

January 2009

Dear Governor Gregoire and Washington State Legislators:

We invite you to share our vision of a Washington free of harmful toxic chemicals. **As health professionals, we urge you to take action in support of this goal, by phasing out Bisphenol A (BPA) from baby bottles and other consumer products, through legislative action in the upcoming 2009 session.**

BPA is a hormone-disrupting toxicant found in plastic products including many baby bottles, sippy cups, food containers, and consumer products. BPA leaches out of plastic into food and liquids that we put into our bodies. Low-level BPA exposure during early stages of development is linked to increased susceptibility to cancer, heart disease, diabetes, and developmental problems. **The National Toxicology Program, which advises the FDA, released reports this year finding BPA posed a significant risk to human development, with specific concern about the impact on children and fetuses. This chemical has no place in children's products!**

Studies increasingly indicate that BPA is present in most people's bodies; recent findings indicate the presence of BPA in 95% of adults, in the cord blood of newborn children, and in the environment. The 2008 study, *Baby's Toxic Bottle*, released by American and Canadian organizations, shows that five of the biggest baby bottle brands all leach BPA in the range of 5-10 parts per billion when bottles are heated - well within the range shown to cause harmful effects.

**Devastatingly, those most at risk are those whose very lives depend on us for protection: developing fetuses, infants and young children.** Children are very different from adults when exposed to toxins in their environment. Their metabolic systems often have increased absorption of a toxicant and a decreased capacity to metabolize and/or remove it from the body. As a result a greater proportion of the toxicant enters a child's body and stays there longer, allowing it more time to exert its damaging effects. Studies have found that children have the highest levels of BPA in their bodies, followed by teens and adults.

A small exposure to a child represents a big dose! **Taking preventive action is our only option.** Though we cannot reverse any damage already done, we can prevent further harm and protect others by banning BPA in key products. In October, Canada announced plans to ban BPA in baby bottles. Major bottle companies, such as Nalgene and Playtex, also are phasing out BPA. We need more of our products to be held to the same standard!

Washington should be proud of its leadership in children's health, but while we have made great progress there is still much to be done. Current state and federal laws are outdated and do not adequately protect our children's health. Washington State legislators have a unique opportunity and responsibility to ensure our children develop in an environment in which they can reach and maintain their full potential. **Only the safest chemicals should be used in the products we buy.**

**Please help protect our children by supporting measures aimed at banning BPA in baby bottles and other consumer products in the 2009 legislative session.** Thank you for your time and attention to this pressing issue.

Sincerely,

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