

# Child Care Safe Siting Initiative



ATSDR and its partners want to ensure that child care and early learning facilities are located in places where chemical and physical hazards have been considered, addressed, and mitigated to best protect children's health.

**ATSDR is developing and implementing a national initiative to protect children from health risks caused by the location of child care and early learning facilities.**

## What is safe childcare siting?

The safe siting of child care and early learning facilities includes thoughtful review of:

- Former uses of a site that may have left harmful substances on the property (including both the building and the land),
- Migration of harmful substances onto the site from nearby properties or activities,
- Naturally-occurring harmful substances on site, and
- Access to safe drinking water.

## Key goals of the Childcare Safe Siting Initiative (CSSI)

- Raise awareness of children's potential exposure to harmful materials resulting from poor child care siting decisions.
- Develop a safe siting manual of tools and resources to help states develop programs to protect children from harmful exposures resulting from improperly located child care and early learning facilities
- Provide technical support to:
  - States when incorporating safe siting considerations in licensing processes for child care and early learning facilities
  - Accreditation organizations and large-scale child care operators to voluntarily implement safe-siting considerations
  - Encourage federally-supported child care programs to consider adoption of safe siting guidelines.

## The Safe Siting Manual

The manual will offer:

- Guidelines for safely locating child care and early learning facilities,
- Case studies,
- Policy and regulatory examples, and
- Tools and resources to begin or expand safe siting efforts at the state and local level.

## Role of Partners

# Child Care Safe Siting Initiative

Protecting children from environmental hazards in the child care and early learning setting relies on the commitment and expertise of people from various disciplines and sectors. There are many stakeholders who play a role in this work including, but not limited to:

- Certification and accreditation organizations
- Champions and advocates
- Child care licensing agencies
- Child care providers
- Parents and the public
- Policy makers, planners and other decision makers
- State environmental health and environmental protection staff

Partners can help in a variety of ways from developing relationships with licensing agencies or other non-traditional partners who play a role in ensuring the safety of child care facilities, to advocating for implementing a formal siting assessment process for child care facilities in their state or locality.



## Planned Timeline

### Year 1 Fiscal Year 2015

- Develop detailed plans and key areas for partner collaboration
- Begin developing reference manual and tools based on feedback provided by partners
- Draft reference manual and tools based on feedback from partners
- Vet guidelines and tools with select partners

### Year 2 Fiscal Year 2016

- Continue vetting of guidelines and tools with select partners
- Introductory website goes live
- Release reference manual and tools on ATSDR website
- Utilize partner networks to broadcast the release
- Provide technical assistance to licensing agencies, state health departments, certification programs, large scale child care operators, federal programs and others to encourage the adoption of model considerations into child care and early learning siting practices and programs.
- Update tools as needed based on feedback from partners.

**For more information, or to get involved in the project, please send an email to:**  
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