



How to Make Sure Your Kids Are Sun-Safe

Most of a person's sun exposure occurs during the first 18 years of life. Protecting children during these years reduces their risk of skin cancer. That said, we know putting sunscreen on your child can be a challenge. Here are some ideas on how you can protect your children and avoid a meltdown:

- Apply sunscreen on yourself with your kids in the room, and explain why you're wearing it. When kids see a parent or guardian taking care of their skin, they will be more likely to apply sunscreen. "Monkey see, monkey do!"
- Put sunscreen on your child while in the house or still in the car seat. Once your child gets outside, there are going to be too many distractions and temptations to run off and avoid applying the sunscreen.
- Reduce the amount of surface area. Have your children wear protective clothing ("shorts-and-t-shirt" swim suits, for example) in order to limit the amount of sunscreen needed on their bodies.
- Get your child involved in the process. Let him or her pick out their own bottle of sunscreen, a wide-brimmed hat, and sunglasses. Find a fun bag for them to tote their beach things in. If they can pick out items they like, they will be more apt to use them.
- Allow your child to put sunscreen on you and/or their siblings. Giving your child a role creates a sense of responsibility for him or her. You can be the inspector to be sure that a job is done well, and touch up any areas that need more SPF.
- When all else fails ... lay down the law! *No sunscreen means no outdoor activities.*



Dana-Farber conducts [free sun safety screenings](#) every summer at local beaches.