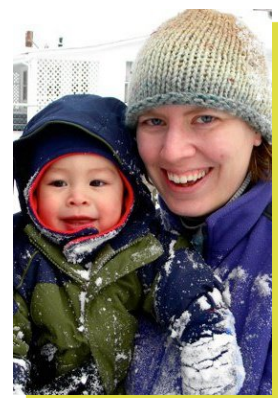


Protecting our Health from BPA

State policy to curb toxic chemicals exposures can help protect our babies and young children



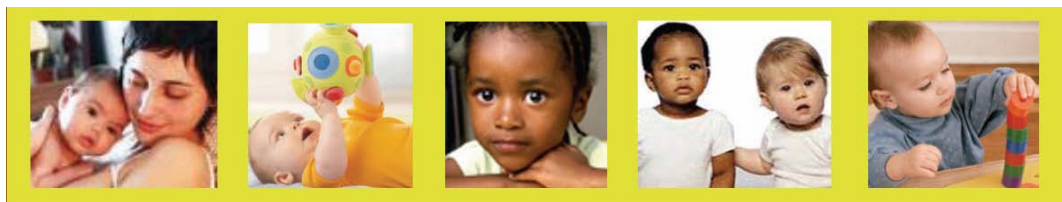
What is BPA? Bisphenol-A (BPA) is a synthetic sex hormone that is found in hundreds of products including water bottles, baby bottles, in the lining of metal food and beverage cans, receipt paper, paper money and even toilet paper. It is nearly impossible to avoid contact with BPA on a daily basis.

How are we exposed to BPA? We are exposed to BPA when it leaches from the products we touch and consume: BPA from a baby bottle or toddler sippy cup can leach into the milk or formula that babies drink;ⁱ when we touch BPA-coated paper it is absorbed into our skin and bloodstream;ⁱⁱ food from a can with a BPA lining also contains BPA.ⁱⁱⁱ The 2010 report *No Silver Lining* (<http://nosilverlining.org>) measured levels of BPA that leached from the lining of canned foods purchased from all over the country, including Kentucky. A can of Wal-Mart brand green peas purchased in Berea, Kentucky had the second highest level of BPA of all that were measured.

How does BPA affect our health? BPA is a hormone-disrupting chemical, and even a small dose can impact our health.^{iv} BPA is linked to health problems like obesity, diabetes, infertility and cancer.^v Babies and children are most vulnerable to the toxic effects of BPA. Research shows that even tiny amounts of BPA at critical windows of development – starting even before a baby is born – contribute to chronic diseases and developmental problems.

Rates of childhood cancers have risen by more than 20% since 1975.^{vi} Genetics alone doesn't account for the sharp increase in rates of these illnesses; health researchers have evidence that exposures to toxic chemicals play some role. While we can't control our genetic makeup, we can take action now to prevent exposure to toxic chemicals like BPA.

Are there BPA substitutes? Yes! More than a dozen companies like Playtex, Gerber and Nalgene have already taken BPA out of baby bottles, water bottles and other products.^{vii} They found that BPA is not necessary in order to manufacture a quality product. More research will reveal the best BPA substitutes that don't pose the same or greater risk to our health. But companies won't have much incentive to switch to safer substitutes without government pressure or mandate to do so.



States are taking action to prevent exposure to BPA.

Even though some companies are already moving away from BPA in baby products, hundreds more products still contain BPA and there is often no way to know what levels of the chemical are present in these products. Until Congress or federal agencies take action to protect our health from this known toxic chemical, states are taking action to help prevent illnesses by preventing exposure to BPA among our most vulnerable population: our babies and children.

As of 2010, seven states voted to ban BPA in baby bottles; in each case, the legislation was supported by Republicans and Democrats alike; in some cases support was unanimous.^{viii} In 2011, many more states, including Kentucky are considering legislation that would take BPA out of baby bottles and other infant and children's products. Representative Mary Lou Marzian (Louisville) and Representative Ruth Palumbo (Lexington) introduced legislation in January 2011 that would take this toxic chemical out of baby bottles, sippy cups and infant formula cans starting in 2012.



Support a BPA-free future for Kentucky! BPA is a harmful chemical for which there are safer substitutes. Curbing exposure to BPA now will mean our children will be less at risk of chronic disease now and later in life.

- ❖ Write Kentucky's state and federal legislators today and tell them that toxic chemicals like BPA have no place in children's products or in our bodies! You can find a list of Kentucky legislators at <http://www.lrc.ky.gov> or by calling 1-800-372-7181. Kentucky's federal legislators can be contacted via <http://www.senate.gov> and <http://www.house.gov>.
- ❖ While promoting government and industry action on BPA, make healthier choices for your family by avoiding BPA as best as you can. Look for the "BPA Free" label and choose foods that are fresh, frozen or packaged in glass instead of BPA-lined cans.



For more information contact the Kentucky Environmental Foundation on the web at <http://kyenvironmentalfoundation.org> or call (859) 986-0868 for health data and opportunities to take more action on toxic chemical reforms.

Kentucky Environmental Foundation * P.O. Box 467 Berea, KY 40403 * (859) 986-0868 * kyenvironmentalfoundation.org

ⁱ *Baby's Toxic Bottle*, Environmental Defense, February 2009. <http://kyenvironmentalfoundation.org>

ⁱⁱ *Journal of Analytical and Biological Chemistry*, March 2010.

ⁱⁱⁱ *No Silver Lining*, National Workgroup for Safe Markets, May 2010. <http://nosilverlining.org>

^{iv} Endocrine Society, September 2008.

^v National Institutes of Health, 2008; Food and Drug Administration, January 2010; *Reproductive Toxicology*, July 2010; *Journal of Human Reproduction*, April 2009; *Cancer Research*, April 2008.

^{vi} Tracy J. Woodruff, et al. *America's Children and the Environment*, (Washington, DC: U.S. EPA, 2008).

^{vii} Parker-Pope, T. (2008, April 22). A Hard Plastic is Raising Hard Questions. *The New York Times*. February 15, 2011.

^{viii} SAFER States, January 2011. <http://www.saferstates.org>