



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

FEB 4 2010

THE ADMINISTRATOR

**MEMORANDUM**

**SUBJECT:** EPA's Leadership in Children's Environmental Health

**FROM:** Lisa P. Jackson  
Administrator

**TO:** Assistant Administrators  
Associate Administrators  
General Counsel  
Regional Administrators

Protecting children's environmental health is central to our work at EPA. As we move ahead on critical environmental initiatives and sharpen our focus on our seven priorities for EPA's future, we must ensure that children's health protection is a driving force in our decisions.

Let me reaffirm that it is EPA's policy to consider the health of pregnant women, infants and children consistently and explicitly in all activities we undertake related to human-health protection, both domestically and internationally. This includes consistently following Agency policies to account for specific exposure pathways and dose-response characteristics of children in our risk assessments and standard setting practices.

Research has demonstrated that prenatal and early-life exposures to environmental contaminants can have tragic, life-long effects. Children's neurological, immunological, digestive, and other bodily systems are still developing; children eat more food, drink more fluids, and breathe more air in proportion to their body weight than adults; and children's behavior patterns can make them more susceptible to environmental exposures. We must be diligent in our efforts to ensure that dangerous exposures and health risks to children are prevented.

EPA will use a variety of approaches to protect children from environmental health hazards. Those approaches will include regulation, implementation of community-based programs, research, and outreach. At the same time, we must periodically evaluate our performance to ensure that we are making steady progress.

The Office of Children's Health Protection in the Administrator's Office will take the lead in ensuring that the programs and Regions are successful in their efforts to protect children's health. Please contact Office Director, Peter Grevatt if you need assistance in your efforts to make children's environmental health a priority in all Agency programs and actions.

## EPA's Children's Health Agenda

EPA's children's health-protection efforts are guided by Executive Order 13045 (Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks), its Policy on Evaluating Health Risks to Children (1995), the *Guide to Considering Children's Health When Developing Agency Actions*, various statutory requirements, and the best available research and data on children's health risks.

Following are three key areas in EPA's agenda to both focus and ensure that the Agency's actions address the environmental origins of health problems in children and are protective of children's environmental health:

First, our efforts to implement the nation's environmental laws must use the best science to include a focus on children. We will robustly and transparently address the potential for and uniqueness of health effects in children during the development of regulations and Agency policies with human-health implications. We will work with states and tribes to ensure that regulations are effectively implemented and enforced to protect children's health. We will also work closely with external research partners to fill critical data gaps on children's.

Second, we will protect children through safe chemicals management. I named chemical management as one of our top priorities for EPA's future largely because of the disproportionate effects of chemical exposures on children. We will establish standards, policies and guidance at home and abroad that help eliminate harmful prenatal and childhood exposures to pesticides and other toxic chemicals. We will work with Congress and stakeholders to identify effective approaches for the protection of children's health in the context of TSCA reform. We will also encourage green chemistry and safer alternatives to chemicals and products that present a potential hazard to children.

Third, we will coordinate national and international community-based programs to eliminate threats to children's health and measure and communicate progress. We will expand implementation of successful community-based programs to protect and improve children's health outcomes. That effort will focus on underserved communities, including tribes and other areas where children's health is at heightened risk. The Office of Children's Health Protection will work with program offices and regions to develop and track indicators of progress in protecting children's health, and we will communicate that progress to the public.

I look forward to working with you to ensure that children's health is paramount at EPA.

cc: Bob Perciasepe  
Diane Thompson  
Bob Sussman  
Ray Spears  
Lisa Garcia  
Larry Elworth  
Peter Grevatt