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## **Children's toys contaminated with a toxic industrial chemical that is recommended for global prohibition**

A survey of children's products in 10 countries<sup>1</sup> finds widespread contamination with an industrial chemical recommended for global prohibition. Short-chain chlorinated paraffins (SCCPs) are industrial chemicals primarily used in metalworking, but also as flame retardants and softeners in plastics. Their harmful properties have attracted global concern and a Stockholm Convention expert committee has recommended world-wide elimination of SCCPs under the treaty. SCCPs adversely affect the kidney, liver, and thyroid; disrupt endocrine function; and are anticipated to be human carcinogens.

The survey found SCCPs to be widely present in products favored by children including Mickey Mouse slippers, jump ropes, balls, and plastic ducks. The study also found a hand blender which is commonly used to prepare baby food that leaked SCCPs. Other baby-related products containing high levels of SCCPs included two baby bibs. None of the product labeling indicated that they contained substances of current global concern. The study was performed by IPEN ([www.ipen.org](http://www.ipen.org)), Alaska Community Action on Toxics ([www.akaction.org](http://www.akaction.org)), and Arnika ([www.english.arnika.org](http://www.english.arnika.org)).

"Obviously, toxic industrial chemicals should not be present in children's toys," said Pam Miller, IPEN Co-Chair. "SCCPs need to be banned globally and strict enforcement needs to keep them out of our children's products and bodies."

The study emerges just days before the Stockholm Convention will decide whether to add SCCPs to its list of chemicals for global prohibition. The treaty expert committee found that SCCPs are persistent, build up in the food chain, and are transported long distances to remote locations, including the Arctic and Antarctic. The expert committee did not recommend exemptions for SCCPs production or use and its analysis of alternatives indicates that none are needed. The use of SCCPs in metal cutting can be substituted with vegetable oil-based formulations and alternative techniques are available for flame retardancy, such as using inherently flame-resistant materials, flammability barriers and product re-design.

"Governments need to step up and ban this chemical without permitting any loopholes," said Jitka Straková, Arnika. "Alternatives are available and the safest measure for workers and children is to eliminate it."

<sup>1</sup> Brazil, Canada, China, Czech Republic, India, Japan, Kenya, Netherlands, Russia, and United States

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<http://ipen.org/toxic-SCCPs-contaminate-toys>