

# A PARENT'S GUIDE TO REDUCING THE RISK OF MELANOMA

## MELANOMA RESEARCH FOUNDATION

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You always hear people say, “Children change everything.” They definitely do. They change the way we act and the way we think. They bring out our protective instincts and make us worry about dangers we never considered before.

We buy our children safe car seats and give them healthy foods. We child-proof our homes and keep choking hazards out of reach. But what about protecting their skin from too much UV (ultraviolet) exposure?

Too much UV exposure, either from the sun or from tanning beds, can damage your child’s skin, lead to wrinkles and may cause skin cancer – including melanoma, the deadliest form. As a parent, there are several steps you can take to lower your child’s risk.

**CHECK OUT THE POSTER INSIDE  
TO LEARN MORE!**

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Melanoma is the deadliest form of skin cancer. It is the second most common form of cancer in adolescents and young adults. It is the leading cause of cancer death in young women.

MELANOMA KILLS ONE PERSON EVERY HOUR OF EVERY DAY IN THE U.S.

NEARLY

# 90%

OF MELANOMAS ARE CAUSED FROM TOO MUCH EXPOSURE TO ULTRAVIOLET (UV) RAYS – EITHER FROM THE SUN OR FROM ARTIFICIAL SOURCES LIKE TANNING BEDS.

AS A PARENT, YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE !



Just like you protect your baby in a car seat or safe crib, be sure to protect your baby from UV rays.

STAY IN THE SHADE AND USE PROTECTIVE CLOTHING, LIKE HATS AND LONG SLEEVES, WHEN ENJOYING TIME OUTDOORS.

Sunscreen is not recommended for babies under six months.

# 10 AM

Try to keep your child out of direct sunlight, especially between the hours of 10 am – 4 pm, when UV rays are strongest.



# 4 PM

## SUNSCREEN

can help prevent skin cancer and early aging. But remember, sunscreen is only one way to protect your child from too much UV exposure. Arm your child with a hat, sunglasses and protective clothing when playing outside. Start talking to your child early about ways to be safe in the sun!



## SKIN DAMAGE

from UV exposure cannot be reversed. It takes only one blistering sunburn, especially at a young age, to more than double a person's chances of developing melanoma later in life.



The safety of sunscreen has been studied extensively in many scientific settings. It is overwhelmingly clear that sunscreen is safe and effective when used as directed.

Teens may have a difficult time practicing sun safety. Having a tan for prom or spring break can be tempting for a teen. Talking to your teen about the dangers of tanning is just as important as talking about seat belts and tobacco use. Like tobacco smoke, UV radiation is a **KNOWN CARCINOGEN**. That means it can cause cancer! Not to mention skin damage and wrinkles.

## WHAT ABOUT VITAMIN D?

Don't worry! Several large, scientific studies reflecting real-life conditions have proven that sunscreen use does not cause vitamin D deficiencies.

TANNING BEDS DO NOT HELP WITH VITAMIN D PRODUCTION.



## THE BOTTOM LINE

No tan is worth your child's life. The earlier you let your child know they are beautiful in the skin they were born in, the easier it will be for them to confidently say NO to tanning!

## QUICK TIPS FOR PARENTS

- Sunscreen is safe for children over the age of six months.
- Use broad spectrum sunscreen with SPF of at least 30 every day.
- Be sure to cover all exposed skin – don't forget the lips, ears, hands, feet and the back of the neck.
- Reapply sunscreen every two hours – but more often when swimming or sweating.
- Protect your child with a wide-brimmed hat, long sleeves and sunglasses.
- Encourage your child to play in the shade whenever possible, especially between 10 am – 4 pm.
- Discourage all forms of intentional tanning – this applies to both natural and artificial UV sources.
- Start talking to your child at a young age about being proud of the skin they were born in!



FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL 202.347.9675.