

# FIRST 5

## S H A S T A

### Family Fun in the Sun

*Keeping Your Kids Safe This Summer*

Summer is a great opportunity for families to spend quality time together. Whether it's playing in the park, hiking or building sandcastles on the beach, summer days can create memories that last a lifetime. But the hot season can also put young children at greater risk of injury.

To help parents protect their children from potential dangers, First 5 Shasta reminds parents and caregivers to always supervise young children and offers the following summer safety tips.

#### **Be sun smart**

A young child's skin is sensitive to the bright summer sun so be sure to avoid sunburns.

- Apply sunscreen with at least 30 SPF (sun protection factor) on your child's skin 15 minutes before going outside and apply again every two hours - especially right after your child has been in water or is sweating.
- Encourage children to play in the shade as much as possible, especially during peak sun hours between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Make sure your child wears lightweight clothing, a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses that offer 100 percent UV (ultraviolet) protection.
- Keep babies younger than 6 months of age out of direct sunlight.

#### **Watch out for water dangers**

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, drowning is the second leading cause of death for children. As a parent, be water wise.

- Swim with your child in calm water without waves, and always know where the nearest lifeguard is before getting in the water.
- Don't completely rely on flotation devices like life vests or floating baby seats to keep children safe; they can shift position, lose air or slip out from under a child.
- Never leave children unattended near water as kids can drown in just a few seconds, even if they know how to swim. Remember to supervise your child near bathtubs, toilets and buckets of water, too.

#### **Survey the playground**

Kids love playing on swings and slides, but parents should first look for potential safety hazards.

- Playground equipment often warms up in the sun and can burn a child's skin. Before your child plays, touch the metal bars and surfaces to make sure they aren't too hot.
- Check playground equipment for rusted parts and loose splinters. These hazards could pinch your child's skin.
- Be careful on slides. Make sure your child holds the slide's rails when climbing the ladder or sitting at the top. Also look for split or cracked plastic that could break if your child sits on it.

### **Banish the bugs**

Insects can be really annoying, their bite can be painful and even dangerous sometimes. Parents can help protect their child by using insect repellants.

- Only use products that are approved for children; follow the instructions carefully and wash off the repellent once your child is back inside.
- Avoid using scented soaps or lotions on your child because perfumes can attract insects.
- Dress your child in light-colored clothing - it doesn't tend to attract bugs.

First 5 Shasta encourages all parents and caregivers to learn about local resources that can help their young children. For more information, please call 229-8300 to request "A Parent's Guide to Shasta County Resources."

### **About First 5 Shasta**

Research shows that a child's brain develops most dramatically in the first five years and what parents and caregivers do during these years to support their child's growth will have a meaningful impact throughout life. Based on this research, California voters passed Proposition 10 in 1998, adding a 50 cents-per-pack tax on cigarettes to support programs for expectant parents and children ages 0 to 5. To date, First 5 Shasta has invested approximately \$12 million in Prop. 10 revenues in programs and services that meet local needs.

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