



Center's Tip of the Month: Back to School

-- Tips for a healthy school year --

As summer comes to an end and the time for back-to-school preparation is quickly approaching. Children spend many hours at school and it's important to make sure that the environment is safe and healthy. Some concerns include harmful chemicals in school supplies and asthma triggers found in the classroom. Use these tips and resources to ensure your child has a healthy school year!



Tips & Resources

What can you do? Choose toxic-free school supplies

- ◆ Buy binders and notebooks without plastic covers. Look for options that are made from materials such as cardboard or labeled as PVC-free.
- ◆ When buying a new backpack, choose one that is made from natural fibers, such as cotton. Avoid backpacks with shiny plastic because they are often made with PVC, which may contain phthalates.
- ◆ Use CHEJ's "[Back-to-School Wallet Guide to PVC-free School Supplies](#)" when completing your school shopping.

What can you do? Pack a healthy lunch

- ◆ Choose fresh fruits and veggies. They make great snacks and a healthy alternative to prepackaged food, which is less nutritious and often in plastic packaging. Try to buy organic or pesticide-free produce, particularly for produce found on the [EWG's Dirty Dozen list](#).
- ◆ Select safer containers when packing your child's school lunch. Food containers can be a source of chemicals, such as BPA and phthalates.
 - ◇ Choose reusable cloth lunch bags when possible. If selecting a plastic lunch box, avoid ones that contain PVC and BPA.
 - ◇ Try reusable cloth sandwich bags instead of plastic ones.
 - ◇ Replace plastic food containers and thermoses with ones that are stainless steel or BPA-free.

What can you do? Check your child's school environment

- ◆ Use CHEJ's "[Back to School Environmental Checklist](#)" as a guide for ensuring your child's school environment is healthy and safe.
- ◆ If there is an environmental concern in your child's school, talk with other parents, teachers, and administrators about ideas for resolving the problem.



Have questions? Want to learn more? Please email us at cccehcolumbia@gmail.com!



Scan the QR code on the left to follow us on Facebook, or find us at www.facebook.com/CCCEH. We also have a twitter page www.twitter.com/cccehcolumbia. Please keep in touch, and join us in the dialogue on the important issues facing children's environmental health today!