

PREVENTION COUNTS

NEW JERSEY COALITION FOR PREVENTION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

www.CoalitionForPrevention.org

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An FASD Case Study: The Barefoot Bandit



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Inside this issue:

February/March Health
Observances
Page 2

Get Your Home Safe and Ready
This Spring
Page 2

Developmental Disability
Awareness: Rey's Syndrome
Page 3

Tips for Preventing a Brain Injury
Page 3

New Standards Set for More
Nutritional School Lunches
Page 4

New Study Shows No Safe Time
to Drink During Pregnancy
Page 4

New Changes Come to Lead
Poisoning Prevention Efforts
Page 5

Facts on Binge Drinking
Page 5

Smoking and Pregnancy Don't
Mix
Page 6

Are You Practicing Car Seat
Safety?
Page 6

I Am Someone to Get to Know
Page 7

Information Spotlight
Page 8

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Alcohol Related Neurodevelopmental Disorder, aka Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) is a stealth destroyer, destroying families and lives without ever being diagnosed. When a birth mother drinks during pregnancy, the baby is born with neurological disorders which provoke devastating effects on that child's ability to control behavior and understand consequences of actions.

Take the case of Colton Harris-Moore, 20 years old and living in Washington State. Colton's mother drank to excess during her pregnancy and continued to drink alcohol throughout Colton's childhood. As a result, this young man has grown up with no ability to control or monitor his own behavior or understand the consequences of serious actions. Colton went on a crime spree, breaking into numerous homes and, in his most daring activity, learning to fly small planes which he piloted to crash landings. Once he piloted a plane to the Bahamas before losing control and crash landing. He would flee the scene in his barefeet, earning the moniker of the Barefoot Bandit.



Because he is cognitively capable of learning something as complex as flying an airplane and was able to elude the police, local authorities have little sympathy for his situation. Local citizens who were victimized by his break-ins are also not concerned about his troubled past. His attorney, however, produced numerous psychological reports attributing his lack of control, grandiose demeanor and failure to see the consequences of his actions to FASD, a wholly preventable and very real diagnosis, which can result in crimes, drug use and violent behavior.



In the case of Colton Harris-Moore, he has been sentenced to seven years in State prison in Washington State. His FASD diagnosis prevented him from maturing properly and controlling his inappropriate and ultimately criminal behavior. As people learn more about FASD, it is our hope that it can be prevented. If a woman is pregnant, planning on becoming pregnant, or not on birth control she should not consume alcohol. For those who suffer from it, it is hoped that more information and understanding will help reduce recidivism and result in better and more comprehensive care.

NO Safe Time, NO Safe Amount, NO Safe Alcohol

More FASD news on Page 4.

February/March Health Observances

February



Observance: International Prenatal Infection Prevention Month

Description: This health observance is a reminder to women that babies can contract infections and diseases while in-utero or during the birthing process.

Supporting Organization: Group B Strep International, www.groupbstrepinternational.org

What you can do: Protecting your unborn child means taking the necessary precautions.

- Getting regular doctor check-ups and following through on treatment, especially when you feel ill.
- Staying updated on necessary vaccinations.
- Eating healthy, taking vitamins, and handling food properly.

March

Observance: National Nutrition Month

Description: Nutrition is critical for proper development of the brain, nervous system, and body. Pregnant women, young children, and adolescents are especially dependent on getting enough nutrients to prevent developmental delays and medical conditions.

Supporting Organization: Eat Right Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, www.eatright.org

What you can do: Learn what foods and vitamins your body needs. Visit choosemyplate.gov and talk with your doctor to make sure you and your child's dietary needs are met.

Observance: March 5-9 is National School Breakfast Week

Description: Many children throughout the US struggle to eat good meals and often rely on subsidized school lunches for their daily meal. Breakfast is essential in helping children focus

in school. Many children qualify for free breakfast programs at school, but do not participate.

Supporting Organization: School Nutrition Association, www.schoolnutrition.org

What you can do: If your child qualifies for free or reduced-price lunches at school you may also be eligible for reduced-price breakfast as well. Even if you don't, it is important to make sure your child has a good breakfast every morning in order to make the most of the day. You can learn how to help other students get this important meal and reduce childhood hunger at feedingamerica.org

Observance: March 12-18 is Brain Awareness Week

Description: Our brain is an essential organ but is very fragile. Many instances of brain injury can be prevented and other brain-related medical conditions need more research to be better understood.

Supporting Organization: The Dana Foundation, www.dana.org

What you can do: Brain injuries can be prevented by wearing helmets when participating in a wheeled sport, skiing or snowboarding. Using proper safety equipment in sports and wearing seatbelts and using a proper car seat for children while driving can reduce brain injuries.

Observance: March 18-24 is Poison Prevention Week

Description: Accidental poisonings happen everyday when children have access to dangerous chemicals such as household cleaners, cosmetics, alcohol, etc. Awareness on how to childproof the home and properly store hazardous chemicals can protect both children and pets from injury or death.

Supporting Organization: PoisonPrevention.org

What you can do: You can learn how to childproof your home at the Home Safety Council, www.homesafetycouncil.org. Also, keep the Poison Control Center number near every phone: **1-800-222-1222**.

Get Your Home Safe and Ready This Spring

Many people are beginning to "spring clean" their homes. While you are getting through the monotonous chores of clearing your gutters and washing your windows, take the time to assess other areas of home safety. Consider these tips:

Child-proof your home, especially if you have children under 6 that live or frequent your household. Even if your home has been child-proofed, it's recommended to follow up with a checklist every 6 months to adjust to your child's development and double-check overlooked items. You can find home safety checklists at

www.homesafetycouncil.org/SafetyGuide

Develop a fire-safety plan. Create an evacuation plan with your family and practice with regular drills. Contact your local fire department to learn more about how to solidify your plan. Be sure every bedroom and each floor of your house has a working smoke alarm and carbon monoxide detector. You can also find out more ways to protect your home and teach your children about fire safety at www.sparky.org

Prepare an emergency kit. Natural disasters can happen at any time of the year whether it is a snowstorm, power outage, tornado, or hurricane. It helps to have your emergency essentials prepared ahead of time. Visit ready.gov to learn how to create an emergency plan and put together an emergency kit with items such as medications, food, water, first-aid supplies.



Developmental Disability Awareness: Reye's Syndrome

What it is: Reye's Syndrome is a serious condition that causes swelling in the brain, liver, and other organs. Reye's generally develops in children and teenagers following a viral infection. Although the cause is generally unknown, one suspected cause is thought to be triggered by aspirin or an undiagnosed metabolic disorder involving fatty acid oxidation. Fatty acid oxidation disorders are a group of inherited metabolic disorders in which the body is unable to break down fatty acids because an enzyme is missing or not working properly.

Risk factors: Using aspirin to treat a viral infection (flu, chicken pox, respiratory infection) or having an undelying metabolic disorder.

Symptoms: For children younger than age 2, the first signs of Reye's syndrome may include: diarrhea and/or rapid breathing. For older children and teenagers, early signs and symptoms may include: persistent or continuous vomiting and unusual sleepiness or lethargy. As the condition progresses, signs and symptoms may become more serious, including: irritable, aggressive or irrational behavior; confusion, disorientation or hallucinations; weakness or paralysis in the arms and legs; seizures; excessive lethargy; decreased level of consciousness.

Diagnosis: There is no one specific test that diagnoses Reye's Syndrome. Instead, blood and urine tests may screen for metabolic disorders. Other tests may be done to rule out causes of neurological or liver problems including a spinal tap, liver biopsy, MRI, or skin biopsies.

Treatment: Reye's Syndrome is often severe and will require hospitalization. Treatment may include IV fluids, anti-seizure medication, diuretics, and medications to prevent bleeding from liver malfunction.

Prevention: Newborn screening is often done to newborns to test for metabolic disorders that may put the infant at risk for Reye's. It is also recommended that you don't give young children and teenagers aspirin during a viral infection. Instead, talk with your doctor about what you should give your child such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen. Also, make sure your children stay current on required childhood vaccinations including the flu vaccine.

Source: Mayo Clinic, <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/reyes-syndrome/DS00142>



Tips for Preventing a Brain Injury

Brain injuries happen every day, but can be prevented with some general (and easy) precautions. Here are some tips from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Brain Injury Association of America to reduce the incidence of brain injuries:



- Wear a seat belt every time you drive or ride in a motor vehicle.
- Always buckle your child into a child safety seat, booster seat, or seat belt (according to the child's height, weight, and age) in the car.
- Never drive while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Wear a helmet and make sure your children wear helmets when:
 - Riding a bike, motorcycle, snowmobile, or all-terrain vehicle;
 - Playing a contact sport, such as football or ice hockey

PREVENTION COUNTS Feb/March 2012

- Using in-line skates or riding a skateboard;
- Batting and running bases in baseball or softball;
- Riding a horse; or
- Skiing or snowboarding.
- Avoid falls in the home by:
 - Using a step stool with a grab bar to reach objects on high shelves;
 - Installing handrails on stairways;
 - Installing window guards to keep young children from falling out of open windows;
 - Using safety gates at the top and bottom of stairs when young children are around;
 - Removing tripping hazards such as small area rugs and loose electrical cords;
 - Using non-slip mats in the bathtub and on shower floors;
 - Putting grab bars next to the toilet and in the tub or shower;
 - Maintaining a regular exercise program to improve strength, balance, and coordination; and
 - Seeing an eye doctor regularly for a vision check to help lower the risk of falling.
- Make sure the surface on your child's playground is made of shock-absorbing material, such as hardwood chips, rubber matting, mulch, and sand.

Source: http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/pub-res/tbi_toolkit/patients/preventing.htm

New Standards Set for More Nutritional School Lunches



The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 has required the U.S. Department of Agriculture to set new standards for healthier school lunches. According to USA Today, the new standards will include: calorie and sodium limits on meals; require increased servings of fruits and vegetables based on age group; schools will need to offer a minimum of leafy greens, red-orange vegetables, starchy vegetables, and legumes each week; over two years all breads, cereals, and pastas will need to have whole grain listed as first ingredient; milk will need to be either low-fat or fat-free; and foods may contain no trans fats.

These new standards will offer healthier meal options for children, especially those who depend on school meals to get the most nutrition in their day. In NJ alone, according to 2010 statistics from Kids Count Data Center, approximately 445,656 children are eligible for free/reduced priced school meals. Many of these children's families live off food stamps or other public assistance programs and depending on their individual circumstances school meals may be the most nutritious or in some cases only meals they eat throughout the day. Additionally, according to the same source, of these children eligible for free/reduced school meals only 77.8% actually participate and receive free/reduced price lunches and 28.7% receive free/reduced price school breakfast. Having a solid breakfast in the morning is essential for children to be able to focus and concentrate in school throughout the day. The NJ Department of Agriculture and NJ Department of Education have partnered to encourage children to participate more in school breakfast programs by suggesting adjusting school start times, hosting early classroom breakfast during the early part of the day, having grab-and-go or breakfast-to-go options, or offering second chance breakfast times during the early part of the morning.

Encouraging children and their families to participate in school lunch/breakfast programs and setting new nutrition standards for food served at school can help give kids the extra nutrition they need to succeed in school and improve children developmentally. These standards and programs set a precedent for better childhood health and well-being.

Sources: USA Today, <http://yourlife.usatoday.com/fitness-food/diet-nutrition/story/2012-01-25/Government-requires-more-fruits-veggies-for-school-lunches/52779404/1>, <http://www.acnj.org/admin.asp?uri=2081&action=15&di=2111&ext=pdf&view=yes>, The Annie E. Casey Foundation Kids Count Data Center, <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/bystate/Rankings.aspx?state=NJ&ind=5304>

New Study Shows No Safe Time to Drink Alcohol During Pregnancy

According to a new study that is set to be published in *Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research* any alcohol consumed during the first trimester of pregnancy can result in possible physical deformities, cognitive damage and behavioral symptoms. In this study, Time Magazine reports, "Between 1978 and 2005, scientists at the University of California, San Diego worked with 992 women who provided information about how much alcohol they drank — as well as other substances they used — every three months during their pregnancies. For every one additional drink the mothers consumed between their 43rd and 84th days of pregnancy, their babies had a 16% greater chance of being born smaller than average, which may put them at greater risk for mental and physical problems. Their infants were also more likely to have birth defects, such as a 25% higher risk of a smooth ridge linking the nose and upper lip, a 12% increased risk of an abnormally small head and a 22% greater chance of unusually thin upper lips." (Time Magazine, 2012).

This study reinforces warnings that alcohol consumption during pregnancy can result in Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD). FASD is an umbrella term for a variety of disorders that may result from prenatal exposure to alcohol including neurological damage, behavioral problems, learning disabilities, and possible physical deformities including low birth weight and designated facial characteristics. Many people diagnosed with FASD have trouble learning, holding down jobs, staying in school, and are more at risk for criminal activity. There is no cure for FASD, but early diagnosis and treatment may help improve quality of life.



FASD can be prevented if pregnant women choose not to drink alcohol. Many FASD organizations encourage women who are pregnant, planning on becoming pregnant, or sexually active and not on birth control to not drink any alcohol. Damage can be done to a baby by alcohol even before a woman knows that she is pregnant. There is no known safe amount, time, or type of alcohol that can be consumed during pregnancy.

Source: Time Magazine, <http://healthland.time.com/2012/01/18/alcohol-never-safe-for-developing-babies-during-pregnancy/>

New Changes Come to Lead Poisoning Prevention Efforts



There is some bad news in the world of childhood lead poisoning prevention. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has been one of the longtime frontrunners in childhood lead poisoning prevention, expanding education and research. Recently the childhood lead poisoning prevention budget was cut by Congress from \$29 million to \$2 million, a nearly 94% decrease. Many problems arise with these changes because not only are there homes across the United States still filled with toxic levels of lead, but the lead poisoning threshold was also changed this year. The CDC now recommends that children with 5 micrograms of lead per deciliter of blood to be considered dangerous enough to seek treatment for lead poisoning, down from previous recommendation of 10

micrograms per deciliter. This will increase the number of children with lead poisoning from 100,000 to nearly 450,000.

So lead poisoning prevention budgets are down and the number of cases of lead poisoning will likely increase due to the changes in lead blood level standards. This means more homes will be considered to have dangerous levels of lead. Informing families about the dangers of lead poisoning, educating about dangerous sources of lead poisoning, and how to seek treatment will now be a challenge under the new budget constraints. How can we as a community accommodate to these new changes?

Keep yourself educated. There is still plenty of information available on the dangers of lead poisoning. Stay updated at leadfreekids.org

Help keep others educated. Help share lead poisoning prevention information with other families. Sharing by word of mouth is one way but you can also Tweet or post your support on Facebook and Twitter and other social media websites.

Test your home. If your home was built prior to 1978 have your home tested for possible lead poisoning.

Test your family. If there is lead in your home your children should be tested for lead poisoning by a doctor. Additionally, it is recommended that children under the age of 6 be regularly tested, since they are the most vulnerable to developmental delays and other consequences of lead poisoning.

Source: USA Today, <http://yourlife.usatoday.com/health/story/2012-01-18/Funds-for-screening-kids-dwindle-as-lead-threat-increases/52638442/1>

Lead in Lipstick?

Recently the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) followed up a study testing lipstick for traces of lead. Between February and July

2010, 400 lipsticks were purchased from retail stores and many tested positive for traces of lead.

Some of the companies with high levels of lead content (up to 7.19ppm) included major brands such

as L'Oreal, Maybelline, Revlon, and Cover Girl among others. While the FDA assures consumers that there is no immediate danger if lipstick is used as intended, it is still a concern for young children and pregnant women. Young children may accidentally consume the product and any lead exposure can be passed from mother to fetus. Even small amounts of lead exposure can build up in the body overtime, gradually leading to lead poisoning. You can find the complete list of lipsticks at <http://www.fda.gov/cosmetics/productandingredientsafety/>. We recommend you dispose of any lipstick you have that are on the list.

Source:

<http://www.fda.gov/cosmetics/productandingredientsafety/productinformation/ucm137224.htm>



Facts on Binge Drinking



Binge drinking is linked to underage drinking and other risky drinking behaviors. Binge drinking can lead to Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders, unplanned pregnancies, vehicle accidents & DUIs, violence, unintentional injuries, and death. Check out these surprising binge drinking facts from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

- Age most often to binge drink is between 18-34.
- Most people who binge drink are not alcoholics or alcohol-dependent.
- More than 90% of the alcohol youth drink and half of the alcohol adults drink is while

binge drinking.

- Drinking too much, including binge drinking, costs \$746 per person in the US in 2006 totaling \$223.5 billion. These costs include health care expenses, crime, and lost productivity.
- The average number of drinks for one person on a binge is about 8, consuming 4 or more drinks for women and 5 or more drinks for men is actually considered binge drinking.

Source: CDC, <http://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/BingeDrinking/index.html>

Smoking and Pregnancy Don't Mix



Many expectant mothers are advised to avoid certain activities during their pregnancy such as alcohol, drugs, and other dangerous activities. Another precaution women should be aware of is to avoid tobacco smoking, which means putting down the cigarette and avoiding secondhand smoke as well.

Tobacco smoke contains over 4000 chemicals including cyanide, lead, nicotine, carbon monoxide and other carcinogens. These chemicals settle in your body and are eventually passed on to your developing baby. Lead can cause developmental delays and complications for young children and can be just as harmful to infants. Carbon monoxide causes a reduced amount of oxygen intake to your baby by attaching to red blood cells where oxygen should go and nicotine additionally reduces the amount of oxygen your baby takes in by narrowing their blood vessels. Complications from tobacco smoke exposure include stillbirth, premature delivery, low birth weight, underdeveloped lungs, heart defects, behavioral problems, learning

problems and lower IQ, and a risk for asthma and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

Preventing these complications is simple: stop smoking and avoid others who smoke around you. Quitting smoking can be difficult but it is necessary in order to give your baby the best possible outcome. You can find smoke quitting tips at Smokefree.gov. Also, remind smokers in your household to smoke outside.

Source: http://www.babycenter.com/o_how-smoking-during-pregnancy-affects-you-and-your-baby_1405720.bc?page=2

Are You Practicing Car Seat Safety?

Many parents are cautious when it comes to car safety and make sure their child is properly restrained in a booster seat, car seat or with a seat belt. However, many parents report do not always follow the proper precautions and laws when it comes to carpooling other children. In a new survey, reported by USA Today "76% of 681 parents of kids ages 4 to 8 in a nationally representative survey say they use a booster seat for their own child, but only 55% insist on it when driving other children. And though 64% carpool, 21% do not insist on booster seats when their child is riding with another driver, says the study in the February Pediatrics" (USA Today, 2012).



These reports are "'disturbing because close to 70% of parents say they carpool children other than their own, and when they do, they're often failing to use booster seats,' says lead study author Michelle Macy, a pediatrician at the University of Michigan C.S. Mott Children's Hospital in Ann Arbor. Why do parents abandon safety seats when carpooling? Practical barriers, including limited vehicle space and difficulties making arrangements with other drivers, were often mentioned, Macy says. Peer pressure is also a likely factor, she says — 'not only pressure on parents but the peer pressure that kids start to feel' during the early school years." (USA Today, 2012).

So what is the recommended rules for driving with young children? Vehicle seat belts are designed to fit an average-sized adult. Children can fit in a regular seat belt when they reach 4'9" and weigh greater than 80lbs. Otherwise, your child should be in a proper booster seat and infants and toddlers should be in an appropriate car seat. If your child is being driven by another person insist they are using the appropriate car seat or booster seat for your child and be sure your child is always seated in the back seat.

Source: USA Today, <http://yourlife.usatoday.com/parenting-family/story/2012-01-30/Carpool-parents-often-dont-put-kids-in-booster-seats/52883348/1>

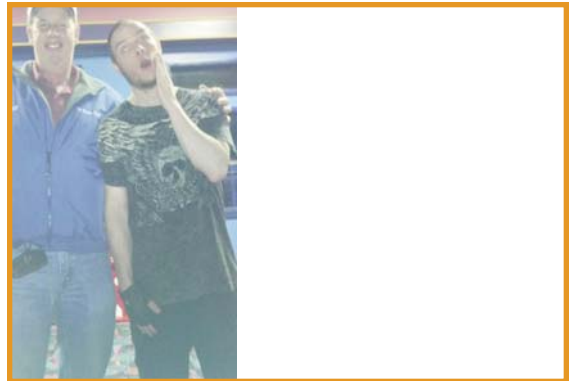
I Am Someone to Get to Know!

A few months ago we asked for volunteers who have disabilities to be willing to share some insight into their life. The Coalition for Prevention along with the NJ Self Advocacy Project want you to meet some of our advocates involved with this campaign and why they are someone to get to know!



"Please remember that we are people with kind hearts and strong spirits."
-Derrick

"I am 29 years old. I am looking forward to bowling my first 300. I am also looking forward to someone loving me so I can love them."
-Scott



"I'm a special person because I show people how to speak up for their rights. I have a love for helping people."
- Julie

"Like most other 8 year-old kids, Annika and Maya are happy little girls. They are warm, loving, and have an incredible ability to connect with others."
-Annika and Mya's father, Bob



Information Spotlight

How Much Folic Acid is Too Much?

A recent issue of Autism Spectrum News reported a story on researching new causes for autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Due to the varying theories on the origins and causes of autism such as genes and environmental influences, new research has begun targeting studies on pregnant women and factors that affect gene expression. “These factors do not change the primary DNA sequence but instead cause dysregulation of gene expression due to covalent modification of the building blocks of the DNA are termed epigenetic factors” (Autism Spectrum News, 2011). One such environmental factor being studied is folic acid (FA), which is prescribed to pregnant women as a supplement to prevent neural tube defects that cause conditions such as Spina Bifida. Many foods are fortified with folic acid such as cereal and pregnant women are encouraged to take additional supplements. One researcher “hypothesizes that excessive FA supplementation during pregnancy will lead to altered gene expression during the crucial development of the fetus and may be responsible for behavioral changes evident in the ASDs.”(Autism Spectrum News, 2011). Studies have shown that folic acid supplementation has caused changes in gene expression but more evidence and further studies are needed. Pregnant women should seek the advice of their doctor and a dietician to be sure they are receiving the right amount of nutrition during their pregnancy.



Source: Autism Spectrum News-Winter 2012, http://www.mhnews-autism.org/back_issues/ASN-Winter2012.pdf

Environmental Chemicals May Cause Vaccines to Lose Effectiveness

In a new study, children exposed to perfluorinated compounds (PFCs) may have a reduced response to vaccines. These chemicals are used on coatings of some products such as non-stick cookware, paper plates, microwavable popcorn bags, upholstery, fast food packaging, and rainwear. According to USA Today, “Scientists measured children's exposure by taking blood samples from their mothers during pregnancy, and from the children at ages 5 and 7. At age 5, just before receiving a scheduled booster shot, 26% had antibody concentrations too low to protect them from tetanus; 37% had levels too low to protect from diphtheria. Researchers gave them booster shots to provide additional protection. Children with the highest prenatal PFC exposure had the lowest response to vaccinations, as measured by the antibodies produced after they received the shots, the study says. Doubling a child's PFC exposure cut immune response in half.” Many manufacturers are currently attempting to limit the amount of PFCs used in products.

Source: USA Today, <http://yourlife.usatoday.com/health/story/2012-01-24/Chemical-exposure-may-compromise-vaccine-response/52774114/1>

EPA Issues New Standards for Air Pollution from Power Plants

Many US power plants emit toxic chemicals such as lead, mercury, arsenic and cyanide. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will implement new standards to limit air pollution from power plants. With these new standards, already half of all power plants have pollution controls, while 40% more will now take similar steps. These new standards will prevent an estimated 11,000 premature deaths, 4,700 heart attacks, 130,000 cases of childhood asthma, and 6,300 cases of acute bronchitis. The total economic benefits may reach up to \$90 billion.

Source: EPA, <http://www.epa.gov>



Join Our Network

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