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Sun Safety Awareness at Home and School

Ways to incorporate sun-safety awareness into your child's everyday life at home and at school.



- Incorporate it as a daily routine. Express to them that what they do now – and don't do now – will have an impact on them later in life. Explain to them that sun exposure has a snowball effect, meaning that year after year of suntans and sunburns adds negative aspects to their skin which will show up as wrinkles or maybe even skin cancer.
- Schedule weekend activities and practices to avoid peak sun intensity hours between 10 AM – 2 PM. This is when the sun's rays are the strongest and can be the most damaging to the skin.
- Use extra caution near water, snow, and sand because they reflect and intensify the damaging rays of the sun, which can increase your chances of sunburn.
- Generously apply a broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen with a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of 30 or more to all exposed skin. "Broad-spectrum" provides protection from both ultraviolet A (UVA) and ultraviolet B (UVB) rays. Apply sunscreen approximately 20 minutes before going outside so it has time to take effect before you go into the sun. Reapply approximately every two hours, even on cloudy days, and after swimming or sweating.
- Talk to your child's teacher and coach about how they incorporate sun safe behaviors. Does your child need a note at school to apply sunscreen? Find out what you need to do to make sure your child is protected at school.
- Encourage staff to wear sun protection such as hats, sunglasses and sunscreen while outside. Have the adults be role models for the children.



- Enhance the school property by creating shaded areas where the kids play outside (shade trees, shade structures, temporary shade structures for dugouts and sidelines.) You can encourage you PTO/PTA to start raising funds if the money isn't in the budget, or you can see if your organization would qualify for a shade structure grant from the AAD.

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- Use the materials in our toolkit to create a sun safety awareness program in your school with lesson plans and handouts which teach the importance of sun protection. Use school assemblies, social events, PTO/PTA to encourage sun safety behavior, and field trips to educate your students.
- Educate staff and children about the UV index number. Check it every day with their teachers and write it on the white board. The message is we need protection every day and the higher the UV index number the more protection you need.
- Consider designating a "SPOT" day and wear orange colors or polka dots to promote sun safety.
- Look for UV-protective clothing for your children to wear at school, while playing sports, or outside. More and more stores carry clothing with a sun-protective factor, and there are many online sources for this type of clothing. Another option is to have your child wear lightweight yet long-sleeved shirts or pants and a wide brim hat because it shades the face, neck and covers the ears.
- Buy inexpensive sunglasses with UV protection for your child to wear at school, while playing sports, or outside. Have an ultraviolet coating added to the lenses of prescription glasses or contact lenses.

EPA issues a UV Alert when the level of solar UV radiation reaching your local area is predicted to be unusually intense for the time of year. The UV Alert is a warning, and it offers simple steps you can take to protect yourself and your family. The UV Alert consists of the SunWise action steps and is posted by ZIP Code and City, State at www.epa.gov/sunwise/uvindex.html.



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