

Syntastic Shades

By:

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It was a nice and sunny Tuesday morning. I fidgeted with my pencil. I was bored and doodled all over my math-book as I already knew the topic. I peered at the clock and almost yelled "YAY!!!", when I saw it was nine o'clock - P.E. time. My class zoomed for the door and dashed out of the classroom. I was the first one on the playground and hollered "Let's play Shark and Minnows!" and my friends happily agreed. Whoosh! My friends ran everywhere to get on land. Whoa! It felt like a hundred degrees out here, but that didn't stop us. I zipped everywhere for a while until I felt completely drained due to the humid and scorching hot sun. I literally felt like I was on fire. I sank on a near-by bench and fantasized as to how nice it would be if we could play in a shaded playground.

This got me thinking about an article that I had read about

the harmful effects of the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays. Apparently, protecting the skin from the sun's harmful ultraviolet rays is important in prevention of premature aging, eye diseases (cataract), immune suppression and skin cancer. Later, I researched some more and learned that skin cancer is one of the most preventable diseases. Skin cancer is caused by too much sun, both long-term exposure and bad sunburns. Sunburn incidents in childhood are directly responsible for skin cancer in adults. Another thing that protects us is the "Good" ozone layer in the upper atmosphere. It acts like sunscreen, or a shield that protects life on Earth from the sun's harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays, which cause skin cancer. But with the constant depletion of the ozone layer, we are more exposed to sun's harmful U.V. Rays.

Florida, our sunshine state is a fabulous place to be in, but it

also means we are exposed to more of the harmful effects of the sun and heat. The two important ways to protect ourselves are using a sunscreen and a hat. Regular usage of good sunscreens (ones with good UVA and UVB coverage) is also very important to prevent sunburns.

I am a big fan of the first lady, Mrs. Obama's "Let's Move" initiative. We as children, need all the exercise we can get. UV exposure is greatest when the sun is at its highest in the sky (between 10 am and 4 pm). A shaded playground will enable us to have P.E, recess during these high-risk hours of the day and at the same time protect us. Besides, it would be an ideal spot for students to relax, read a book or just get some fresh air! Also, come rain or shine we will always be able to use the shaded playground.

The more I think about it, the more I am

convinced that A BRAND NEW
SHADED PLAYGROUND is almost
a necessity and not just a
comfort.