

A New Cycle of Commitment

Linking Environment and
Health Through Bicycling

Ted Coopwood

National Coordinator, Youth and
Intergenerational Programs

US Environmental Protection Agency
Washington, DC

Office of Children's Health Protection
and Environmental Education

EPA's Mission

Protect the nations environment and
the health of **all** it's citizens

EPA's Role in Getting Kids Outside and Active

- EPA was created in part of the response to growing public concern and a grass roots movement to "do something" about the deteriorating conditions of water, air, and land.
- From its beginning EPA has been interested about the environment and the people who depend on it and enjoy it.
- April 22, 1970 the first Earth Day celebration brought 20 million Americans out into the spring sunshine for peaceful demonstrations in favor of environmental reform.

EPA Environmental Cycling Team

- 1993 The creation of EPA's Environmental cycling team
- Purpose: To promote environmental awareness and stewardship and to model EPA's commitment to the environment and kids.

Environmental Cycling Tours

- Appalachian Mountain Tour : Washington DC to Cookeville, Tennessee: April 1993 (700 miles)
- Great Lakes Tour: Duluth, Minnesota to Chicago, Ill: May 1994 (950 miles)
- Chesapeake Bay, Environmental Justice Tour: Washington DC around Chesapeake Bay through various cities and towns of Maryland and Delaware and Back to Washington: (375 miles)

Tour Components

- School Presentations (class rooms and assembly)
- Community events (town hall meetings, environmental fairs, tree plantings,)

Appalachian Tour Results

- Schools visited: 5
- Community events: 3
- Number of children reached: 2,000

Great Lakes Tour Results

- Schools visited: 8
- Community events: 2
- Number of children reached: 6,000

Environmental Justice/Chesapeake Bay Tour Results

- Schools visited: 13
- Community events: 6
- Number of children reached: 4,000

Creation of EPA's Office of Children's Health Protection

- February 27, 1997 EPA Administrator Carol M. Browner announces the new Office of Children's Health Protection to protect children from environmental health threats
- Mission: To make the protection of children's health a fundamental goal of public health and environmental protection

Office of Children's Health Protection's Goal

PROTECT CHILDREN WHERE THEY:

- **LIVE**
- **LEARN**
- **PLAY**

Where they live

- Air quality/sun safety (AQI)
- Home pesticide use
- Contaminated soil (lead)
- Sun safety

Where they Learn

- Safe Routes to School
- National Walk to School Day
- Environmental Cycling Club model for schools
- Sun safety
- School pesticide uses

Where they play

- Smart Growth Initiatives; developing communities with safe places to walk, cycle, etc.. and with green spaces for kids to play
- US Fish and Wildlife Service “ Lets Go Outside” Initiative: By 2010 have 2500 health professions working with land management professionals and community organizations to take actions to connect people , especially children, to nature for health improvements, and environmental stewardship.

Climate Change and Children's Health: A Campaign for our Nation's Youth

- National effort to engage young people in addressing climate change and its effects on children's health
- Educate youth about connections between climate change and its effects on children's health.
- Encourage young people to become Climate Ambassadors or leaders in efforts to address climate change and its effects on children's health.

The campaign's web site

- www.epa.gov/climateforaction
- information and tools to help young people and partners get involved
- A carbon calculator designed specially for young people helps them learn about simple things they can do to reduce their impact on the planet.
- A ready-to-use presentation

Ted Coopwood

United States Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Children's Health Protection and
Environmental Education

1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW

Washington, DC 20460

202-564-2197

571-243-6579 (cell)

E-mail: coopwood.theodore@epa.gov