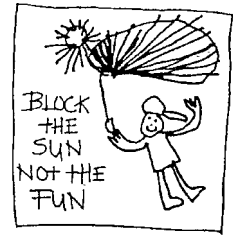




Cancer Research Center
1600 Pierce Street
Denver, Colorado 80214
303 233-9582 FAX
303 233-6501

May, 1995



Dear Parent:

The number of cases of skin cancer is increasing faster than any other cancer in the United States. Research shows that the amount of sun exposure people get during childhood is one of the main reasons for this. That is why your preschool or daycare center is participating in the AMC Cancer Research Center **Skin Cancer Prevention Program**. Staff members from your center have attended a skin cancer prevention workshop. There, they learned strategies to reduce the amount of sun your child gets while in their care. They also learned activities to teach the children about sun protection.

We ask your help in supporting this prevention program. Here's what you can do:

1. Read the enclosed materials about skin cancer and sun protection.
2. Ask your child's caregiver or teacher if you need to provide anything such as sunscreen, sun-hats, or long sleeved clothing.
3. Get in the habit of practicing sun protection at home. This is important for two reasons. First, to protect your child's skin from the sun, and second, to develop the habit of sun protection in your child. Habits established now are more likely to be kept later in life.
4. Be a role model for your child! Practice sun protection yourself, including dressing to reduce your sun exposure, using sunscreen, and avoiding tanning.
5. If your child brings home sun protection activities that he or she has done at school, review them with your child. You can both learn about sun protection together.
6. Try some of the sun protection activities included in this packet with your child.
7. Use the "Block the Sun, Not the Fun" tote bag and kitchen magnet to remind you to protect your child from the sun.

And now, a brief comment about sunscreen. Sunscreens with an SPF of 15 or greater have been found to be very effective in preventing sunburns and non-melanoma skin cancers. However, in the last year there has been some discussion in the media about potential dangers of using sunscreen. We want you to know that there is virtually complete agreement among dermatologists (doctors specializing in the skin) that sunscreens are safe to use and that they reduce the chance of developing skin cancer. The only known problem with sunscreen is a chance of a mild skin irritation or allergic reaction. If your child develops a rash after wearing sunscreen, stop using the sunscreen and talk to our pediatrician or dermatologist about using another sunscreen. Sunscreens that have PABA as an ingredient have more of a tendency to cause skin reactions. Still, any skin reaction from a sunscreen is uncommon.

Have a safe summer, and remember to "Block the Sun, Not the Fun!"

Sincerely,

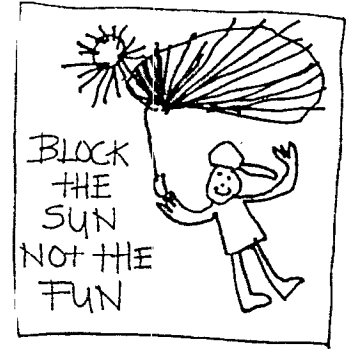
Lori A. Crane, Ph.D.
Behavioral Scientist
AMC Cancer Research Center

Joseph J. Yohn, M.D.
Clinical Assistant Professor of Dermatology
University of Colorado Health Sciences Center
and
Dermatologist
Colorado Permanente Medical Group

Kathy D. Plomer, M.P.H.
Health Educator
AMC Cancer Research Center

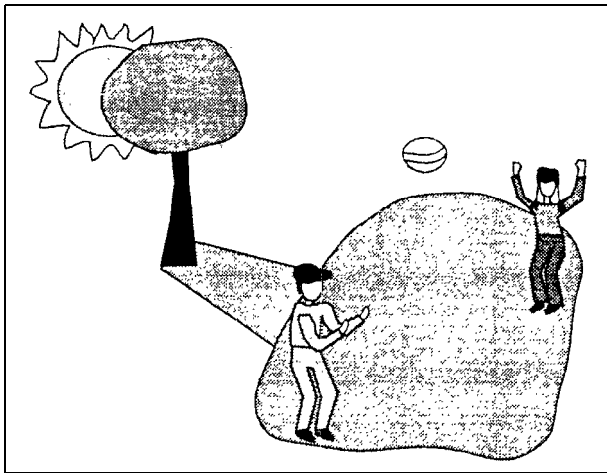
Joseph G. Morelli, M.D.
Assistant Professor of Dermatology and Pediatrics
University of Colorado Health Sciences Center

SKIN CANCER PREVENTION BEGINS IN CHILDHOOD



Did you Know?

- Damage from the sun begins in early childhood.
- Sun damage can lead to skin cancer.
- A single severe sunburn in childhood doubles the chances for melanoma, the most deadly form of skin cancer.



4. Use sunscreen on uncovered areas of the body.
 - Use sunscreen with a number 15 or more SPF (sun protection factor).
 - Put on sunscreen about 1 hour before going out in the sun. Put more sunscreen on every two hours, or after swimming or perspiring.
 - Use sunscreen on cloudy days and in the winter too, especially when there is snow on the ground! You can get a sunburn anytime during the year.

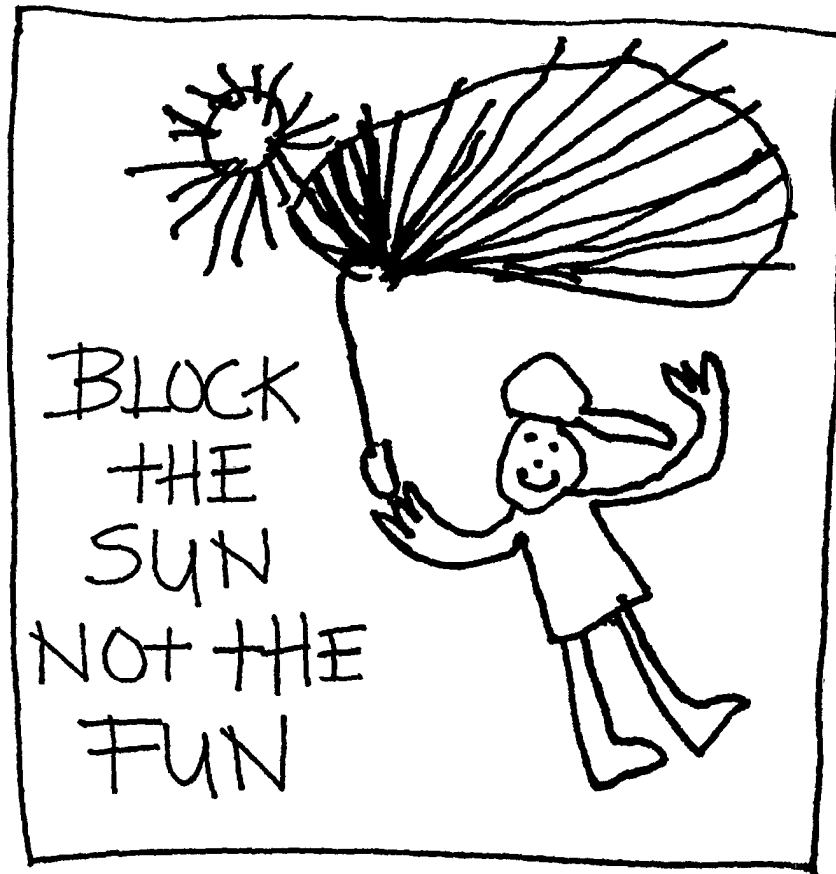
What You Can Do

1. Keep children out of the sun in the middle of the day (from 10:00am - 3:00pm) when the sun's rays are the strongest.
2. Increase the amount of shade in play areas with trees and patio covers.
3. Dress children in hats, long sleeved shirts, and long pants when playing in the sun.

Babies Need Special Care



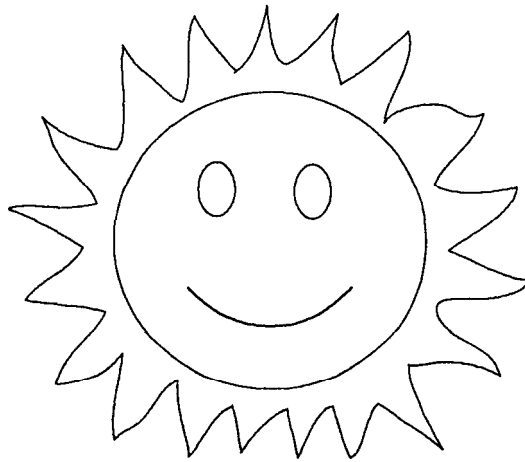
- ☐ Keep infants under 6 months in the shade all of the time
- ☐ Put hats, pants, and long sleeve shirts on your baby when he or she is out in the sun.
- ☐ Begin using sunscreen at 6 months old, when your baby begins to crawl out of the shade.



Activities for Parents and Children

Protecting your child's skin from the sun is important, because...

- damage from the sun begins in early childhood.
- sun damage can lead to skin cancer.
- a single severe sunburn in childhood doubles the chances for melanoma, the most deadly form of skin cancer.



At school, your child is learning different ways to protect him/herself from the sun. You can help teach your child good sun protection practices at home too! Some fun sun protection activities that you can do with your child are listed below. Choose the activities that are appropriate for your child's age.

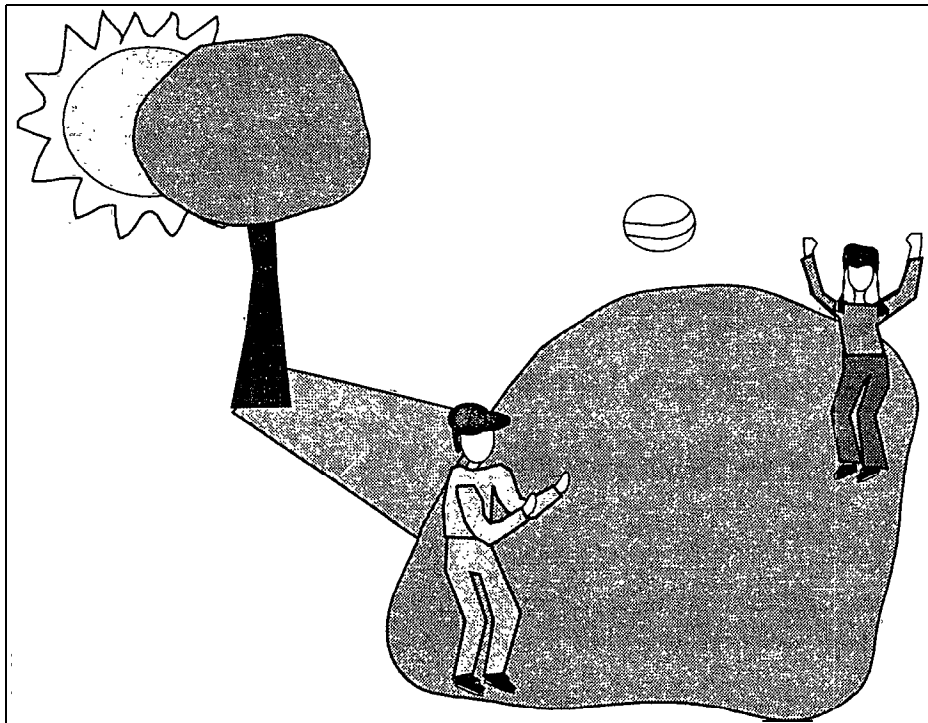
Sun Protection Activities:

- ☐ Be your child's "sunscreen buddy". Sunscreen buddies can help each other put sunscreen on. They can also remind each other to use sunscreen.
- ☐ Long sleeve shirts, long pants and hats with wide brims help to protect your child's skin from the sun. Help your child see what kinds of clothing they have that can help protect them from the sun. Have your child wear these clothes outside.

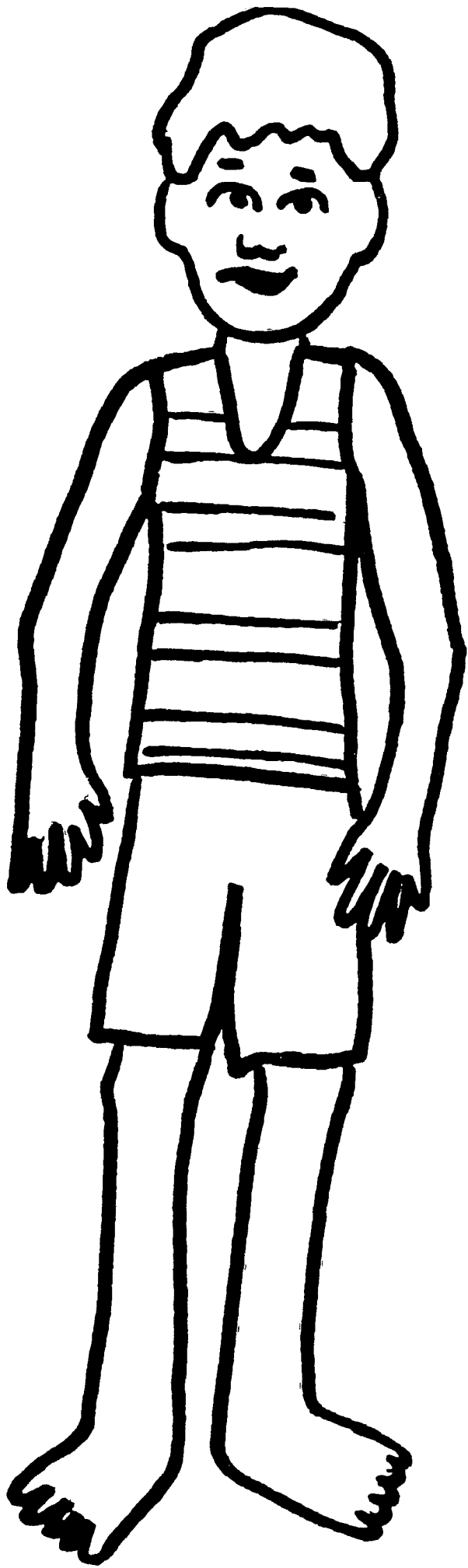
- ☐ Have your child draw a picture of him/herself wearing sun protective clothing. Hang the picture in their room to help them remember to protect their skin from the sun.
- ☐ You can be a great role model for your child. Next time your family goes on an outing (picnic, swimming, zoo, etc.), make it a “hat day” and have everyone wear a hat!
- ☐ If your child doesn’t have a hat, help them to think of some other things they could do to protect their face and shoulders from the sun. (Some good ideas are - wearing sunscreen, playing in the shade, wearing a long sleeved shirt.)
- ☐ Go exploring around your house or yard with your child and find all the places to play outside and be in the shade. Try to find as many places as you can.
- ☐ Measure your child’s shadow. Shadows are short in the middle of the day, between 10:00am - 3:00pm when the sun is the strongest. To measure your child’s shadow, have them stand up straight outside in the sun. Use chalk or a pencil and trace the outline of your child’s shadow. Have the child then lay down on the ground next to the shadow and trace around the child. Compare the two tracings. Which is shorter? When your child’s shadow is shorter than his or her body, that means that the sun is strong and they need to play in the shade or inside.
- ☐ Do an experiment. Leave a newspaper in a sunny location for a few days. Place another newspaper in a dark place like a closet. After 3-4 days compare the difference in color. Is one a lighter color than the other? Why? Explain that things like newspaper cannot protect itself from the sun, but living things can!

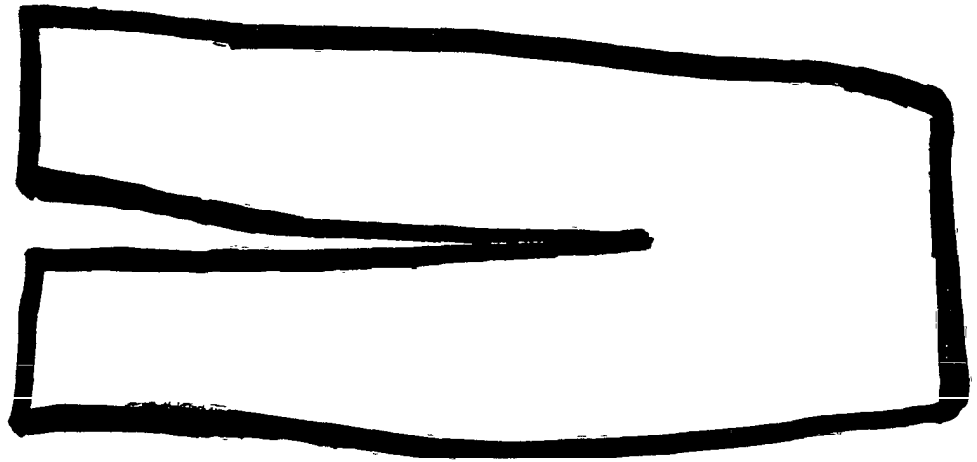
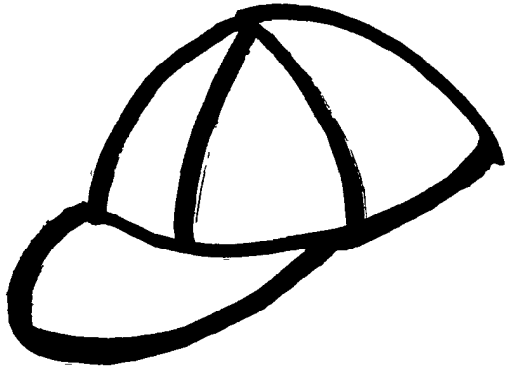
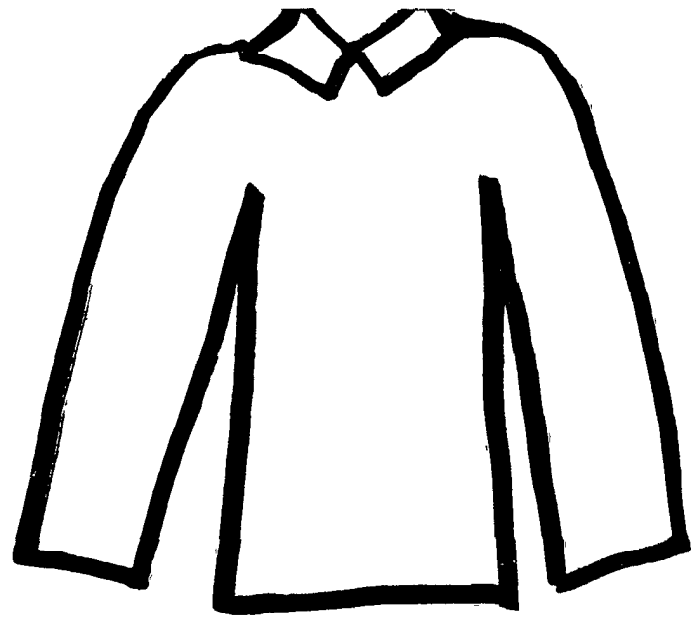
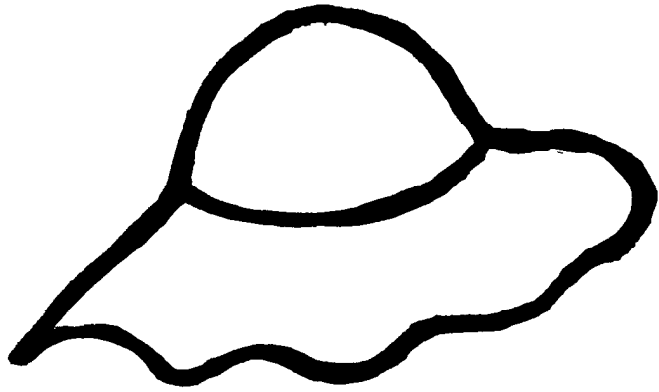
- Watch an animal on a hot day. What does it do? Does it rest in the sun or the shade? When it's hot, most animals will rest in the shade and out of the sun! (You can do this at home, at a park, or at the zoo!)
- Have a "shade party". Bring out games or activities you can do in the shade with your child. For lunch, have a picnic in the shade.
- Pretend...Have your child take his or her favorite stuffed animal outside to play. Pretend that it needs to be protected from the sun just like your child does. What should you bring to protect it from the sun?

Can you think of other sun protection activities that would be fun to do with your child?



Use the pictures on the attached pages to do a "cut, paste, and color" activity with your child. Dress the children so they are safe to be in the sun!





Y 2 9 7