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SAVE O₃UR SKY - BE OZONE FRIENDLY

When I was twelve, my sisters and I used to play out in the sun all day. We'd have great fun skipping and basking and simply enjoyed the sun. (I don't play under the sun any more).

One day our neighbour, Mr. Mark died of skin cancer. We were very close and I couldn't help but ask my mum what causes skin cancer, why did Mr. Mark have to die, how come the guys at the hospital couldn't do to him what they did to sick people and make him healthy again. I remember Mum's exact words. She said, Mr. Mark had to die, there's no way of getting rid of skin cancer. She was right, in a way. There is no cure for cancer.

Skin cancer, headaches, dizziness and many other diseases are all effects of (over exposure to) ultraviolet rays from the sun. The ozone layer which is a form of oxygen that is present in the earth's atmosphere in small amounts, protects us from the deadly rays.

However, chlorofluorocarbons present in aerosol sprays, in refrigerators and foam carton are released into the atmosphere everyday. When this happens the ozone layer, which lies in the stratosphere between nine and eighteen miles above the earth surface, are destroyed. Consequently, human life and plants are endangered.

We all love the sun. Some of us want to have a good tan, others just want to get some vitamin D; I just want to go out and enjoy the sun like I did when I was twelve. Yes, we can all go out and enjoy ourselves without thinking of ultraviolet rays or CFCs or skin cancer or headaches. We can only achieve this by saving O₃ur Sky.

The Chinese say, The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step, similarly our mission to save O₃ur Sky will start with a single step. First and foremost let's get some education. The Government of Kenya needs to educate the citizens, both the young and the aging, of the importance of the ozone layer. Let us learn to appreciate the importance of the ozone, let us kick ignorance out of our country and let us save our sky and our skin.

Kenyans can also protect O₃ur Sky by preventing the use of chemicals that destroy the ozone layer.

See? Mr. Mark didn't have to die.