

No case for toxic school supplies

By ACSH Staff — September 9, 2013



[1]It s that time of year again. Summer s over, and school is starting

again. And with this new year comes another (predictable) chance for activist groups posing as scientific experts to scare parents about toxic chemicals found in children s [school supplies](#) [2]. Some take it further as well, warning consumers about cosmetics, cleaning supplies and furniture.

The Center for Health, Environment and Justice (CHEJ) even puts out a publication detailing safer school supplies that can be purchased for your children. [According to](#) [3] Mike Schade, speaking for this organization, We ve been sounding the alarm on toxic chemicals in back to school products, including lunch boxes, backpacks made from vinyl, a plastic with many hazardous ingredients like phthalates, linked to asthma and reproductive harm. And then, there s a host of other activist organizations: The Natural Resources Defense Council, which released a healthy purchasing guide including a list of school products to avoid, which includes basically everything (binders, pencil cases, lunchboxes, raincoats, backpacks and other items made with plastic); The Alliance for Toxic Free Fire Safety advocating for precautions regarding flame retardants as they ve been linked to neurological problems, infertility, endocrine disruption, even cancer; And the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics, claiming that household products contain carcinogens and other harmful ingredients.

ACSH s Ariel Savransky responds to these baseless scares. As we have said [previously](#) [4], as recently as our publication [The Top 10 Unfounded Health Scares of 2012](#), [4] decades of the widespread use of these toxic chemicals have indicated that they are safe and do not pose any danger to human health. The case of school supplies, and any of these other products for that matter, is just another example of activist groups repeating baseless allegations that have turned into public hysteria. There is no biological hypothesis put forward for how these harmless chemicals are dangerous to our health. Furthermore, it is important to consider that there is never any mention of what may replace these harmless chemicals, should they be removed from these products. Parents should not be discouraged from buying their children school supplies containing phthalates as a result of this hysteria.

Source URL: <https://www.acsh.org/news/2013/09/09/no-case-for-toxic-school-supplies>

Links

[1] <http://acsh.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/86533172.jpg>

[2] <http://www.onearth.org/articles/2013/08/making-sure-your-kids-school-supplies-dont-make-them-sick>

[3] <http://www.digitaljournal.com/pr/1427682>

[4] <http://acsh.org/2013/02/the-top-10-unfounded-health-scares-of-2012/>