



# Coalition for a Safe and Healthy Connecticut

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## Help us continue to make Connecticut Safe and Healthy!

### CSHC Gears Up for the 2013 Session:

**Happy New Year!** We have been very busy planning for the upcoming legislative session and look forward to working with you to protect Connecticut residents from harmful chemicals!

The session began January 9<sup>th</sup> and we will again work hard on legislation that identifies chemicals of concern to children and takes meaningful steps to reduce exposure or require labeling.

This is going to be a **very difficult** task with the current budget deficit and industry lobbyists fighting to prevent any reforms to our inadequate federal laws. So, we are going to need your help! I hope we can count on you to stay engaged in our work and help us by reaching out to your legislators to urge their support. The chemical and toy industry will spend large sums of money to maintain the status quo but they can not win if we all speak up to protect public health!

We will also work to require labeling on all food and beverage packaging that contains bisphenol-A (BPA) and work on a bill that restricts the use of toxic flame retardants in children's products.

### What we've been up to!

We've been very busy over the summer and fall as we aim to be even more of an advocacy powerhouse!

Our goals are to:

- grow and strengthen our Coalition by adding new groups/members, doing presentations across the state and hosting fun events
- expand our name recognition—we want CSHC to be as well known as AARP!

- Expand our name recognition and activist engagement through social media, a new website, facebook and twitter
- collaborate and cultivate our legislative champions
- develop a tight knit coordinated strategic campaign to deal with the well-funded Toy Industry
- plan a Research Forum for the start of next session with top-notch researchers.

Again, we hope we can count on you to help us. **Taking a minute to contact your legislators when we send out action alerts is critical and will be the only way we can get these bills passed!** Let's stand together to protect the health of our most vulnerable citizens!!

### **Federal Update on the Safe Chemicals Act!**

Now that the new Congress is in session, the Safe Chemicals Act will again need to be raised. Our new Senator, Chris Murphy, has indicated that he supports this bill so we'll work to make sure he signs on as an early co-sponsor. We are working with our national partners to assure that the Safe Chemicals Act remains strong and moves toward a vote on the Senate floor in 2013!



***As we begin the New Year, we look back and celebrate the highlights of 2012.***

*While thinking about how to recap the year of 2012 and I thought it would be fun to invite our CSHC partners to send us a short quote, just a sentence about a favorite moment of the past year.*

*This is what we came up with: a collage of favorite 2012 moments – and some appreciations too!*

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At home in Connecticut, we worked to build our Coalition of groups and concerned individuals, and raise our profile within the state.

CSHC got a face lift with a new webpage, FB page and even a video! Find them at [www.safehealthyct.com](http://www.safehealthyct.com).

*"I am so proud to serve as the Coordinator for the Coalition for a Safe and Healthy CT and love the diverse and passionate group of advocates and member groups that are united in protecting public health from harmful chemicals. People all over the state tell me how important our work is, yet many still don't know who we are. I want us to be as well known as AARP!" - Anne*

Local members participated in national studies of toxics, such as the study of tris flame retardants in couches.

*"I love the work the Coalition does. As a nurse and person that was diagnosed with breast cancer at age 35, I was happy to participate in a study to analyze the presence of toxic flame retardant chemicals in my couch. I was shocked to learn that these chemicals are often carcinogens and leach out into the air and dust in my home. This is shocking and unacceptable! I am proud to support the work of this Coalition and feel like I am helping to make a difference." - Beka*

We proposed and advocated for bills at the state legislature:

Many members of CSHC testified at Public Hearings on comprehensive chemical reform, recycling of mercury thermostats, banning BPA from food packaging and carcinogenic flame retardants from children's products, and contacted their state legislators in support of these bills.

*"What was most memorable for me was when the Connecticut Nurses Association delivered 900 post cards to legislators from nurse constituents in CT requesting support of the Comprehensive Toxic Chemical Bill!" - Mary Jane*

*"The CSHC continues to be one of the most effective organizations that I work with." - Loyola, CEUI SEIU Local 511*

The end-of-session post card campaign heated up! Meeting the Clean Water Action canvassers at 9 pm to pick up hundreds of postcards they had collected from residents of a CT town, to be delivered to their state legislators the next day before the vote.

*"The more we talk to the citizens of CT about our campaigns, the more they understand the issue of toxins in consumer products and the more they will demand change." - Rachel, CWA Canvas Director*

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This year the Coalition for a Safe and Healthy Connecticut worked hand in hand with Safer Chemicals, Healthy Families, Safer States and many other groups toward passage of the federal Safe Chemicals Act.

We were thrilled when it passed in the U.S. Senate Environment and Public Works Committee but, unfortunately, it was not called for a vote on the Senate floor.

Highlights of our national advocacy:

Marching in the National Stroller Brigade with concerned citizens and dedicated advocates from around the country!

*"I love working with our partners at the Coalition for a Safe and Healthy CT! They are dedicated and passionate about their work. My favorite moment of 2012 was meeting people from around the country with similar passions and marching with them in the National Stroller Brigade in Washington DC!" - Susan*

The day we learned that, after two years and hundreds (thousands) of letters, Senator Lieberman had finally signed on as a co-sponsor of the Safe Chemicals Act!

*"Hats off to Senator Lieberman's support of a long overdue revision of the Toxic Substances Control Act. We are thrilled that he chose to lead on toxic chemical reform as one of the final acts in his legacy of environmental stewardship. We are also grateful to have Senator Blumenthal's strong support of this vitally needed legislation." - Joyce*

*"How exciting it is that both of Connecticut's Senators are now co-sponsoring such an important bill that will benefit all of America!" - Pamela*

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Some of the most important moments were the most personal...

*"One of my favorite moments this year was when my son started telling me to use glass containers to reheat food in the microwave, citing the dangers of plastic containers releasing hormone disruptors into the food!!!" - Tony*

The Chicago Tribune series on tris flame retardants inspired us all to fight harder for a toxic-free world!

*"Speaking at the press conference about Tris chemicals with my young daughter was an important moment for me. Not only was I able to give a voice to mothers' concerns about flame retardants but I was also able to start my little girl off in the world of activism at a very early age (under a year!)" -Michelle*

What a memorable year! Let's work together to make 2013 even better!



## Follow us and get involved!

Website: [www.safehealthyct.org](http://www.safehealthyct.org)

Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Coalition-for-a-Safe-Healthy-Connecticut/140671096045867>

**Thanks for all you do! We look forward to working with you to protect CT citizens from toxic chemicals!**

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