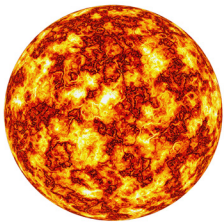


CLIMATE CHANGE AND CHILDREN'S HEALTH

Climate change is not in some far-off future. It is happening now. Our children are already suffering from the effects of climate change, and will continue to suffer the health consequences, until we limit carbon emissions from power plants, end fossil fuel subsidies, and transition to a clean energy economy.



HEAT

Children are especially vulnerable to heat exposure because they do not have fully developed temperature-regulation mechanisms. Heat can cause problems ranging from mild heat rash and dehydration to heat exhaustion and deadly heat stroke. Other important health impacts include diminished school performance, pregnancy complications, and renal effects.



ASTHMA

Climate change will increase levels of smog in urban areas. Children suffer the most from smog pollution, which triggers asthma and contributes to reduced lung function, sensitivity to irritants and allergens, and chest pain, coughing, and nausea – even in healthy children.



ALLERGIES

Climate change has increased the length and severity of pollen season. Pollen season has lengthened by two weeks since 1995, and total pollen count is on the rise. Pollen can trigger asthma attacks and cause severe discomfort among children with allergies.



INSECT-BORNE DISEASES

A warming world alters the habitat and lifecycle of insects, such as the ticks that carry Lyme disease and the mosquitoes that carry West Nile virus. Scientists predict that incidence of malaria and Dengue fever, among other vector borne illnesses, will likely increase as pathogens enter previously uninfected areas.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND CHILDREN'S HEALTH



EXTREME WEATHER

Climate change is altering weather patterns and triggering more storms, drought, fires, and rain. Stronger and more frequent hurricanes, typhoons, tornadoes, and floods increase the risk of injury, death, and drowning in weather emergencies. Children are especially susceptible to these grave health impacts.



BACTERIAL DISEASES

Extreme weather events can compromise infrastructure such as sewage systems, refrigeration, and water treatment facilities. When infrastructure is damaged, food- and water-borne bacterial diseases – like cholera – can thrive. Children are especially vulnerable to the life threatening impacts of diarrheal diseases.



FOOD INSECURITY

Climate change and its effects impact the global food supply, potentially creating shortages of staple food crops and access to safe food and water. When food is in short supply, children suffer disproportionately. Malnutrition can also interact with infectious diseases, making infections more severe and their impact more serious.



MENTAL HEALTH IMPACTS

Extreme weather events cause physical harm and can also have intense psychological effects on survivors. Children and families experience anxiety and stress around severe weather events, which can include long-range mental health effects.