



# Learning and Developmental Disabilities Initiative

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



**Biweekly Bulletin December 1, 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](http://www.healthandenvironment.org/working_groups/learning/r/bulletins)

## LDDI Highlights

### [2010: Environmental Health Highlights of the Year, December 8th.](#)

For our last CHE partner call of the year, we decided to invite three national leaders to highlight what they think have been the top 2 or 3 research studies, reports, policy actions, seminal events, etc. in environmental health and justice in 2010 -- and why. We would also like to invite YOU to send in your thoughts on what have been prominent highlights or turning points (positive or challenging) during this past year and why. To offer your contributions, [visit the CHE blog](#).

### **AAIDD Research and Science Teleconference December 7th**

"Cross-sectional Evaluation of Formaldehyde Levels of Portable Classrooms (= 3 years old) and Traditional Classrooms-Georgia, 2009 Pilot Study" will be presented by Isabela C. Ribeiro, PhD. This presentation will describe the results of a pilot investigation conducted to assess formaldehyde levels and potential factors that could affect formaldehyde levels in portable and traditional classrooms in use in one school district in Georgia. See event #2 below for more information.

### **CANCELED: Mental Health Working Group Meeting**

The meeting of the CHE Mental Health Working Group that had been scheduled for Friday December 3, 2010, has been canceled. Please [contact CHE](#) for more information.

### **New Members**

The Learning and Developmental Disabilities Initiative welcomes these new members:

- Susan Brinchman, La Mesa, California
- Terry Siemens, Sacramento, California

## Announcements

*A daily news feed with articles and announcements is available on CHE's website:*

<http://www.healthandenvironment.org/news/announce>.

### [Holiday shopping guide for greener electronics.](#)

The 2010 Holiday Shopping Guide for Finding Greener Electronics (PDF), compiled by the Center for Environmental Health, works to tie all the other studies together into one, easily readable chart.

### [CDC unveils Learning Connection Website.](#)

Many environmental health offerings are there, along with material about infectious diseases, chronic diseases, food safety, injury and violence prevention, epidemiology,

and more. Environmental Protection.

**[EPA calls for nominations for 2011 Presidential Green Chemistry Challenge Awards.](#)**

This year the agency is encouraging nominations for the design of safer and more sustainable chemicals, processes, and products that will protect the public, particularly children and other sensitive populations, from exposure to harmful chemicals.

**[EPA to expand chemicals testing for endocrine disruption.](#)**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has identified a list of 134 chemicals that will be screened for their potential to disrupt the endocrine system.

**[EPA releases new draft voluntary guidelines for selecting safe school locations.](#)**

Major investments in our children's schools can be compromised if environmental hazards are not fully understood prior to selecting a school site.

**[Call for papers: Health Affairs.](#)**

Health Affairs journal's theme issue "Health and the Environment" will be published in May 2011. Papers are invited; submissions are due December 15th.

**[Job opening: Salt Lake City, Utah.](#)**

The State of Utah has an opening for an assessment manager, This position, in collaboration with the Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the US Environmental Protection Agency directs, manages, and supervises the Site-Specific Health Hazards Assessment cooperative agreement and the National Toxic Substances Incidence Program. Applications are due December 5th.

## Upcoming Events

**Online Calendar.** These and more upcoming events are listed in a searchable calendar: <http://www.healthandenvironment.org/cgi-bin/searchevents.cgi> The calendar now lists deadlines for funding proposals and conference abstracts.

**1) Linking Early Exposures to Late Effects: New Science, Tools and Modes of Action**

Sunday through Tuesday December 5 - 7, 2010  
Montreal, Quebec Canada  
at Delta Centre-Ville, 777 University

Sponsor: Society of Toxicology of Canada

On the first day, "Toxicology and the Developmental Origins of Adult Health and Disease" will examine evidence that toxicant exposure during fetal development can contribute to the development of diseases that are generally seen in adulthood including obesity, hypertension, Type 2 diabetes and effects on immune function. On day 2 in "The role of MicroRNA in Toxicity", we will examine the growing evidence that noncoding RNA may play a very significant role in mediating toxic responses in a wide variety of tissues. Our final session, "Novel Screening Methods in Reproductive and Developmental Toxicology", will critically examine the value of emerging tools for rapid screening for reproductive and developmental toxicology for predicting chemical hazards.

Price: see the [Registration form](#)

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: [stcsecretariat@mcgill.ca](mailto:stcsecretariat@mcgill.ca)

**2) Cross-sectional Evaluation of Formaldehyde Levels of Portable Classrooms (= 3 years old) and Traditional Classrooms - Georgia, 2009 Pilot Study**

Tuesday December 7, 2010  
2:00 - 3:00 p.m. Eastern time

Sponsor: American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities  
Environmental Health Initiative

High levels of formaldehyde measured in FEMA-supplied trailers and mobile homes used in recent hurricane events have prompted similar assessments in portable classrooms (350,000 in use in US), where school-aged children spend significant time in the course of a day. This presentation will describe the results of a pilot investigation conducted to assess formaldehyde levels and potential factors that could affect formaldehyde levels in portable and traditional classrooms in use in one school district in Georgia. Formaldehyde levels ranged from 7-36 ppb. In both traditional and portable classrooms, overnight formaldehyde median levels were higher than day median levels. Levels were slightly higher in traditional than in portable classrooms. This study did not identify levels of formaldehyde that are associated with adverse health effects. Isabela C. Ribeiro, PhD, will be the presenter. This presentation is open to the public.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Laura Abulafia, [Laura@aaidd.org](mailto:Laura@aaidd.org)

### **3) Scientific Workshop: Exploring the Environmental Causes of Autism and Other Learning Disabilities**

Wednesday December 8, 2010

Registration begins at 8:30 a.m.

New York, New York

at the New York Academy of Medicine

Sponsor: Mount Sinai Children's Environmental Health Center

Featured speakers include Philip J. Landrigan, MD, MSC; Linda S. Birnbaum, PhD, DABT, ATS; Marion J. Balsam, MD; and others.

Price: unknown

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: [katherine.southwick@mssm.edu](mailto:katherine.southwick@mssm.edu)

### **4) Phone Seminar - Robin Guenther, Architect and Designer, Sustainable Health Leader, Perkins+Will**

Wednesday December 8, 2010

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

Sponsor: Great Lakes Green Chemistry Network

"Linking Public Health, Regenerative Design, and Sustainability." As a Principal at Perkins+Will and a national leader in the conversation linking public health, regenerative design and sustainability, Robin Guenther synthesizes newly developing ideas and diverse groups to further the values she promotes. Robin is particularly skilled at achieving consensus for sustainable ideas, a quality valued by clients as well as the many advocacy groups with whom she works. Her work has helped shape healthier, more welcoming facilities for nearly every medical institution in New York City. Robin's many accomplishments include the second LEED™-certified healthcare project in the world, the Discovery Center. She was the principal author of the *Green Guide for Health Care*, the most commonly used method of tracking sustainability in health care spaces today. Her book, *Sustainable Healthcare Architecture*, was released in 2008, and she is currently working with the US Green Building Council to create the *LEED™ for Healthcare Reference Guide*. Robin was the recipient of the 2005 Changemaker Award from The Center for Health Design for her efforts in improving and supporting the environment.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

### **5) Health Impacts of Coal Symposium**

Wednesday December 8, 2010

6:00 - 7:30 p.m.

Seattle, Washington

Sponsor: Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility, Sierra Club and Earth Justice

This training for health professionals on the health impacts of coal pollution and how to advocate for a coal-free Washington. Speakers will be Alexander M. Hamling, MD, pediatrician at Seattle Children's Hospital; Doug Howell, senior representative with the Sierra Club Coal-Free Northwest Campaign; and Cherie Eicholz, executive director of Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility.

Price: unknown

Contact: Cara, 631-241-0483 or [DolanCara@gmail.com](mailto:DolanCara@gmail.com)

### **6) Food for Thought: Nutritional Approaches to ADHD and Autism**

Wednesday December 8, 2010

6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Rockville, Maryland

at TLC's Katherine Thomas School, 9975 Medical Center Drive

Sponsor: The Treatment and Learning Centers

Dr. Compart is a developmental pediatrician who treats children with a variety of behavioral and developmental disorders, with a special interest in treating children with autism spectrum disorders. She performs comprehensive assessments and provides ongoing treatment, combining both traditional and complementary medicine approaches in treating these disorders. In presenting Food for Thought: Nutritional Approaches to ADHD and Autism, Dr. Compart will discuss how children with autism and ADHD often have biochemical differences and nutritional deficiencies which can affect brain function. Dr. Compart will address common dietary, nutritional and biochemical factors which can be identified and modified to help improve brain function and potentially decrease symptoms of ADHD and autism.

Price: \$10 advance registration/\$15 at the door

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Bonnie Lawhorn, 301-424-5200 x138 or [blawhorn@ttlc.org](mailto:blawhorn@ttlc.org)

### **7) Atmospheric Toxics Webinar Series: PBT Measurement Techniques**

Wednesday December 15, 2010

10:00 a.m. - noon Eastern time

Sponsor: Great Lakes Commission

Over the last six years, the Great Lakes Commission (GLC), under funding from the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and in cooperation with the eight Great Lakes states, has awarded research grants dealing with atmospheric toxic pollutants affecting the Great Lakes and their tributary watersheds. Thirty-five research grants have been awarded since 2004 addressing a diverse array of research concerning atmospheric pollutant loadings and movement within the basin and the associated impacts of numerous persistent, bioaccumulative, and toxic (PBT) chemicals on wildlife and human health. A substantial amount of new scientific knowledge has been attained through these research activities. The GLAD webinar series is intended to provide a forum for GLAD Principal Investigators (PIs) to disseminate information on their respective research activities, including specific findings, recommended follow-up actions, and potential public policy actions to foster elimination of PBT threats to the region. Judith Perlinger, PhD, will present "Monitoring techniques and modeling of PBT transport in Lake Superior basin" and Frank Marsik, PhD & Thomas Holsen, PhD, will present "An

Intercomparison Study: Mercury dry deposition measurement techniques."

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: GLC, 734-971-9135

## News and Journal Articles

### [Manganese tied to higher rates of Parkinson's disease.](#)

*Tuesday, November 30, 2010*

A recent study finds that Medicare recipients who live in urban areas with high levels of manganese emissions are about 75 percent more likely to develop Parkinson's disease compared to those in urban areas with lower manganese emissions. Environmental Health News.

### [Smoking during pregnancy affects genes involved in brain development.](#)

*Tuesday, November 30, 2010*

New research from the University of Virginia Health System shows that nicotine use during pregnancy affects genes important in regions of the brain associated with neurobehavioral development. Staunton News Leader, Virginia.

[See other articles about smoking and tobacco: [CDC: Air travelers at risk from secondhand smoke](#); [Tobacco prevention working in the state of Washington](#); [WHO seeks regulation of flavored tobacco](#) and [Global health officials target tobacco additives](#)]

### [The 10 cities with the world's worst air.](#)

*Tuesday, November 30, 2010*

With the latest round of global climate change talks set to begin this week in Cancun, Mexico, the assembled delegates should be thankful they're not meeting in, say, Beijing or New Delhi. Daily Finance.

[See other articles about air quality: [Calif. cars 99% cleaner than in 1960s, but smog levels still high, study says](#); [Air pollution exceeds safety limits in big Asian cities: report](#); [56 religious groups to U.S. Senate: Save the clean air act](#) and [City pollution reports eyed](#)]

### [San Francisco honors nail salons for healthy polish.](#)

*Sunday, November 28, 2010*

San Francisco's first-of-its-kind program to honor toxic-chemical-free nail salons will serve as the base coat upon which many new layers are painted if public health advocates have their way. San Francisco Chronicle, California.

### [African ministers adopt Luanda Commitment, prioritise health, environment issues.](#)

*Sunday, November 28, 2010*

The priorities include provision of safe drinking water; provision of sanitation and hygiene services; management of environmental and health risks related to climate change; sustainable management of forests and wetland and management of water, soil and air pollution as well as biodiversity conservation. Afrique en Ligne.

### [Colorado seeks to regulate medical pot production, but rules are hard to come by.](#)

*Saturday, November 27, 2010*

Colorado is working toward becoming the first state to regulate production of medical marijuana. Regulators say pot consumers deserve to know what they're smoking, and producers should have safety regulations such as pesticide limits for plants destined for human consumption. Associated Press. [See another article about drug regulation: [Lawsuit claims diet pills contain dangerous chemical](#)]

### [Synthetic turf: Study urges tests for fake grass.](#)

*Saturday, November 27, 2010*

The stuff in synthetic turf that helps make it green needs routine monitoring for lead hazards and guidelines to assess them, a UNLV professor and six colleagues concluded after a recent study. Las Vegas Review Journal.

### **[Buckets of green for painters.](#)**

*Thursday, November 25, 2010*

Every occupation has its hazards and it seems as if painters who work indoors face some of the most serious health and safety problems, But by choosing paint low in volatile organic compounds, known as VOCs, painters can avoid many health problems caused by vapors from chemicals used to make paint. Houston Chronicle, Texas.

### **[Science and the safety of BPA part 1: Of mice and men.](#)**

*Wednesday, November 24, 2010*

New evidence comparing how mice, monkeys and humans metabolise BPA suggests that not only does it take longer for the body to excrete it than EU regulators currently believe, human exposure to BPA may also be much higher than currently thought, and non-dietary exposure more important than currently suspected. Health & Environment.

[See other articles about BPA: [Feinstein pushes BPA restrictions in food safety bill](#); [Tests show cancer-causing chemical in some canned foods](#); [The impact of bisphenol A and triclosan on immune parameters in the US population, NHANES 2003-2006](#); [A warning by key researcher on risks of BPA in our lives](#) and [EU bans bisphenol A chemical from babies' bottles](#)]

### **[Pennsylvania gas drillers dumping radioactive waste in New York.](#)**

*Wednesday, November 24, 2010*

How can a landfill's private operators get clearance from regulators to become a regional dump for radioactive drilling wastes? The short answer: Provide the revenue-hungry county a rich payout, exploit a legal loophole, and presto, it's a done deal. Washington DC Bureau, District of Columbia.

[See other articles about contaminated sites: [Voices of acid mine drainage](#); [CSG miners banned from toxic chemicals](#); [Gone, but not forgotten](#); [Newfield dispute just won't go away](#); [No conclusion on Lafarge and BP oil well capped, but trauma still flowing](#)]

### **[Teach your children to be wary of cellphones: Expert.](#)**

*Wednesday, November 24, 2010*

Devra Davis, one of the foremost critics of the phone-making industry, believes cellphone radiation is a pending public health crisis that, if not checked, will see a surge in brain cancers within the next decade. Ottawa Citizen, Ontario.

[See other articles about cell phones and related electronics: [Association between exposure to radiofrequency electromagnetic fields assessed by dosimetry and acute symptoms in children and adolescents: a population based cross-sectional study](#) and [Electrosensitivity: Is your mobile really a threat to your health?](#)]

### **[International research study focuses on human health effects of 'e-waste.'](#)**

*Tuesday, November 23, 2010*

A new international population study, led by the University of Cincinnati, will be the first to examine the human developmental effects of environmental exposure to the complex metal mixture found in electronic waste (e-waste). Medical News Today.

[See related articles: [Living off toxic trash in the Philippines](#), [Auctions launder e-waste](#) and [California recyclers find market for toxic trash](#)]

### **[Allotment gardening and health: a comparative study among allotment gardeners and their neighbors without an allotment.](#)**

*Tuesday, November 23, 2010*

These findings are consistent with the notion that having an allotment garden may promote an active life-style and contribute to healthy aging. Environmental Health.

### **[California aims to remove toxins in products.](#)**

*Monday, November 22, 2010*

It's almost unthinkable now that environmentalists and manufacturers once stood together as Gov. Schwarzenegger signed a bill making California the first state to regulate toxic chemicals in consumer products. Two years later, with regulations set to take effect in January, the longtime foes are increasingly at odds. Associated Press.



### **Environmental justice issues take center stage.**

*Monday, November 22, 2010*

The controversy over toxic coal ash waste in one corner of Prince George's County -- and fights for greater coal ash regulation from Alabama to Puerto Rico -- highlights an issue that has been around for decades and is again in the spotlight: environmental justice. Washington Post.

### **Growing up digital, wired for distraction.**

*Sunday, November 21, 2010*

The risk, they say, is that developing brains can become more easily habituated than adult brains to constantly switching tasks -- and less able to sustain attention. New York Times.

### **New era, new curriculum.**

*Sunday, November 21, 2010*

In laboratories across the country chemists are trying to come up with new formulas to make safer products. And students at many universities are learning how to do it. It's called green chemistry. Living On Earth.

### **Byron Williams: Curiosity cornerstone of activist's environmental work.**

*Sunday, November 21, 2010*

West Oakland, where Margaret Gordon lives, is a community that faces five times more toxic pollution per person than other residents of Oakland. San Jose Mercury News, California.

### **Genes marked by stress make grandchildren mentally ill.**

*Saturday, November 20, 2010*

A little thing called methylation means that parental neglect, or eating a poor diet, could lead to depression or schizophrenia two generations later. New Scientist.

[See other articles about diet and health: [Chronic high cholesterol diet produces brain damage](#) and [Effects of a low-glycemic load diet in overweight and obese pregnant women: a pilot randomized controlled trial](#)]

### **Different reaction patterns of dopamine content to prenatal exposure to chlorpyrifos in different periods.**

*Friday, November 19, 2010*

These results suggest that the two key brain regions involved in learning and memory, the cerebral cortex and hippocampus, react differently to CPF exposure in different prenatal periods. Journal of Applied Toxicology.

[See other articles about pesticides: [Kerala seeks ban on toxic pesticide](#); [Arugula operation in Shady Valley the focus of pesticide investigation](#); [NSTAR herbicide use still concerns watchdogs](#); [Strawberry pesticide targeted by environmentalists, farmworkers](#) and [Government tackles harmful pesticide issue](#)]

### **New report: Toxic Toys R Us.**

*Friday, November 19, 2010*

Testing conducted on toys purchased at Toys R Us using a portable X-Ray Fluorescence (XRF) analyzer by the Ecology Center in Ann Arbor, MI shows that 72.5% of all toys/children's products tested contained high levels of chlorine, indicating they were likely made of PVC.

[See other articles about toxic children's products: [Before you buy that train set, do your homework](#); [Cadmium, lead found in drinking glasses](#); [Dangerous toys](#); [Tips to keep kids safe](#); [PIRG releases latest on toxic toys](#) and [Report warns of toys posing choking hazards, chemicals](#)]

### **Government insists full-body scanners are safe.**

*Friday, November 19, 2010*

As the government rolls out hundreds more full-body scanners at airports just in time for crowds of holiday travelers, it is working to reassure the public that the machines are safe. Associated Press.

*[See other articles about radiation risks: [The downside of a cancer study extolling CT scans](#); [PG&E considers SmartMeter compromise](#); [Hospitals, doctors and patients try to cut radiation from CT scans](#); [Radiation worries for children in dentists' chairs](#); [Veterans' long battle for nuclear tests' compensation](#); [Radiation risk from flying dwarfs body scanners](#); [PUC consumer division pushes for SmartMeter health probe](#); [SmartMeter revolt persists](#); [Experts assess health risks of airport full-body scanners](#) and [CT scan use rising in emergency rooms, study says](#)]*

### **FDA opens investigation into reusable grocery bags.**

Friday, November 19, 2010

The U.S. FDA has opened an official probe into reusable grocery bags, following a Tampa Tribune report that found some highly decorated bags contained elevated levels of lead. Mobile WKRG, Alabama.

### **Planned groundwater treatment plant will remove TCE from wells.**

Wednesday, November 17, 2010

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is building a treatment plant to help clean up contaminated groundwater. Cheyenne Tribune-Eagle, Wyoming.

*[See other articles about water contamination: [Regulators require replacement for contaminated water](#); [Barstow water contaminated with perchlorate](#); [Pregnant women, children most likely to be impacted by perchlorates](#); [Rural residents say natural gas drilling has tainted their drinking water](#); [Drinking in perils around us](#) and [Copper poisoning linked to plastic water tanks](#)]*

### **Household cleaners could be hazardous.**

Wednesday, November 17, 2010

Scientists at the University of Washington, Battelle Memorial Institute and the U.S. EPA tested 25 household consumer products. All of the household cleaning supplies contained volatile organic compounds, which can be hazardous and can also affect indoor air quality Springfield WWLP TV, Massachusetts.

*[See related articles: [Household cleaners will be reformulated to clean up California smog](#) and [Being too clean hazardous to health](#)]*

### **Could your seafood contain toxic chemicals?**

Wednesday, November 17, 2010

When you think of tainted seafood, you may think of the Gulf oil spill. But 80 percent of the fish and shrimp Americans eat comes from overseas and some of that seafood may contain toxic chemicals. Today Show.

*[See other articles about food: [The quest to put some bite into foreign food inspections](#); [Greens might not be that healthy that after all](#); [The big challenge in making farmed shrimp safe to eat](#) and [Beware E. coli when drinking raw milk: study](#)]*

### **UC Berkeley gets \$16.5 million for three children's environmental health centers.**

Wednesday, November 17, 2010

Researchers at the University of California, Berkeley's School of Public Health are getting \$16.5 million to support three research centers as part of a federal initiative to examine the environmental factors influencing children's health. UC Berkeley News.

### **Major U.S. cities violate new EPA lead standards.**

Wednesday, November 17, 2010

Sixteen areas, including Los Angeles, Tampa and Cleveland, have unhealthful amounts of lead in the air that violate national standards, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced Tuesday. Scientific American.

*[See other articles and announcements about lead: [Wind whisks lead across the Pacific Ocean to California](#); [EPA seeks small businesses input on exterior lead paint for public and commercial buildings](#); [Lead in bags, other products result of global economy](#); [EPA to clean up around schools in 'Old Lead Belt'](#); [New EPA regulations take aim at lead paint](#); [Getting the lead out](#) and [Canada toughens limits on lead in consumer products](#)]*



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](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**

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