



# Eye on Health

## Sunglasses With UV Protection Shield Young Eyes From Harm

(NAPSA)—Taking heed of the serious warnings about the danger of UV rays, most parents are diligent when it comes to slathering sunscreen on their kids during the summertime. But while they know the importance of protecting their children's skin, many are unaware of the damaging effect the sun can have on the eyes as well.

According to the American Optometric Association, the earlier children begin wearing sunglasses outdoors the better their chances of avoiding eye health problems, like cataracts, later in life.

Dr. Jeff Smith, vice president of professional services at Pearle Vision, says this is because UV radiation is cumulative, damaging the eyes over a number of years. "Children are particularly susceptible to ultraviolet rays," states Dr. Smith. "Kids spend a lot of time outdoors and younger eyes let in more UV light."

### UV Protection

To avoid the damage that can lead to eye disease, protect your children's eyes and your own by wearing sunglasses with lenses that block 99 to 100 percent of UV rays. UV rays are strongest between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. and are stronger at high altitudes and closer to the equator.

Be extra cautious when at the beach or near water. The reflective qualities of sand and water intensify the effects of UV radiation, potentially harming unprotected eyes even over a brief period of time. Remember, clouds may block brightness, but still allow 80 percent of UV light to



**Keep your children's eyes safe with sunglasses that block dangerous UV rays.**

reach eyes and skin.

Photokeratitis, a painful sunburn of the cornea, can result from too much time in the sun without adequate protection. Symptoms include discomfort, blurred vision and light sensitivity. In addition to cataracts, macular degeneration and skin cancer around the eyes have also been attributed to long-term exposure to UV radiation.

Since children's eyes are particularly sensitive, make sure that your kids are wearing sunglasses whenever they are outdoors. A wide-brimmed hat for babies and toddlers is also a good idea.

### Polarized Lenses

Sun glare, a problem that can cause eyestrain and impaired vision, can be significantly reduced by using polarized lenses. Ideal for outdoor activities and driving,

these lenses use polarized filtering to deflect and diffuse concentrated light waves, eliminating 99 percent of reflected glare. Sun glare can be a real danger when driving, as bright sunlight or reflected light off a vehicle or roadway can be temporarily blinding. In addition, polarized lenses can increase visual clarity and enhance depth and color perception.

### Sunglasses for Everyone

It's a wise idea to protect your family's eyes from the sun's damaging rays year-round. Lenses with adequate UV protection are available in a wide range of prices. Whether choosing inexpensive or designer sunglasses, always look for lenses that block 99 to 100 percent of UV rays.

Keep in mind the color and darkness of the lens is not an indicator of its ability to block UV light. In fact, UV protection is clear. Therefore, it's recommended that you add UV protection to your regular prescription eyeglasses as well.

Pearle Vision carries a wide selection of prescription and non-prescription sunglasses including hip designer lines such as Ralph Lauren, Calvin Klein, Guess, DKNY, Tommy Hilfiger, Serengetti, Ray Ban and others. Any prescription eyeglass frame at Pearle Vision can be turned into a custom pair of prescription or non-prescription sunglasses with tinted lenses and UV protection.

Ask your eyecare professional for advice about sunglasses or prescription sunglasses and eyeglasses that best suit your family's needs.