



Learning and Developmental Disabilities Initiative

[of the Collaborative on Health and the Environment](#)



Biweekly Bulletin January 27, 2010

This bulletin lists upcoming events plus recent announcements, news and journal articles, calls for proposals and other items related to learning and developmental disabilities and environmental health. They are archived and searchable on LDDI's website: www.healthandenvironment.org/working_groups/learning/r/bulletins (Note the new URL).

LDDI Highlights

LDDI Biomonitoring Project

The report, *Mind Disrupted*, is being released in conjunction with a Congressional Hearing on chemical policy reform currently scheduled to be held on the Senate side Thursday, February 4th. For a live streaming of the event, and for more information on the report release, please visit www.minddisrupted.org, the new website that will be housing the report and other relevant materials. The website will be available before the February 4th hearing.

LDA Conference Symposium February 17th

The Learning Disability Association of America's annual medical symposium on environmental health will be held in Baltimore, Maryland as part of LDA's annual conference. The first part of the symposium will feature participants in the LDDI biomonitoring project. For more information, please see even #7 below or contact Maureen Swanson at mwsanson@ldaamerica.org.

Congressional Briefing February 19th

A briefing on the LDDI biomonitoring project is currently scheduled in Washington, DC, for Friday, February 19th on the House side. For more information, please contact Laura Abulafia with LDDI: laura@healthandenvironment.org.

AAIDD Teleconference February 9th

The American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) first teleconference of 2010 will be held on Tuesday February 9th at 2:00 p.m. Eastern time. The call will feature Renee Dufault, MAT, who will speak on: "Mercury exposure, nutritional deficiencies and metabolic disruptions may affect learning in children". For more information, see event #6 below or contact Laura Abulafia: laura@aaidd.org.

New Resources Coming on Mental Health

The National Association for the Dually Diagnosed is currently working on some resources on mental health for the LDDI Mental Health Working Group. The LDDI [Practice Prevention column](#) on pesticides has already been updated with new information on mental health effects and routes of exposure. For more information, contact Ed Seliger: eseliger@thenadd.org.

New Autism Working Group

CHE is initiating CHE-Autism, a working group dedicated to exploring the new paradigm of autism research and treatment in Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD). CHE and Commonweal have had a strong interest in ASD for many years. Commonweal co-hosted a series of conferences over the past decade exploring the new paradigm of autism

research and treatment. Two of the co-hosts of these conferences, Martha Herbert and Robert Hendren, have agreed to serve as science advisers to CHE-Autism. Michael Lerner will facilitate CHE-Autism initially with his colleague Sheila Opperman, who has been involved with autism work for years. CHE hopes to identify partners who would like to be candidates for the position of co-facilitators.

To join CHE Autism contact info@healthandenvironment.org (this link has been fixed since the last bulletin; we apologize for the error). For more information on the CHE Autism Working Group, please visit [its web page](#).

Announcements

A daily news feed with articles and announcements is available on CHE's website: <http://www.healthandenvironment.org/news/announce>.

[Call for comments: 2010 Strategic Planning Superfund Research Program.](#)

This plan will direct us in prioritizing the scope of the science, establishing an approach for attaining scientific balance and growth, enhancing translation, community outreach, and training along with developing guidelines for managing the program/decision-making. Questionnaires must be completed by January 29, 2010.

[EPA, Congressional Black Caucus announce joint Environmental Justice Tour.](#)

The joint EPA-CBC Environmental Justice Tour will visit several areas throughout the country to highlight environmental justice challenges faced by Americans in all communities.

[New report: The Health Case for Reforming the Toxic Substances Control Act.](#)

In the 34 years since TSCA was enacted, the EPA has been able to require testing on just 200 of the more than 80,000 chemicals produced and used in the U.S., and just five chemicals have been regulated under this law.

[See a related article: [Stricter rules urged on toxic chemicals](#)]

[Call for comments: EPA seeks public input on use of modified grenade simulators at Camp Edwards.](#)

A 30-day public comment period begins January 20, 2010, for EPA's proposed agreement to allow the Massachusetts National Guard and other military agencies, to resume training using a reformulated pyrotechnic device, the M116A1 Hand Grenade.

[FDA, health organizations to study safety of medications taken during pregnancy.](#)

About two-thirds of women who deliver a baby have taken at least one prescription medication during pregnancy according to a journal article published in the American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology. There are very few clinical trials that test the safety of medications in pregnancy due to concerns about the health of the mother and child.

[Call for comments: Engineering Evaluation and Cost Analysis of the TVA Kingston site.](#)

The analysis is for the non-time-critical cleanup alternatives for restoration of the Swan Pond embayment area impacted by spilled fly ash and stabilization and closure of the failed dredge cell. Comments will be accepted until February 18th.

[Call for comments: EPA Definition of Solid Waste \(DSW\) rule.](#)

Consistent with EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson's commitment to reach out to communities historically underrepresented in EPA decision-making, the agency is requesting public input on a draft plan for assessing the potential impacts of its hazardous waste recycling rule on low-income, minority and tribal populations. Comments are due by March 15, 2010, and public meetings and an online public roundtable are also scheduled.

[Environmental Public Health Tracking: State-to-State Peer Fellowship Program.](#)

The Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) invites applications from interested candidates of non-EPHT funded states and territorial health agencies to serve

as an ASTHO Tracking Fellow. Fellows are expected to pursue activities that strengthen their capacity to conduct and collaborate on EPHT activities. The duration of the project will be from March through May 2010. Applications must be received by February 26, 2010. Inquiries can be directed to Abraham G. Kulungara, MPH, director of Environmental Health, 571-527-3154 or akulungara@astho.org.

[Call for proposals: Exploring New Air Pollution -- Health Effects Links in Existing Datasets.](#)

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is seeking applications proposing to use existing datasets from health studies to analyze health outcomes for which the link to air pollution is not well established, or to evaluate underlying heterogeneity in health responses among subgroups defined by susceptibility or extent and/or composition of exposure. Proposals are due by April 27, 2010.

[Call for proposals: Revitalizing Core Environmental Health Programs.](#)

The EHS-Net Research opportunity seeks to improve the practice of environmental health service programs by establishing a network of environmental health specialists (EHS) who collaborate with epidemiologists and laboratorians to conduct research to identify and prevent environmental risk factors contributing to foodborne and/or waterborne illness. Letters of Intent must be received by Friday February 12, 2010.

[Job opening: Tallahassee, Florida.](#)

The Florida Department of Health has an opening for a chief of community environmental health to begin in spring 2010. The closing date for applications is February 14, 2010.

[Job opening: Falls Church, Virginia.](#)

The Center For Health, Environment and Justice has an opening for a coordinator for its Childproofing Our Communities Campaign which works to protect children from exposure to environmental health hazards where they live, learn, play and pray.

Upcoming Events

Online Calendar. These and more upcoming events are listed in a searchable calendar: <http://www.healthandenvironment.org/cgi-bin/searchevents.cgi>

1) What does Chemical Contamination Cost Health Care?

Thursday January 28, 2010

1:00 p.m. Eastern time / 10:00 a.m. Pacific time

Sponsor: Practice Greenhealth

A new report being released this month by Safer Chemicals, Healthy Families outlines the role of environmental contaminants in cancer, asthma, reproductive disorders, and other conditions. Learn about the report from a co-author and other leading researchers. Estimates of the proportion of the disease burden that can be attributed to toxic chemical exposures vary, ranging from 1 percent of all disease to 5 percent of childhood cancer, 10 percent of diabetes, Parkinson's disease, and neurodevelopmental deficits, and 30 percent of childhood asthma. A conservative estimate puts the health care cost savings attributable to a decline in the incidence of chronic disease due to reductions in chemical exposures at \$5 billion per year. The report illustrates the opportunity to prevent disease and reduce health-care expenditures by overhauling the chemical management system in the United States. Speakers will be Charlotte Brody, RN, from Safer Chemicals Healthy Families; Richard Clapp, DSc, MPH, of Boston University School of Public Health; and Ted Schettler, MD, MPH, of the Science and Environmental Health Network.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

2) Lead-Safe Remodeling and Renovation Train-the-Trainer Program

Thursday and Friday, January 28 - 29, 2010

Los Angeles, California

Sponsor: Alliance for Healthy Homes in partnership with the Healthy Homes Collaborative

This class will help prepare organizations to become accredited trainers under EPA's new Renovation, Repair and Painting (RRP) rule. By April 2010, this rule will require virtually every contractor working in pre-1978 homes to complete an 8-hour course in lead safe work practices or face a Federal fine of up to \$37,500 a day. The Train-the-Trainer course does not certify participants to be accredited trainers under the rule, but rather gives participants background on the requirements of EPA's rule and instruction on how to most effectively deliver the new lead safe work practices course for renovators.

Price: unknown

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Vikki Paulus, vikki@healthyhomescollaborative.org

3) Green Chemistry and Environmental Health

Wednesday February 3, 2010

3:00 p.m. Eastern / 2:00 p.m. Central / noon Pacific time

Sponsor: Great Lakes Green Chemistry Network

The speaker will be Dr. Linda Birnbaum, director of the US National Institutes of Environmental Health Sciences and the National Toxicology Program.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

4) A Conversation with Linda Birnbaum, Director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences

Thursday February 4, 2010

10:00 a.m. Pacific / 1:00 p.m. Eastern time

Sponsor: Collaborative on Health and the Environment

We will hear from Birnbaum on the priorities and challenges facing the NIEHS in the coming years as well as discuss other pressing environmental health concerns.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: CHE, info@healthandenvironment.org

5) DC Environmental Health Community Forum

Saturday February 6, 2010

10:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Washington, DC

at the Martin Luther King Jr. Library, 901 G Street Northwest

Sponsor: The DC Environmental Health Collaborative

The purpose is to unveil a draft report on environmental health risks and engage District organizations and residents in a critique of the draft list of environmental health priorities. The forum will provide a warm lunch, children's activities and transportation available according to need. Please RSVP by January 27th.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Joanne Perodin, 202-543-4033 ext. 12 or jperodin@cehn.org

6) Mercury Exposure, Nutritional Deficiencies and Metabolic Disruptions May Affect Learning in Children

Tuesday February 9, 2010

2:00 - 3:00 p.m. Eastern time

Sponsor: American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

The speaker will be Renee Dufault, MAT, of United Tribes Technical College, Bismarck, North Dakota.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

7) LDA 47th Annual International Conference

Wednesday through Saturday, February 17-20, 2010

Baltimore, Maryland

at the Baltimore Marriott Waterfront

Sponsor: Learning Disabilities Association of America

This conference will include the latest research and dialogue on learning disabilities, including specific workshops on medical, mental health, teacher preparation, public policy, adults, assessment, research and more. A full-day medical symposium on "Toxic Chemicals and Brain Development: Prevention and Policy" is scheduled for Wednesday, including a panel presentation on the new biomonitoring study from the Learning and Developmental Disabilities Initiative.

Price: unknown; an "early bird" rate is effective until Monday February 1st

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: see the [Contact page](#)

News and Journal Articles

[Genes, diet offer new clues to Parkinson's disease.](#)

Tuesday, January 26, 2010

Researchers say they've spotted a new genetic risk factor for Parkinson's disease, as well as a link between the illness and two other factors, metabolism and vitamin B6. Business Week.

[Low level arsenic impairs glucose-stimulated insulin secretion in pancreatic beta-cells: Involvement of cellular adaptive response to oxidative stress.](#)

Monday, January 25, 2010

Our studies suggest that low levels of arsenic provoke a cellular adaptive oxidative stress response which increases antioxidant levels, dampens ROS signaling involved in GSIS, and thus disturbs beta-cell function. Environmental Health Perspectives.

[Current and future applications of toxicogenomics: Results summary of a survey from the HESI Genomics State of Science Subcommittee.](#)

Tuesday, January 26, 2010

The survey findings provide valuable information on the current state of the science toxicogenomics (TGx) applications, identifies key areas in which TGx will have an impact, as well as the key hurdles in applying TGx data to address issues. Environmental Health Perspectives

[Study finds high PCB levels in NW Indiana waterway.](#)

Monday, January 25, 2010

Researchers who took soil samples from the Indiana Harbor and Ship Canal in heavily industrialized northwestern Indiana have found that it contains high levels of potentially cancer-causing PCBs. Associated Press.

[That new-car smell.](#)

Monday, January 25, 2010

For many, the new-car smell is a bonus that comes with buying a new vehicle -- an olfactory reward to enjoy each time the owner slides behind the wheel. That smell, however, also could make them -- and their passengers -- sick. AOL Autos.

[Debate over fracking continues.](#)

Sunday, January 24, 2010

Wider use of hydraulic fracturing will help the United States increase its domestic energy supplies even as the practice draws concern about its possible impact on drinking water, Exxon Mobil Corp. Chairman and Chief Executive Rex Tillerson says. McClatchy Newspapers.

[Radiation offers new cures, and ways to do harm.](#)

Sunday, January 24, 2010

Americans today receive far more medical radiation than ever before. Without a doubt, radiation saves countless lives, and serious accidents are rare. But patients often know little about the harm that can result when safety rules are violated and ever more powerful and technologically complex machines go awry. New York Times.

[PVC, the poison in your home.](#)

Saturday, January 23, 2010

PVC (polyvinyl chloride) plastic, commonly referred to as vinyl, is one of the most hazardous consumer products ever created. East London Daily Dispatch, South Africa.

[New bylaw forces businesses to divulge use of toxic chemicals.](#)

Saturday, January 23, 2010

Pretty soon you'll be able to track just how many harmful chemicals your local dry cleaner, auto body shop, printer or medical lab uses and releases into the environment. Toronto CP24 TV, Ontario.

[See a related article: [REACH list of dangerous chemicals doubled](#)]

[Why Alzheimer's is called 'type 3 diabetes.'](#)

Saturday, January 23, 2010

The role of insulin in the brain and the link between Type 2 diabetes and Alzheimer's is a multi-faceted one. Studies have shown that diabetics have a 30 to 65 percent higher risk of developing Alzheimer's disease, and that obesity and diabetes can cause the brain to shrink. Toronto Star, Ontario.

[Lead paint rules require contractor certification.](#)

Saturday, January 23, 2010

New EPA rules for lead paint removal go into effect April 22, adding a bit more time and cost to some home renovations. The agency estimates about 38 million homes and apartment units, or 40 percent of the housing stock, contain lead paint. Associated Press.

[Iraq littered with high levels of nuclear and dioxin contamination, study finds.](#)

Saturday, January 23, 2010

More than 40 sites across Iraq are contaminated with high levels of radiation and dioxins, with three decades of war and neglect having left environmental ruin in large parts of the country, an official Iraqi study has found. London Guardian, United Kingdom.

[Lead found in women's handbags.](#)

Saturday, January 23, 2010

Testing that revealed disturbingly high levels of lead has generated a landmark agreement involving two big retail chains that establishes, for the first time, limits on lead in women's handbags and wallets. ABC News.

[Industrial chemicals lurking in your bloodstream.](#)

Friday, January 22, 2010

Concern is heating up over whether common industrial chemicals found in plastics and

other consumer goods could be harming our kids. BPA is just one of hundreds of industrial chemicals that may be in your blood or urine right now. Forbes.

[See a related article: [Killers in your kitchen: Gender-bending packaging, exploding floor cleaners and toasters more deadly than sharks...](#)]

[Mercury pollution a global problem.](#)

Thursday, January 21, 2010

Concern about global mercury pollution has been mounting for decades and a recent expert report for the United Nations Environment Programme warned that mercury now appears to be present all over the world in concentrations that may affect people and wildlife. Durban Mercury, South Africa.

[See related articles: [Mountains of mercury](#) and [Ceremonial candles possible source of mercury contamination](#)]

[Kettleman City landfill growth sparks suit.](#)

Thursday, January 21, 2010

A group of Kettleman City residents is going to court to try to stop the expansion of a hazardous-waste landfill that they suspect has caused birth defects. Fresno Bee, California.

[Prenatal exposure to flame-retardant compounds affects neurodevelopment of young children.](#)

Wednesday, January 20, 2010

Prenatal exposure to ambient levels of flame retardant compounds called polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs) is associated with adverse neurodevelopmental effects in young children, according to researchers at the Columbia Center for Children's Environmental Health (CCCEH) at Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health. Science Daily.

[See a related article: [Younger mothers' breast milk has highest levels of flame retardants](#)]

[NYC to address PCB-contaminated caulk in schools.](#)

Wednesday, January 20, 2010

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and New York City announced a pilot program Tuesday to address the problem of potentially hazardous PCBs in construction materials in some city schools. Associated Press.

[What's in a cigarette? US to study ingredients.](#)

Tuesday, January 19, 2010

The Food and Drug Administration is working to lift the smokescreen clouding the ingredients used in cigarettes and other tobacco products. In June, tobacco companies must tell the FDA their formulas for the first time, just as drugmakers have for decades. Associated Press.

[Smoke, sleep problems linked.](#)

Monday, January 18, 2010

More secondhand smoke exposure means less sleep for children with asthma, according to new research from Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center. Cincinnati Enquirer, Ohio.

[Chemicals coat apples decades after Alar scare.](#)

Monday, January 18, 2010

In 2005, the last year results were available, the U.S. Department of Agriculture found pesticide residues on 98 percent of the apples it tested. All the residue was at levels within federal guidelines. Associated Press.

[See a related article: [Cholinesterase depression and its association with pesticide exposure across the agricultural season among Latino farmworkers in North Carolina](#)]

[OSR#1: Industrial chemical or autism treatment?](#)

Sunday, January 17, 2010

An industrial chemical called OSR#1 that was developed to help separate heavy metals from polluted soil and mining drainage is being sold as a dietary supplement by a luminary in the world of alternative autism treatments. Chicago Tribune, Illinois.

[Venison a la plomb.](#)

Sunday, January 17, 2010

Deer hunting season is over in the West. And if you were a good aim, your freezer is chock full of venison. But be warned, new research suggests that eating game shot with lead bullets may expose you and your family to lead, a poisonous heavy metal. High Country News.

[Residence near power lines and mortality from neurodegenerative diseases: Longitudinal study of the Swiss population.](#)

Friday, January 15, 2010

The relation of living in the proximity of 220-380 kV power lines and the risk of death from neurodegenerative diseases was studied, and an increased hazard ratio for Alzheimer's disease was found to increase with the number of years of residence within 50 m. American Journal of Epidemiology.

[DEP tests show prescription drugs leaching from landfills.](#)

Friday, January 15, 2010

The Maine Department of Environmental Protection says it now has enough evidence to prove that unwanted prescription drugs being tossed into local landfills pose a threat to surface and groundwater supplies around the state. Maine Public Broadcasting Network.

[Do TETRA \(airwave\) base station signals have a short-term impact on health and well-being? A randomized double-blind provocation study.](#)

Friday, January 15, 2010

Our findings suggest that the adverse symptoms experienced by electrosensitive individuals are due to the belief of harm from TETRA base stations rather than due to the low-level EMF exposure itself. Environmental Health Perspectives.

[Indoor air quality.](#)

Friday, January 15, 2010

Air quality is often much worse inside our homes than outside. That's because tens of thousands of chemicals, some synthetic and some found in nature, are used to make products commonly found in buildings. Environmental News Network.

[F.D.A. ordered to stop blocking imports of e-cigarettes.](#)

Friday, January 15, 2010

A federal judge on Thursday ordered the Food and Drug Administration to stop blocking the importation of electronic cigarettes from China and indicated that the devices should be regulated as tobacco products rather than drug or medical devices. New York Times. [See a related article: [Proof lacking on e-cigarettes' safety, experts warn](#)]

[Alcohol during pregnancy chemically alters fetal DNA.](#)

Friday, January 15, 2010

Drinking too much during pregnancy can harm offspring permanently. Now experiments in mice suggest this may be because alcohol chemically alters the fetus's DNA, affecting how genes are expressed. New Scientist.

[Top product safety regulator warns parents to take cheap jewelry from kids.](#)

Thursday, January 14, 2010

The nation's product safety agency issued an unprecedented warning Wednesday to parents: Don't give your children cheap metal jewelry. And if they already have some, toss it because it could contain hazardous levels of heavy metals such as lead and cadmium. Associated Press.

[See a related article: [Majority of toys in Indian market toxic: Study](#)]

[Elevated amount of BPA can increase cardiac risk by 45%, study finds.](#)

Wednesday, January 13, 2010

Elevated exposure to bisphenol A has been linked in a new study to a significantly increased risk of cardiovascular disease, the second time researchers have made a connection between the widely used plastic-making compound and heart ailments. Toronto Globe and Mail.

[See related articles: [FDA does about-face on exposure to BPA](#), [FDA says it's unable to regulate BPA](#), [The high cost of plastic convenience](#) and [Obesity now a growing problem for babies](#)]

Exercise may aid cognitive function.

Wednesday, January 13, 2010

Almost any amount of moderate physical activity in mid or late life reduced the odds of mild cognitive impairment by 30% to 40% in an ongoing cohort study, researchers reported. Medpage Today.

[See related articles: [Start running and watch your brain grow, say scientists](#) and [Exercise: In women, training for a sharper mind](#)]

Natural-gas sites don't have air problems: Regulators.

Wednesday, January 13, 2010

Air tests around natural gas production facilities in Fort Worth found "no pollutants at levels that would be a cause for concern," Texas environmental regulators said Tuesday. NBC News.

[See a related article: [New private tests renew concerns about air quality problems tied to gas drilling](#)]

Secrets in the soil remain untold.

Wednesday, January 13, 2010

Caro claims that the soil contamination across the neighborhood has been documented for years. The toxins are suspected to be linked to ash that spewed from the city incinerator decades ago; ash that fell like snow. Miami WFOR TV, Florida.

The Collaborative on Health and the Environment offers this information as a service but does not endorse any of the events, articles or announcements.

Companion bulletins are available for different audiences:

- For those interested in general children's environmental health: http://www.healthandenvironment.org/working_groups/childrens_health/bulletins
- For those interested in environmental health in Washington State and the Pacific Northwest: <http://washington.chenw.org/bulletins.html>

While there is overlap with this bulletin, there are some events and announcements unique to those bulletins.

If you would like to join the Collaborative on Health and the Environment (CHE) and the LDDI Working Group, please complete the application on the CHE website:

<http://www.healthandenvironment.org/application> Joining CHE means receiving up to four email messages a month from the CHE National listserv. CHE costs nothing to join and the benefit is shared information and opportunities for further engagement, if you choose. Be sure to mark that you want to join the Learning and Developmental Disabilities Initiative Working Group at the bottom of the application.

Nancy Snow
Collaborative on Health and the Environment

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

[Forward email](#)

✉ [SafeUnsubscribe®](#)

Email Marketing by



Collaborative on Health and the Environment | P.O. Box 316 | Bolinas | CA | 94924