



## Child Health and State EPA Clean Power Plan Implementation

### OVERVIEW

Outdoor air pollution is linked to respiratory problems in children, including decreased lung function, coughing, wheezing, more frequent respiratory illness, and asthma exacerbation. In 1970, Congress passed the federal Clean Air Act to address these and other concerns about America's worsening air quality.

The Clean Air Act is now being extended to reduce carbon emissions from power plants, with final rulemaking underway. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Clean Power Plan seeks to allow states to meet carbon reduction targets via 1 or more state-determined compliance strategies.

These actions are essential to limit immediate impacts on child respiratory health and in curtailing global climate change.

While Clean Power Plan implementation activities by EPA have been delayed by a US Supreme Court Ruling, states can continue to plan for implementation and work with regulators and power producers to limit carbon emissions.

### AAP POSITION

- The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) is dedicated to ensuring that children have an optimal environment in which to live, learn, and play.
- The AAP strongly supports the EPA's work to reduce carbon pollution and urges states to set a path to reduce carbon emissions via the EPA Clean Power Plan.
- State legislatures and regulatory agencies have a critical role in implementing the plan and meeting state and regional carbon emission reduction targets.
- Building political will for implementation of the EPA Clean Power Plan is an important child advocacy objective.
- Pediatricians should understand the threat of global climate change, anticipate their effects on children's health, and participate as children's advocates for strong mitigation and adaptation strategies now.
- AAP chapters are uniquely positioned to educate legislators and regulators about the unique environmental health needs of children and the importance of reducing power plant carbon emissions. By limiting carbon emissions, the air children breathe today will be cleaner, and will help to forestall global climate change in the future.
- AAP chapter advocates can also work with local and state health departments to strengthen public health infrastructure, disease surveillance and reporting, and disaster preparedness.

