Protecting Children
Where They Live, Learn, & Play

National Conference of State Legislatures
August 7, 2012
AMERICA'S CHILDREN AND THE ENVIRONMENT
Measures of Contaminants, Body Burdens, and Illnesses

http://www.epa.gov/envirohealth/children
Percentage of children ages 0 to 17 years reported to have current asthma, by race/ethnicity and family income, 2007-2010

Data: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, National Health Interview Survey

*America's Children and the Environment, Third Edition*
Percentage of children ages 5 to 17 years reported to have attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, by sex, 1997-2010

SOURCE: America's Children and the Environment, Third Edition

DATA: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, National Health Interview Survey
Percentage of children ages 0 to 5 years living in homes with interior lead hazards, 1998-1999 and 2005-2006

SOURCE: America's Children and the Environment, Third Edition
DATA: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, National Survey of Lead and Allergens in Housing, American Healthy Homes Survey
Blood lead in children ages 1 to 5 years

Concentration of lead in blood (g/dL)

95th percentile blood lead

Median blood lead

DATA: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey
Children’s Exposures are Different

Children Eat More Food – Different Varieties

Children’s Drinking Water Ingestion Rates

- 95th percentile
- Mean

Adult Default: 29 mL/day-kg

EPA Children’s Health Priorities

A. Regulations use the best science

EPA will use the best science to ensure that regulations and other agency actions protect children’s environmental health by actively addressing the potential for unique childhood vulnerability and exposure.

B. Safe Chemicals Management

Assuring the safety of chemicals in our products and our environment is critical to protect the health of children. EPA is establishing standards, policies, and guidance to help eliminate harmful prenatal and childhood exposures to pesticides and other toxic chemicals.

C. Coordinate community-based programs to help Eliminate threats to children’s health and to measure progress.
Where are kids most vulnerable?

Children spend 90% of their time indoors

- Home
- School
- Childcare Facility
Surgeon General’s Call to Action to Promote Health Homes

This *Call to Action* describes steps all Americans can take to prevent disease, disability and injury that may result from health hazards in homes. It outlines specific actions for individuals, community and faith-based organizations, home lenders, developers, builders and inspectors, health care providers, policymakers, and the government.

Healthy Homes Strategy

Healthy homes inter-agency work group was established in 2009 consists of EPA, CDC, HUD, USDA/NIFA, DOE, DOL, NIST, and NIEHS.

Developed strategy that:
• Builds on long established principle of what constitutes a healthy homes (dry, clean, pest-free, safe, contaminant-free, well-ventilated, and thermally controlled).
• Outlines approaches for addressing environmental health and safety hazards in housing holistically - rather than using soiled approaches.
• Will not require any additional investment of federal resource by the government but instead optimizes use of existing resources.
Radon in Homes

- Radon is a deadly, common, and poorly addressed environmental cancer risk.

- It's a leading cause of environmental cancer mortality in US.

- Radon causes 21K deaths each year - the 2nd leading cause of lung cancer; leading cause among non-smokers

- Over 7M homes above EPA's action level and the number is growing

Radon is a health hazard with a simple solution.

Test. Fix. Save a Life.

- Subtitle E, Section 461 of EISA requires the EPA, in consultation with relevant federal partners to develop:
  1. Model guidelines for the siting of school facilities; and
  2. Voluntary guidelines to assist states in establishing and implementing environmental health programs in K-12 schools.
EPA has taken the following actions in response to the EISA mandates:

1. **Siting Guidelines** (Released Fall 2011) – Guidance to help school districts and community members evaluate environmental factors to make the best possible school siting/location decisions.

2. **School Environmental Health Program Guidelines for States** - (Scheduled to be released October 2012) – Guidance to help states, tribes, and territories establish and sustain K-12 school environmental health programs to support schools and school districts in creating healthy learning environments.
What is a School Environmental Health Program for States

An effective state or tribal environmental health program for schools promotes preventive, cost effective practices at the local level that support safe, clean, and well maintained school buildings and grounds and create an environment that is conducive to learning and protecting the health of children and school staff.
Benefits of establishing clean, green and healthy school environments include:

**Healthy Students & Increased Academic Performance**

- Improved health and decreased absenteeism of both students and teachers
- Positive impact on the students' ability to perform mental tasks requiring concentration (e.g., addition, multiplication, and sentence comprehension)
- Higher scores on standardized tests
ENERGY STAR for K-12 School Districts

Partnering with ENERGY STAR is a commitment to your students as well as to the environment.

As a school official, you probably know that the annual energy bill to run America's primary and secondary schools is a staggering $6 billion — more than is spent on textbooks and computers combined.

What you may not know is that:

- The least efficient schools use three times more energy than the best energy performers; and
- Top performing ENERGY STAR labeled schools cost forty cents per square foot less to operate than the average performers.

What You Can Do

- Teach kids about how becoming energy-efficient can help save our world
- Prepare an Energy Strategy for the Future
- Establish a comprehensive energy management program using ENERGY STAR's Guidelines for Energy Management and read the New Energy Design Guidelines for High Performance Schools
- Join ENERGY STAR
- Evaluate your school's energy performance with Portfolio Manager
- Learn about financing your energy projects
- Visit EPA's Indoor Air Quality for Schools Web site and download Energy Efficiency and Indoor Air Quality in Schools
The State’s Role

The foundation of many effective environmental health programs are state, tribal, and territorial laws and policies that drive action towards improving environmental conditions where children live, learn and play.

Effective State environmental health laws and policies have been used in school settings to address:

- Green Cleaning
- Indoor Air Quality
- Integrated Pest Management
- Chemical Management
Model State Policies

Green Cleaning
As of March 2012, 10 states (e.g., Illinois, Missouri, and New York) and the District of Colombia have passed effective state green cleaning policies.

Chemical Management
States with chemical management policies and guidance include Colorado, Maryland, and Nebraska.

Indoor Air Quality (IAQ)
As of March 2012, 33 states (e.g., Connecticut, Indiana, New Jersey, and Texas) had some type of state regulation regarding IAQ in schools.

Integrated Pest Management (IPM)
Existing state IPM programs (e.g., California, Florida, Pennsylvania, and Texas) are good resources for states and tribes to use as guidance in developing standards and policies for IPM in schools.
Connecticut

By implementing the EPA IAQ Tools for Schools program, the state of Connecticut has helped address IAQ issues in over 800 schools. School districts throughout the state have benefitted from implementing this component of a K-12 school environmental health program through:

• **Improved Health Outcomes within Connecticut School Districts**
• **Cost Savings for Connecticut School Districts**
• **Positive Public Relations**

Visit the [Connecticut Tools for Schools](https://www.epa.gov/iaqtoolsforschools) website for more information.
Additional Information

America’s Children and the Environment (ACE) Report
www.epa.gov/ace

Healthy Child Care Resources
www.epa.gov/childcare

EPA’s Healthy School Environments Website
www.epa.gov/schools
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