



# Collaborative on Health and the Environment

## June 2015



### Upcoming Partnership Events

**CHE Partnership call:** [A Story of Developmental Disability, A Story of Health: The Influence of Environmental Exposure and Opportunities for Prevention](#)  
Thurs, June 11

**CHE Partnership call:** [Identifying EDCs for Public Health Protection: The Endocrine Perspective](#)  
Tues, June 16



### Can We Be Both "Steward" and "Kin" to Better Protect Health?

Elise Miller, EdM  
Director

At a funder-organized meeting I attended some years ago, a woman native to Hawai'i spoke about the difference between stewardship and kinship when considering environmental concerns. She said, "In my community we do not see ourselves as

Tues, June 10

*Hosted by the EDCs  
Strategies Group*

**CHE Partnership call:**  
[Gestational Diabetes and  
Environmental Chemical  
Exposure](#)

Tues, June 23

*Hosted by the CHE Diabetes-  
Obesity Spectrum Working  
Group*

**CHE Partnership call:**  
[Tobacco: Science, Policy,  
and Prospects: A Talk with  
Stanton Glantz, PhD](#)

Thurs, July 9

**CHE Partnership call:**  
[Towards a New Global  
Commission on Environmental  
Pollution](#)

Tues, July 14

Visit the [CHE Partnership call  
archives](#) and [CHE Working  
Group call archives](#) to listen  
to MP3 recordings of past  
calls.

**Special Announcement**

stewards of what is around us. Instead we are kin." That simple reframing spoke volumes about how different cultures define the relationship between humans and environment. The predominant Western perception is that people are essentially separate from the environment and thus we need to oversee it. We are the deciders in terms of how to use and interact with what is outside ourselves--what is nonhuman. Many native cultures, however, have long held that we are inextricably embedded in the environment, and the environment is embedded in us. We are kin, not overseers.

My take is that these concepts are interrelated: Understanding our connection to others evokes a greater responsibility to care for and protect that which we hold dear, and in turn, when we care for something consciously, our sense of kinship with it grows stronger. Right now we seem to have collectively forgotten (with few exceptions) how to do either--or certainly not how to do either well. We like to create but give little thought to the longer term consequences of our inventions. We like to find cures, but we're not so keen on prevention.

In this context, it was notable that last week the Obama Administration held the very first "[White House Forum on Antibiotic Stewardship](#)." This event bolstered awareness

## [New CHE column: Your Health This Week](#)

CHE has started a weekly column on the CHE Blog highlighting studies and resources that you might find useful in safeguarding or improving your own health or that of your family.

### [A Story of Health eBook](#)

Your health. The environment. What's the story? CHE and partners have created [A Story of Health](#) multimedia eBook to investigate just that. How do different aspects of our environment interact with our genes to influence our health across the lifespan? You can download the entire book or individual chapters featuring research about disease origin and helpful facts about disease prevention. Stories on additional health endpoints are forthcoming.

## Resources

[CHE's Toxicant and Disease Database](#)

about the overuse of antibiotics in feedstock and implications for human health. It also put in motion steps to help mitigate this critical problem. Of course the process included some oversights too, as highlighted by [Keep Antibiotics Working](#).

What also drew my attention was the use of the word "stewardship" in this particular effort. Though nonprofits like the [Product Stewardship Institute](#) apply that term to man-made products, government agencies use it mostly in reference to land, forests and waterways, or sometimes institutions or estates--not for something like antibiotics. But this appears to be changing. In fact, I found the CDC has indeed recently established an [antibiotic stewardship program for health care systems](#).

To me this is a very good sign. It suggests that those who have been pressing at a national level to increase interest in stewarding what we have created (and put into the world in forms that have not existed before) are succeeding. Of course this kind of stewardship now needs to include all kinds of products--throughout their lifecycles--as well as the chemicals, nanoparticles, and other elements used to develop and manufacture those products. But it seems the momentum is growing.

[CHE's searchable calendar](#) of events related to environmental health.

[CHE's blog](#) of commentary on current topics.

[CHE's podcast](#) of teleconference call recordings.

[CHE's news feed](#) of news articles, studies, reports, calls for proposals, job openings and other announcements. Relevant items are sent to CHE's listservs several times each week, or visitors can subscribe via RSS.

Given the current state of the planet--the pressures of overpopulation, the exploitation of limited natural resources, the widespread pollution, and waste-producing practices, it is essential that we re-cultivate our capacities to recognize our kinship with the rest of existence and to steward with greater care what we invent. This is the only way we can help current and future generations to not only live, but thrive.

Warm wishes,



## Working Groups and Initiatives

Visit the webpages of CHE's groups for the latest news, research, and announcements:

### Topic-based Working Groups

[Asthma](#)

[Autism](#)

[Breast Cancer](#)

[Cancer](#)

[Children's Health](#)

[Cumulative Impacts](#)

[Database](#)

[Diabetes/Obesity](#)

[Electromagnetic Fields \(EMF\)](#)

[Fertility/Reproductive Health](#)

[Integrative Health](#)

[Learning and Developmental Disabilities](#)

[Mental Health](#)

[Pet](#)

[Neurodegenerative Disease](#)

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