



# Healthy Kids Today

Experts say that by the age of 18, youths will have had 80 percent of their lifetime sun exposure.

## Middle & High School Edition

### May 2005

- Summer Sun Safety
- Home Alone Guidelines for Summer
- Stomp Out Cyber-Bullies
- Help Your Child Prepare For a Healthy School Year
- Kids and Alcohol Don't Mix
- Did You Know?

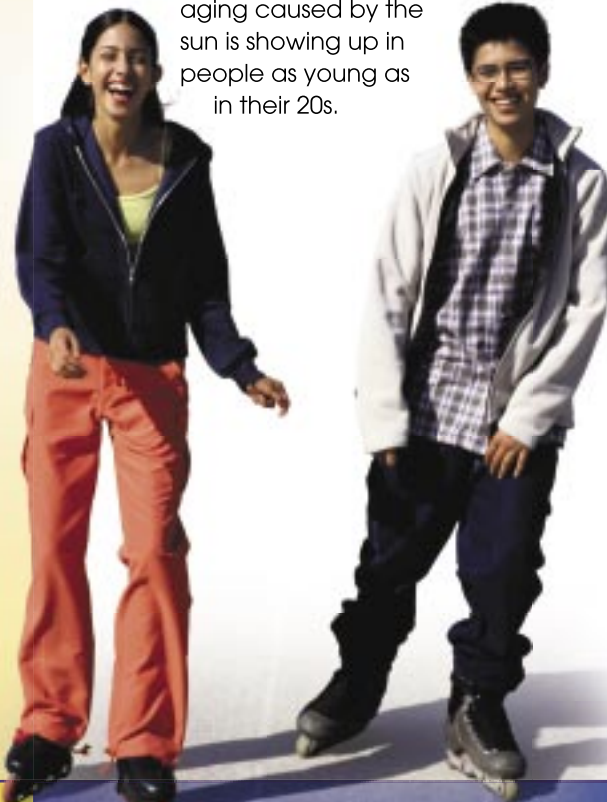
**Healthy Kids Today** is published by the Winter Park Health Foundation especially for students and families affiliated with schools in the Winter Park Consortium of Schools—Aloma, Audubon Park, Brookshire, Cheney, Dommerich, Hungerford, Killarney, Lake Sybella and Lakemont elementary schools; Glenridge and Maitland Middle schools; Winter Park 9th Grade Center; Winter Park High School and Winter Park Tech.



## Summer Sun Safety

For many teens, summer is the time to seek the perfect tan—at the beach, at the pool or in a lawn chair in the backyard.

The immediate result may be smooth, golden skin, but down the road, this can translate into leathery skin and wrinkles. Skin aging caused by the sun is showing up in people as young as in their 20s.



And wrinkles may be the least of their problems.

Consider this. The Skin Cancer Foundation reports that more than 90 percent of all skin cancers are caused by sun exposure, yet fewer than 33 percent of adults, adolescents, and children routinely use sun protection. One in five Americans will get skin cancer in the course of a lifetime.

And the incidence of melanoma is increasing rapidly in women under the age of 40. It is now the most common cancer in young women aged 25 to 29 and it kills more young women than any other cancer, according to The Skin Cancer Foundation.

*continued on page 2*

## Home Alone Guidelines for Summer

Long summer days may mean more kids spending time alone at home. This makes it all the more important for parents to set some guidelines.

The first decision parents need to make is whether or not the child can be left alone. And age is not always the best determining factor. It is most important, says Heather Galvin, licensed clinical social worker and CHILL counselor at Maitland Middle School, to assess a child's ability to problem solve and make good decisions. Maturity is an important consideration.

Age, however, is important to consider if siblings are to be left alone together. If an older sibling is in charge, especially for brothers and sisters who are not too much younger, that can be a challenging situation, Galvin said. It is important for the parent to sit down and tell children what is expected from each. The older child should be in charge of safety and of observing behavior, but he or she should not be in charge of disciplining. Parents should handle that when they get home.

*continued on page 2*

For more information, go to:

**American Academy of Dermatology**  
www.aad.org

**American Cancer Society**  
www.cancer.org

**National Council on Skin Cancer Prevention**  
www.skincancerprevention.org

**The Skin Cancer Foundation**  
www.skincancer.org

Tanning beds are not a good alternative, according to the American Academy of Dermatology (AAD), though they are growing in popularity, with adolescents in the Midwest and South more likely to use them than those in the rest of the country. AAD officials say tanning beds are dangerous as well and would like to see minors prohibited from using them.

Encourage your teens to protect themselves this summer by following these suggestions offered by the Nemours Foundation and the Skin Cancer Foundation:

- It's important to use a sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15 every day, even on cloudy days. Dermatologists say

a great deal of sun exposure can occur when you least expect it. For example, sun rays can pass through car and residential windows.

- Make sure sunscreen blocks both UVA and UVB rays. Sunscreens with this type of protection are called broad-spectrum sunscreens.
- Lather on sunscreen liberally. People often do not put on enough to get full protection.
- Reapply sunscreen every two to three hours and after swimming or sweating. In direct sun, wear a sunscreen with a higher SPF, like SPF 30.
- Try to limit sun exposure when the sun is the strongest—from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

- Wear dark T-shirts rather than light-colored T-shirts to block more sun. Note: Wet T-shirts let more light through than dry ones.
- If you put on bug spray after applying sunscreen, the SPF gets watered down. It is a good idea to look for repellents that include sunscreen.
- Don't forget to protect eyes from ultraviolet rays with sunglasses. Wide-brimmed hats help too.
- Self-tanning lotion provides a safe tan, as does an airbrush tanning treatment which costs a bit more. But remember, after applying self-tanner products, it still is important to wear sunscreen outdoors.

## Home Alone

from page 1

Rules and schedules will be important.

Here are some other issues to talk about, suggested by Galvin and authors of the Kids Health website, www.kidshealth.org, sponsored by the Nemours Foundation:

- Are the children allowed to watch television, DVDs, videos or computer games, and, if so, which ones and for how long?
- Can friends come over and, if so, how many? This can be a problem, especially for teens because word can get out that there is a home with no parental supervision.
- What can you eat if you want a snack?

- Can you go outside, and if so, where?
- Which appliances can be used—the microwave, computer, etc.?
- Which chores need to be done, and by when?
- When should the children check in with parents?

In addition, it is a good idea for parents to:

- Decide what is to be done if the phone rings or if someone knocks at the door. Practice some "what if" scenarios with the children. Talk about what they could do in different situations.

- Make sure the children know how and when to dial 911 and know the name, location, and phone numbers of where mom and dad work.
- Provide the name, address and phone number or a trusted neighbor or family member who can be contacted during an emergency.

And if the kids are home alone a lot, look for some activity for them to get involved in to provide an outlet. When kids get too bored, they can get into trouble.

# Stomp Out Cyber-Bullies

Bullying, once anchored in school hallways, restrooms and buses, has gone high tech. It has wormed its way into computers via harassing emails and instant messages, and even onto cell phones by way of taunting text messages. And bullies also are using camera phones to take embarrassing photos to spread to other students' phones and computers.

Cyber-bullies are invading the personal space of teenagers, places where they are supposed to feel safe. And the bullying can take place 24 hours a day.

Because summer provides kids with a lot of free time on the computer, it is a good time for parents to set guidelines and be on the lookout for internet bullying.

Ron Anderson, vice president of Connect with Kids, one of a number of

organizations working to prevent high tech harassment, suggests parents put the computer in the family room where parents can keep an eye on what is showing up on their kids' screens. This gives the family more control over the computer.

He also suggests parents find an appropriate way to talk about cyber-bullying with their children. In addition, he says, parents need to learn as much as possible about computers. Learn about the ways bullies use the computer to harass. Parents shouldn't just use the computer as a babysitter.

The National PTA recommends parents discuss values with their children. Kindness and decency should be a top priority even though technology has changed.

The group also recommends that:

- Teens not share passwords and that they change them frequently.
- Parents talk to their teens if they suspect they are being bullied. The teens may be too embarrassed to tell a parent or teacher.
- Parents assure their children they are not to blame if bullied and that they should tell you about any incidents.
- Parents and teens keep copies of harassing emails because documentation will strengthen a case if it needs to be reported to

authorities. It is important not to delete the original email because the header may contain traceable information.

- Stress the Internet's impact, explaining one email can be forwarded to hundreds of other people. Kids, the group says, "need to think before clicking."
- For more information, see:
- **National PTA**  
[www.pta.org/](http://www.pta.org/)
- **Connect with Kids**  
[www.connectwithkids.com](http://www.connectwithkids.com)



## Remember: Healthy Kids Make Better Students Help Your Child Prepare for a Healthy School Year

Plans are underway for a Back to School Health Fair to be held from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. Friday, July 29 and from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, July 30 at Glenridge Middle School. The event is free and offered exclusively to the families of children attending schools within the Winter Park Consortium. The Winter Park Consortium includes Winter Park High and its elementary and middle feeder schools. It is presented by the Winter Park Health Foundation's Coordinated Youth Initiative, which includes the CHILL Counselors, School Nurses, Nurse Practitioners and Healthy School Team programs. Keep visiting the Healthy Kids Today website, [www.healthykidstoday.org](http://www.healthykidstoday.org), for more information., or you can call the Winter Park Health Foundation at 407-644-2300.

**Free School & Sports Physicals** will be available beginning June 27 for students in need attending schools in the Winter Park Consortium. Please call the nurse practitioners for an appointment at 407-623-1415 ext. 256.

# Kids and Alcohol Don't Mix

The countdown is on for graduation and summer vacation, an exciting time for students and parents.

It is also a time when some teens celebrate irresponsibly and experiment with alcohol, but it doesn't have to be that way.

Counselors urge parents to get involved in planning events that offer teens safe alternatives to drinking. And, they say, parents should avoid feeling they need to provide alcohol to their kids. It is okay for parents to just say no too.

Some parents feel pressured to provide alcohol believing that if they do, they are in control and somehow teaching their kids to drink responsibly. Others believe that their kids will drink anyway, so they give in and allow it to

happen on their terms. "Both beliefs are flawed," says Joanna Eckhardt, Licensed Clinical Social Worker and CHILL Counselor at Winter Park High School. "By purchasing alcohol for teens, parents are teaching children that breaking the law—that says you must be 21 to drink alcohol—is okay. The lesson teens learn is that 'Even though I am only 17, it's okay for me to drink and break the law, my parents even buy the alcohol for me.' Parents are sending mixed messages," says Eckhardt.

Please consider the safety of your child not only at this time of his or her life, but also in the years to come, Eckhardt says. Teens are looking for parents and adults to set the example. Set a good one.

## Did You Know?

Summer months are a good time to stay especially tuned to the kids. One reason—youths try marijuana and cigarettes for the first time most often in the months of June and July, according, to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health. It is not much of a surprise because of all the free, unsupervised time that is available.

For more information, go to:

**Parents, the Anti-Drug**  
[www.theantidrug.com](http://www.theantidrug.com)

**Talking With Kids About Alcohol and Drugs**  
[www.talkingwithkids.org/drugs.html](http://www.talkingwithkids.org/drugs.html)

For more health news you can use, go to the WPHF website, [www.healthykidstoday.org](http://www.healthykidstoday.org). Updated weekly, it features news, tips and recipes and it's available 24/7.

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