



July 2019



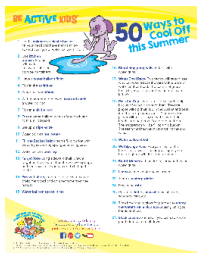
Hi everyone! I'm not sure about you but my clubhouse friends and I have been having so much fun playing outdoors this summer. We have done so many exciting things like swimming at the Clayton Swim Club, playing in the sand at Fort Fisher, hiking Black Mountain, fishing and tubing down the North Toe River at the Buck Hill Campground, and so much more.

A friend of mine shared an awesome book with me a few years ago about the importance of spending time outdoors and connecting with nature. The book, [Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder](#) is by Richard Louv. It was so interesting how today's kids are more disconnected from the natural world. The author wrote that: "Instead of passing summer months hiking, swimming and telling stories around the campfire, children these days are more likely to attend computer camps or weight-loss camps and as a result, they've come to think of nature as more of an abstraction than a reality." Check out this book and a few others by Richard Louv ([The Nature Principle](#) and [Vitamin N](#)).

Now that I have been spending so much time outdoors, I've become more thoughtful about the sun and its effects on my furry body. Because I'm a bear, my fur helps protect me from the harmful rays of the sun. Although the sun doesn't affect me as much due to bear features, it does affect some of my kid friends. There are both positive and negative effects to consider while we are outdoors. A few positive effects include improved mood, increased vitamin D levels (heart, muscle, and bone health), and lowered blood pressure. A few negative effects include skin cancer, premature aging of skin, and eye damage. Since I want all our Be Active Kids friends to be sun safe while spending 120 minutes or more being active outdoors, I want to share a few sun safety practices from the [Sunbeatables™](#) and our friends at [The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center](#). (1) Find some **shade**, especially between 10:00am and 4:00pm when the sun's rays are most harmful, (2) Apply and reapply **sunscreen**, (3) Wear protective **clothing** when possible, (4) Wear **sunglasses**, and (5) Wear **hats**. Another great resource is Sun Safe Nurseries (www.sunsafenurseries.co.uk) – check it out.



These are two of our favorite resources to help teachers and caregivers be inspired to create more active outdoor play opportunities for children.



[50 Ways to Cool Off this Summer](#)



[30 Cool Things to do on a Hill](#)

We'd love to hear and see how you've been active outdoors this summer! Email your outdoor play experiences, sun safety techniques, and pictures to info@beactivekids.org or share your outdoor, sun safe fun on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram by using **#beactiveblue**, **#caughtbeingactive**, and **@beactivekids**.

We can't wait to see all of those smiling, active children and adults having fun and being sun safe together.

Happy summer and see you in August!