

**National PTA**  
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## **POSITION STATEMENT**

(Adopted by the 1992 Board of Directors)

### **THE USE OF PESTICIDES IN SCHOOLS AND CHILD CARE CENTERS**

Americans use hundreds of millions of pounds of pesticides, herbicides (plant killers), and fungicides each year, for non-agricultural purposes, including in and around schools and child care centers. Pesticides are, by nature, poisons, and exposure- -even at low levels- -may cause serious adverse health effects. Our nation's children, because of a variety of age-related factors, are at increased risk of cancer, neuro-behavioral impairment, and other health problems as a result of their exposure to pesticides. The National PTA is particularly concerned about the use of pesticides in and around schools and child care centers because children are there for much of their young lives.

The National PTA, long an advocate for a healthy environment, supports efforts:

\* at the federal, state, and local levels, to eliminate the environmental health hazards caused by pesticide use in and around schools and child care centers. These efforts will result in cost-savings when use of chemical controls is reduced; decreased health risks; and safe school and child care center environments.

\* to encourage the integrated pest management approach to managing pests and the environment in schools and child care centers. Expansion of integrated pest management policies in schools and child care centers is an excellent long-term solution for control of pests that will significantly lower children's exposure to harmful chemicals by using the least toxic mix of pest control strategies.

\* to retain authority for governmental bodies, at the state and local levels, to regulate the use of pesticides in and around school and child care center buildings. This authority is critical to retaining maximum state and local control over an issue so basic to children's health and well-being.