



## Health & Safety Notes California Childcare Health Program

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# Smart Fun in the Sun

During the summer the sun shines all over California. Children spend more time outdoors, increasing their exposure to the sun. Be sure staff and children are protected from the sun's rays by wearing protective clothing and using sunscreen before they are exposed to the sun. In order to apply sunscreen on children, you will need to obtain the written permission of parents—just a simple note that states you have their permission, what brand and SPF they use, and their signature. Parents should supply the sunscreen, as they will know whether the child has had a negative reaction to a sunscreen and what works best for their child. Even the youngest child can learn about sun safety and actively participate in sun protection. Be sure to talk with children about why they need sun protection and engage their cooperation by asking them to help apply the sunscreen or put on their hats.

Remember the American Academy of Dermatology's ABCs for safe fun in the sun this summer.

1. Avoid the midday sun, especially from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. when the sun's rays are the strongest. Keep infants under 6 months of age out of direct sunlight and in the shade at all times. Use an umbrella over strollers. Plan for shaded areas in the yard with trees, plants on trellises, deck covers or portable sun shades.
2. Block the sun's rays with an SPF of at least 15. Apply at least 20 minutes before sun exposure. Reapply every two hours and after swimming and sweating. Apply sunscreen beginning at 6 months of age.
3. Cover up outdoors with a wide-brim hat or sun visor, tightly woven clothing and sunglasses.
4. Share information on sun protection with family and friends.

### Tips

1. Avoid sunscreens with PABA or alcohol in them as they tend to irritate the skin.
2. Read the label and pick a broad spectrum sunscreen that protects against both UVA and UVB rays.
3. Use a waterproof brand for water play. Reapply every two hours.
4. Apply sunscreen to the scalp, ear tips and tops of feet. These areas are frequently forgotten and can be very painful if sunburned.
5. Remember that sunscreen can get in the eyes during water play, swimming or sweating.
6. Sunburn can occur on overcast days, so use sunscreen even if the sun isn't bright.
7. T-shirts and light-colored, long-sleeved shirts provide good sun protection outdoors.
8. A wide-brimmed hat (four-inch brim) can produce a shadow which covers and protect eyes, ears, nose, face and back of neck.
9. Just because a particular sunscreen costs more doesn't mean it's better. It may feel or smell better but isn't necessarily more effective.

We also know that the sun exposure children get now can lead to skin cancer later in life. Avoiding sunburn lowers the risk of skin cancer now and in the future.

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