

## School holiday "Burnanza"

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### INTRODUCTION

Anecdotally, a higher number of paediatric burns are referred to the burns unit at the Children's Hospital Westmead (CHW) during the school holidays. This study compared burns sustained by school aged children during the school holidays to during the school term.

### METHOD

A retrospective analysis of all burns sustained by school aged children from January 2005 to January 2019.

### RESULTS

3020 children were referred to CHW during this time.

	School holidays	School term
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	559 (61%)	1226 (58%)
Female	350 (39%)	885 (42%)
<b>Mean age</b>	10.2	10.3
<b>Mean %TBSA</b>	2.9	2.9
<b>Total no.</b>	909	2111
<b>Total weeks</b>	168	560

TABLE 1. Demographics

### RESULTS

More burn injuries were referred during the school holidays than school term (5.4 vs 3.8,  $p < 0.0001$ ).

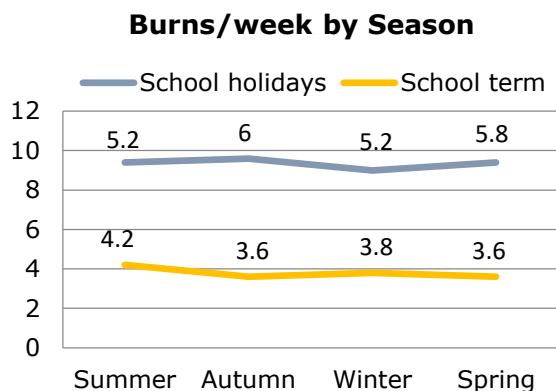


FIGURE 1. Burns referred per week by season. No significant seasonal pattern found.

The majority of burns occurred in the residential home in both groups (77%,  $p < 0.0001$ ). However, the percentage of burns that occurred at places for sport, recreation or holidays doubled during school holidays (17% vs 8%,  $p < 0.0001$ ).

### Mechanism of burns injury

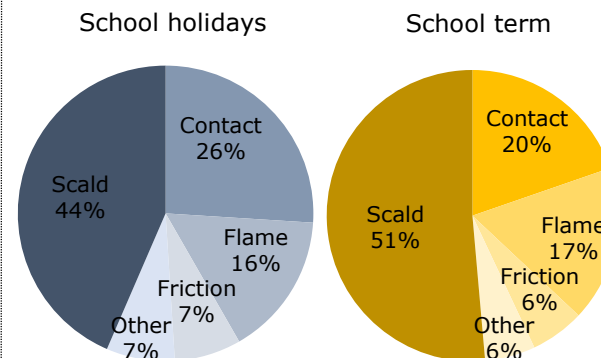


FIGURE 2. Mechanism of burns injury. Scalds were the most common mechanism of burn injury.

The relative proportion of scald burns decreased in school holidays whilst the proportion of contact burns increased (Figure 2).

The increased proportion of contact burns during school holidays was due to an increased incidence of burns from coal/ash (4% vs. 2%) and car/motorcycle exhaust pipes (11% vs. 7%).

### Outcome measures

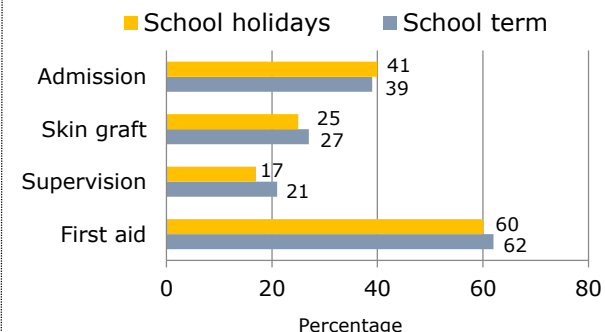


FIGURE 3. Outcome measures. Rates of admission, skin grafting, supervision and first aid were similar in both groups.



FIGURE 4. Motorcycle exhaust contact burn.

### CONCLUSION

Burn injuries amongst school-aged children are more common during the school holidays. Burn prevention strategies should therefore target school holiday periods.