wear a hat when they see their parents do it first, further emphasising that the benefits of sun-safe habits can last a lifetime, especially when introduced early.

“This National Skin Cancer Action Week, we're encouraging Australians to carry sun-safe habits forward and pass them on to a new generation.”

The 2026 theme focuses on the role families play in establishing sun protection habits, encouraging parents and carers to lead by example and make sun safety a consistent part of everyday life.

Australasian College of Dermatologists President Dr Adrian Lim said the enduring success of the Slip! Slop! Slap! message demonstrated the value of simple, memorable health communication. “The Australasian College of Dermatologists is proud to celebrate 45 years of the iconic Slip, Slop, Slap campaign with Cancer Council Australia."

“These, now further evolved to five sun protection steps, including Seek and Slide, continue to be the best defence against Australia's most common cancer.”

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National Skin Cancer Action Week reminds Australians to check the UV Index and use all five forms of sun protection whenever the UV level reaches three or above: **Slip** on protective clothing, **Slop** on SPF50 or SPF50+ sunscreen, **Slap** on a hat, **Seek** shade and **Slide** on sunglasses.

Throughout November and National Skin Cancer Action Week, Australians will have the opportunity to win limited-edition Little Sid Seagull 10-cm plushies through Cancer Council Australia giveaways.



Image | Little Sid Seagull. Credit: Cancer Council Australia

Chair of Cancer Council's National Skin Cancer Committee, Sally Blane, added: "In 1981, Slip! Slop! Slap! gave Australians a simple and memorable introduction to sun protection. Our upcoming National Skin Cancer Action Week is an opportunity to renew that message, celebrate its enduring recognition with the introduction of Little Sid Seagull, and help families turn sun protection into habits that last a lifetime.

"We encourage Australians to check their local UV levels on the SunSmart Global UV app and use all five forms of sun protection when the UV is three or above. Remember to Slip on sun-

protective clothing, Slop on SPF50 or SPF50+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen, Slap on a broad brimmed hat, Seek shade and Slide on sunglasses."

-ENDS-

Media opportunities

Available from 02 November 2026:

- Spokespeople to discuss 45 years of Slip! Slop! Slap! and Sid Seagull
- Original Sid Seagull advertisements and jingle
- Little Sid Seagull plushies & imagery

Available from 15 November 2026:

- New data on Australians' sun protection attitudes and behaviours
- Interviews with Jacinta Reddan and Dr Adrian Lim
- Lived-experience case studies sharing personal experiences of skin cancer

Contact details

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About the research

YouGov conducted the study from 16–20 October 2025 among a nationally representative sample of 1,035 Australians aged 18 and over. Data was weighted by age, gender and region to the latest ABS population estimates; respondents came from the YouGov panel.

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About National Skin Cancer Action Week 2026

More information about National Skin Cancer Action Week is available on our website: National Skin Cancer Action Week 2026 | Combatting Australia's 'national cancer' | Cancer Council Australia

Media assets are available here.

Link to Little Sid Seagull competition (this will go live after embargo): https://www.cancer.org.au/nscaw2026/win-little-sid-seagull

About Cancer Council Australia

Cancer Council Australia is Australia's leading cancer charity, working to reduce the impact of cancer for all Australians. Cancer Council Australia works with its members, the eight state and territory Cancer Councils, to:

- Undertake and fund cancer research
- Prevent and control cancer
- Provide information and support for people affected by cancer
- Shape and influence policy and practice

Find out more at cancer.org.au, or visit our Facebook, Instagram, or LinkedIn