**Where can I find more on how to keep children safe and healthy?**

**www.doh.wa.gov/children**

**Public Health Questions (DOH)**
1-800-525-0127

**Toxic Free Tips Info Line (Ecology)**
1-866-939-9991

**Washington Poison Control**
1-800-222-1222

**Created by**

Washington State Department of Health
www.doh.wa.gov

Department of Ecology, State of Washington
www.ecy.wa.gov/toxicfreetips

Local Hazardous Waste Management Program in King County, Washington
www.lhwmp.org/home

PEHSU Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Units
www.depts.washington.edu/pehsu

EPA United States Environmental Protection Agency
www.epa.gov

If you need this document in a format for the visually impaired, call 360-407-6700. Persons with hearing loss, call 711 for Washington Relay Service. Persons with a speech disability, call 877-833-6341.

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# Protect Kids From Toxics

**Look inside for ways to protect kids from toxic chemicals**

***Toxics are especially harmful to children.**

Children are more affected by toxic chemicals for many reasons. Children eat, drink, and breathe more than adults in relation to their body size. This means they are at greater risk for health problems from toxic chemicals.

Adults need to be careful around toxic chemicals too, especially women who plan to become pregnant, are pregnant, or are nursing. Some toxics are stored in the body and build up over time. A woman can pass toxics to her developing fetus which may affect the brain and health of the developing baby.

*Toxics are poisons or substances that are poisonous.

## Keep Indoor Air Healthy

**Indoor air can be more polluted than the air outside.**

### Keep Your Home and Car Smoke-Free

Never smoke near children. Second-hand smoke increases the risk of heart disease, lung cancer, and asthma, and is linked to Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

### Keep Wood Smoke Out

Replace older wood stoves with cleaner gas, pellet, or EPA-certified wood stoves.

### Keep it Clean

Vacuum and dust regularly. Dust using a wet rag and use a vacuum with a HEPA filter if you can. Dust particles may contain toxic chemicals.

### Keep Mold Away

Mold can grow in places that are wet. Repair water leaks and dry wet areas right away. Prevent moisture by using kitchen and bathroom fans that vent to the outdoors.

### Keep it Aired-Out

Air out your whole house regularly. Fresh air reduces the concentration of contaminants.

### Prevent Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Never use gasoline-powered equipment or burn charcoal inside. Never use a gas oven to heat your home. Install a carbon monoxide detector.

### Test for Radon

Radon gas is colorless and odorless and occurs naturally. It can seep into your home from the ground. Test for radon with a home test kit.

## Reduce Toxics in Food and Water

**America's food and water supplies are among the safest in the world. However, sometimes toxics can get into our food and water and make children sick.**

### Wash Fruits and Vegetables

Wash fruits and vegetables to remove dirt and chemical residues. Scrub produce that has a skin, like apples, with a brush or cloth.

### Eat Fish Low in Mercury

Some fish have less mercury than others. Good choices are salmon, cod, flounder, trout, tilapia, and canned light tuna.

### Let Tap Water Run

When water sits in water pipes, it may pick up lead and other metals. Flush pipes by running cold water until the water is noticeably colder.

### Use Cold Water

Use only cold water for drinking, cooking, and making baby formula since hot water may contain higher levels of lead.

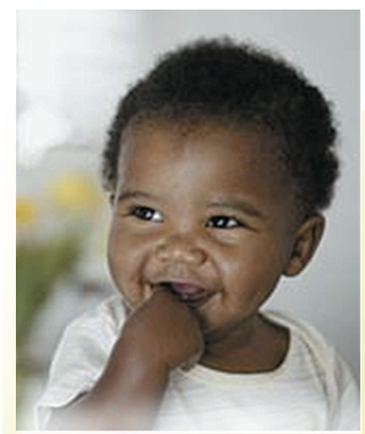
### Test Private Well Water

If you own a private well, test your drinking water every year for coliform bacteria and nitrate. Consider testing for arsenic.

## Use Household Products Safely

**Household products, such as cleaners and bug killers, can cause health problems.**

- Follow the instructions on the label.
- Keep products out of the reach of children.
- Avoid products labeled "Danger" or "Poison."
- Avoid using bug killer and "weed and feed" products.
- Use safer options when you can. For safer options and shopping tips visit **ecy.wa.gov/toxicfreetips**.



## Use Plastics Wisely

**Some plastic bottles, cups, containers, toys and pacifiers, are made with the chemicals bisphenol A (BPA) and phthalates. These chemicals may be toxic when released by heat or when the product is scratched.**

- Choose food and beverage containers that are BPA-free, glass, or stainless steel.
- Avoid putting hot liquids or foods into plastic food containers.
- Avoid putting plastics in the microwave or dishwasher.
- Avoid cooking or storing food and beverages in plastics marked with recycling codes #3, #6, and #7.

## Prevent Lead Poisoning

**Lead dust and chips from paint in homes and buildings built before 1978 are the biggest sources of lead exposure. To reduce your child's exposure to lead dust and chips:**

- Wash toys, pacifiers, and bottles often with soap and water.
- Vacuum and damp dust regularly.
- Keep children away from peeling paint.
- Remove shoes when going inside to avoid tracking in soil that may contain lead and other toxics.
- Use lead-safe work practices when renovating or doing home repairs on paint that may contain lead.

### Wash Hands Well and Often

**Washing hands with soap and water gets rid of germs, as well as lead, arsenic, pesticides, and other toxics your child may have touched.**

**For more information on how to keep your child safe and healthy, visit www.doh.wa.gov/children.**

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