

Policy Report: A Healthy Planet for Healthy Children - Policies for a Future without Toxics

Protecting Children from Hazardous Chemicals

Achieving a toxic-free future is paramount. Around **six per cent of the world's disease burden and eight per cent of deaths can be attributed to chemicals.** Annually, more than 1.7 million premature deaths among children under the age of 5 are caused by pollution and toxic substances. **Children are particularly vulnerable** to the effects of hazardous chemicals due to their smaller size and hence greater relative exposure and because of their developing internal organs. However, toxic air and contaminated water and soil are not only an existential threat to human health in general but also threaten planetary health, jeopardising the sustainability of modern societies.

About this policy report

The report aims to draw attention to the "silent pandemic" of disability and disease associated with exposure to hazardous chemicals and pollution during childhood, by providing **key facts on how hazardous chemicals** affect children's health. Moreover, the report inspires with **insights into award-winning policies** that have been honoured with the Future Policy Award – the world's only award for policy solutions that create better living conditions for current and future generations. The publication also highlights a set of **useful policy recommendations**, with which policymakers and key stakeholders can take effective action to advance the protection from hazardous chemicals and include a child rights perspective in their policy making.



More than 90 per cent of the world's children breathe **TOXIC AIR** every day. In 2016, 600,000 children died from acute lower respiratory infections caused by polluted air.



Annually, more than 1.7 million **PREMATURE DEATHS** among children under the age of 5 are caused by pollution and toxic substances.



Exposure to **LEAD** causes 143,000 cases of deaths and 600,000 cases of intellectual disability in children every year.



Rates of childhood **LEUKAEMIA AND BRAIN TUMOURS** have risen by more than 40 per cent in the last fifty years 17 with approximately 400,000 children



Inspiring Policies

There is an urgent need to advance institutional protection of children against hazardous chemicals around the world. The good news: there are already impactful initiatives, which address the issue. In this policy report, you can find inspiring examples of policies that **phase out the use of toxic pesticides worldwide**, and **toxic metals, including lead in paint**. The report also suggests **solutions to child's exposure to toxic chemicals in products of everyday use** and **inadequate management of pharmaceuticals** which has escalated since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. The report draws attention to effective **tools to increase chemical safety**, future-oriented policies, and provides key policy recommendations that policymakers and key stakeholders can use to advance the protection against hazardous chemicals.

7 Policy Recommendations to Advance Institutional Protection of Children Against Hazardous Chemicals

- Act as if millions of children's lives are at stake – because they are
- Recognise that harm from chemicals crosses borders – and that solutions can too
- Promulgate rules that recognise that every child is being exposed to more than one chemical at any given time
- Ensure that workers and communities that are being exposed to chemicals understand and can act on the dangers they are facing
- Encourage corporate action for safer chemicals and products by using preferable procurement and other incentives as well as regulatory policies
- Realise the power of effective regulations and cost recovery instruments that successfully drive down exposure
- Create the pathways to a toxic-free future by inspiring the evaluation and adoption of safer alternatives

How you can Help

In our report, you learnt about our commitment to children and future generations.

Do you want to help to protect children from hazardous chemicals? If so, we are connected by a common goal. Bringing decision-makers together to ensure a toxic free future is not possible without the support of our donors. If you wish to improve the livelihood of millions of children with your donation, please donate to the World Future Council.

Donation Account:

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Full Report:

