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Texas Choose Safe Places Program

Health Assessment and Toxicology Program
Environmental Surveillance and Toxicology Branch
Texas Department of State Health Services
June 2021



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TXCSP Program Mission

Protect children from exposures to harmful substances where they learn, play and grow.



DOD Archives

Environment Matters!!!!



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What is a hazardous contaminant?



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- A substance that may be harmful to human health when a person is exposed
- Other terms:
 - Hazardous substances
 - Pollution
 - Toxic substances
- Can be manmade or naturally occurring

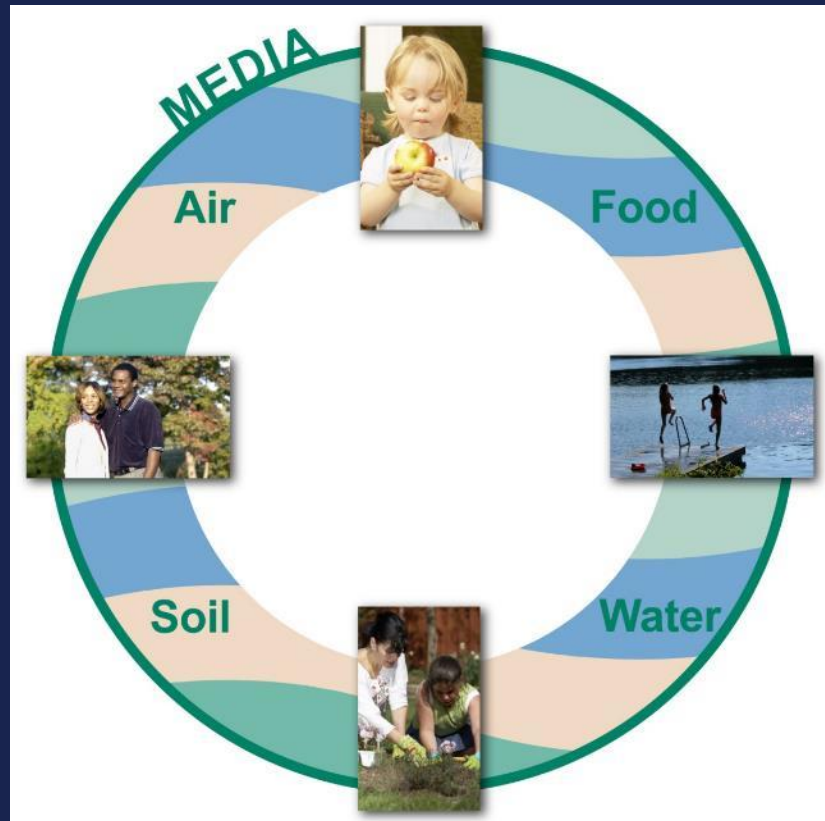


Environmental Exposures



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ATSDR. Environmental Health: Preventing exposure to hazardous substances
<http://slideplayer.com/slide/4849950/>



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Children are more vulnerable to environmental contaminants

Children are at increase risk for exposure

- Put their hands and objects in their mouths
- Ingest more dust and dirt
- Spend more time outdoors and close to the ground





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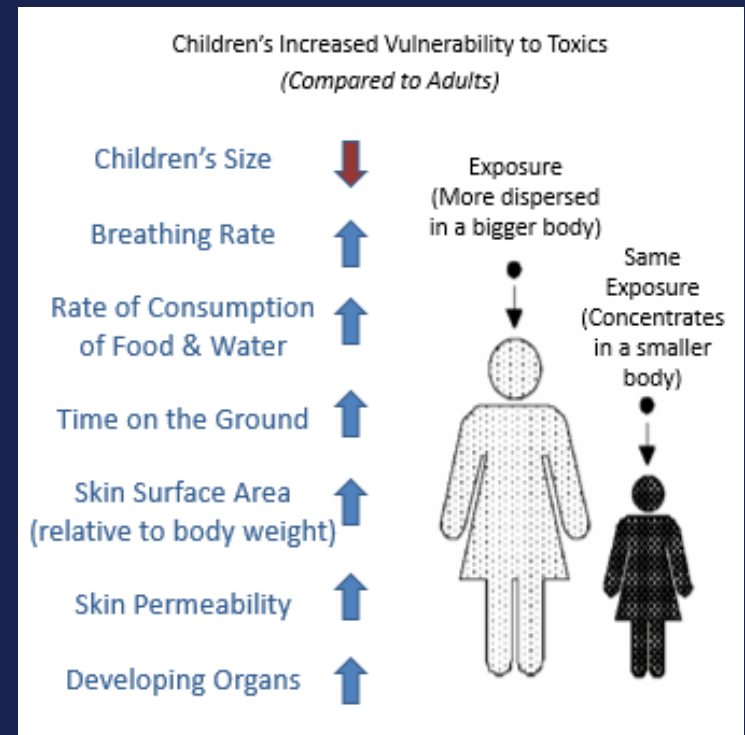
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Children are more vulnerable to environmental hazards

Children are at increased risk for harm

- Increased “dose”
- Bodies still developing:
 - effects at lower doses or
 - disrupt normal development





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2015 Caring for Our Children Basics: Health and Safety Foundations for Early Care and Education Settings

5.1.1.5 Environmental Audit of Site Location

An environmental audit should be conducted before construction of a new building; renovation or occupation of an older building; or after a natural disaster to properly evaluate and, where necessary, remediate or avoid sites where children's health could be compromised. A written report that includes any remedial action taken should be kept on file. The audit should include assessments of:

- a) Potential air, soil, and water contamination on program sites and outdoor play spaces;
- b) Potential toxic or hazardous materials in building construction, such as lead and asbestos; and
- c) Potential safety hazards in the community surrounding the site

acf.hhs.gov/ecd/caring-our-children-basics

Voluntary Services



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Safe Siting



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What is the Safe Siting Property History Questionnaire?

The Safe Siting Property History Questionnaire aims to help prevent children from coming into contact with harmful substances. We use a customized map to see if potential environmental hazards are near prospective or existing childcare locations. TXCSP then makes recommendations. The voluntary questionnaire is for informational purposes only. It does not affect your ability to get a child care license.

Who is eligible?

Operators of:

- licensed, registered, and listed child care homes
- licensed child care centers
- school-age programs, and before and after school programs (not located on school grounds)

The service is also available for a person considering starting a child care program who has identified a potential location.

What do I need to complete the Questionnaire?

Use the physical address of the site to complete the screening. To get the most out of the questionnaire, provide the following information:

- age of the building
- past use of the land or building
- source of water (public water system or private well)

[FILL OUT THE VOLUNTARY QUESTIONNAIRE >](#)

Together, we can keep kids safe where they learn, grow and play!

dshs.state.tx.us/hat/safeplaces/TXCSP/



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Facility Hazards

- Built before 1980
 - Asbestos
 - Mercury
 - Lead
- Chemicals
 - Cleaning and disinfecting products
 - Art and craft supplies
 - Pesticides and lawn care products



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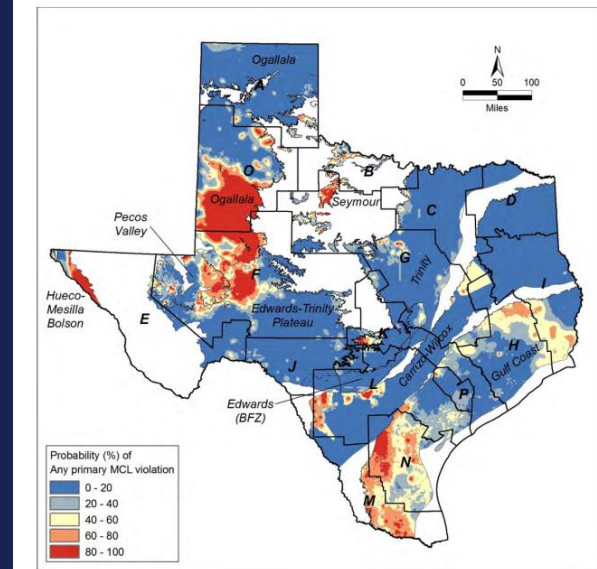
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Property Hazards

- Contamination from former uses of the site or nearby properties
- Naturally occurring hazards
 - Radon
 - Arsenic

Naturally Occurring Groundwater Contamination in Texas



twdb.texas.gov/publications/reports/contracted_reports/doc/1004831125.pdf



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Benefits of Safe Siting

Protects children and ECE providers!!

Prevent:

- exposure to harmful levels of hazardous substances
- stress, worry, and fear among staff and parents
- financial and legal consequences



ECE's:

- Meet the minimum health and safety standards recommended by experts for quality care

Cities:

- Healthier children and better educational outcomes
- Meet social equity and public health goals

Resources



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Safe Cleaning

[SAFE DISINFECTING ETOOLKIT \(ZIP\)](#)

Using Bleach to Disinfect for COVID-19 Flyer



[English \(PDF\)](#)

[Spanish \(PDF\)](#)

Safe Cleaners Shopping Card



[English \(PDF\)](#)

[Spanish \(PDF\)](#)

Bleach Disinfecting Spray Labels



[Download Labels \(PDF\)](#)

Using Microfiber Towels Flyer



[English \(PDF\)](#)

[Spanish \(PDF\)](#)

Personal Safe Cleaning for COVID-19 Sample Plan and Routine



[Download fillable
cleaning plan \(PDF\)](#)

[Download an example
cleaning plan \(PDF\)](#)

Cleaning and Disinfecting



[English \(PDF\)](#)

[Spanish \(PDF\)](#)

dshs.state.tx.us/safe-cleaning/

Thank you!



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Contact Information



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