



Learning and Developmental Disabilities Initiative

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



Biweekly Bulletin February 24, 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

Mind, Disrupted Biomonitoring Report

We have had a significant project on our hands, and after many months of planning for a major release and Hill Briefing, I can enthusiastically say that we did it!

If you haven't already done so, please visit the project website at www.minddisrupted.org; there you can download the full report (PDF) or just view the website which breaks down the report into different web pages. You can also listen to the Congressional hearing on toxic chemicals, along with the report press release teleconference from a couple weeks ago.

Last week, LDDI and colleagues from Safer Chemicals, Healthy Families (SCHF) geared up for a Hill briefing on the report. The first major event was on Wednesday at the Learning Disabilities Association of America (LDA) annual meeting in Baltimore. Maureen Swanson from LDA's Healthy Children Project hosted an incredibly successful symposium on the biomonitoring project at her meeting. Speakers included biomonitored participants Vernell Jessie (advocate from Texas), Larry Silver (LDA past president and health professional), Stephen Boese (LDA New York State), and Laura Abulafia (AAIDD and LDDI). After the panel on biomonitoring, we had a range of important speakers including Dr. Ted Schettler (project physician). In attendance were Joyce Martin from AAIDD, Judy Robinson from SCHF, and many more leaders in our organizations and in the field.

On Thursday last week, most of us in DC participated in strategic Hill visits, where we spoke with House Representatives from Texas, Ohio, Iowa, Vermont, Michigan, California, Louisiana, New York, and Washington. In addition, Ellie Collinson and Katharine Huffman from the Raben Group spoke about advocacy and messaging to policymakers at the LDA meeting back in Baltimore.

And of course, on Friday we held our Hill briefing, which is the event we had all been waiting for these past months. It was incredibly well-attended, with many Congressional staffers present. Speakers at the briefing included Maureen Swanson (LDA), Dr. Tom Zoeller, and Jeff Sell (Autism Society). Moderating the panel was Andy Igrejas from Safer Chemicals, Healthy Families.

Now that we have accomplished some very impressive goals, we still have work to do. Ongoing outreach will be essential for this work. Please stay tuned in as we continue our follow up activities and let me know if you have ideas for outreach as well!

~Laura Abulafia, laura@aaidd.org

Biomonitoring Study Resource

In response to the release of LDDI's body burden/biomonitoring report and several other recent reports, the [Biomonitoring Reports web page](#) on the LDDI website has been updated, compiling reports to give visitors easy access.

Teleconference March 9th

The American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) Environmental Health Initiative Teleconference Series presents "Poisoned For Profit: The toxic assault on our children and why it continues" with Alice Shabecoff on Tuesday March 9th from 2:00 - 3:00 p.m. Eastern time. For more information, see event #3 below or visit www.aidd.org/ehi.

Educational Pamphlet

AAIDD has also released an educational pamphlet for expectant moms or women of childbearing age, which has now been translated into Spanish. For this resource, please visit [EHI's website](#).

Mental Health Guide for Healthcare Providers

The Mental Health working group has released an educational brochure on "Mental Health Effects Arising from Pesticide Exposure: A Guide for Healthcare Providers and Mental Health Practitioners." To download the brochure, visit the [Mental Health Working Group 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: Pesticides: Draft Guidance for Pesticide Registrants on Pesticide Drift Labeling.](#)

US Environmental Protection Agency has proposed guidance for new pesticide labeling to reduce off-target spray and dust drift in a draft Pesticide Registration (PR) Notice. The new instructions, when implemented, will improve the clarity and consistency of pesticide labels and help prevent harm from spray drift.

[EPA increases transparency of proposed regulations.](#)

The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is launching a new website giving the public additional opportunity to participate in the agency's rulemaking process. The online Rulemaking Gateway serves as a portal to EPA's priority rules, providing citizens with earlier and more concise information about agency regulations. It also allows users to search for EPA rules that relate to specific interests, including impacts on small business; children's health; environmental justice; and state, local and tribal government.

[Final rule reduces air toxics from existing stationary diesel engines.](#)

The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is setting the first standards that will reduce emissions of formaldehyde, benzene, acrolein and other toxic air pollutants from certain stationary diesel engines. These pollutants are known or suspected to cause cancer or other serious health problems and environmental damage.

[Updated guide: Grow Smart, Grow Safe.](#)

The sixth edition of this guide includes environmental and health ratings of 600 pesticides, fertilizers and soil amendments, offering a comprehensive guide to lawn and garden products.

[Call for proposals: Environmental Health Sciences Core Center Grants.](#)

The National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) invites applications from qualified institutions for support of Environmental Health Sciences (EHS) Core Centers. These Centers are designed to establish innovative programs of excellence in the field of environmental health sciences by providing scientific and programmatic support for promising investigators and areas of research. Letters of intent are due March 1st.

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

Monday and Tuesday, March 1 - 2, 2010
New Orleans, Louisiana

Sponsor: Alliance for Healthy Homes in partnership with NeighborWorks Training Institute

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: [NeighborWorks Training Institute](#)

2) Learning Disabilities: What Parents and Child Care Professionals Need to Know

Thursday March 4, 2010

6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Paterson, New Jersey

at 4Cs of Passaic County, Two Market Street, Suite 300

Sponsor: 4Cs of Passaic County

All are welcome. Child-care providers will receive two professional development credits for attending.

Price: free

Contact: Sue Richards, CCHCC Child Care Health Consultant Coordinator, 973-981-0986 or 973-684-1904 ext.270

3) Poisoned For Profit: The Toxic Assault on Our Children and Why It Continues

Tuesday March 9, 2010

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

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

Alice Shabecoff's webinar presentation will begin with an overview of the epidemic of chronic childhood illnesses among American children today and what is now known about the role toxics, from man-made chemicals and heavy metals to nuclear waste, play in triggering that epidemic. She will offer a layman's understanding of a few of most recent scientific breakthroughs - gene expression, polymorphisms, and endocrine disruption - that allow us to assert that there's a cause-and-effect connection. The major part of the talk will focus on the topic of corporate America's knowing acts of repeated pollution, enabled by their network of hired scientists, lawyers, p.r. professionals and legislators. Alice hopes to engage in a give-and-take discussion of what we can all do to counteract the power of polluters. Registration is required: [open the registration page](#).

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Laura Abulafia, Laura@aaidd.org

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

Monday March 15, 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) California's Toxics Information Clearinghouse: Scientific Approaches to Implementation

Monday and Tuesday, March 15 - 16, 2010

Sacramento, California

at the Cal/EPA building, 1001 I Street

Sponsor: UCLA Law and Environmental Health Sustainable Technology Policy Program, the UC Berkeley Center for Green Chemistry, and the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), with primary funding from the UC Toxic Substances Research and Teaching Program

The first of two workshops, this will focus on indicators for human health hazards in three sessions: 1) state of the science on identifying chemical hazards; 2) human health hazard indicators for cancer, developmental neurotoxicity and endocrine disruption; and 3) moving forward with human health hazard indicators. The second workshop will be May 12 - 13th in Berkeley.

Price: unknown

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Sara Hoover of OEHHA, shoover@oehha.ca.gov

News and Journal Articles

[Childhood poverty can alter kids' brains.](#)

Tuesday, February 23, 2010

Living in poverty can shape the neurobiology of a developing child "in powerful ways", affecting children's behaviour, health and how well they do later in life, a study presented here on Sunday shows. Agence France-Presse.

[See related articles: [In sickness and in health](#) and [Study reveals poverty, poor facilities make Bronx the unhealthiest county in New York](#)]

[The true cost of tobacco.](#)

Tuesday, February 23, 2010

Researchers find that poor smokers' children are the victims of the habit: Their nutrition takes a hit when their parents divert precious resources to pay for tobacco. Miller-McCune.

[Omega-3, vitamins, minerals may reduce aggressive behaviour.](#)

Tuesday, February 23, 2010

Supplements of omega-3s, vitamins and minerals for prisoners may reduce the number of violent and aggressive episodes in prisoners, according to a new study from The Netherlands. NutraIngredients-USA.com.

[Using systematic reviews and meta-analyses to support regulatory decision-](#)

[making for neurotoxicants: Lessons learned from a case study of PCBs.](#)

Monday, February 22, 2010

Our findings add support to previous calls for establishing consensus standards for the conduct, analysis and reporting of epidemiologic studies in general, and for those evaluating the effects of potential neurotoxic exposures in particular. Environmental Health Perspectives.

[Law slows efforts to control chemical used by dry cleaners.](#)

Monday, February 22, 2010

For dry cleaning, nothing gets stains out like perchloroethylene. But for decades, officials at the U.S. EPA have been studying the chemical as a cancer threat. That points to an even-bigger problem - a federal law that keeps the government from protecting people from dangerous chemicals. Columbus Dispatch, Ohio.

[Toxic electronic waste poses increasing risk.](#)

Monday, February 22, 2010

Developing countries face increasing environmental and health hazards from electronic waste unless toxic materials are collected and recycled properly, according to a United Nations report released on Monday. Deutsche Presse-Agentur, Germany.

[See a related article: [UN conference to tackle growing problem of 'e-waste'](#)]

[Scientists vacuum up the data on dust.](#)

Saturday, February 20, 2010

Most public health focus has been on particulates from human sources, such as from combustion of fossil fuels, but there is increasing attention to potential health effects from dust from such sources as volcanic ash or of smoke and ash from wildfires. Associated Press.

[Years later, MTBE still a danger to water supply.](#)

Friday, February 19, 2010

The additive MTBE was supposed to help air pollution by making gasoline burn cleaner in our cars, but it fouled water supplies across the state. Years after it was banned, we are still feeling the effects. San Francisco KGO TV, California.

[Glaxo to halt production of Poligrip with zinc.](#)

Friday, February 19, 2010

The maker of Poligrip denture cream will stop making formulas containing zinc amid lawsuits claiming years of excessive use caused neurological damage and blood problems in consumers, allegedly crippling some. Associated Press.

[Mark Leno bill would require radiation labels for cell phones.](#)

Friday, February 19, 2010

Because of emerging international health studies, Sen. Leno has introduced a bill that would require all cell phones sold in California to include information about their radiation emissions on sales boxes, instructional materials and model displays in stores.

Sacramento Bee, California.

[See a related article: [Not exactly a ringing endorsement](#)]

[Use of emerging science and technologies to explore epigenetic mechanisms underlying the developmental basis for disease.](#)

Thursday, February 18, 2010

On July 30 - 31, 2009, the National Academies Standing Committee on the Use of Emerging Science for Environmental Health Decisions held a public workshop to further understanding of the implications of epigenetic effects on public health and of the research that would be most important for efforts to inform public health leaders about epigenetic effects of chemicals. Emerging Science for Environmental Health Decisions.

[Consumer agency tells industry to put safety first.](#)

Thursday, February 18, 2010

One of the nation's top safety officials is delivering a stern warning to the makers of toys, cribs and other children's products, telling them to put safety first -- or face potential fines, lawsuits or other actions. Associated Press.

[Grave impact of US banned weapons use on Iraqis.](#)

Wednesday, February 17, 2010

Experts say that the use of chemical weapons during the war on Iraq will bring about serious consequences in the future, as the used bombs also contained radioactive materials that remain in the soil for decades. Doha Islam Online, Qatar.

[Report compares health county-by-county.](#)

Wednesday, February 17, 2010

For the first time, a new report reveals how counties across America stack up when it comes to health. Today, whether you live in Malibu or Atlanta, you can learn if your community is holding its own in health. USA Today.

[See related articles: [Chronic health conditions increasing in children, study finds](#) and [Immigrants struggle with declining health](#)]

[Study finds C8 in wide variety of foods.](#)

Wednesday, February 17, 2010

Researchers have found low levels of the toxic chemical C8 [also known as perfluorooctanoic acid or PFOA] in a wide variety of foods, ranging from hamburgers and bacon to tilapia, olive oil and peanut butter, according to a new scientific paper. Charleston Gazette, West Virginia.

[The case against plastics and BPA.](#)

Tuesday, February 16, 2010

The future of certain plastics isn't looking so bright thanks to BPA (or bisphenol-A), a chemical that seeps out of some plastic products and ends up in us. A growing number of studies is raising health concerns. Miami Herald, Florida.

[See related articles: [Bans sought for chemical BPA in baby, toddler products](#); [Assembly backs limits on BPA in baby bottles](#); [Oregon Senate shoots down ban on BPA in baby bottles, sippy cups](#); [Md. hearing held to ban BPA in baby products](#); [Flawed experimental design reveals the need for guidelines requiring appropriate positive controls in endocrine disruption research](#) and [Alternatives to BPA containers not easy for U.S. foodmakers to find, plus guidance from the Food and Drug Administration: Update on bisphenol A for use in food contact applications: January 2010](#)]

[Human testing at heart of debate over U.S. toxics law.](#)

Tuesday, February 16, 2010

Scientific advances that have made it possible to detect the tiniest traces of chemicals in the human body and the environment are shaping efforts to modernize U.S. chemical policies and regulations. Greenwire.

[See related articles: [Vermonters surprised by chemicals found in their bodies](#) and [Study: Bay Area girls have higher chemical levels than others](#)]

[Project to reduce mercury in lakes gets good reviews.](#)

Tuesday, February 16, 2010

While scientists might not know why a popular fishing spot is so polluted, they think they might have a means of dramatically reducing the danger levels. Salt Lake Tribune, Utah.

[See related articles: [Mackenzie River's fish contaminated with dangerous toxins: Scientists, Too much mercury in canned tuna -- or is there?](#) and [Mercury on the loose](#)]

[51 pc schoolkids in metros at high risk of lead poisoning.](#)

Tuesday, February 16, 2010

Sudden decline in IQ levels of children and unexplained retardation or hyperactivity among them can now be traced to unacceptably high levels of lead in their blood-sugar levels. Chandigarh Tribune, India.

[Wanted: Volunteers, all pregnant.](#)

Tuesday, February 16, 2010

Authorized by Congress in 2000, the National Children's Study began last January. With several hundred participants so far, it aims to enroll 100,000 pregnant women in 105 counties, then monitor their babies until they turn 21. New York Times.

[Anger fuels water-fluoridation debate in Watsonville.](#)

Monday, February 15, 2010

Suspicion of fluoridation comes from the right and the left. Some see it as a dangerous erosion of liberty. Others believe it's an underhanded way for businesses to get rid of industrial waste. Los Angeles Times, California.

[New safety rules for school lunches due by July.](#)

Monday, February 15, 2010

By this summer, the U.S. Department of Agriculture will have launched its most sweeping safety reforms in a decade for the food it buys for school lunches. USA Today.

[Water-well worries run deep.](#)

Sunday, February 14, 2010

More than 450 private wells fall within a quarter mile of at least one of almost 400 sites in Brevard County where underground tanks or piping once leaked petroleum -- and left behind chemicals linked to increased risk of cancer and birth defects. Melbourne Florida Today, Florida.

[Electromagnetic field studies reach different conclusions.](#)

Sunday, February 14, 2010

How could respectable scientists armed with the same data on electromagnetic fields end up on opposite sides of the spectrum? The studies themselves are largely to blame. Some suggest a link between EMF and health problems, and some don't. Los Angeles Times, California.

[See a related article: [On different wavelengths over EMFs](#)]

[Underactive thyroid linked to pesticide exposure.](#)

Friday, February 12, 2010

Exposure to certain types of pesticides could up the risk of thyroid disease in women, according to a new study of thousands of women married to licensed pesticide applicators. Reuters.

[See related articles: [Weed killer in the crosshairs](#), [Experts warn that any type of pesticide can be dangerous](#), [Study: Salinas Valley house dust carries pesticides](#), [Pesticide use and cutaneous melanoma in pesticide applicators in the Agricultural Health Study](#), [Pesticides to blame for wave of Parkinson's in Israeli Arab town](#), [Researchers say toxic pesticides poisoning Indonesia's farmers](#)]

[Researchers warn of arsenic.](#)

Friday, February 12, 2010

About 60 percent of the state relies on water from public sources, which is tested and treated for arsenic under mandate by the federal government. The other 40 percent - as many as 250,000 private wells in New Hampshire - are unregulated and may contain unsafe levels of arsenic, a carcinogen, studies show. Concord Monitor, New Hampshire.

[Toxicologists say methyl iodide poses health risks.](#)

Friday, February 12, 2010

An independent panel of toxicologists, asked by state regulators to assess the potential risks of a controversial new soil fumigant called methyl iodide, being considered as a replacement for ozone-damaging methyl bromide, say it presents "significant health risks." Ventura County Star, California.

[Even if you're careful, drugs can end up in water.](#)

Thursday, February 11, 2010

The federal government advises throwing most unused or expired medications into the trash instead of down the drain, but they can end up in the water anyway, a study from Maine suggests. Associated Press.

[Cleaning naturally improves indoor air quality.](#)

Thursday, February 11, 2010

While commercial cleaning products present a bevy of environmental health hazards, there are plenty of natural cleaning solutions that will keep you and your family healthy and squeaky-clean. San Mateo Daily Journal, California.

[Bipartisan effort to improve air quality.](#)

Thursday, February 11, 2010

A bipartisan group of senators has introduced a bill that would sidestep the stalled climate debate on carbon emissions and reduce other harmful gases by large margins in the next few years. Scripps Howard News Service.

[Spent ammo's harm to environment is debated.](#)

Thursday, February 11, 2010

Lead in paint, gasoline and drinking water is prohibited as dangerous for health and the environment. But tons of lead from ammunition can accumulate on the ground over years. No federal law addresses lead containment at outdoor shooting ranges. Nashville Tennessean, Tennessee.

[See related articles: [Former ammunition employees suffer health effects](#) and [New investigation launched at CAAP](#)]

[Mom's anemia may raise schizophrenia risk in offspring.](#)

Thursday, February 11, 2010

Doctors have long recommended iron supplements for the support of a healthy pregnancy, but new research adds even more weight to the sage advice: By increasing her iron intake, a pregnant woman may also decrease her baby's risk of schizophrenia later in life. Reuters Health.

[See a related article about problems associated with too much iron: [Blood pressure, "rich" blood affect baby's growth](#)]

[Do PCBs at local schools pose a health risk?](#)

Thursday, February 11, 2010

Scientific research shows that PCBs seep into the environment even when hiding undisturbed in window caulking as they were in some local schools. Bronx Riverdale Press, New York.

[Perfluorinated compounds, polychlorinated biphenyl, and organochlorine pesticide contamination in composite food samples from Dallas, Texas.](#)

Wednesday, February 10, 2010

Despite product bans, POPs were found in U.S. food and mixtures of these chemicals are consumed by the American public at varying levels. Environmental Health Perspectives.

[Despite billions spent on cleanup, Hanford won't be clean for thousands of years.](#)

Wednesday, February 10, 2010

Some radioactive contaminants at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation will threaten the Columbia River for thousands of years, a new analysis projects, despite the multi-billion dollar cleanup efforts by the federal government. Portland Oregonian, Oregon.

[Target pulls Valentine's toys over lead concerns.](#)

Wednesday, February 10, 2010

Target Corp. said Tuesday it was pulling its Valentine's Day "Message Bears" from store shelves after California's attorney general raised concerns that the toys have illegal levels of lead. Associated Press.

[F.D.A. to increase oversight of medical radiation.](#)

Wednesday, February 10, 2010

The F.D.A. said Tuesday that it would take steps to more stringently regulate three of the most potent forms of medical radiation, including increasingly popular CT scans, some of which deliver the radiation equivalent of 400 chest X-rays. New York Times.

[See a related article: [CT scan rules developed to cut kids' exposure to unnecessary radiation](#)]

[Kids at schools close to busy roads breathe more pollution.](#)

Wednesday, February 10, 2010

Most Salt Lake County kids attend school in areas that aren't terribly close to major roadways. But the 7 percent who do are more exposed to the pollutants linked to asthma, heart problems and a host of other maladies associated with dirty air, says a

new study from the University of Utah. Salt Lake Tribune, Utah.
[See related articles: [Air pollution and mortality in the Canary Islands: a time-series analysis](#), [New Jersey restaurants cooking up pollution along with pizza and hamburgers](#), [Study delay creates alarm over school heaters](#), [Pollution: the biggest killer on Britain's roads](#), [City plans phaseout of 'dirty oil'](#) and [Something in the air](#)]

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

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