

Neonates

A neonate is a newborn orca. An orca is considered a neonate until it's about six months old. Neonate's white patches are tinted orange since their blubber isn't fully developed, so their blood vessels show through their blubber. When a neonate is born they can't hold their breath for very long. Their mothers have to dive down to pick up their baby and carry it to the surface to breathe. Neonates are extremely vulnerable, and just like children are more susceptible to getting sick than as an adult. Neonates are also affected by PCBs. PCBs are toxic chemicals that are passed down from their mothers, PCBs are impossible to get rid of. They stay in the blubber of the orcas, and can cause premature births, which can result in early death.

I was mainly motivated to do this art piece because it was a school project and I wanted a good grade, *until I went to the San Juan Islands*. When the orcas came up to our boat it changed my thinking on my art piece. Being on the water with the whales made me realize just how intelligent and beautiful they really are. Somehow, I feel that they knew we were trying to help them. For the first time in the history of that company, the whales came up to the boat two different times while we were on the water, that was a very special moment for me.

Aliyah

