United States Environmental Protection Agency

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EPA Develops an Information Resource to Help Assess Children's Health Risks

October 2006 is Children's Health Month

Protecting the health of children from environmental risks is fundamental to the mission of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). As a part of EPA's efforts to address children's health issues, EPA's research and development office, a leader in the area of human health risk assessment, has written a report - *A Framework for Assessing Health Risks of Environmental Exposures to Children* - that can serve as an important resource on children's health risk assessment. This peer-reviewed report provides a comprehensive and consistent framework for considering children in risk assessments at EPA. This Framework is not an Agency guideline, but rather describes the overall structure and the components considered important for children's health risk assessment.

Children may be more sensitive to environmental hazards than the rest of the population, and EPA seeks continued progress in reducing their daily exposure to environmental hazards. This Framework discusses and illustrates the process, shows existing published sources for more detailed information, and includes Web links to relevant online Agency and other publications. The document emphasizes the need to account for the potential exposures to environmental agents during all stages of development, and consideration of the relevant adverse health outcomes that may occur as a result of such exposures.

In addition, each year during Children's Health Month, EPA releases an Annual Children's Health Report. The theme of this year's Health Month is "Promoting Healthy School Environments," which will raise awareness about environmental health risks in schools. The Annual Report highlights a variety of Agency-supported efforts to improve the environments where children live, learn, and play.

The Framework can be found on the National Center for Environmental Assessment's Web site at www.epa.gov/ncea under *Recent Additions*. For more information on Children's Health Month and EPA's 2006 Annual Children's Health Report please visit http://yosemite.epa.gov/ochp/ochpweb.nsf/content/chm.htm.

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