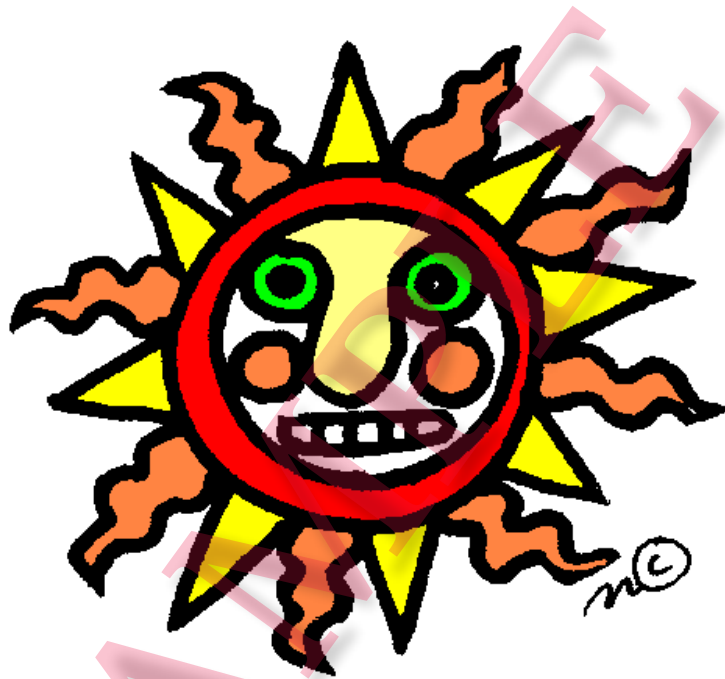


# SunSafe in the Middle School Years



Rec Staff/Lifeguard Section

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# How Rec Staff and Lifeguards Can Protect Young People's Skin

As a lifeguard or recreation program staff, you work hard to prevent injury to children with whom you work or watch over. Ensuring they practice sun safe behaviors is another aspect of protecting them from injury.

Adults have a dual role of instructing children how to protect themselves from the sun AND role modeling sun safe behavior themselves. Young adults are especially important role models because young teens relate to them more than older adults. Many people associate tan skin with health - the media promotes this idea by showing models and athletes with tans. In fact, a "tan" is the body's signal that skin is injured. You can help youth learn that the lighter the "tan," the healthier the skin. Promote the idea that being healthy means taking care of your skin as much as being active or working out to build muscles.

## Make Sun Safe Behaviors a Daily Habit

- ✓ Apply sunscreen before you come to work. Reapply at least every 2 hours.
- ✓ Wear a hat that protects your face, neck and ears.
- ✓ Wear protective clothing when possible.
- ✓ Wear sunglasses.
- ✓ Seek shade whenever possible or make your own with an umbrella.

It's what we say..... and it's what we do.

**Seeing someone they respect practice sun safe behaviors has more impact than simply telling children and teens to change their sun protection behaviors.**

## Adopt a Sun Safe Policy for Recreation Center and Pool or Beach

- ◇ Encourage everyone to come to the pool, beach or rec center with sunscreen already applied. Make sure they are wearing a broad spectrum UVA/UVB sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15. Ask them to bring sunscreen with them.
- ◇ At the beginning of activities, ask if they are set to go *with* sunscreen. If they did not, ask them to put it on before they start swimming or other activities.
- ◇ During the day, make sure they reapply sunscreen at least every 2 hours.
- ◇ Encourage everyone to wear sunglasses when sitting near water or during outdoor activities.
- ◇ Encourage everyone to wear a hat when they are outdoors. The hat should protect the face, neck, and ears.
- ◇ When possible, ask them to play in an area protected from the sun, especially from 11 am to 3 pm (the times of most intense UV radiation).



**Make it a goal for everyone to be sun safe.**