



Sun Safety: A Summer Safety Activity

Let the sunshine in with these sun safety tips.

By [Ellen Booth Church](#)

Overview

Children develop social and language skills while they practice how to safely spend time in the sun.

Materials

- Sun-protection items to use as props, such as empty plastic sunscreen bottles, brimmed hats, sunglasses, loose and densely knit clothing, etc.
- Beach items to use as props, such as beach balls, towels, sand toys, etc.

Set Up and Prepare

Gather materials appropriate for a pretend trip to the beach and place them in the dramatic-play area or outside in the shade.

Directions

Step 1: Have a discussion about the sun. What do children know about the sun? Can they feel the difference between being in the sun and being in the shade? Tell children how the sun's rays can cause serious sunburn. Ask if anyone has had a sunburn and what it felt like.

Step 2: Introduce ways children can protect themselves from getting sunburned. Introduce sunscreen, sunglasses, the best type of clothing to wear (loose and densely woven fabrics), and brimmed hats.

Step 3: Tell children that it is important to avoid direct exposure to the sun during peak hours, which are between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m.

Quick Tip to Share: If they see that the length of their shadow is shorter than they are tall, they need protection from the sun. On the next bright, sunny day take children outdoors and try this simple experiment!

Step 4: Now invite children to take a pretend trip to the beach. Allow free time for children to explore their own way of using the props. Offer suggestions and ask questions to help children explore the uses and purposes of each sun-protection product. For example, ask, "What are you going to do with that sunscreen?" to a child who's holding it. "Why do we wear sunglasses?"

For Younger Children

Play a game of "What do I see?" with the students. Pass around a pair of sunglasses so that each child can take a turn wearing the glasses. The child wearing the glasses will describe something that he sees in the classroom, without identifying it. Others in the group will try to name the object from the child's description.

For Older Children

Talk with children about the way they feel on very hot, sunny days. Print children's descriptive words and phrases on a sheet of chart paper. When finished, give each child a chance to dramatize one of the descriptive words or phrases for the group.

Spin-Off Activity

On pieces of construction paper, create beach scenes using real sand. Invite children to draw a sunny day at the beach. Once children finish their pictures, ask them to spread a thin layer of glue where the sand would be. Help them sprinkle sand onto the wet glue. Once the glue has dried, shake off excess sand and display for all to enjoy.

Related Books

- *Grandma's Beach* by Rosalind Beardshaw
- [*Sun \(Science Emergent Readers\)*](#) by Susan Canizares
- [*The Sun Is My Favorite Star*](#) by Frank Asch
- *Swimsuit* by Kit Allen

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June

Aug 09, 2011

Published