Green Momma PARTY GUIDE

(FOR THE GUESTS)

Creating a non-toxic home for you and baby

WOMEN'S VOICES FOR THE EARTH
WWW.WOMENSVOICES.ORG

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Women's Voices for the Earth is a national organization that works to eliminate toxic chemicals that impact women's health by changing consumer behaviors, corporate practices and government policies.

Welcome

As a parent, you have a lot on your mind, and the last thing you want to worry about is exposing your baby to harmful chemicals in your own home. We really have to watch out for babies because they are especially vulnerable to chemicals.

- Babies' immune systems and organs are still developing, and some chemicals may interfere with those processes.
- Babies breathe more often and more deeply and consume more food and water per pound than adults, increasing their exposure risk to toxic chemicals in the environment.
- Babies crawl on the floor and put so many things in their mouths, exposing them to more unwanted chemicals than adults.

Yet it's not always easy for busy parents to know where toxic chemicals might be lurking and what the safe and practical alternatives are.

That's why Women's Voices for the Earth (WVE) created the Green Momma Party Guide! Inside, you'll find room-by-room tips for eliminating toxic chemicals from your home, do-it-yourself recipes, and action items to make creating a non-toxic home fun.

So let's get this party started! Join together with friends and family and start creating a non-toxic home for you and your baby!

The Nursery

From changing diapers to singing lullabies, the nursery is where you and your baby will spend a lot of time together. It is no place for toxic chemicals! Here are some hidden hazards in the nursery and how to avoid them.

DIAPERS & WIPES

The average child uses about 8,000 disposable diapers before being potty trained – that's a lot of diapers sitting in our landfills! In addition, most diapers contain a variety of plastics, adhesives, glues, elastics and lubricants made from chemicals that build up in the environment. Fortunately, parents today have many options to reduce diaper waste while avoiding these harmful chemicals. You can test out these ideas before deciding what works best for you.

Try this!

- **Look for diapers labeled chlorine-free, fragrance-free and dye-free.** Also use fragrance-free, chlorine-free and dye-free baby wipes.
- **Look for disposable diapers** made from renewable resources like wood pulp, or diapers made from a hybrid of cloth and biodegradable materials.
- **Try cloth diapers.** There are lots of easy, affordable (and stylish!) options. Some come fitted with an elastic waistband, others have pockets to place absorbent material or flushable liners, and still others are "all-in-one" with a built-in waterproof cover. Make sure to wash them with fragrance-free detergent.
- **Make your own wipes!** See the do-it-yourself section for a recipe.
- **Don't store antibacterial cleaning wipes in the nursery.** These products contain harsh disinfectant chemicals that are not meant to be used on a baby's skin. Keeping them out of the nursery will avoid the chance of using them accidentally after a diaper change.

PAINT/WALLPAPER

Decorating the new room for baby? As pretty as they are, many paints and finishes contain a variety of chemicals known as volatile organic compounds (VOCs), which release low-level toxic emissions into the air. Short-term exposure to VOCs may cause eye and throat irritation, while long-term exposure may cause increased risk of cancer or central nervous system damage. Some wallpaper may contain polyvinyl chloride (PVC), which can release toxic chemicals and cause asthma. Older homes may also contain lead-based paint, which is linked to developmental disorders in children.

Did You Know?

Changing diapers means using lots of wipes!

And no doubt that disposable wipes are both effective and convenient. But disposable wipes can be pricy and they add to the landfill. Some wipes contain fragrances or other chemicals, and all disposable wipes are bathed in a solution that contains a small amount of a preservative to allow the wipes to stay wet but avoid the growth of bacteria. Using disposable wipes means an additional exposure to potentially harmful chemicals on some of the most sensitive skin on your baby's body.

Try this!

- **Choose low-VOC or zero-VOC paints**. Alternatively, look for natural paints derived from clay or chalk, or for milk paints made with milk protein and colored earth pigments.
- **Use wallpaper that is vinyl/PVC-free and chlorine-free.** Look for wallpapers made from bamboo, hemp, or rice paper.
- **If you live in a home that was built before 1978, you may have lead-based paint in the home.** Call the Lead Information Center at 800-424-LEAD or visit www.epa.gov/lead to find out how to safely remove lead-based paint.
- **Leave the paint color as is!** If you can live with the color, avoid exposures to paint chemicals altogether by sprucing up the room with other decorations instead. You can check out www.healthystuff.org to find non-toxic alternatives for re-decorating the nursery.

TOYS

It's hard to believe, but many children's toys contain heavy metals like mercury, cadmium, arsenic, bromine, and lead, which are especially harmful to children. Also, many soft teething rings and bath toys are made from PVC, also known as the toxic plastic.

Try this!

- **Search for safer toys.** Refer to www.healthystuff.org to find safer toys that don't contain heavy metals.
- **Choose number 5.** Look for plastic toys with the recycle symbol number 5, which signifies polypropylene, a safer plastic.
- **Go natural.** Purchase toys made from natural materials such as wood or organic fibers like cotton, hemp or wool.
- **Check in with the Consumer Product Safety Commission's Recall website for the latest on children's products and toys that have been recalled due to safety violations like leaded paint:** http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/prerel/prerel.html

FURNITURE & MATTRESSES

Say no thank-you to the special treatments when it comes to furniture. Avoid furniture that has been specially treated with stain-resistant coating; has polyurethane foam, which has likely been treated with flame-retardants; or that is made from particleboard or pressure-treated wood, which may emit formaldehyde. These chemicals found commonly in furniture are linked to cancer, reproductive problems, and nervous system disorders.

Try this!

- **Choose untreated solid wood furniture rather than furniture made with particleboard.**
- **Ask before you buy.** If you do shop for new furniture, ask the salesperson if flame-retardants were used in its production and have them contact the manufacturer if they aren't sure.
- **Choose furniture or furniture covers without added stain-resistant treatments.**
- **Look for PVC-free mattress covers and organic cotton sheets.** Polypropylene, polyethylene or polyester are safer alternatives to PVC mattress covers.
- **Let it breathe.** If you buy a new mattress and aren't sure about it, let it off-gas in a well-ventilated room for several days before using it.
- **Buy an eco-friendly mattress.** You can find a list at www.greenpages.org.

AIR FRESHENERS

Before you reach for that aerosol air freshener or plug-in to "freshen up" the nursery, think about the chemicals that go into making those synthetic "fresh" smells. Four common chemical ingredients in air fresheners – formaldehyde, petroleum distillates, p-dichlorobenzene, and aerosol propellants– disrupt hormones and are linked to breathing problems.

Try this!

- **Sprinkle some baking soda inside the trash can and diaper pail to absorb odors.**
- **Squeeze a fresh lemon or a few drops of essential oil in a nearby sink for a real fresh smell.**

Make A Change & Check It Off!

Pick a change (or a few!) you can commit to making and share with your group.

The Nursery

- ❑ Try disposable diapers and wipes that are chlorine, fragrance, and dye free.
- ❑ Start using biodegradable diapers made from renewable resources.
- ❑ Try cloth diapers.
- ❑ Make your own diaper wipes using the simple recipe provided.
- ❑ Don't store antibacterial wipes in the nursery.
- ❑ Use low-VOC/zero-VOC paint or natural based paints made from clay or chalk.

- ❏ Use vinyl/PVC free wallpaper or natural wallpaper materials such as bamboo, hemp or rice paper.
- ❏ Leave the paint color as-is and spruce up the room with decorations.
- ❏ Replace PVC plastic toys with the ones made of non-PVC plastic or natural materials.
- ❏ Purchase furniture that is not treated with stain-resistant coating or flame-retardants.
- ❏ Opt for a mattress made from natural materials, and mattress covers made from polypropylene, polyethylene or polyester.
- ❏ Discontinue use of air fresheners.
- ❏ Make your own natural deodorizers with lemon or essential oil.

Notes:

The Kitchen

It is often said that the kitchen is the heart and soul of the home – so you want make sure that it's a healthy place for your family! Below are some tips for stocking the fridge with pesticide-free food, avoiding cooking equipment that contains toxic chemicals, and using cleaning products that are safe for you and your baby.

FOOD

Treating your baby to healthy, fresh food is important. Pesticide residue is often found on conventionally grown fruits and vegetables. Some pesticides build up in your body over time, and long-term pesticide exposure has been linked to neurological, developmental, and reproductive disorders. Some store-bought baby foods, formulas, and canned foods have been found to be contaminated with Bisphenol A, which can leach from the packaging. Bisphenol A (BPA) is an hormone disruptor linked to obesity, diabetes, breast cancer, and other health conditions.

Try this

- **Choose baby food labeled "organic," "pesticide-free," or "hormone-free" if possible.**
- **Shop at your local farmers' market when you can.** Many local farmers grow organically, even though they may not be certified. Then, you can make your own baby food with local, organic fruits and vegetables.
- **Use produce lower in pesticides.** Choose onion, avocado, sweet corn, pineapple, mango, sweet peas, asparagus, kiwi, cabbage, eggplant, cantaloupe, watermelon, and grapefruit. Avoid celery, peaches, apples, blueberries, nectarines, bell peppers, spinach, cherries, kale, potatoes and grapes, which are generally grown with more pesticides. Learn more with the Environmental Working Group's Guide to Pesticides in Produce at www.ewg.org.
- **Can the cans.** Choose fresh, frozen, or glass-jarred foods over canned where possible. Many canned food liners contain Bisphenol A. Look for canned food brands that state they are BPA-free.
- **Breast milk is the best milk!** For moms that are able to breastfeed, breast milk is the best option for providing nutrition and boosting your child's immune system. While toxic contaminants have been detected in breast milk, average levels have not been deemed harmful enough to counteract the many health benefits of breastfeeding.

FOOD CONTAINERS AND COOKING EQUIPMENT

Whether you're storing leftovers, wrapping up food, or using a cutting board, the plastics found in kitchens often contain toxins such as polyvinyl chloride (PVC), shown by the recycle symbol number 3. Another red flag is non-stick or Teflon cookware, which releases perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) when heated to 450 degrees. Exposure to PFOA is liked to developmental harm and cancer.

Try this

- **Avoid plastic.** Use glass containers to store food, wood or bamboo cutting boards, and stainless steel cooking utensils.
- **Use safer plastic.** If using plastic, look for the recycle symbol number 4, polyethylene (LDPE), and never put any plastic in the microwave.
- **Choose PVC-free and BPA-free baby dishes and utensils.** Look for safer plastics labeled BPA-free or use wood, stainless steel, or bamboo.
- **Use cast iron, carbon steel, or stainless steel pans for cooking.**

HOUSEHOLD CLEANERS

Your little explorer can be exposed to toxic chemical residue on surfaces and floors from household cleaning products. Many all-purpose cleaners and disinfectants contain chemicals that are linked to serious health problems, including asthma.

Try this!

- **Make your own cleaners!** Mix your own with non-toxic ingredients like vinegar and baking soda. For more information and green cleaning recipes, check out www.womensvoices.org.
- **Use less toxic products.** Avoid products marked "Danger" or "Poison," and reduce your use of products marked "Caution."
- **Use fewer products.** An all-purpose cleaner can handle a lot of cleaning jobs around the house; it's not necessary to have a different product for each room.
- **Look for products that have all ingredients listed on the label.** Avoid phthalates, glycol ethers, ammonium quaternary compounds, and triclosan.

Make A Change & Check It Off!

Pick a change (or a few!) you can commit to making and share with your group.

The Kitchen

❑ Buy organic, hormone-free, and locally produced food more often.

❑ Make your own baby food.

❑ Breastfeed, if possible.

❑ Replace non-stick, Teflon cookware with cast iron, carbon steel, or stainless steel pans.

❑ Store food in non-PVC plastic containers or glass jars.

❑ Look for safer plastics or use wood, stainless steel, or bamboo for baby dishes & utensils.

❑ Look for baby bottles and sippy cups labeled BPA-free.

❑ Avoid microwaving plastic containers or wrappers.

❑ Avoid canned food when possible.

❑ Use WVE's recipes to make your own non-toxic cleaners.

❑ Use fewer cleaning products.

Notes:

The Bathroom

Move over hairspray, makeup and nail polish—it's time to make room for baby lotions, ointments, and powders. With all the new products taking up space in your bathroom cabinet, along with the extra time spent in the bathroom with your baby, you'll want to guarantee that you're not exposing your newborn to unwanted chemicals. Plan a bathroom cleanse and use the tips and recipes to create one of the most fun and non-toxic rooms in the house.

BABY PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS

Splish, splash – your baby's favorite time of the day! Sadly, some baby bath products contain chemicals linked to cancer, hormone disruption, and other health problems. From formaldehyde in popular baby shampoo to triclosan - a chemical linked to hormone disruption - in antibacterial soaps, babies' exposures can add up!

Try this!

- **Stay away from the baby bath products that contain potentially harmful ingredients like parabens, sodium laureth sulfate, quaternium-15, artificial color, and synthetic fragrance.** Instead, look for products labeled "phthalate-free."
- **Wash your baby simply with castile soap and water.**
- **Make your own baby personal care products.** For example, you can substitute almond oil for lotions that may contain harsh chemicals. Check out www.safecosmetics.org for other non-toxic DIY bath products!
- **Avoid antibacterial soaps with triclosan.** Look for soaps with thyme oil, a safer alternative that has natural antibacterial properties.
- **Remember to store all personal care products for you or your baby securely out of children's reach.**

BATHROOM ACCESSORIES

Keep baby bath time fun and non-toxic by avoiding PVC, the poison plastic linked to cancer, found in bath toys and baby tubs, and vinyl, which some shower curtains are made from.

Did You Know?

TOO CLEAN CAN BE HAZARDOUS FOR YOUR HEALTH

Try to resist the urge to disinfect every surface in your house. With recent flu news, manufacturers have capitalized on consumer fears and intensified their marketing of disinfectants. But how clean is too clean? Research shows that the chemicals used in disinfectants, which are intended to kill germs, are linked to a range of health problems, from respiratory irritation and hormone disruption to reproductive disorders and certain cancers. Instead of relying on these harmful cleaners containing toxic chemicals, use good old-fashioned soap and water for daily clean-ups. To learn more, check out WVE's Room-by-Room Chart for Reducing Exposure to Disinfectants at womensvoices.org.

Try this!

- **Say no to #3.** Avoid bath toys made from PVC, signified by the plastic recycle symbol number 3.
- **When shopping for a shower curtain look for liners made out of organic hemp or cotton, polyester, or nylon.**

MOLD AND MILDEW SPRAYS

Because babies' immune systems are still developing during the first year of life, they are more prone to respiratory illnesses if exposed to mold. Yet many commercial mold and mildew sprays contain harsh chemicals that could be even more harmful to your baby's young respiratory system.

Try this!

- **Prevent mold in the first place.** Turn on the fan, open a window, or install a dehumidifier.
- **Use mold removal sprays without fragrance.**

Make A Change & Check It Off!

Pick a change (or a few!) you can commit to making and share with your group.

The Bathroom

- ❑ Use fewer personal care products on your baby.
- ❑ Check labels on baby care products to avoid toxic ingredients and contaminants.
- ❑ Make your own baby lotions, shampoos or other personal care products.
- ❑ Look for antibacterial soaps with safe alternatives like thyme oil or simply use plain castile soap and water.
- ❑ Replace PVC plastic bath toys with PVC-free toys.
- ❑ Replace vinyl shower curtains with ones made from natural materials.
- ❑ Prevent mold through good ventilation and dehumidifiers.
- ❑ Reduce your use of disinfectants and anti-bacterial cleaners.

The Laundry Room

With all the baby bibs, sleepers, blankets, and diapers, you're probably doing more laundry than ever before. Use this section to learn how to keep your baby's clothes clean and safe!

BABY CLOTHES

Most cotton clothing, including baby jumpers, t-shirts, and sleepers, is made from cotton grown with large amounts of pesticides. Baby bibs made from vinyl (PVC) may contain lead, which can be dangerous to children even at low levels. Fabric like oil-cloth, often used for bibs and highchair covers, is made from PVC and should be avoided around babies.

Try this!

- **Wash new clothes before putting them on your baby.** Preservatives are often used in the shipping of clothes and can be washed off.
- **Opt for materials not heavily sprayed with pesticides such as organic cotton, wool or hemp.**
- **Avoid buying vinyl or oil-cloth bibs.** Instead, purchase an organic cotton bib or try sewing your own bib and highchair covers from natural fabrics.

LAUNDRY DETERGENT, STAIN REMOVER AND FABRIC SOFTENER

That fresh smell of lavender fields on your towels isn't exactly real. But you already knew that. So why do we associate cleanliness with certain synthetic chemicals? Many of the chemicals used in detergents are harmful to our health and to the environment. Monoethanolamine (MEA), a chemical used to enhance the cleaning power of a detergent is linked to asthma. Other common chemicals found in detergents are VOCs, phosphates, chlorine bleach, and synthetic fragrances. Synthetic fragrance chemicals have been linked to birth defects, cancer, and may even break down our bodies' defenses against other toxic exposures.

Try this!

- **Look for detergent labeled fragrance-free, dye-free, and chlorine-free.**
- **Make your own detergent.** Check out our recipe!
- **Use hydrogen peroxide, cornstarch, baking soda, lemon juice, or club soda to remove stains.**
- **Add 1/2 cup of white distilled vinegar to your laundry to soften clothes, and use hydrogen peroxide rather than bleach to whiten.** Soak for 30 minutes in the washer with 1/2 cup 20% peroxide and launder as usual.

Did You Know?

CHEMICALS IN STAIN RESISTANT CLOTHING

Perfluorinated compounds (PFCs) are synthetic chemicals used to repel stains and grease in pans, clothing, and furniture; they're also made into water-resistant fabric like Gore-Tex. These chemicals, which have been linked to increased risk of cancer, have been found in rivers and wildlife. In 2002, manufacturer 3M started phasing out PFCs in Scotchgard, a brand of stain resistant clothing and carpeting; however PFCs still exists in many clothing brands. Opt for more natural options, like organic cotton, linen, and wool. When stains happen, treat them quickly with water or club soda before they have time to set and dry.

Make A Change & Check It Off!

Pick a change (or a few!) you can commit to making and share with your group.

The Laundry Room

- ❑ Use detergents that are dye, fragrance, and chlorine free.
- ❑ Make your own laundry detergent out of soap, baking soda, and washing soda.
- ❑ Remove stains and soften clothes with pantry staples like lemon juice and vinegar.
- ❑ Avoid purchasing clothing marketed as stain resistant.
- ❑ Opt for baby clothes made from natural options like organic cotton, linen, or wool.
- ❑ Look for organic cotton bibs or try sewing your own bib and highchair covers from natural fabrics.

Notes:

The Outdoors

Studies show that children who spend more time outdoors have less anxiety, higher attention rates, and are more physically fit. This section offers some tips on how to enjoy a fun, natural space outside of your home with your baby, the Green Momma way.

LAWN

While lawns can be a great place for your baby to explore nature, they can contain massive amounts of pesticides and fertilizers. Studies have shown that some pesticides mimic hormones, causing developmental harm. Use of lawn herbicides at home has been associated with a seven-fold increase in the risk of childhood leukemia, increased rates of miscarriage, and increased cancer in pet dogs.

Try this!

- **Reduce petro-chemicals in fertilizers and pesticides by mulching, mowing, hand weeding, or using an organic spray in your yard.**
- **Try making and putting compost on your lawn and garden rather than synthetic fertilizers.** Check out www.beyondpesticides.org for ideas.
- **Thinking about getting rid of your lawn altogether?** Go natural with native plants, rock gardens, or other low-maintenance landscaping techniques.

SUNSCREEN & BUG SPRAY

It is crucial to protect vulnerable baby skin against harmful UV rays. However, many sunscreens contain oxybenzone, which can trigger allergic reactions and is a potential hormone disruptor. Most health experts caution against using it on children. Many bug sprays contain DEET, which is a neurotoxin and may increase the toxicity of other chemicals your baby is exposed to.

Try this!

- **Cover up!** The best way to protect your baby from the sun is to stay in the shade and put a hat on your little one's head.
- **Look for sunscreens that contain the minerals zinc or titanium.**
- **Avoid sprays and loose powder sunscreens, which can be accidentally inhaled.**
- **Check out the Environmental Working Group's Sunscreen Guide at www.ewg.org to find some safer brands of sunscreens.**
- **Avoid bug repellants that contain DEET.**
- **Make your own bug repellent with WVE's recipe.**

Make A Change & Check It Off!

Pick a change (or a few!) you can commit to making and share with your group.

The Outdoors

- ❏ Avoid synthetic fertilizers and pesticides on lawn.
- ❏ Ditch the lawn all together and go natural with native plants, rock gardens, etc.
- ❏ Use sunscreen that doesn't contain oxybenzone.
- ❏ Avoid sprays and loose powder sunscreens.
- ❏ Avoid bug repellants that contain DEET.
- ❏ Make your own bug repellent with WVE's recipe.

Notes:

Get Crafty! Do-it-Yourself Recipes

Safe & Gentle Reusable Diaper Wipes

YOU WILL NEED:

Old fabric to cut into wipes

Scissors

Small bag or basket

Clean, empty spray bottle

1-2 teaspoons non-toxic liquid soap, such as Dr. Bronner[1]s

1-2 cups water

Cut squares of fabric into 8-inch x 8-inch wipes. Keep them together in a small bag or basket near your diaper changing area. Next, add 1-2 teaspoons of liquid soap to the spray bottle, and fill the rest with water. Replace cap tightly on spray bottle and shake well to mix soap and water. When you need a diaper wipe, pull out a piece of fabric, spray it with the mix, wipe, and wash it with your laundry when you're done!

Note: If you are using disposable diapers and are feeling squeamish about throwing poopy wipes in your laundry hamper, try just using them with wet-only diapers, with disposable wipes at the ready for messier diapers.

Sweet Potato and Melon Mash Baby Food

YOU WILL NEED:

1 cup cooked organic sweet potato, diced & peeled

1 cup organic cantaloupe melon, diced

¼ cup natural yogurt

In a food processor, blend together the melon and sweet potato. Add the yogurt. Puree all ingredients together in a food processor. For a little extra zing, try adding a dash of cinnamon. You can also combine sweet potato with butternut squash, carrots, bananas, or homemade applesauce.

Sweet potato freezes well, so you can make these dishes in bulk and store them in your freezer in ice cube trays. Then you'll have easily de-frostable kid-sized portions whenever you need them!

**From: www.homemade-baby-food-recipes.com*

Get Crafty! Do-it-Yourself Recipes

Non-Toxic Bug Repellant

YOU WILL NEED:

1 to 25 drops essential citronella oil

2 tablespoons vegetable oil/ olive oil

1 tablespoon aloe vera gel (optional)

Jar for storage

Combine the ingredients in a glass jar. Shake to blend. Dab a few drops on your baby's skin or clothing.

Note: You can use this on mom's skin, too!

**From care2.com*

Clean and Fresh Laundry Detergent

YOU WILL NEED:

1 cup soap flakes

1/2 cup washing soda

1/2 cup baking soda

1-2 tbsp. oxygen bleach (optional for extra whitening)

Make soap flakes by grating your favorite pure vegetable soap with a cheese grater. Mix ingredients together and store in a glass container. Use 1 tablespoon per load (2 for heavily soiled laundry), wash in warm or cold water.

For soft water: use 1 cup soap flakes, 1/4 cup washing soda and 1/2 cup baking soda. **For hard water:** use 1 cup soap flakes, 1 cup washing soda, and 1 cup baking soda.

Note: This recipe can be safely used in HE washers.

Get Crafty! Do-it-Yourself Recipes

Detox Your Body: Grapefruit Sugar Scrub for Mom

YOU WILL NEED:

1 to 1½ cups organic white table sugar

8 drops grapefruit essential oil

¼ cup jojoba oil

¼ cup liquid castile soap, such as Dr. Bronner's

Jar for storage

Place sugar into a large bowl and stir to break up any clumps. Add the essential oil. Add the jojoba oil and castile soap next, a little at a time, stirring after each addition. Mix well and pour into clean container.

To use, stand in the tub or shower and massage the sugar scrub onto your skin. Rinse. Enjoy!

Note: Leftover jojoba oil makes a great moisturizer on its own!
From www.safecosmetics.org

Non Toxic Shopping Guide

WHERE CAN YOU FIND SAFER PRODUCTS?

Visit **www.womensvoices.org/green-momma-parties** for a list of resources.

Five Take Action Tips for Green Mommas

Many of us assume that products on the store shelves have been evaluated for safety by government agencies or by the company who produced them. Unfortunately, this is not the case. Of the more than 80,000 chemicals on the marketplace, less than 10% of them have ever been evaluated for their long-term impacts to human health. This means that we are exposed daily to a spectrum of potentially harmful chemicals in products from baby shampoo and all-purpose cleaner to sunscreen, and more.

Making personal changes in your home and in your purchasing decisions is a great first step, but we need to ensure that chemicals aren't showing up in our products in the first place. WVE believes that the water we drink, the food we eat, the air we breathe, and the products we use in our homes and workplaces should not be contaminated with toxic chemicals that may impact our health. No exception!

That's why WVE works to eliminate harmful chemicals from products and to ensure that chemicals are evaluated for safety before they're placed in products. But our work is dependent on individuals like you to raise public awareness and contact policy makers. As a busy parent, we know you have your hands full, so here are 5 quick action tips to make a difference!

- **JOIN WVE'S ACTION NETWORK**
  Sign up to receive updates, tips and action alerts at **www.womensvoices.org**

- **SHARE WHAT YOU LEARN ON FACEBOOK AND TWITTER!**
  Stay educated on the issues by following WVE on Facebook and Twitter, then share what you learn! For example, you can update your status with, "I've just been to a fabulous Green Momma Party! Check out how you can have one too at **www.womensvoices.org**!"

- **TELL ELECTED OFFICIALS TO PROTECT YOUR HEALTH**
  To create lasting change, we need strong policies to regulate the tens of thousands of chemicals on the marketplace. Go to **www.womensvoices.org** to take action now!

- **DEMAND THAT COMPANIES MAKE SAFER PRODUCTS**
  Companies shouldn't be putting toxic chemicals in the products they sell us. Go to **www.womensvoices.org** to raise your voice today!

- **MAKE A DONATION TO SUPPORT WVE'S WORK**
  Help ensure we can continue to create useful resources for you and your family and advocate for safer products. Make a contribution to support this work by visiting **www.womensvoices.org/donate** today!

Chemicals to Avoid Reference List

1,4-dioxane is a contaminant that may be present in some bubble baths and body washes that contain ingredients like sodium laureth sulfate. This chemical is linked to cancer.

Ammonium quaternary compounds are found in some disinfectants and cleaning sprays, and are linked to asthma and other respiratory illnesses.

Benzyl acetate is commonly found in fabric softeners and dryer sheets and linked to certain cancers.

Bisphenol A (BPA) is found in some baby bottles, water bottles, and metal food containers. Exposure at low doses has been linked to increased risk of cancers, early puberty, and developmental disorders.

Chlorine bleach, also known as sodium hypochlorite, is an ingredient in dishwashing detergents, disinfectant cleaners, laundry detergents, mildew removers, and toilet bowl cleaners. Bleach is linked to asthma and is a lung, skin and eye irritant.

DEET is a neurotoxin found in some insect repellants, and exposure may increase the toxicity of other chemical exposures.

Flame retardants or polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs) are found in furniture and mattresses. These chemicals are linked to learning and developmental disabilities, thyroid hormone disruption, late puberty, reduced fertility, fetal malformations and cancers.

Formaldehyde is found in particleboard, some baby shampoos, and body washes. Short-term exposure to formaldehyde may cause watery eyes, burning sensations in the eyes, nose, and throat and skin irritation, while long-term exposure is linked to cancer.

Glycol ethers are solvents commonly found in glass cleaners and all-purpose spray cleaners, and are linked to reduced fertility and low birth weight in exposed mice.

Monoethanolamine (MEA) is commonly found in detergents and all-purpose cleaners, and is linked to asthma and other respiratory illnesses.

Oxybenzone is commonly found in sunscreens, and is linked to allergies, hormone disruption, low birth rates, and cell damage.

Parabens are preservatives found in some personal care products, and are linked to hormone disruption and cancer.

Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) commonly referred to as the brand name Teflon, is found in non-stick cookware and is linked to developmental harm and cancer.

Phthalates are used to make some plastics such as PVC more flexible and are found in fragrances and wallpaper. Phthalates are linked to reduced fertility, increased risk of cancers, and genital malformations in baby boys.

Polyurethane is commonly found in foam cushions, mattresses, and insulation. Exposure can cause coughing, skin and eye irritation.

Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC) is commonly referred to as vinyl and is found in many household items, including toys, wallpaper, and shower curtains. Production of PVC creates dioxin, which is linked to cancer, kidney damage, immune system damage, and hormone disruption. PVC can release volatile organic chemicals into the air causing developmental damage, as well as damage to the liver and central nervous, respiratory, and reproductive systems.

Sodium laureth sulfate is found in some personal care products and may be contaminated with 1,4-dioxane, which is linked to cancer.

Synthetic fragrances are found in many cleaning products and baby personal care products. Common fragrance ingredients include synthetic musks (linked to hormone disruption, and are persistent and bioaccumulative), phthalates (linked to reproductive and developmental harm), and allergens. Because many companies claim fragrance ingredients as trade secrets, labels will simply list "fragrance." It's best to avoid fragranced products altogether.

Tributyl-tin (TBT) is found in some diapers and is linked to hormone disruption.

Triclosan is found in many antibacterial hand soaps and cleaners, and is linked to hormone disruption.

Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) are gasses emitted from many paints and contain a variety of chemicals. Exposure may cause eye, nose, and throat irritation and are linked to cancers.

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