



# Prescriptions for PREVENTION

Guidance from the Western States  
Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit



## The Unique Vulnerability of Children

### Did you know?

**K**ids are more likely to get sick from harmful chemicals than adults.

### Why are kids more exposed to toxic chemicals?

- Cleaning supplies, pollution, smoke, pesticides, and polluted water are all examples of harmful chemicals. Chemicals in schools, homes, and places where kids are taken care of can cause health problems like trouble learning, asthma, kidney diseases, cancer, and early puberty.
- These chemicals can stick around in their body for life and lead to health issues when they grow up. Children depend on their parents, communities, and lawmakers to make their environment safe.

### Babies in the womb, kids and teens are more vulnerable to these toxic chemicals because:

- Their bodies, especially their brains, are growing and developing rapidly.
- Development during these "windows of vulnerability" can be disrupted by very small amounts of chemical exposure.
- Their bodies cannot get rid of toxic chemicals easily.



### Pound for pound, children:



### Take Action

- ✓ Limit the use of unnecessary chemicals, especially in places where children spend time.
- ✓ Children should never handle chemicals, examples include pumping gas, gardening in an area with pesticides, using cleaning products and sanitizing wipes, etc.
- ✓ Protect your child from toxic exposures when they breathe, eat and drink.



For details on specific exposures and health risks, check out all the [Prescriptions for Prevention](#), in English and Spanish!