Abstract: Introduction: Children are at particular risk for sun exposure, a major cause of skin cancer. Parents and caregivers can help protect children by educating them about practicing safe sun habits, and providing supportive environments. The aim of this study is the promotion of sun protection behaviors in 1-8 years old children through mother education based on Social Cognitive Theory (SCT).

Methods: One hundred and sixty five mothers of 1-8 years old children referring to Emamshahr health care center of Yazd city participated in this study. The study subjects were randomized to either an intervention (70 subjects) or control (90subjects) group. Data was gathered by using Parental Sun Protection Scale (PSPS), via face to face interview, before and two months after performing the educational intervention program and were analyzed by using SPSS 11.5 software and suitable statistic tests.

Results: Findings of this study showed that the significant increases were found in mean scores of self efficacy ($P \leq 0.001$), norms ($P \leq 0.001$), impediments ($P \leq 0.01$), and expectancies ($P \leq 0.001$), in intervention group at two month after performing the educational intervention program. Significant increases were also found in behaviors of using the sun protection devices such as sun screen ($P \leq 0.001$), sun glass ($P \leq 0.007$), and protective clothing ($P \leq 0.01$). There was no significant variation in mean scores of the variables in the control group.

Conclusion: The results of this study showed the efficacy of educational interventions based on Social Cognitive Theory for the promotion of sun protection behaviors in children via education of their mothers.

Key words: sun protection, educational intervention, Social Cognitive Theory

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