



<http://www.epa.gov/schoolair/children.html>

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Assessing Outdoor Air Near Schools

You are here: [EPA Home](#) [Air & Radiation](#) [Assessing Outdoor Air Near Schools](#) [Children's Health Issues](#)

Children's Health Issues

The air children breathe impacts their health. People exposed to toxic air pollutants at sufficient concentrations and durations may have an increased chance of health problems including damage to the immune system, and neurological, developmental, respiratory and other health problems including cancer. In some cases, children may be more vulnerable to these health effects than adults because:

- their bodies are still developing; and
- their behavior can expose them to more chemicals.

[Learn more about children's health issues](#)

In addition to assessing outdoor air near schools, EPA has several existing programs that take action to help make the air in and around schools safer for children to breathe:

Indoor levels of air pollutants can be two to five times higher than outdoor levels. Sources of poor indoor air quality in schools range from inadequate ventilation systems to fumes from pesticides and cleaning agents. More than half of the nation's schools are implementing indoor air quality management programs, most of which are based on [EPA's Tools for Schools Program](#), which helps schools identify, resolve and prevent indoor air quality problems using low- and no-cost measures.

EPA launched the [Clean School Bus USA Program](#) in 2003 to address the condition of America's aging school bus fleet and the health effects that result from exposure to diesel exhaust emitted by idling school buses. EPA has provided grants to many school districts to fund the replacement of old school buses with new buses that use cleaner fuels.

EPA's [Healthy School Environments web site](#) is a "one-stop shop" for resources and information on topics related to environmental health and safety in schools.

EPA is also taking action to be sure that levels of lead, ozone, and fine particle pollution in the air protect children's health. Learn more about each:

- [Lead](#)
- [Ozone](#)
- [Particle pollution](#)