



**Connecticut
Public Health
Association**

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Connecticut Public Health Association

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Facts and Recommendations on Child Safe Products and Cadmium

In order to ensure the health and safety of Connecticut children, the Connecticut Public Health Association (CPHA) supports **H.B.5130, *An Act Concerning Child Safe Products*** and **H.B. 5314, *An Act Banning Cadmium in Children's Jewelry***. **H.B. 5130** would establish a process for state agencies to identify and phase out a list of the most hazardous chemicals in children's products. **H.B. 5314** would ban cadmium from jewelry designed to be worn by children under age twelve that is sold or manufactured in Connecticut.

Background

Tens of thousands of potentially dangerous chemicals are used in products designed and marketed to children. Federal regulations do not require manufacturers to prove the safety of new chemicals before use in consumer products [1]. Of the 3,000 most commonly used chemicals, only 12 have been tested for safety in children and pregnant women [1,2]. Cadmium is a known carcinogen and occupational health hazard commonly found in batteries, paints, metal coatings and in metal alloys used in children's jewelry [3,4,5,11]. In efforts to reduce chemical exposure in children, other states, including Maine, California and Washington, have already enacted legislation phasing out cadmium and chemicals of highest concern in children's products [3,6,7]. Several leading medical groups have also called attention to the problem of toxic chemical exposures, including the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Endocrine Society [1].

A growing number of scientific studies show that toxic chemicals are linked with chronic diseases including certain cancers, developmental disorders, birth defects and problems with fertility [1,2,8]. It is estimated that 30% of childhood asthma and 5% of childhood cancers are caused by chemicals that are found in the child's environment [1,9]. Cancer is the second most common cause of death for Americans under age 20, and chemical exposure is linked to some childhood cancers including leukemia and brain cancer, which have increased 20% since 1975 [1,9]. Other studies have demonstrated that many common chemicals, such as phthalates and cadmium, can be detected in the bodies of most people at levels shown to cause reproductive health abnormalities [1,8,10]. Children are exposed to neurotoxic chemicals through house dust, plastics, baby furniture, and teething toys [1,8]. There is compelling evidence that children's exposure to chemicals, including cadmium, should be limited as much as possible to prevent adverse health effects [1,12].

Diseases such as childhood cancer and respiratory issues result in enormous societal and economic costs and contribute to an overburdened health care system [1]. It is estimated that \$2.3 billion are spent each year on children's medical costs due to cancer, asthma and behavioral disorders that are associated with toxic chemicals [1,9]. We spend \$7,000 per person per year on healthcare in the U.S., not including additional costs of disability, unemployment or the loss of productivity associated with chronic disease [1]. Some of these costs may be preventable by identifying and phasing out toxic chemicals in consumer products and replacing them with safer alternatives where they exist.

Recommendation

CPHA supports the reduction and eventual elimination of toxic chemicals in children's products in order to improve the health of Connecticut children. The adoption of a list of chemicals of high concern will more effectively address the harms these chemicals pose to children's health and development. Phasing cadmium and other chemicals out of consumer goods will ultimately contribute to a reduction in the economic and human costs associated with the presence of toxic chemicals, and improve the safety of our children's environments.

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