

Miss Atlanta's Teen: A Voice for Melanoma Awareness and Prevention

Mara Eva Cline uses her pageant platform to advocate for melanoma awareness. She also wrote a children's book on skin cancer and sun safety.

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By [Laurel Farr, Melanoma Research Alliance Development Associate](#)

Mara Eva Cline is not your average high school senior. That's because, in addition to going to class and hanging out with friends, Mara Eva is also the proud pageant titleholder of Miss Atlanta's Teen. Over the past three years — as she competed at various pageants — she has dedicated herself and her platform to promoting melanoma awareness and prevention.

"Although pageant titles are often overlooked by others, they have created numerous opportunities for me," said Mara Eva. "I am not only able to promote melanoma awareness, but also empower other girls to love their skin. I consider myself lucky to be able to do that."

Mara Eva's interest in melanoma first started when her 9th grade biology teacher gave a lesson on the harmful effects of UV rays and shared that she recently had a few spots removed on her face. After the lesson, Mara Eva continued to read everything she could about [UV damage](#), sun safety, and skin cancer. "I realized there is a major gap between what we know to be healthy for us and what people actually do," said Mara Eva. "I knew I could make a difference by raising awareness of this — so I did."

As her interest grew, Mara Eva discovered she also had a personal connection to the cause. She learned that her grandfather was diagnosed with melanoma in the 1980s and underwent Mohs surgery. He was fortunate that it was detected and treated early before it had time to metastasize to other parts of his body. Her mother and uncles also had spots removed over the years, causing Mara Eva's family to take extra precautions when it comes to sun protection and [regular skin checks](#). Mara Eva even remembers having dermatologist appointments as early as 10 years old to have her skin checked.

Funding the Fight Against Melanoma

Choosing melanoma awareness and prevention as her pageant platform was an easy choice for

Mara Eva. As the title holder of Miss Atlanta's Teen, she is in a position to make a difference by helping people learn about melanoma and sun safety. As part of her efforts, she has held multiple fundraising events in support of the Melanoma Research Alliance and created a page on Instagram — [safe_in_the_sun](#) — to promote melanoma awareness and provide resources for others.

After some research, Mara Eva connected with the Melanoma Research Alliance, and in 2020 — when she held the title of USA National Miss Southeast Jr. Teen — she organized her first raffle in support of MRA. That raffle raised \$875 from 165 participants. To date, Mara Eva has held three raffles and raised over \$2,000 for MRA's lifesaving research program.

Mara Eva is also participating in MRA's [Step Up for Melanoma](#) campaign for the second year. She's looking forward to being active, while also raising funds for a cause she is passionate about. As a returning participant, Mara Eva offers the following tips for new participants:

- promote the event in your community,
- get your friends and family involved, and of course,
- have fun with the challenge and get engaged!

Promoting Awareness of Melanoma

On social media, Mara Eva's message is clear: "love your skin." She knows that avoiding harmful activities like tanning, and taking measures to protect your skin from UV radiation — like wearing sunscreen and protective clothing — will help people be the most confident and healthy version of themselves. Experts believe that 90% of all melanomas are caused by ultraviolet radiation from the sun or indoor tanning devices.

As a young adult, Mara Eva recognizes the lack of awareness among younger people on the topic of melanoma and that stigmas exist around wearing [sunscreen](#) or going to a dermatologist. A fact that stuck with Mara Eva from a young age was that even one terrible sunburn during childhood can double a person's risk of developing melanoma later in life.

To further promote melanoma awareness and encourage young people to embrace sun safety, Mara Eva is publishing a children's book, called *Whack a Mole Before It's Too Late*. Her book will follow an animal family of moles as they go on vacation and will be published through Amazon in the coming months. "I really hope that this children's book can spread awareness on the importance of sun safety and encourage children to wear sunscreen and protect their skin," explained Mara Eva.

Empowering the Community

Mara Eva is proud of the impact she has made in her community over the years. “It’s been great to see my peers’ response to everything I’ve been promoting,” said Mara Eva. For example, classmates have told Mara Eva that because of her efforts, they have started wearing sunscreen every day, and some have started going to the dermatologist to get skin checks, all because of the facts and helpful resources she regularly shares.

Mara Eva’s pageant titles have given her a platform to voice her passion for melanoma awareness and prevention within her community. She is committed to continuing to build relationships and sharing lifesaving information with others about the importance of sun safety. Mara Eva’s biggest takeaway so far is knowing that her efforts have made a positive difference in people’s lives. “I really consider this an honor,” she said.

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<http://beta.docker.cancerhealth.com/blog/miss-atlantas-teen-mara-eva-cline-voice-melanoma-awareness-prevention>