

## What Myths Are Your Children Learning About The Sun?

### **Myth #1: A suntan is a sign of health.**

**Fact:** A suntan is a sign that your skin is trying to protect itself against the sun's damaging rays. The tan will fade but damage to your skin cells remains and adds up over the years.

### **Myth #2: You can't get a sunburn on cloudy days.**

**Fact:** Up to 80 percent of the sun's rays can pass through light cloud, mist and fog. You can get a sunburn even on cloudy days. Sunburns increase your risk for skin cancer.

### **Myth #3: Only fair skinned people are at risk from too much exposure to sunlight.**

**Fact:** Too much sunlight can damage eyes and lead to cataracts. Too much sunlight can damage the skin even without getting a sunburn, and can cause premature skin aging and skin cancer. Everyone, regardless of skin colour, needs protection from the sun.

### **Teach your children to be sun safe by:**

- limiting time spent in the sun, especially between 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. or whenever the UV Index is 3 or more
- wearing a hat with a wide brim or flap to protect ears, nose and the back of the neck
- wearing long, loose clothing to cover as much skin as possible
- wearing sunglasses that provide UVA and UVB protection
- using sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher, and reapplying every two hours or after sweating or getting wet

For more information, call Toronto Health Connections at 416-338-7600 or visit [www.toronto.ca/health](http://www.toronto.ca/health) (see A-Z index, Sun Safety).

Last updated August 2010