Children's Toolkit

American Academy of Dermatology's
SPOT Skin Cancer®

Why SPOT Skin Cancer®

Skin cancer is something that kids hardly ever get, so you probably don't think about it much. But lots of grown-ups get skin cancer and often it's because of things they did – or didn't do – when they were kids.

They might have gotten bad sunburns, or got really dark tans. They didn't protect themselves from the sun when they were outside.

The main reason people get skin cancer is that they were exposed to too much sun on their skin, especially when they were young. There's no way to know for sure who will get skin cancer and who won't. But if you protect your skin from the sun now, there's a better chance you won't get skin cancer in the future.

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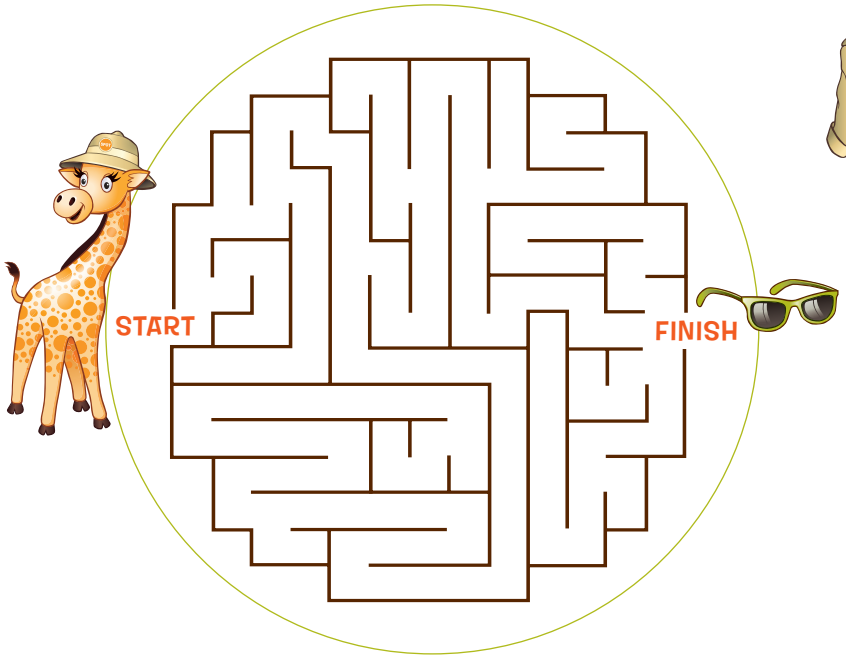
Hi Kids! I'm Gigi the Giraffe!

I'm here to help you learn about sun safety. Follow me and my spots and together we can do fun activities and learn interesting facts.

Help Gigi through the maze to get to her sunglasses.



Unscramble these words to find five things that protect you from the sun.

HRIST

MRLUBEAL

SRCSENENU

THA

GASUSNSLSE

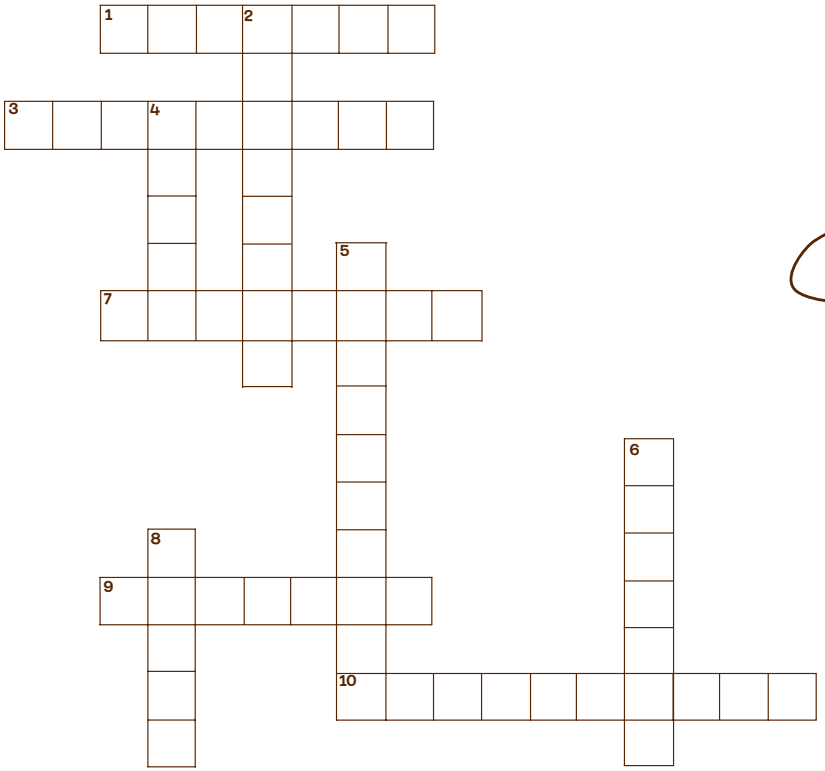
Circle the items you would use to help protect you from the sun.

Search for the words listed below.

Shade
Melanoma
Sunburn
UV index
SPF
Prevention
Awning
Skin Cancer
Sun Safety

N	V	M	V	E	M	Q	U	A	R
S	O	W	E	A	D	V	J	E	C
U	B	I	H	L	I	A	C	F	B
N	R	M	T	N	A	N	H	P	V
B	L	T	D	N	A	N	Z	S	L
U	L	E	L	C	E	Z	O	P	Z
R	X	E	N	Z	D	V	S	M	Y
N	V	I	I	I	Z	S	E	Y	A
R	K	G	N	I	N	W	A	R	K
S	U	N	S	A	F	E	T	Y	P

Use the clues below to fill in the puzzle.

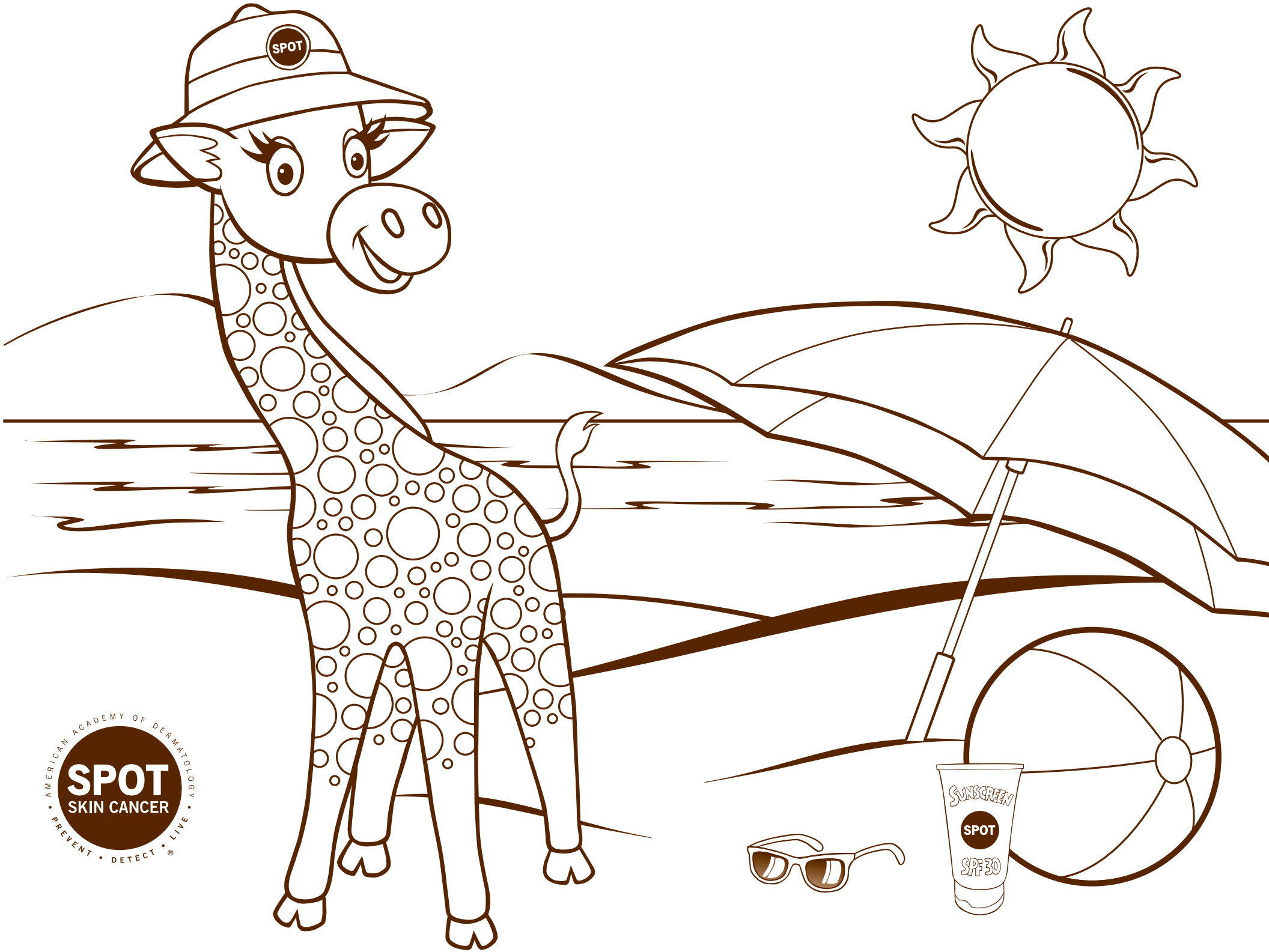


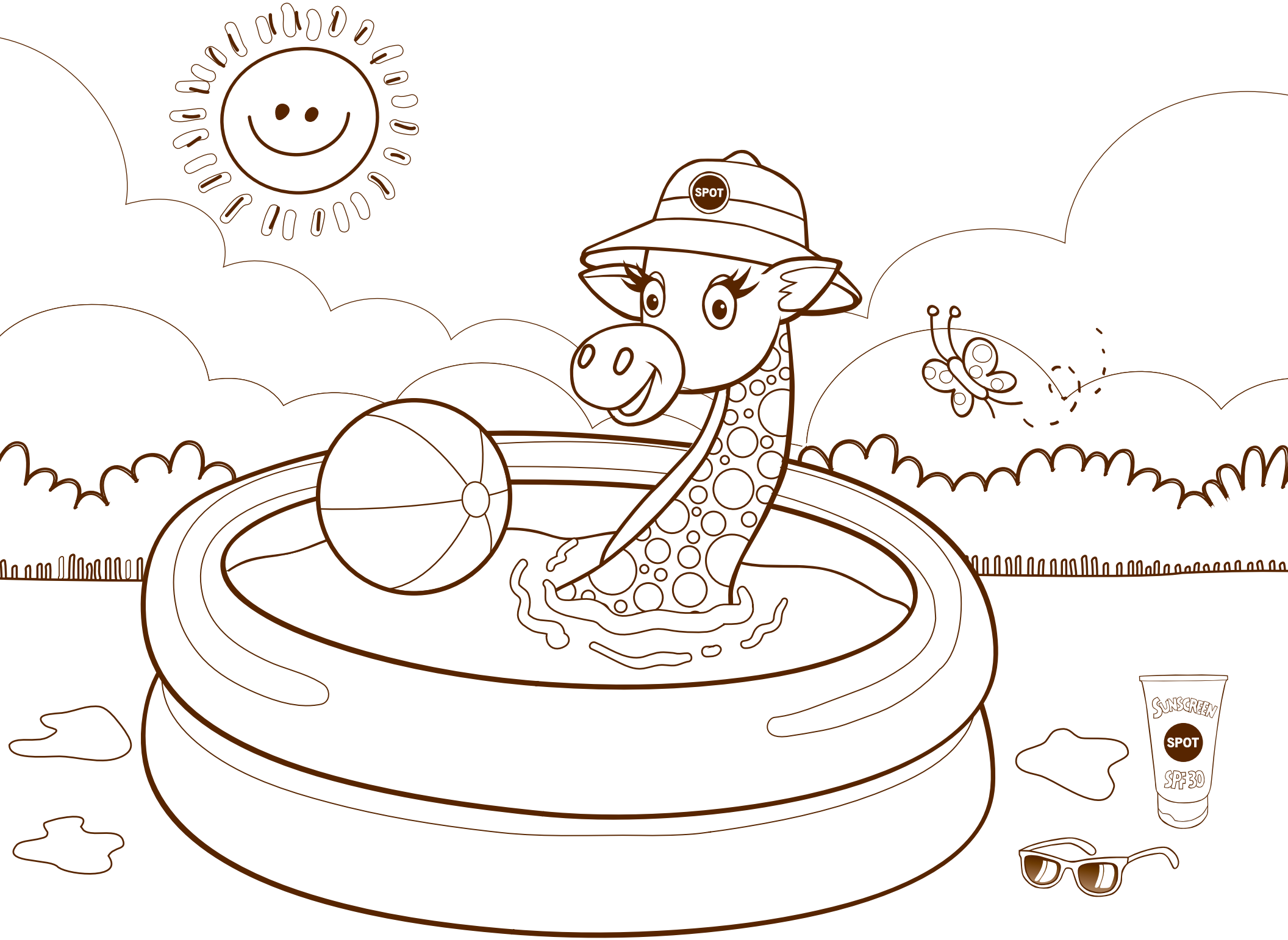
Across

1. What can happen to your skin within 15 minutes of being in the sun? _____
3. What should you always put on before you go out into the sun? _____
7. What is the most common form of cancer for young adults ? _____
9. How do you measure the intensity of the sun's rays? _____
10. Frequent sunburns can lead to _____ _____ .

Down

2. Check your _____ suit on your birthday for anything unusual.
4. Seek _____ when outdoors.
5. Parents and teachers should act as _____ _____ to encourage sun safety.
6. Avoid _____ beds!
8. You should _____ the hot midday hours from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.


SPOT
SUNSCREEN
SPOT
SPF 30
AMERICAN ACADEMY OF DERMATOLOGY
SPOT
SKIN CANCER
PREVENT • DETECT • LIVE ®


SPOT
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SKIN CANCER
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Meerkats have black rings around their eyes to absorb the sun's rays, protecting their eyes from sun damage.

The hippopotamus protects its skin by leaking a pink oil substance. This oil keeps the hippos' skin from drying out and protects them from the effects of the sun!

Animals need protection from the sun too! But these animals don't wear sunscreen or sunglasses like we do. Check out how they protect their skin from the sun.

The first thing some elephants do when they get outside is cover their bodies in sand and soil. They do this to protect their skin from bug bites and also to prevent sunburn. Believe it or not, elephants can get a sunburn!

Giraffes have dark tongues which prevent it from getting sunburned while reaching up in the trees to eat!

Here are some fun activities for parents to do with their children to teach them about the sun and its damaging UV rays.

Take a walk through your neighborhood and have your child point out the different examples of places to seek shade, such as umbrellas, porches, under a tree or a shade structure.

Purchase UV-changing beads from a craft supply store. These can be made into bracelets or backpack zipper pulls. The beads are a useful and fun way to demonstrate the effects of UV rays on the skin.

Take your child to the zoo to look at different types of animal skin, such as the smooth skin of dolphins, the dense fur of the polar bears, or a flamingo's feathers. Talk about how their skin protects them from the sun.

Select a sampling of t-shirts from your child's closet. Hold each shirt up to a light so the child can see how much light shines through (e.g. dark colored shirts vs. light colored shirts; thin vs. thick fabric; etc.) Ask your child to pick the shirts they think provide the best sun protection. It's important to note that darker-colored shirts and heavier fabrics will provide better sun protection and are an important way to be safe in the sun. This also includes wearing sunscreen and seeking shade.

Place a dark, colored piece of construction paper on a sunny window sill with a solid object placed in the middle of it. Leave the object there for a few days. Have your child look weekly at the construction paper, lifting the object to see how much of the paper exposed to the sun is fading. Explain to your child that just as the sun has changed the unprotected portion of the paper, the sun does the same thing to their skin — changing and damaging it.

Note the sun's power by slicing one apple into rings and hanging the rings from individual strings to dry. Place another apple in a cool, dry spot. Make sure the hanging apple rings do not touch, and cover them with cheesecloth to discourage bugs. Have children observe the ring's changes. To demonstrate more clearly the difference between day one and the day the apple rings are dried out, cut the other apple (the one you set aside at the beginning of the experiment) into rings. Then compare a freshly cut ring to a dried one. Explain that the sun has the same power to dry out your skin as it has to dry apple slices. This can be a reminder to moisturize your skin after being in the sun.

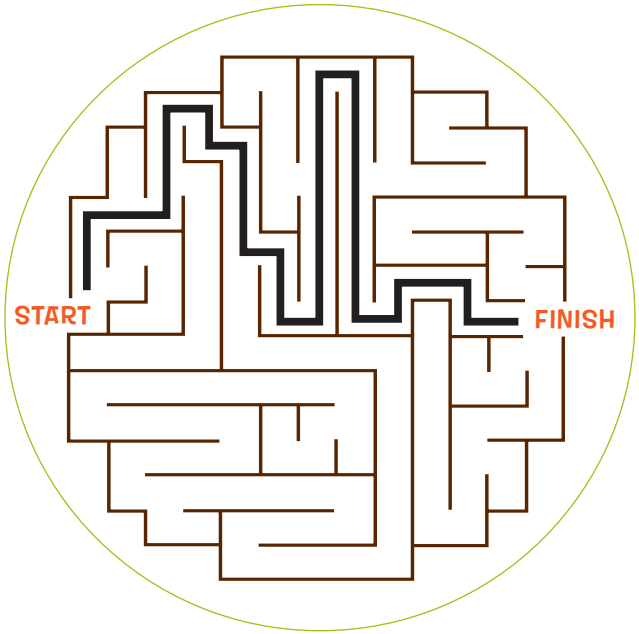
Decorate hats that will provide sun protection with fabric pens, paints, iron-on patches and other items to encourage your child to wear the hat in the sun.

If your child is in Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Campfire or Indian Guides? Help him or her start a service project to educate kids in the community about sun safety, and the importance of wearing sunscreen and covering up.

The best way to teach your child about sun protection is to start early and incorporate it into their everyday routine – make sun safety a habit!

Keep sun-safety items near the front door, in the car, and in your child's backpack. I'm sure by now your child doesn't complain about wearing his or her seatbelt or a helmet while riding a bike, so the same can happen for sun protection habits.

Answer Key



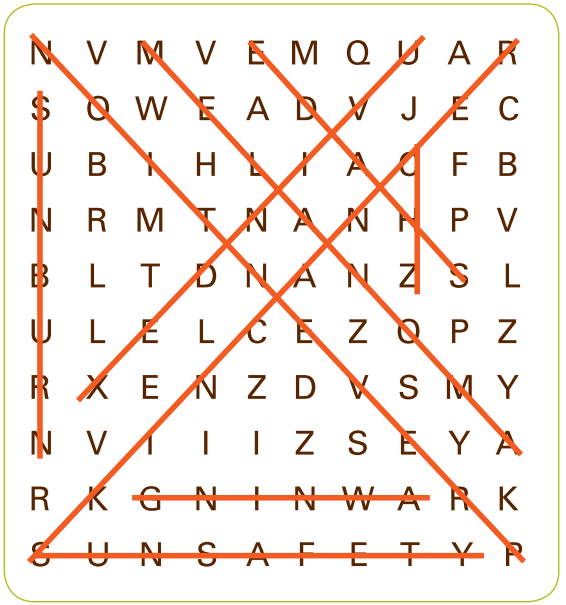
HRIST
SHIRT

MRLUBEAL
UMBRELLA

SRCSENENU
SUNSCREEN

THA
HAT

GASUSNSLSE
SUNGLASSES



Answer Key

			S	U	N	B	U	R	N					
						I								
S	U	N	S	C	R	E	E	N						
			H		T									
			A		H									
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			D										G			

Ways to incorporate sun-safety awareness into your child's everyday life at home and at school.

- Incorporate it as a daily routine. Express to them that what they do now – and don't do now – will have an impact on them later in life. Explain to them that sun exposure has a snowball effect, meaning that year after year of suntans and sunburns adds negative aspects to their skin which will show up as wrinkles or maybe even skin cancer.
- Schedule weekend activities and practices to avoid peak sun intensity hours between 10 AM – 2 PM. This is when the sun's rays are the strongest and can be the most damaging to the skin.
- Use extra caution near water, snow, and sand because they reflect and intensify the damaging rays of the sun, which can increase your chances of sunburn.
- Generously apply a broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen with a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of 30 or more to all exposed skin. "Broad-spectrum" provides protection from both ultraviolet A (UVA) and ultraviolet B (UVB) rays. Apply sunscreen approximately **20 minutes before** going outside so it has time to take effect before you go into the sun. Reapply approximately every two hours, even on cloudy days, and after swimming or sweating.
- Talk to your child's teacher and coach about how they incorporate sun safe behaviors. Does your child need a note at school to apply sunscreen? Find out what you need to do to make sure your child is protected at school.
- Encourage staff to wear sun protection such as hats, sunglasses and sunscreen while outside. Have the adults be role models for the children.
- Enhance the school property by creating shaded areas where the kids play outside (shade trees, shade structures, temporary shade structures for dugouts and sidelines.) You can encourage you PTO/PTA to start raising funds if the money isn't in the budget, or you can see if your organization would qualify for a shade structure grant from the AAD. **www.aad.org/ssp**
- Use the materials in this toolkit to create a sun safety awareness program in your school with lesson plans and handouts which teach the importance of sun protection. Use school assemblies, social events, PTO/PTA to encourage sun safety behavior, and field trips to educate your students.
- Educate staff and children about the UV index number. Check it every day with their teachers and write it on the white board. The message is we need protection every day and the higher the UV index number the more protection you need.
- Consider designating a "SPOT" day and wear orange colors or polka dots to promote sun safety.
- Look for UV-protective clothing for your children to wear at school, while playing sports, or outside. More and more stores carry clothing with a sun-protective factor, and there are many online sources for this type of clothing. Another option is to have your child wear lightweight yet long-sleeved shirts or pants and a wide brim hat because it shades the face, neck and covers the ears.
- Buy inexpensive sunglasses with UV protection for your child to wear at school, while playing sports, or outside. Have an ultraviolet coating added to the lenses of prescription glasses or contact lenses.

EPA issues a UV Alert when the level of solar UV radiation reaching your local area is predicted to be unusually intense for the time of year. The UV Alert is a warning, and it offers simple steps you can take to protect yourself and your family. The UV Alert consists of the SunWise action steps and is posted by ZIP Code and City, State at www.epa.gov/sunwise/uvindex.html.

UV Index Number

UV Index Number	Exposure Level	Precautions
0-2	Low	Wear sunscreen and sunglasses
3 to 5	Moderate	Wear sunscreen, sunglasses, cover up, seek shade near midday hours.
6 to 7	High	Wear sunscreen and protective eyewear and clothing. Reduce time in sun between 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
8 to 10	Very High	Wear sunscreen and protective eyewear and clothing. Take extra precautions. Unprotected skin will be damaged and can burn quickly. Reduce time in sun between 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
11+	Extreme	Extreme high risk of harm. Take all precautions. Unprotected skin can burn in minutes. If possible stay inside.

FAQ's about sun safety

Is a suntan healthy?
No! There is no such thing as a healthy suntan. Any change in your natural skin color is a sign of potential skin damage.

Are self-tanning lotions safe?
Yes. Self-tanning lotions are safe, however most do not contain sunscreen and thus, do not protect against sunburn or other harmful effects of the sun. Make sure to wear sunscreen as well.

Does applying sunscreen mean I can stay outside longer?
No! Although a sunscreen with an SPF of 30 offers protection from sunburn, it does not block all of the sun's damaging rays. To fully protect yourself, remember to seek shade, avoid peak hours of sun exposure and wear a long-sleeved shirt, pants and sunglasses in addition to applying sunscreen.

Do I have to reapply water resistant sunscreen once I put it on?
Yes. Water resistant sunscreens still have to be reapplied regularly, as heavy perspiration, water, and towel drying remove the sunscreen's protective layer.

Is indoor tanning safe?
No! The dangers of indoor-tanning are well documented. In fact, research has shown that those who visit the tanning booth can increase their risk for skin cancer.

Additional Resources

Apply for a Shade Structure Grant

The American Academy of Dermatology's (Academy) Shade Structure Grant Program awards grants to public schools and non-profit organizations to install permanent shade structures for outdoor locations that are not protected from the sun, such as playgrounds, pools or recreation spaces. Each shade structure grant is valued at a maximum of $8,000, which includes the cost for a shade structure and installation. The number of grants depends on the availability of funding each year. In addition to the grant, the Academy also provides a permanent sign near the shade structure.

Learn more and download resources at **www.aad.org/ssp**

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