



CHILDHOOD CANCER

CROSS-SECTOR STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTION ONE YEAR LATER

ADVOCACY INCREASES AS RISKS FOR CHILDREN GROW

INTRODUCTION

On September 23rd, 2020, the Childhood Cancer Prevention Initiative released the **Childhood Cancer: Cross-Sector Strategies for Prevention report** wherein our cross-sector team of scientists, health, and business leaders described increasing rates of cancer among children and adolescents that could not be explained by genetics alone and called for a multi-sector approach to protect children and families from this devastating diagnosis. Below we outline some of the latest science, business, and policy updates of the past year.

NEW DATA AND NEW CONCERNS FOR CHILDHOOD LEUKEMIA

In the initial 2020 report, researchers reported that incidence rates of cancer among those under the age of 20 increased by 34 percent from 1975 to 2017. Sadly, today this upward trend continues; **new data from 2018** from the National Cancer Institute's Surveillance Epidemiologic End Results (SEER) Program show that incidence rates since 1975 have increased by 41 percent (annual percent change of 0.8%). We don't know what the data would say for 2021, and won't know for three more years, but the trend doesn't look good for childhood cancers in this country.

Over the last year, scientific research has validated the primary findings in our 2020 report. Recent **meta-analyses confirm that exposure to pesticides increases the risk of childhood leukemia**, especially if women are exposed during pregnancy. Recent studies also reveal that **living close to plant nurseries may also increase risk of childhood cancers**, raising the specter of exposure to **pesticide drift** as a cause of childhood leukemia. In addition, studies continue to document concerns related to increased risk of childhood leukemia associated with air pollutants, including outdoor air pollutants **near petroleum facilities** and indoor air **pollutants in the home**.

ADVOCACY GROUPS LEAD BUSINESSES AND POLICYMAKERS TO TAKE STEPS TO PROTECT KIDS

With such clear connections between pesticides and childhood cancers, advocacy groups, including CCPI participants, have encouraged policymakers to step up to begin to take protective actions. In August, the U.S Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) **announced that it will ban the use of chlorpyrifos** on all food products nationwide. Chlorpyrifos was **prohibited from indoor use after passage of the 1996 Food Quality Protection Act** to reduce the risk of harm to children, but its use on agricultural fields has continued despite evidence suggesting that it is likely toxic to humans, even at low levels. This decision by EPA to end the use of the pesticide follows a series of actions by states (**California, New York, Hawaii, Oregon, and Maryland**) to eliminate certain uses within their borders. And in April, New York City became the largest city in the U.S. to ban the routine use of pesticides in parks and on other city property.



WE CAN AND WE MUST DO MORE TO PROTECT KIDS.





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In several states, business leaders testified in support of restrictions on the use of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in children's products and in food packaging and serviceware. Health effects from PFAS exposure include **hormone disruption, immune system effects, high cholesterol, thyroid disease, hypertension, lowered sex and growth hormones** in children, **kidney and testicular cancers**, and **altered mammary gland development**. Laws restricting the use of PFAS in children's products were passed in **Maine, Nevada, and Vermont**; laws restricting the use of PFAS in food packaging in **Maine, New York, Washington, and Vermont**; and laws setting limits on PFAS in drinking water in **Massachusetts, Michigan, New Hampshire, New Jersey, and Vermont**.

Additionally, New York State passed a bill through the Senate and Assembly that bans broad categories of flame retardant chemicals (organohalogens, organophosphorous, etc.), many of which are known or suspected carcinogens, in furniture and bedding. New York also became the first state in the U.S. to pass a ban on organohalogen flame retardants in electronic displays, screens and casings of electronic devices. Flame retardants migrate out of products and accumulate in household dust. Young children are particularly at risk because they crawl and play on the floor where contaminated dust settles. The bill is now awaiting Governor Hochul's signature.

WAYS YOU CAN SUPPORT
CHILDHOOD CANCER PREVENTION

We need to act now to end the use of pesticides and other toxic chemicals associated with cancers where children live, learn, and play. There are a number of actions you can take to protect the health of our children and our communities.

1. Support the **Protect America's Children from Toxic Pesticides Act**, which needs to be reintroduced in the House and Senate, by reaching out to your **Congressional leaders** to call for action on promoting childhood cancer prevention.
2. Support the Childhood Cancer Prevention Initiative in our mission to raise awareness of the environmental causes of childhood cancer (including toxic chemicals) by making a donation on our **website**.
3. Protect yourself and your children. The Cancer Free Economy Network (CFE) has put together a list of member **resources** with information about harmful chemicals and products as well as information about preventing different cancers. Choosing safer products in our everyday lives can increase the health of our children and communities and also encourage companies to move towards using safer chemicals. Watch and share the **Childhood Cancer Prevention Video**.
4. Share the CCPI **Social Media Toolkit** and download and share the One Pager in **English** and **Español**.
5. Sign the business or public sign-on to let representatives know you support childhood cancer prevention:
 - a. **Business Sign-on**
 - b. **Public Sign-on**

PREVENTION IS THE BEST CURE, AND YOUR SUPPORT WILL HELP REDUCE THE INCIDENCE OF CHILDHOOD CANCER. BECAUSE NO CHILD SHOULD GET CANCER BECAUSE OF TOXIC CHEMICALS IN THEIR ENVIRONMENT.

#PreventChildhoodCancer

**For more information, visit
ChildhoodCancerPrevention.org**

Thanks to the addendum contributors:

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