

**The Post Rock Connection**  
**Post Rock Extension District #1 Family and Consumer Sciences Column**  
**Month of April 2025**  
**By Jamie Rathbun, Family and Community Wellness Agent**

**Sun's Out, Fun's Out**

Spending time outdoors is a favorite pastime for many individuals and families, and many people have outdoor careers. Families enjoy sports, hiking, swimming, and other activities to not only have fun but to stay physically active and improve their health. Sunshine is synonymous with outdoor fun, but it can also mean sunburn worries. When outdoors, it's important to stay sun safe, understanding that ultraviolet rays can damage skin cells and how to best protect yourself and loved ones from harmful rays. Here's how to create lasting memories while keeping your children safe in the sun. ( 😊 All of these tips are good for us adults too.)

*Sun Protection: A multi-layered approach*

Sunscreen is a must-have, but it's not the only line of defense. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends a broad-spectrum sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher for children over 6 months old. Apply liberally 15 minutes before sun exposure and reapply every 2 hours, or more often after swimming or sweating.

Even if you do not plan to spend much time outside, make sunscreen a habit daily, applying before putting on make-up or brushing your teeth. All individuals can benefit from applying sunscreen. If wearing sandals or shoes that do not cover the whole foot, be sure to apply sunscreen to your feet.

*Dress for Success*

Clothing provides excellent sun protection. Opt for lightweight, tightly woven fabrics that cover your child's arms and legs. Look for clothing and swimwear with UPF (Ultraviolet Protection Factor) rating for added defense. Wide-brimmed hats are essential, shading the face, ears, and neck. Even when wearing protective clothing, be sure to regularly apply sunscreen.

### *Seek Shade and Time it Right*

The sun's rays are strongest between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. When possible, it's best to stay indoors or in the shade during these hours for the greatest protection. Plan outdoor activities for the early morning or late afternoon when the sun is less intense. Seek shade whenever possible, whether under a tree, umbrella, or pop-up tent. You can also utilize the "shadow test" to gauge the sun's intensity. When your shadow appears shorter than you, seek shade.

### *Cool Hydration is Key*

Sun exposure can lead to dehydration, so keep your child well-hydrated throughout the day. Offer cool water frequently, even if they don't say they're thirsty. Pack a reusable water bottle and make it a fun game to see how many refills they can get.

### *Make Sun Safety Fun*

Turn sun protection into an engaging activity. Let your child pick out a colorful hat and cool sunglasses with UV protection. Apply sunscreen together and make it a silly game by singing songs or telling stories.

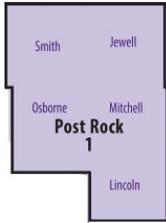
### *Be a Sun Smart Role Model*

Children learn best by example. Always wear sunscreen and sunglasses yourself and take breaks in the shade to show them the importance of sun safety.

By following these tips, you can create a summer filled with joyful memories while safeguarding your child's delicate skin from the sun's harmful rays. Remember, sun safety is a habit that will benefit your child for a lifetime.

Visit this link for more information on [Protecting your Skin from the Sun](#) read through this publication from Kansas State University.

*The Post Rock District of K-State Research and Extension serves Jewell, Lincoln, Mitchell, Osborne, and Smith Counties. Contact Jamie Rathbun at [jrathbun@ksu.edu](mailto:jrathbun@ksu.edu) or by calling 785-524-4432. Stay connected with "Post Rock Extension" on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. Our website is [www.postrock.ksu.edu](http://www.postrock.ksu.edu).*



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