

SUN SAFETY ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS



Take a walk through your neighborhood and have your child point out the different examples of places to seek shade, such as umbrellas, porches, under a tree or a shade structure.



Take your child to the zoo to look at different types of animal skin, such as the smooth skin of dolphins, the dense fur of the polar bears, or a flamingo's feathers. Talk about how their skin protects them from the sun.



Note the sun's power by slicing one apple into rings and hanging the rings from individual strings to dry. Place another apple in a cool, dry spot. Make sure the hanging apple rings do not touch, and cover them with cheesecloth to discourage bugs. Have children observe the ring's changes. To demonstrate more clearly the difference between day one and the day the apple rings are dried out, cut the other apple (the one you set aside at the beginning of the experiment) into rings. Then compare a freshly cut ring to a dried one. Explain that the sun has the same power to dry out your skin as it has to dry apple slices. This can be a reminder to moisturize your skin after being in the sun.



Select a sampling of t-shirts from your child's closet. Hold each shirt up to a light so the child can see how much light shines through (e.g. dark colored shirts vs. light colored shirts; thin vs. thick fabric; etc.) Ask your child to pick the shirts they think provide the best sun protection. It's important to note that darker-colored shirts and heavier fabrics will provide better sun protection and are an important way to be safe in the sun. This also includes wearing sunscreen and seeking shade.



Place a dark, colored piece of construction paper on a sunny window sill with a solid object placed in the middle of it. Leave the object there for a few days. Have your child look weekly at the construction paper, lifting the object to see how much of the paper exposed to the sun is fading. Explain to your child that just as the sun has changed the unprotected portion of the paper, the sun does the same thing to their skin — changing and damaging it.



Purchase UV-changing beads from a craft supply store. These can be made into bracelets or backpack zipper pulls. The beads are a useful and fun way to demonstrate the effects of UV rays on the skin.



SPOT Children's Activities are a part of the American Academy of Dermatology's SPOT Skin Cancer™ campaign.
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Decorate hats that will provide sun protection with fabric pens, paints, iron-on patches and other items to encourage your child to wear the hat in the sun.



If your child is in Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Campfire or Indian Guides? Help him or her start a service project to educate kids in the community about sun safety, and the importance of wearing sunscreen and covering up.



The best way to teach your child about sun protection is to start early and incorporate it into their everyday routine – make sun safety a habit!

Keep sun-safety items near the front door, in the car, and in your child's backpack. I'm sure by now your child doesn't complain about wearing his or her seatbelt or a helmet while riding a bike, so the same can happen for sun protection habits.



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HOW DO ANIMALS PROTECT THEIR SKIN?



Meerkats have black rings around their eyes to absorb the sun's rays, protecting their eyes from sun damage.



The hippopotamus protects its skin by leaking a pink oil substance. This oil keeps the hippos' skin from drying out and protects them from the effects of the sun!



The first thing some elephants do when they get outside is cover their bodies in sand and soil. They do this to protect their skin from bug bites and also to prevent sunburn. Believe it or not, elephants can get a sunburn!



Giraffes have dark tongues which prevent it from getting sunburned while reaching up in the trees to eat!

Animals need protection from the sun too! But these animals don't wear sunscreen or sunglasses like we do. Check out how they protect their skin from the sun.



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