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Gigantic Rubber Ducky Visits Traverse City To Support Passage of the Children's Safe Products Act

Bills to provide parents with a "right to know" if their children are being unnecessarily exposed to toxic chemicals awaits action in the Michigan Senate

Traverse City, MI- Advocates of all kinds gathered today at the Kids' Cove in Traverse City with one common goal: protecting Michigan's children from unnecessary exposure to toxic chemicals. The group, known as the [Michigan Network for Children's Environmental Health](#), is celebrating the passage of the Children's Safe Products Act (HB4763-4769) in the Michigan House of Representatives, and seeking support for the passage of the package of bills in the Michigan Senate. The legislation is currently awaiting a hearing and a vote in the Senate Health Policy Committee, of which local State Senator Jason Allen is a member.

"Toxic chemicals simply do not belong in toys, nor in our children," said Ken Fletcher, Director of Government Affairs for the Michigan Nurses Association, a member organization in the Michigan Network for Children's Environmental Health. "Exposure to toxic chemicals from children's products is unnecessary and preventable."

The Children's Safe Products Act (HB 4763-69) requires manufacturers and importers who use the small subset of chemicals known to be highly hazardous and present in children ("chemicals of highest concern") to publicly disclose (in 2012) which of these chemicals they use in children's products sold in Michigan. Parents and other consumers would have easy access to this information from the Michigan Department of Community Health.

"Eighty five percent of a child's brain develops between the ages of 0-5 and as a parent, one of the best things I can do for my child is to choose safe products from companies that I trust," said Sommer Poquette, mother, educator and Founder of Green and Clean Mom. "Knowing what is safe is a big issue with so many chemicals in the marketplace and companies touting 'green' or 'natural'. Babies are being pre-polluted with toxins. Studies of umbilical cords have found they can contain some 200 toxic chemicals. I'm concerned and I urge Senator Jason Allen as a parent himself to support the Children's Safe Products Act."

[The Ecology Center](#) in Ann Arbor has been hosting town hall meetings across the State over the last two years about toxic toys. At these meetings, "toy testing" has been available to the public with an XRF analyzer, which is basically an x-ray gun that

can test products for toxic chemicals. Unfortunately, many of the products tested have registered hazardous levels of toxic chemicals. A list of toys tested and the results can be found at www.Healthytoys.org. "Learning and developmental disabilities have risen dramatically the last few decades - at tremendous cost to the state and our children's quality of life," said Dr. Bill Weill, MD, Professor Emeritus of Pediatrics & Human Development at Michigan State University. "We must protect vulnerable children from these unnecessary exposures to known toxic chemicals."

The Children's Safe Products Act does not ban, restrict, phase-out, label or otherwise regulate any particular chemicals. The legislation also does not directly impact Michigan's businesses since retailers and industrial users are exempt, as are small toy manufacturers.

"This legislation will help responsible toy businesses in Michigan," said Bill Kirk of the Michigan League of Conservation Voters. "Since Michigan's toy manufacturers are almost exclusively small, the main impact on Michigan businesses would be to have access to more information from toy importers. This legislation should help encourage Michigan-manufactured products, which tend to have fewer chemicals of highest concern compared to imports."

"The risks that children face due to toxic substances in toys and other children's products are unnecessary and unacceptable," concluded Kirk. "This legislation empowers parents to minimize those risks by giving them a right to know what is in the products their children play with."

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