**5 Steps to Sun Safety for Kids**

In summer -- or any season -- protecting kids from the sun's harmful rays is a must. Here's what every parent should know. Compiled By Elana Roth

The Skin Cancer Foundation estimates that 80% of lifetime sun exposure occurs during childhood -- and that just one blistering sunburn can double the risk of getting melanoma later in life. Protect your children by following these tips from the American Academy of Dermatology and the American Academy of Pediatrics:

1. **Limit outdoor playtime between 10a.m. and 4p.m.** Avoid unnecessary exposure when the sun's rays are at their strongest. Even on cloudy or cooler days, ultraviolet (UV) rays remain strong. Shady spots can be just as tricky because of reflected light. If your child is playing outdoors during these hours, make sure to apply sufficient sunscreen.
2. **Apply sunscreen properly.** Generously apply sunscreen 30 minutes before your child goes out in the sun. Choose a sunscreen with SPF (Sun Protection Factor) 15 or higher. Scented and colorful sunscreens appeal to some kids and make it easier to see which areas have been covered well. Don't forget nose, ears, hands, feet, shoulders, and behind the neck; lips can also burn, so apply a lip balm with SPF protection. Reapply sunscreen every 2 to 3 hours, or after sweating or swimming.
3. **Cover up.** Wearing protective clothing and hats is one of the most important ways of warding off UV damage. When wet, light-colored clothing transmits just as much sunlight as bare skin. Keep your kids covered with dark colors, long sleeves, and pants whenever possible. And don't forget the accessories: sunglasses with UV protection to guard against burned corneas, and hats to prevent sunburned scalps and faces. Protective clothing, hats with brims, and sunglasses are just as important for babies. At the beach, bring along a large umbrella.
4. **Keep watch on medications.** Some medications increase the skin's sensitivity to the sun, so make sure to ask your doctor whether your child may be at risk. Prescription antibiotics and acne medications are the most notorious culprits, but when in doubt, ask.
5. **Set a good example for your kids.** If your child sees you following sun-safety rules, he'll take them for granted and follow suit. Skin protection is important for every member of the family, so team up with your children to stay protected when venturing out in the sun.

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