

Choosing Products Safe for Your Baby's Skin

As a caregiver, you want what's best for your child. That includes giving them the best skin care routine to keep their skin soft and healthy. Understanding which baby skin care products to buy can be confusing. Some ingredients can cause sensitive skin to become irritated, and others can be absorbed into your little one's body and cause allergic reactions in that way. For this reason, it's important to know what ingredients are in the products you use on your baby's skin. Still, you should talk with your child's primary care provider about a skin care routine at their checkups and before introducing a new skin care product that you're unsure about.

Moisturizers

Not all babies need moisturizer applied. Patches of dry skin will often go away on their own.

If you want to use a moisturizer, though, ointments such as petroleum jelly are the most effective. However, some parents and babies may not like the greasy feel of ointments. If that's the case, choose a moisturizing cream over lotions, which require more frequent applications for similar moisturizing effects.

Sunscreen

Sunscreen is not recommended for babies under 6 months old. For babies older than 6 months, sunscreen should be applied to areas of uncovered skin when they are exposed to both direct and indirect sunlight. Opt for mineral-based sunscreens, also known as physical sunscreens, that block harmful UV rays. The American Academy of Dermatology recommends choosing sunscreens



containing zinc oxide or titanium dioxide for children to lessen the chance of skin irritation.

Bath Products

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends using a small amount of mild cleanser with a neutral pH for bath time. Check the ingredients list for harsh additives, such as alcohols and fragrances, that may dry out baby's skin or cause irritation.

Detergents

In detergents, fragrances and dyes are what tend to cause skin reactions. They can also trigger dry, irritated and scratchy skin for those who have eczema. Wash your child's clothes using laundry detergent that does not contain perfumes and dyes. Avoid anti-static products or fabric softeners, which also contain chemicals and fragrances. Since liquid

detergents sometimes rinse out easier than powder detergents do, they may be a better choice for sensitive skin. You may find that sticking with a baby detergent, designed for the most sensitive of skin, is the best option for your child.

Understanding Product Labels

Many baby skin care products contain claims to help them appear safer. For example, their labels might say:

- hypoallergenic
- natural
- gentle
- organic

But what do these terms really mean? Unfortunately, not much. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is responsible for regulating skin care products, but it doesn't have the power to approve products before they make it onto shelves. The FDA can take action when there is evidence that a brand is making misleading claims about a product, but a 2018 research study suggests that adverse reactions to baby cosmetics are under-reported. As a result, regulation of baby skin care product claims and labels can be challenging.

Ingredients to Avoid

While each baby is unique, some ingredients are especially important to avoid in products for your little one. The following ingredients are likely to cause skin irritation as well as allergies absorbed through the skin.

Fragrances

Everyone loves a good-smelling baby. As a result, fragrances are common in baby skin care products. Fragrances can cause

Driving Without a Valid Driver's License

Driving without a valid driver's license is a crime that should be taken seriously. Driving without a driver's license can mean any of the following:

- Driving without ever having obtained a drivers license,
- Driving with a suspended or revoked drivers license,
- Driving with an expired drivers license, or
- Driving with a valid drivers license but neglecting to have it with you.

In California, driving without a valid license can result in a traffic infraction with a fine of \$250 maximum. In some situations, however, this offense can be a misdemeanor with a \$1,000 maximum fine, probation, and vehicle impound.

In addition to California law and regulations, the RFA Written Directives is also very clear that driving without a driver's license is not allowed. Specifically, the Written Directives states that "a Resource Family may not allow a child or non-minor dependent to be transported by an individual the Resource Family knows or reasonably should know does not have a valid driver's license." This means that a caregiver may not drive a child in his or her care without a valid driver's license. In addition, if a caregiver knows that someone doesn't have a driver's license, that person also may not drive the child.

SECTION 11-10: Transportation

(c) A Resource Family may not allow a child or nonminor dependent to be transported by an individual the Resource Family knows or reasonably should know does not have a valid driver's license.

allergic reactions, including rashes and breathing problems. If your baby seems sensitive to products with fragrances, be sure to choose soaps and moisturizers with labels that don't have these words:

- "fragrance"
- "perfume"
- "parfum"
- "essential oil blend"
- "aroma"

Fragrances may be listed generically without using specific ingredient names, or they may be identified by a less obvious name, such as "amyl cinnamal."

Synthetic Dyes

The good news is that most color additives and synthetic dyes are tightly regulated by the FDA and must get approval before they are included in cosmetic products. However, this certification doesn't apply to all dyes. Dyes that do not need to be certified include those from:

- minerals
- plants
- animal sources

Parabens

Parabens are used in a variety of cosmetic and food products as a preservative. They are particularly common in "wash off" products such as soaps and shampoos. Parabens are a common source of irritation from skin care products, so they should be avoided for babies and young children who are sensitive to them. Parabens are also easily absorbed by the skin. Research suggests that the long-term exposure to parabens throughout a person's life may affect their metabolism and hormone regulation, so you may want to reduce your child's exposure early in childhood.

Phthalates

Phthalates are chemicals used in some cosmetic products. Research suggests that exposure to phthalates at different times in life has effects on human development, allergies, and reproductive health. According to the FDA, diethyl-phthalate (DEP) is a commonly used phthalates in cosmetic products.

Formaldehyde

Formaldehyde and formaldehyde-releasing preservatives are used in a variety of cosmetic products, including liquid baby soaps and baby wipes. These compounds are used to prevent bacterial growth but also may cause skin irritation and allergic reactions in people who are sensitive to them. Although the doses observed in skin care products are generally considered safe, repeated and long-term exposure may increase the risk of other health concerns, including asthma and some cancers. Most cosmetic companies have voluntarily removed formaldehyde from their products, but it's still used in some products for babies and children, so be sure to check the ingredients list.

Propylene glycol

Propylene glycol is a type of alcohol commonly used in moisturizers and sunscreens. It has become increasingly popular in cosmetic products due to its skin-softening properties, but it is also a common cause of irritation and allergic reactions. Talk with your child's primary care provider or dermatologist if you suspect your little one is having a reaction to it.

Sulfates

Sulfates are a hard ingredient to avoid. They are used in a lot of different skin care products, such as shampoos and body washes. The most commonly used sulfates are:

- sodium lauryl sulfate
- sodium laureth sulfate

Sulfates aren't necessarily unsafe, but they can cause temporary irritation. If you notice any redness, dryness, or itching after bath time, check your baby's products for sulfates and consider switching to a sulfate-free wash.

Chemical sunscreens

Not all sunscreens are created equal. Chemical sunscreens protect skin by absorbing UV rays, whereas mineral sunscreens block UV light, deflecting it away from the skin. Both protect against

the sun's harmful rays, and chemical sunscreens are often more appealing to parents because they're easier to apply. However, research published in 2020 suggests that some of the ingredients in chemical sunscreens can be absorbed through the skin into the body. While that doesn't necessarily mean they're unsafe, parents should be aware of the potential risks until more research is done, since some of these compounds may affect the activity of hormones in the body.

Common ingredients in chemical sunscreens to avoid include:

- avobenzone
- benzophenone
- homosalate
- methoxycinnamate
- octinoxate
- octisalate
- oxybenzone
- PABA

The Takeaway

Choosing safe and effective skin care products for your baby can be overwhelming, but it is not impossible. Instead of picking up labels with trendy claims, such as "hypoallergenic," "gentle," or "organic," try learning about ingredients that can cause skin irritation if your baby shows signs of a rash or reaction. This can help you feel empowered to navigate the many options available to you. And don't forget, your child's primary care provider or dermatologist is there to provide guidance on the best way to care for your baby's skin.



Champions for Children Jhamicha Jones

Ms. Jones is the type of caregiver who treats all children under her care as her own. She not only provides a safe and stable home for children in her care, but she takes it upon herself to give abundant compassion, love, and nurturing to those who may be struggling. She relishes in the milestones that children in her care reach and shares them excitedly with a child's family and PSW.

Ms. Jones has put forth a lot of effort to open her home to children and can directly relate to their experience. At a young age, she lost both of her parents and experienced abuse before she found a safe place.

"I don't want other kids to go through what I went through," explains Ms. Jones. Following advice from her cousin who is also a resource parent, Ms. Jones completed the resource family training program to become a resource parent herself.

"It's a blessing to be a foster parent," Ms. Jones says. She acknowledges that it comes with challenges but getting to provide a safe landing place for children is worth it. Over the past four years, six children have stayed with her before reuniting with their families. In addition to the amazing care she gives, she supports and respects the biological families of the children in her care. She has opened her own home to ensure biological family members can have visits and spend special occasions, such as birthdays, with their children. She treats the families with dignity and humility.

On top of it all, Ms. Jones is a frontline worker at CPMC hospital, balancing her work and care for children. She adapted to the ever-changing dynamics of the pandemic and pivoted to adopt extra safety precautions. Through it all, she has been able to still prioritize her children's needs, emotional well-being, and connection to their family.

San Francisco Family and Children's Services along with the Parenting for Permanency College appreciate Jhamicha Jones for her dedication and willingness to provide a safe and stable home to those who need it most. Her engagement, support and feedback is appreciated more than can ever be expressed. Congratulations to Ms. Jones, our May Champions for Children!



K.I.D.S.

Published bimonthly for San Francisco County foster parents, resource families, NREFMs and kin care providers. To suggest a topic, submit an article, promote an event, or provide feedback, email Sharon.Walchak@sfgov.org.

Editorial Staff

Editors: Agnes Balla and Sharon Walchak
Amabel Baxley, Kimberlee Pitters, Casey Schutte

City and County of San Francisco/Family & Children Services
PO Box 7988 • 170 Otis Street, San Francisco, CA 94120

Newsletter Website: <https://sfcaresforkids.org/kids-newsletter/>

Helpful Phone Numbers

HSA Operator	(415) 557-5000
CPS Child Abuse Hotline	(800) 856-5553 or (415) 558-2650
Foster Care Ombudsman	(415) 558-2828
Transportation Duty Line	(415) 557-5376
Licensing/RFA/Recruitment Hotline	(415) 558-2200
Free Foster Parenting Respite Service	(415) 861-4060 x 3035
Community Services	211
Non-emergency Government Services	311

FCS Agency Directory: www.sfhsa.org/174.htm

Alternative Family Services-PPC Training

RFA Pre-Service Approval Training	
English RFA Pre-Service Training	May 22-29, 2021 (Saturdays) 8:45 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
English RFA Pre-Service Training	June 8-17, 2021 (Tues/Thurs) 5:15-9 p.m.
Spanish RFA Pre-Service Training	May 1- 8, 2021 (Saturdays) 8:45a.m.-4:30 p.m.
SA/HIV Training	
ABC's of Baby Care (English)	May 19, 2021 (Wednesday) 5:15-8:30 p.m.
Ongoing Training	
Self-Care (English with Spanish Translation available)	May 15, 2021 (Saturday) 9 a.m.-12:15 p.m.
Educational Monthly Training Series (Part 5) (English with Spanish translation available)	May 5, 2021 (Wednesday) 5:15-7 p.m.
SB-89: El Bienestar Sexual y Reproductivo para los Jóvenes Bajo Crianza Temporal (Spanish)	June 5, 2021 (Saturday) 9 a.m.-12:15 p.m.
To register for training please contact Alternative Family Services (AFS)-PPC Training @ ppc@afs4kids.org or contact your RFA Worker. All training is through Zoom until further notice.	

Resource Parent Meetings and Support Groups

Resource Family Meetings:

For more information about Resource Family, meetings please contact your RFA Worker or Arlene Hylton at Arlene.hylton@sfgov.org or 451-557-5067.

Caregiver Quarterly Meeting - Quarterly (6-8 p.m.)

July 6, 2021

Resource Family Convening - Bi-monthly (5-7 p.m.)

3rd Wednesday of EVERY OTHER month

Quality Parenting Initiative Meeting (QPI)

4th Thursday of Month (11 a.m. -12:30 p.m.)

May 27, 2021 & June 24, 2021

Support Groups:

Resource Family Support Groups (SA/HIV) (7:30 to 9:30 p.m.) 3rd Tuesday (English) and 3rd Thursday (Spanish) of each month, 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. unless otherwise announced. To attend SA/HIV Support Group, contact Sharon Walchak at (510) 282-4658.

English: May 18, 2021 & June 15, 2021

Spanish: May 20, 2021 & June 17, 2021

COFFEE WITH CAREGIVERS Fridays from 1:30-2:30 p.m.

Coffee with Caregivers Supports Relative, Non-Relative, Adoptive and Guardianship Caregivers. Grab your favorite drink and snack and join us during the following virtual meetings. To register please Email Nichole at narnold@cacaregivers.org

Other RFA Ongoing Training Resources:

(Reminder: Approved Resource Families are required to complete 8 hours of training yearly)

Foster Parent College: <http://www.fosterparentcollege.com>

QPI California-Just In Time Training: <http://www.qpicalifornia.org>

Mandated Reporter Training: <https://mandatedreporter.ca.com>

Education Corner

With the end of the 2020-21 school year, now is a good time to reflect on how the year went and plan for the summer and upcoming school year. Some questions you might want to consider include:

- Did your child benefit from services, like tutoring or homework help, that you want to make sure are in place at the start of next school year?
- Is your child changing schools, including a move from elementary to middle school or middle to high school? If so, is there anything you can do to help them prepare for that transition, both socially and academically?
- If your child is in high school, do you know if they are on track to graduate, and have you talked to them about their plans for after graduation?

Now is also a good time to think about preventing "summer learning loss," which occurs when students lose academic skills over the summer. School districts are providing programming this summer to support summer learning, so that may be something to look into. You can also do things at home to prevent summer learning loss, including making time for learning at home, encouraging your child to work on math skills, and setting time aside each day for your child to do some reading and writing.