



June 2010

2010 National Drug Control Strategy

White House Office of National Drug Control Policy

President Obama's 2010 National Drug Control Strategy reflects a comprehensive approach to reducing drug use and its consequences. Endorsing a balance of prevention, treatment, and law enforcement, the Strategy calls for a 15-percent reduction in the rate of youth drug use over 5 years and similar reductions in chronic drug use and drug-related consequences such as drug deaths and drugged driving. Below are some brief highlights of the Strategy, which harnesses the collaborative strength of local, State, tribal, and Federal agencies, community-based organizations, and other nongovernmental partners.

Strengthen Efforts to Prevent Drug Use in Communities:

Preventing drug use before it begins is a cost-effective, common-sense way to build safe and healthy communities. Research on adolescent brain development shows the value of focusing prevention on young people: those who reach the age of 21 without developing an addiction are very unlikely to do so afterward. Therefore, the Obama Administration's Strategy focuses on:

- Developing a community-oriented national prevention system focused on young people
- Collaborating with States to help communities implement evidence-based prevention initiatives
- Providing sound information about the dangers of drug use to young people, their parents, and other caring adults through the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign, at the workplace, and through schools, faith communities, and civic organizations
- Supporting mentoring initiatives, especially among youth at greater risk for initiating drug use
- Expanding research on drugs used by youth, including inhalants, pain killers, "study drugs" (e.g., Ritalin), and steroids

- Fostering collaboration between public health and public safety organizations to prevent drug use
- Curtailing drugged driving by encouraging States to establish and enforce laws that impose penalties for the presence of any illicit drug while driving and by launching a national effort to educate the public about the serious public health and safety threat posed by drugged driving

Seek Early Intervention Opportunities in Health Care:

Studies indicate that most healthcare spending related to substance abuse goes to the avoidable, catastrophic consequences of addiction rather than to its treatment. The healthcare system can avert enormous human and economic cost if care providers consistently screen and intervene with early-stage substance abuse before it becomes acutely life threatening. Therefore, the Obama Administration's Strategy focuses on:

- Increasing screening and early intervention for substance use in all healthcare settings
- Increasing healthcare providers' knowledge of screening and brief intervention techniques through medical schools and continuing education programs
- Curbing prescription drug abuse by expanding prescription drug monitoring programs, encouraging community prescription take-back initiatives, informing the public of the risks of prescription drug abuse and overdose, recommending disposal methods to remove unused medications from the home, and working with physicians to achieve consensus standards on opiate painkiller prescribing
- Expansion of reimbursement for screening and brief interventions in primary care

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Integrate Treatment for Substance Use Disorders into Health Care, and Expand Support for Recovery:

For millions of Americans, substance use progresses to a point where brief interventions are not sufficient to promote recovery. Addiction treatment can be a critical – even lifesaving – resource in such situations, but only if it is readily available and of high quality. Making recovery possible is, therefore, key to effective drug control, and the Obama Administration's Strategy focuses on:

- Expanding addiction treatment in community health centers and within the Indian Health Service
- Supporting the development of new medications to treat addiction and implementation of medication-assisted treatment protocols
- Improving the quality and evidence base of substance abuse treatment, including family-based treatment
- Fostering the expansion of community-based recovery support programs, including recovery schools, peer-led programs, mutual help groups, and recovery support centers

Break the Cycle of Drug Use, Crime, Delinquency, and Incarceration: Drug use is often interwoven with criminal and delinquent behavior that disrupts family, neighborhood, and community life in fundamental and long-lasting ways. The criminal justice system plays an important role, therefore, in reducing drug use and its consequences, and the Obama Administration's Strategy focuses on:

- Supporting law enforcement's efforts to reduce drug availability and to educate the public about the dangers and legal consequences of drug trafficking and drug abuse
- Encouraging partnerships and collaboration between law enforcement and community organizations to increase cooperation and understanding and to reduce open-air drug markets and gang activity
- Promoting and supporting alternatives to incarceration such as drug- and problem-solving courts
- Reducing drug use by those under criminal justice supervision through drug testing with certain, swift, but modest sanctions in probation and parole systems

- Mandating treatment and court monitoring for chronic drug-using offenders who disproportionately burden the healthcare and criminal justice systems
- Supporting post-incarceration reentry efforts by assisting in job placement, facilitating access to drug-free housing, and developing adult reentry programs
- Developing and disseminating more effective models of addressing substance use disorders among youth in the juvenile justice system



Disrupt Domestic Drug Trafficking and Production:

Drug-trafficking organizations move large quantities of illicit drugs into the United States and distribute these drugs throughout the Nation. These same groups, at times working through street and prison gangs, employ criminal networks that return the illicit proceeds of the drug trade – along with an array of weapons – across our borders. This trade imposes enormous negative consequences on the safety, health, and security of our citizens. The resources of the United States must be marshaled to disrupt the organizations that conduct this trade, and the Obama Administration Strategy focuses on:

- Maximizing Federal support for law enforcement drug task forces
- Assisting tribal authorities in combating trafficking on tribal lands
- Implementing the Southwest Border Counter-narcotics Strategy, the Administration's border plan, which requires United States agencies to take specific actions to address the serious border drug threat
- Interdicting the southbound flow of currency and weapons
- Disrupting counterintelligence operations of

drug-trafficking organizations to improve interdiction and protect the safety of United States personnel

- Countering domestic methamphetamine production and reducing retail diversion of pseudoephedrine used in clandestine labs, both large and small, to produce methamphetamine
- Eliminating high-potency indoor grow labs and marijuana cultivation on public lands
- Disrupting the criminal distribution of prescription medications for nonmedicinal purposes

Strengthen International Partnerships:

The United States is one of the world's most lucrative markets for illegal drugs. It is in our interest to work collaboratively with international partners to reduce the global drug trade because such actions protect the health and safety of our citizens. The United States also shares responsibility with drug-producing and transit nations for the existence of this dangerous, destabilizing, and violent criminal enterprise. Shared responsibility for the origin of a problem implies shared responsibility to solve it.

Therefore, the Obama Administration's Strategy focuses on:

- Conducting joint counterdrug law enforcement operations with international partners to cause major disruptions in the flow of drugs, money, and chemicals
- Intensifying counterdrug engagement internationally, particularly in the Western Hemisphere, including through training and technical assistance to help our international partners build stronger judicial, civic, and health institutions
- Promoting alternative livelihoods for coca and opium farmers to reduce drug production
- Improving our understanding of the vulnerabilities of drug-trafficking organizations by pooling the knowledge of our intelligence and law enforcement agencies
- Targeting the illicit finances of drug-trafficking organizations by engaging the international community in major anti-money-laundering initiatives



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- Expanding support for international prevention and treatment initiatives in partnership with the United Nations and the Organization of American States
- Increasing medication-assisted treatment for drug addiction through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), the largest effort in history to treat a single disease

Improve Information Systems for Analysis, Assessment, and Local Management: Science should help inform policy and rigorously evaluate its effects. This can be possible only with near real-time information on drug use patterns, associated problems, and the results of previously implemented policies. To achieve better management information, the Obama Administration's *Strategy* focuses on:

- Enhancing current data systems that identify the number of drug users, drug-related offenders, drug-related emergency room admissions, and other key public health and public safety indices
- Assessing the availability, price, and purity of illicit drugs on the street so it is known when our programs have a measurable impact on drug markets
- Developing and implementing community-based data systems focused on drug use and drug related problem indicators

The Obama Administration's *National Drug Control Strategy* relies on a comprehensive approach, informed by experience and evidence, to reducing drug use and its consequences in the United States. The Strategy is a collaborative effort by dozens of departments, agencies, Members of Congress, and the American people, and its implementation is a shared responsibility guided by the Office of National Drug Control Policy and its interagency partners.

Georgia



WestCare Georgia Partners with the City of Atlanta

WestCare Georgia Community Relations/Resource Development Specialist, John Bascom, with Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed at his First Annual Senior Fair at City Hall where over 400 seniors attended. WestCare Georgia has partnered with the Mayor's office on Community Service Outreach projects.

Did You Know?

Throughout history June has been a time of major events that changed the world

- King John of England Signed the Magna Carta in 1215.
- Benjamin Franklin proved that lightning is electricity in 1752.
- Eli Whitney Patented the Cotton Gin in 1793.
- Baseball was first introduced in 1839.
- Ford Motor Company was established in 1903.
- The assassination of Austrian Archduke Ferdinand triggered World War I in 1914.
- Amelia Earhart was the first woman to fly across the Atlantic Ocean, from Newfoundland to Wales, 1928.
- The Normandy Invasion on D-Day took place June 6, 1944.
- The United Nations Charter was signed in June 1945.
- The Beatles US album, Sgt.. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band," was released, 1967.



Nevada

Kudos for The Cares Program:

By Miltina Fraser – WestCare Nevada

On May 1, 2010, a team from WestCare Nevada (the MammoGlams!) made up of employees and program participants, joined with 592 other teams, including 10,262 individuals to raise a total of \$195,230 for the 15th Annual Race For The Cure to help fight and end breast cancer forever! The host of this event was the Southern Nevada Affiliate of Susan G. Komen.

Since 1982, Komen for the Cure has played a critical role in every major advance in the fight against breast cancer – transforming how the world talks about and treats this disease and helping to turn millions of breast cancer patients into breast cancer survivors. Komen has contributed to some real victories:

- **More early detection** – nearly 75 percent of women over 40 years old now receive regular mammograms, the single most effective tool for detecting breast cancer early (in 1982, less than 30 percent received a clinical exam).
- **More hope** – the five-year survival rate for breast cancer, when caught early before it spreads beyond the breast, is now 98 percent (compared to 74 percent in 1982).
- **More research** – the federal government now devotes more than \$900 million each year to breast cancer research, treatment and prevention (compared to \$30 million in 1982).
- **More survivors** – America’s 2.5 million breast cancers survivors, the largest group of cancer survivors in the U.S., are a living testament to the power of society and science to save lives.



▲ Pictured above are WestCare Nevada staff members Barbara Mason (Team Captain), Candice Kidd (Co-Captain), Darlene Terrill, Heather Shoop and seven WestCare Nevada program participants.

While we may have had a funny team name we are deadly serious about putting an end to this terrible disease!

- **Because without a cure** 1 in 8 women in the U.S. will continue to be diagnosed with breast cancer – a devastating disease with physical, emotional, psychological and financial pain that can last a lifetime.
- **Without a cure** an estimated 5 million Americans will be diagnosed with breast cancer – and more than 1 million could die – over the next 25 years.
- And, **without a cure** an estimated 25 million women around the world will be diagnosed with breast cancer – and 10 million could die – over the next 25 years.

Story of Spring Fling

By Courtney C. – WestCare Nevada

Once again a phenomenal day. Just when graduation seems two thousand light years away, as well as family, the WestCare Alumni show up and really show us how to party sober. That is the key,

isn't it? That's why I am here at Harris Springs Ranch, to get clean and sober and change.

The Alumni are people with stories just like mine and they have traveled the road and taken the "Rock." They follow the simple programs of NA and CA and life goes on. Brothers who wonder where they are going with this can see a success story in the Alumni that came today to this camp. Not only for a B-B-Q, but to share experience, strength, and hope. My life starts right here, right now.

Thank you WestCare Alumni . . .



Spring Fling is one of many annual events sponsored by the WestCare Alumni. It is a way for those who have graduated from our programs to give back and to invite anyone to become a member. The Alumni raises money by selling fireworks, to hold three major events annually. Spring Fling is one of our Bar-B-Que events that also include a suit case race, and a boat race. The men spend weeks working on the perfect boat for the race. These events are ways of boosting moral and it keeps the men and women connected during and after treatment. The Alumni is honored to return to HSR and the Women's and Children's Campus. They are a group of people who will continue to "Uplift the Human Spirit."

WestCare Arizona's Volunteer Dinner Comes Together

By Kim Mitchell – *WestCare Arizona*

With 65 people in attendance, Arizona held their annual Volunteer Recognition Dinner on Tuesday, May 18, 2010, at the beautiful Laughlin Ranch County Club. With this year's theme "Volunteers Plant the Seeds of Kindness," guests

enjoyed a great all-American dinner, were presented with certificates from their Coordinators, and took home door prizes, customized seed packets and potted plants. Several volunteers came up to the staff after the event, asking what else they could do for WestCare. This year's Volunteer of the Year award went to Bev Flannigan who donates her time to the WestCare Thrift Store. A special award was presented to Lois Wakimoto by Shawn Jenkins, WestCare COO, for her many years of service to WestCare Arizona. Sr. Vice President, Maurice Lee closed the evening



Arizona

with moving comments about the volunteers and their role in helping WestCare Arizona to continue to help others. It was a fun and relaxed evening.



The King's English

Directions: Translate the following statement into an everyday common English expression.

May Answer – "Look Before You Leap." – (Surveillance Should Precede Saltation).

The first person from each state that answered correctly is noted below.

Congratulations to: Cherly Clark, Sean Clay, Diana Heller, Chris Nelson, Sabrina Pierre, Harold Thomas, Stacie Villata and Sarah Wagner.



California Graduates have Transformed Their Lives

By Tim Scott – *Special Projects Officer, WestCare California*

California



More than 30 men and women, including 29 ex-offenders, who have successfully completed substance abuse treatment programs administered by WestCare California were honored during the "Road to Recovery" celebration May 20th in Fresno. Graduates and their families from throughout the state came together to celebrate the graduates' success in overcoming addiction and moving on to living productive, independent lives.

"By completing important substance abuse treatment, these graduates have paved a path to a promising future," said Steve Hedrick, Deputy Director for the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) Office of Substance Abuse Treatment Services.

Sheila Robinson, daughter of rhythm and blues and soul music great Ray Charles, delivered a motivational address describing her battle with substance abuse and her recovery. Thrilling the audience, she also sang a few of her songs plus a medley of her father's.

"We are proud of these graduates who are transforming their lives and will be able to successfully reunite with their families and communities," said Lynn Pimentel, Deputy Administrator of WestCare California.



A Turning Point for Chronic Public Inebriates in Florida

By David Rosynsky – Grants Specialist and National AmeriCorps Director

Chronic public inebriates are especially high users of community resources in Pinellas County. This population is alcohol dependent and frequently inebriated in public have repeated encounters with alcohol detoxification services and with other public services, such as police, jail and court services, emergency medical transportation services, public hospital emergency room care and involuntary commitment services. Many, if not most, among this population have co-occurring substance abuse and mental health disorders. As a result, Pinellas County is always faced with a very serious problem in terms of the burdens that are placed on community services and law enforcement.

For more than eight years, WestCare has served chronic public inebriates at A Turning Point Homeless Emergency Shelter and Inebriate Receiving Facility located in the city of St. Petersburg. A Turning Point remains one of the county's primary destinations for referrals from law enforcement, community and faith-based providers, the Pinellas County Coalition for the Homeless and the Pinellas County Homeless Street Outreach Taskforce and local hospital emergency rooms. In addition, it is the only facility in Pinellas County that accepts chronic public inebriates brought directly from the street by law enforcement personnel. More than 33% individuals served at A Turning Point annually are chronic public inebriates referred by local law enforcement. The program serves approximately 1,500 unduplicated clients annually.

Local data substantiates that chronic public inebriates experience high recidivism rates. Some, who were also diagnosed as mentally ill, passed through the criminal justice system ten times in a single year. These data speak to the impact and strain of chronic public inebriates on Pinellas County systems as this population continues to cycle in and out of public services, particularly those in the criminal justice field.

Chronic public inebriates have lost their sense of community and a sense of belonging, says Katrina Tucker, Program Manager.

A Turning Point has proven to be an economical alternative to jail for chronic public inebriates. According to the Pinellas County Sheriff Department,

the average daily cost for an individual to be incarcerated is \$120 per day and the cost per day at the Turning Point is \$57.

Comparing the two rates, there is a cost savings to Pinellas County of \$113,022 a year based on an average length of stay in jail of three days.

That's a primary reason why in late 2009, the Pinellas County Department of Justice and Community Services granted funding to WestCare through the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program to provide

substance abuse treatment and support services at Turning Point to adult male and female chronic public inebriates who reside in Pinellas County, Florida as an alternative to incarceration.

The funding enables WestCare to address the very serious problems of recidivism and cycling in and out of the jail by chronic public inebriates with an evidence-based program model, a reduction in bookings, incarcerations, utilization of public services traditionally used by the targeted population and an increase in sobriety, employment and stable living circumstances among the clients served.

The new funding provides an opportunity to implement a modified therapeutic community at A Turning Point shelter with a 10-bed capacity serving 28 clients each year with a typical length of stay of 90 days. Approximately 95% of the clients of this program have been abusing alcohol for more than 20 years.

The program is rich with new partnerships such as Prevent Blindness who is partnering with WestCare to assist clients to obtain eyeglasses as well as Pinellas County Vocational Rehabilitation who assists clients to become self sufficient.

Clients are participating in five didactic groups and two 12-step meetings daily onsite and traveling offsite three times per week to attend 12-step meetings with a peer buddy.

Florida



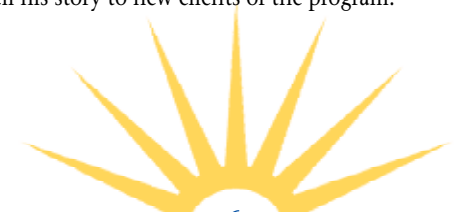
For Sam D. the MTC at A Turning Point has proven successful. In between multiple arrests Sam had been admitted to A Turning Point at least three times previously, had racked up 5 DUIs and more than 15 episodes of homelessness over the course of his 40-year addiction to alcohol and drugs.

It's all due to my drinking, commented Sam who was diagnosed with major depression in 2009. Sam attempted suicide twice, he said. The last attempt was in July of last year.

Sam successfully completed the MTC program at A Turing Point where his Case Manager Lyssa Maxwell assisted him to obtain medication, health insurance and re-file for his social security benefits. She also helped him connect with legal services.

Sam transitioned from the program into a local transitional housing program where he can remain for up to 24 months or until he obtains permanent housing while continuing his substance abuse and mental health treatment.

Sam phones A Turning Point every other day to check-in with staff. Sam's goal is to return to A Turning Point upon achieving 1 year of sobriety to tell his story to new clients of the program.





Endowment Campaign Corner

Farewell Kirby Burgess!

After a long and distinguished career spent in public service, both with the State of Nevada and with WestCare, Endowment Director Kirby Burgess has retired. The entire WestCare family wishes him well in this next phase of his life, he will be missed.



The WestCare Endowment continues to develop relationships and activities to raise funds to support the mission of the agency, Major Gifts Office, Sharon Steinberg will be the point of contact until a new Director is identified.



**WestCare Foundation
Endowment Campaign**

FLAG DAY is June 14th

On June 14th, 1885, Bernard J. Cigrand, a 19 year old teacher at Stony Hill School, placed a 10 inch, 38- star flag in a bottle on his desk then assigned essays on the flag and its significance. This observance, commemorated Congresses adoption of the Stars and Stripes as the flag of the United States on June 14, 1777. This observance was also the beginning of Cigrand's long years of fervent and devoted effort to bring about national recognition and observance of Flag Day. The crowning achievement of his life came at age fifty when President Wilson, on May 30, 1916, issued a proclamation calling for a nation wide observance of Flag Day. Then in 1949, President Truman signed an Act Of Congress designating the 14th day of June every year as National Flag Day.



Happy Father's Day!

June 20th, 2010

The concept of Father's Day was first proposed in 1909 by Washingtonian native Mrs. John B. Dodd. Her inspiration for the holiday was to honor her own father, William Smart, a Civil War veteran and single dad, widowed http://www.holidays.net/father/did_you_know.htm## when his wife died in childbirth with their sixth child. Mrs. Dodd's vision did not become reality until 63 years later? In 1966, President Lyndon Johnson signed a presidential proclamation declaring the 3rd Sunday of June as Father's Day.



"One night a father overheard his son pray: Dear God, Make me the kind of man my Daddy is. Later that night, the Father prayed, Dear God, Make me the kind of man my son wants me to be." – Unknown



WestCare Receives Mini Grants from Kentucky Area Substance Abuse Policy Board

By Ray Cox – Program Director, WestCare Kentucky

The WestCare Kentucky Emergency/Homeless Shelter and Community Involvement Center in Pikeville has been awarded KY ASAP mini grant that will offer boxing as a healthy, fun alternative activity to at risk youth in the community. WestCare will collaborate with Mayfield's Boxing Gym to provide these services. With a professional record of 48-16, Mayfield was a great boxer, trained by the legendary Bud Bruner of Louisville, Ky. Bruner is best known as being the first professional trainer of "the Greatest" Muhammad Ali. Mayfield also had the opportunity to train alongside Ali. Mayfield incorporates mentoring and life coaching along with his boxing training.

WestCare, the Pikeville Housing Authority and the school system will work together to identify and refer at risk youth to the boxing program. WestCare,

Mayfield's and Housing Authority are within walking distance of each other therefore eliminating the need for transportation. The program will be 6 weeks of mentoring and training and as a condition of the program each participant will have at least 1 encounter inside the ring.

WestCare Emergency/Homeless Shelter and Community Involvement Center is a full service shelter serving the needs of the community since 2006. The CIC provides licensed outpatient substance abuse treatment, life skills training and rental/utility assistance through the Kentucky HEARTH Program.

In addition to the above mini grant WestCare was also awarded a grant to purchase Big Books and Twelve and Twelve's for their outpatient program.



5 Questions with Lynn Pimentel

Deputy Administrator – WestCare, California

1. What is your most rewarding experience or biggest challenge working for WestCare?

Every graduation, birth and successful completion brings me great joy. I truly believe we are Changing the World One diaper at a Time. The biggest challenge is providing services during these tough economic times; it breaks my heart when we have to close programs, deny people treatment or lay off staff due to lost revenue. People are literally dieing because we can not provide services.

2. What do you do in your spare time?

Rescue kitties, support my friends and appreciate all that I have. There is so little free time I find reading a good book is a treasured experience.

3. What would everyone be surprised to learn about you?

I turned 60 this year and enjoyed every minute of

those 60 years. During my life I never had children however many individuals call me "Mom."

4. Proudest personal or professional accomplishment?

Professionally I am the most proud of being appointed as Deputy Administrator for WestCare. Personally my most treasured experience was becoming a part of the WestCare family. My most important accomplishment was entering and completing treatment. I have put together 20 years of sobriety and it is my more valuable than my masters Degree from college.

5. What is your favorite TV show? If you do not watch TV what is your favorite type of music?

Son's of Anarchy and Parenthood

Thought for the Month

"To make no mistakes is not in the power of man; but from their errors and mistakes the wise and good learn wisdom for the future." – Plutarch



Summer Sun Safety

By Anna Weinstein

Skin cancer is a growing concern among parents these days. According to the Skin Cancer Foundation, there are more than one million skin cancers diagnosed each year. Most parents have heard the statistics: 65% of melanoma cancers can be attributed to ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun, and 90% of nonmelanoma cases can be attributed to UV rays.

Thirty and forty years ago, parents were less informed about the damaging effects of UV rays. Today, however, the message is clear: overexposure can cause skin cancer.

So, how do parents balance sun safety and their children's insatiable energy for playing outdoors? Charlotte Hendricks, president of Healthy Childcare Consultants and a board member of the Sun Safety Alliance, says there are a lot of actions parents can take to protect their children from the sun. "Children need to be active outdoors," she says. "And they need to be protected."

Suntan lotion, hats, sunglasses, protective clothing, and water for hydration are all necessary to keep children protected while playing outdoors. But most parents second guess their understanding of the rules. What number sunscreen? What brand? How often do you reapply it?

Jeff Ashley, M.D., is a clinical professor of dermatology at the University of Southern California. He also is the President and Founder of Sun Safety for Kids, a nonprofit organization dedicated to reducing the incidence of skin cancer through teaching and promoting sun protection to children. Ashley provides answers to some common questions about sun protection:

As a general rule, how much time each day should children be allowed to play outdoors during the summer months?

Ashley: There's really no time limit so long as children are adequately protected from the elements, including the sun's UV radiation. Because sunscreen wears off, it is commonly recommended that it be reapplied at least every two hours during continuous outdoor exposure.



WestCare Wellness Watch



Should parents avoid sending their kids outside over the noon hour?

UV rays are strongest at solar noon, usually close to 1 p.m. during daylight savings time-so, that's when sun protection is most important. When there's a choice, it's safer to be outdoors before 10 a.m. or after 4 p.m., but that's not always practical or possible. The best defense against overexposure during midday is to cover as much area of skin as possible with lightweight, loose-fitting clothing, wear a broad brimmed hat, wear UV-blocking sunglasses, and apply sunscreen to any non-covered areas of skin.

What number sunscreen should children wear? Does it differ for children of different ages?

All people, including children, should use a sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15, preferably 30 or higher. SPF relates to the product's ability to block UVB rays. One reason for going higher is because most people don't put on enough to achieve the SPF, or because it comes off due to time elapsed, rubbing, sweating, swimming, and so forth. Within the next couple of years, the FDA will require sunscreen manufacturers to also label their products according to their ability to block UVA rays. At this time, consumers should at least check that the product claims to block UVA.

Are generic brands just as good as name brands?

All sunscreen products, brand name or generic, are supposed to have been tested to ensure that they provide the SPF that is claimed on the product label.

What are some of the benefits of sunshine and outdoor play?

The only known benefit of sunshine on the human body is its ability to cause the skin to produce vitamin D. In prior ages, this was the most important

source of vitamin D. However, today there's a safer and more reliable way to achieve adequate vitamin D levels by taking a vitamin supplement. These are now readily available and inexpensive. The healthiest lifestyle, in my opinion, consists of practicing careful sun protection and taking a vitamin D supplement to compensate for the lack of sun exposure. Many experts recommend approximately 1,000 I.U. per day for otherwise healthy adults who protect their skin from the sun. The amount for children depends on their age, so it would be best for parents to ask their pediatrician. Physical exercise, whether indoors or outdoors, remains beneficial and highly desirable, but the objective is to protect against overexposure to the sun while enjoying outdoor activities.



Anna Weinstein is a freelance education and academic writer. She has written and edited textbooks and educational materials for many educational publishers, including McGraw-Hill, Harcourt, Houghton Mifflin, and Rosen Publishing.

