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How to be sun-savvy for your family

(BPT) - Summer days lead to cherished family memories - whether they're spent splashing in surf and sand or picnicking in the park. Parents have a knack for creating magical summer moments for their kids. During these times they can also set an example for sun-protection smarts, and in doing so, they can become a sun-savvy role model for the whole family.

Parents know that outdoor time is important for an active and healthy lifestyle, but it also allows us to send a great sun-smart message to our kids. From field days at school to sunny summer days at the beach to outdoor activities during camp, opportunities for kids to engage in outside play are infinite. But it's important that parents help to ensure that their children have protection options they need when enjoying those sunlit moments.

Just one blistering sunburn in childhood can increase the chance of developing skin cancer later in life, according to skincancer.org. Knowing the facts reminds parents of the importance of sun protection. Become a sun-savvy super hero, because making sun protection a priority begins with you. Create a routine

of applying sunscreen together as a family and don't forget other types of protection like umbrellas, sunglasses and sun-protective clothing before sending them out for the day. According to results of an Australian survey, parents who used sunscreen and additional forms of sun protection while outdoors with their children increased the odds of their children practicing these behaviors.

With this in mind, the Coppertone Making the Sunscreen Grade program helps parents make sun sense a priority at the beach, at summer camp and even during the school day.

To help you set an example, here are fun ideas for summer activities with the family:

- Play a game of neighborhood kickball

Kickball is an age-old game that never gets old. Enlist the neighborhood kids and their parents to come play this family-fun game, but before kickoff, try to model sun-savvy behaviors by sporting baseball caps, sunglasses and applying sunscreen together. Coppertone Sport AccuSpray is a good option that offers parents a continuous spray they can control when applying sunscreen to themselves and their

children. The formula stays on strong when you sweat and won't run into eyes and sting.

- Go for a family bike ride

Bike rides are great fun for the whole family, but it's difficult to stay in the shade while on the move. Remember UV rays are strongest between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Make sure to teach your family that sun protection is as important as wearing a bike helmet. To help ensure everyone's protected, wear sun-protective clothing and use your break time from the bike path as an opportunity to seek shade and reaply sunscreen.

- Plant vegetables in the backyard

Want your kids to eat their veggies? It's more fun for them if they've grown them in their own backyard. Gardening is a great way to teach children lifelong skills, including sun-smart habits. Make sure everyone grabs wide-brimmed hats and applies sunscreen before going out. To help you become that role model, try using new Coppertone CLEARLYSheer For Sunny Days, which is extremely lightweight and suitable for everyday occasions like this.



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Electronic devices raising eye concerns

(BPT) - Your morning probably starts off in a routine. You might watch the weather report on your flatscreen TV before jumping into the shower, answer an email on your tablet shortly after getting dressed, or text a friend while eating breakfast.

We use our eyes much differently than any generation before us, and dramatic shifts in digital tool usage and media consumption are exposing eyes to blue light from electronic devices, which could adversely affect your vision in the future.

Studies show denizens of the digital world are significantly increasing time spent in front of their computers, smartphones, and other blue light-emitting devices. The average American spends about two hours and 19 minutes online plus another two hours and 20 minutes conducting non-voice activities on tablets as well as mobile phones every day, according to a survey by eMarketer. Additionally, recent Nielsen ratings reveal that the average American spends about 34 hours per week watching live television, and another three to six hours watching recorded programs.

What does this mean for our eyes? Blue light, which radiates from digital sources like computers, smartphones, and televisions, can have an adverse effect on visual cells. In fact, researchers are learning blue light, found in sun-

light and some indoor lighting, plays a role in the incidence and severity of age-related macular degeneration (AMD).

Fortunately, Mother Nature arms us with macular pigments, zeaxanthin and lutein that act like "internal sunglasses". These pigments protect and enhance vision, and are found in the center of the macula in the back of your eye. Internal sunglasses protect the cones and rods that are responsible for central and peripheral vision, respectively and can enhance vision as well.

The density of macular pigment is largely determined by diet, but can change as we age. As macular pigment becomes thinner or less dense, harmful blue light can reach and damage the photoreceptors (rods and cones). The resulting damage can lead to visual performance challenges and contribute to other eye issues like fatigue, strain, sleeplessness, and even more serious conditions like AMD.

Thick, or dense macular pigment can improve visual acuity for activities like reading in dim light or needlepoint; reduce sensitivity to bright light like sunlight or stadium lights; improve recovery time from glare from things like oncoming headlights; and enhance contrast sensitivity such as seeing an object clearly against its background.

Increasing macular pigment density can be achieved by replenishing the macular pigments zeaxanthin and lutein. According to the



American Optometric Association, (AOA) of the 600 carotenoids found in nature, zeaxanthin and lutein are the only two that are deposited naturally in the macula.

Since the human body does not produce the zeaxanthin and lutein it needs, good nutrition is essential. Lutein is plentiful in leafy-green vegetables like spinach, kale, and broccoli. Zeaxanthin, on the other hand, is found in foods like corn, eggs, and peppers, but only in trace amounts. For most Americans, a significant zeaxanthin dietary gap exists, resulting in less protection and potentially decreased visual performance. The quantity of these pigments in the macular region of the retina can be measured with a

macular pigment optical density (MPOD) exam. MPOD exams are quick, non-invasive, and available through leading optometrists.

For those who cannot consume enough zeaxanthin and lutein through the diet, eye vitamins like EyePromise offer macular health formulas designed to increase MPOD and build internal sunglasses that provide vision protection and enhancement.

As computer, tablet, and smartphone usage increases, society's collective exposure to blue light will also continue to surge. Optimal health of our internal sunglasses is imperative in safeguarding our eyes from harmful blue light today and into the future.

Five reasons to crack a smile this Mother's Day

(BPT) - Did you know the act of smiling can impact both how you look and how you feel?

Dove research finds that one in three women hardly ever smile at themselves because they don't like what they see in the mirror.

Building a positive relationship with beauty helps women to feel more confident, and every encounter with the mirror can be a positive affirmation for a woman of her beauty. Research has shown that girls replicate their mother's behaviors about beauty, confidence, and self-esteem; so this Mother's Day, Dove encourages all women to smile when they look in the mirror. Jess Weiner, the Dove Global Self-Esteem Ambassador, offers

five reasons to keep beaming this Mother's Day:

- Sets a positive example - It's important that mothers recognize the beauty in themselves in order to set positive examples for their daughters.

- Improves levels of happiness - Studies show that smiling is effortless and immediate. It has been proven that smiling can actually make you happier. In the UK, a British study found that one smile can even provide the same level of stimulation as up to 2,000 chocolate bars.

- Improves health - Smiling can also provide therapeutic effects. An Empirical Reflection on the Smile documented positive effects such as reduced stress hormone levels, increased health

and mood enhancing hormone levels, and lowered blood pressure.

- It's contagious - A Swedish study included in the Journal of Nonverbal Behavior proved that humans are wired to smile back. It is an unconscious, automatic response. So, when you wear a smile, you can help to lift the moods of the people around you.

- Today is your day - Mother's Day is a great day to be celebrated by those who love you, but it is also important for you to celebrate yourself. Whether it's your first or your 50th, smile and enjoy having a much-deserved day that is all about you.



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