

Learning and Developmental Disabilities Initiative

of the Collaborative on Health and the Environment



Biweekly Bulletin April 6, 2011

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

LDDI Highlights

Senate Briefing, April 7th

The American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) and Safer Chemicals are presenting a briefing for the Senate staffer on health effects of chemical exposures. Dr. Tom Zoeller will talk about IDD, and other speakers will talk about reproductive health and cancer. The briefing is scheduled for from 1:30-2:30 on Thursday April 7th. Contact Joyce Martin at AAIDD for more information.

Wretches and Jabberers

This April, the Autism Society and AMC Theatres have teamed up to bring the new film *Wretches & Jabberers* to 40 cities in a special limited release. This ground-breaking documentary, about two men with autism who embark on a global quest to change attitudes about disability, intelligence and communication, highlights the real lives of adults living with autism. This is a huge opportunity to raise awareness about the issues faced by adults with autism and other disabilities today. We appreciate AMC Theatres for providing this very rare opportunity for an independent documentary to have such a long run in large mainstream movie theaters. AMC is generously donating 10% of ticket sales to the Autism Society to commemorate Autism Awareness Month. Learn more about the film or buy presale tickets.

MacNeil PBS Program on Autism

Robert MacNeil is returning to PBS to host a six part television series on autism running April 18-26 during Autism Awareness Month. MacNeil, a reporter for 50 years, has never brought his family into a story until Nick, his six-year-old grandson with autism. MacNeil coproduced the specials with Carin Zucker, who has produced many stories on autism and is the mother of a 16 year old son with autism. The six episodes will air as follows on PBS stations:

- April 18: Nick and Autism as a Whole Body Experience
- April 19: Autism Prevalence
- April 20: Autism Causes
- April 21: Autism Treatment
- April 25: Autism Treatment
- April 26: Autism Policy

Save the date: Healthy Lives, Healthy Minds, June 9th

This AAIDD Environmental Health Initiative workshop follows the successful EHI conference on the environment and the developing brain held in Minnesota December '08. Featured presentations will focus on the science that links environmental exposures and impacts on the developing brain. This workshop is part of AAIDD Annual Meeting June 5-9, 2011, in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Autism Society National Conference, July 6-9, 2011

The Autism Society welcomes all who wish to learn more about autism, network with others affected by autism, and learn the latest on autism and environmental health and public policy to their annual national conference in Orlando, Florida. Child care is available, and Disney World excursions are close by. The conference will feature the third annual science symposium on Saturday July 9th. Leading scientists and advocates will discuss autism and environmental health, the latest research on environmental influences and the developing brain, and policy needs to protect the public.

CHE Calls, April 18th and 20th

Upcoming calls include a request for input from NIEHS (April 18th) and a conversation with the author of *Legally Poisoned: How the Law Puts Us at Risk from Toxicants* (April 20th). Please see events #3 and #4 below for details.

Practice Prevention Column Updates

Recent updates to CHE's Practice Prevention columns will bring new information to parents, caregivers, advocates and others concerned about children's health. New and updated columns and Spanish translations continue to be added to the <u>LDDI website</u>.

Announcements

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

Call for papers: Cumulative Health Risk Assessment.

A special issue of the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health will highlight the new approaches, models, and theories that either have been applied or are under development to assess cumulative health risks from exposure to diverse hazards in the environment. The deadline for manuscript submissions is October 31, 2011.

New county health rankings available.

The County Health Ranking website, of the Mobilizing Action Toward Community Health (MATCH) project, provides access to reports each state, ranking each county within the 50 states according to its health outcomes and the multiple health factors that determine a county's health.

EPA seeks public comment on sediment cleanup options for Boeing Plant 2, one of Duwamish River corridor's most contaminated sites.

The cleanup options offered would either remove (excavate) the sediments and then backfill with clean material, or place a thick cap to isolate the contamination. A public meeting & Open House will be held on April 27, 2011, at the South Park Community Center, 8319 8th Avenue South.

New report: Global Trade Impacts: Addressing the Health, Social, and Environmental Consequences of Moving International Freight Through Our Communities.

The purpose of this report is to: 1) provide an overview of the growth and scale of the freight transportation industries and the U.S. shift from a production to a distribution economy, 2) document examples of organizing and policy approaches that have injected important considerations of health, labor, and community impacts into freight transportation policy and decision-making, and 3) identify new directions so that local and regional communities can better address what is happening in their backyards.

EPA solicits applications for RE-Powering America's Land.

EPA is soliciting applications from states, tribes, regional governments, and communities that are interested in the development of renewable energy on current and formerly contaminated properties. Proposals are due to EPA by May 20th.

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) Rx for Survival: Social Justice and Medical Advocacy

Friday through Sunday, April 8 - 10, 2011 Washington, DC at George Washington University

Sponsor: Physicians for Social Responsibility's student-led division, SPSR

Rx for Survival 2011 seeks to create a unique forum that promotes social responsibility and smart policy from the medical perspective. It seeks to encourage participants to look beyond the traditional realms of their medical or public health professional careers by becoming change makers in both the medical and policy world.

Price: \$30 for students or \$90 for health professionals and the general public Visit the website

2) 3rd Paris Appeal International Congress

Tuesday and Wednesday, April 12 - 13, 2011 Paris, France at UNESCO, 125 avenue de Suffren

Sponsor: Organized by the Association for Research and Treatments Against Cancer (ARTAC), in partnership with HEAL and the International Society of Doctors for the Environment, under the technical support of the World Health Organization

The Paris Appeal, an international declaration on the sanitary dangers of chemical pollution, has now been signed by thousands of scientists, several Novel Prizes in Medicine, the medical governing bodies of the 25 EU member states at the time, which amounts to over 2 million European doctors, by close to 1,500 non-governmental organizations and approximately 350,000 European citizens. In 2006, the second Congress of the Paris Appeal brought together about a thousand doctors, scientists, environmentalists and representatives of the civil society. The ARTAC presented a Memorandum stating 164 practical measures drawn up by 68 international specialists in an attempt to curb chemical pollution in our environment and the numerous chronic diseases and affections that result from it. The third Congress of the Paris Appeal will focus on children's health in relation with the environment. This Congress will bring together several of the best international specialists and will review the latest scientific breakthroughs in that field. Not only will the whole set of chemical pollutants involved be tackled, but also sanitary effects of electromagnetic fields. This Congress will focus more specifically on transgenerational risks caused by in utero contamination of the embryo and fetus, which results in the onset of diseases and affections not only in children, but also in adults. Thus, it will deal with factors contributing to current public health scourges that we now need to halt and that may get worse tomorrow if no laws are enforced to cut back on pollution in our environment.

Price: see the Registration page

Visit the website

Contact: Genon Jensen, 0032 2 234 3641 or genon@env-health.org

3) NIEHS: Visionary Ideas Wanted

Monday April 18, 2011

11:00 a.m. Pacific / 2:00 p.m. Eastern time

Sponsor: Collaborative on Health and the Environment

The National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) has invited the public to submit visionary ideas regarding environmental health research by April 30th as part of NIEHS's strategic planning process. Though a number of colleagues already plan to submit suggestions from their respective institutions and organizations, CHE is hosting this call to underscore the need for more research using systems-based approaches in order to better elucidate multiple and cumulative impacts on health as well as potential public health interventions. On the call, we will have several invited researchers briefly describe their recommended priorities for NIEHS. In addition, we invite other participants to highlight ideas either verbally or in writing on CHE's blog either during or prior to the call. Please note we are inviting senior NIEHS staff involved in the strategic planning process to listen in on the call. The call will be recorded.

Price: free Visit the website

Contact: CHE, info@healthandenvironment.org

4) CHE Café Call: A Conversation with Carl Cranor, Author of "Legally Poisoned: How the Law Puts Us at Risk from Toxicants"

Wednesday April 20, 2011

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

Sponsor: Collaborative on Health and the Environment

Carl Cranor, PhD, author of the recently published book *Legally Poisoned: How the Law Puts Us at Risk from Toxicants*, is the Distinguished Professor of Philosophy at the University of California, Riverside. Based on his broad understanding about the harm toxic chemicals can cause to human and ecosystem health, Dr. Cranor has analyzed the current legal structures designed to prevent such harm and has found them ineffective and often by design, inadequate to the public health challenge at hand. In addition to his most recent book, he has written numerous other books and articles. In these, Dr. Cranor offers suggestions about what kinds of legal initiatives might work, making the case that individual actions will not be sufficient to prevent harm and that only pragmatic, thorough and far-reaching reforms will give us world reasonably safe from toxic chemical harm. Dr. Cranor will discuss some of his ideas on a CHE Café call hosted by CHE staffer Sharyle Patton.

Price: free Visit the website

Contact: CHE info@healthandenvironment.org

5) NYU Forum on Theatre for Public Health

Thursday through Saturday, April 21 - 23, 2011

New York, New York

Sponsor: Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, & Human Development, New York University

The goal of this forum is to facilitate a dialogue on the intersections between drama and public health education. The forum will also investigate the perceived boundaries and barriers for artists and educators when delving into health education, as well as those for health professionals when utilizing drama in their work. By public health, we refer to the interdisciplinary field which focuses on protecting, promoting, and improving health and well-being of populations, especially vulnerable ones. The social justice foundation of public health leads the field to consider social, economic, political, and medical care conditions when addressing health issues.

Price: \$20 - \$100; see the website for details

<u>Visit the website</u>

Contact: Dr. Nancy Smithner, theatreforpublichealth@gmail.com

6) Introduction to Managing Environmental Data with Microsoft Access 2007

Tuesday and Wednesday, May 3 - 4, 2011

8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Bellevue, Washington at the Bellevue Hilton

Sponsor: EOS Alliance

Participants will gain basic to intermediate skills in using Microsoft Access 2007 to build relational databases for managing and mining their environmental data. This comprehensive class uses extensive hands-on exercises for in-depth use of tables, queries, forms, reports, and macro objects in Access 2007. These Access database subjects use real-world environmental examples with actual field data. No experience with MS Access 2007 is required; however, basic understanding of Microsoft Office software and basic computer skills are required. Continuing Education Units are available.

Price: \$545 or \$445 for employees of Native American tribes, nonprofits, and government agencies; students; and NAEP members

Visit the website

News and Journal Articles

Mercury pollution damages environment, public health.

Sunday, April 03, 2011

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates that mercury pollution is so widespread that one in six women of childbearing age already has enough mercury in her blood to put her baby at risk, should she become pregnant. Joplin Globe, Missouri. [See other articles about mercury: Sierra Club offers free mercury tests in Montclair; Study finds no association between mercury exposure and risk of cardiovascular disease; Mercury in new light bulbs not being recycled, escaping to environment; CFL bulbs: The U.S. EPA guidelines and the debate over mercury and Va plant's toxic mercury releases to be studied.]

Can mom's medicine hurt the baby?

Saturday, April 02, 2011

Doctors must carefully weigh the benefits of a medication to both mother and baby against the often uncertain risk that it might interfere with fetal development. Many of the most serious medication risks occur when a baby's vital organs are forming in the first trimester, often before a women knows she's pregnant. Wall Street Journal.

New director at EPA plans shakeup of laggard chemical-risk system.

Thursday, March 31, 2011

Cogliano has plans for revamping IRIS, including streamlining its process for assessing chemicals and making plans to analyze substances that might present future health risks. New York Times.

Study: packaged food raises levels of bisphenol A.

Wednesday, March 30, 2011

Forgoing packaged foods such as canned soups and vegetables could dramatically lower levels of a hormone-disrupting chemical, bisphenol A, that has been linked to myriad health problems, including birth defects, autism and reproductive issues, according to a study released today. San Francisco Chronicle, California.

[See another article about contaminated food: <u>Toxins in baby food might affect hormones: study</u>]

<u>Low-level environmental lead exposure in childhood and adult intellectual function: a follow-up study.</u>

Wednesday, March 30, 2011

Our study suggests that lead exposure in childhood predicts intellectual functioning in young adulthood. Our results also suggest that school-age lead exposure may represent

a period of increased susceptibility. Environmental Health.

[See other articles about lead: Regular breakfast and blood lead levels among preschool children and Baltimore housing authority says it won't pay millions in lead poisoning judgments]

Artificial food dyes scrutinized by FDA.

Tuesday, March 29, 2011

A Food and Drug Administration panel plans to meet this week to consider the potential link between hyperactivity in children and artificial dyes found in common foods such as candy, waffles and salad dressing. Wall Street Journal.

[See related articles: Food dyes favor fades as possible links to hyperactivity emerge; FDA panel rejects need for warnings on food coloring; FDA advisors recommend more study of food dyes and Colorless food? We blanch]

Scientist gives advice on how to avoid mobile phone health dangers.

Tuesday, March 29, 2011

Just how unhealthy is it to use a mobile phone? A leading scientist looks at the research and has some tips on how to avoid the risks. Australia ABC News, Australia.

Group to tell Senate panel about 42 disease clusters in 13 states.

Tuesday, March 29, 2011

An environmental group will tell a Senate panel Tuesday that it has identified 42 suspected clusters of cancer, birth defects and other illnesses in 13 states. McClatchy Newspapers.

[See a related article from Australia: North coast babies linked to birth defect 'cluster']

Cancer society worried as Calgary revives use of herbicides to fight weeds.

Monday, March 28, 2011

A jump in herbicide use in the City of Calgary is worrying some on the city council. The Canadian Cancer Society says the potential health risks are too high to justify using chemicals to control invasive plant species. Calgary Herald, Alberta.

[See other articles about pesticides: <u>Tick study seeks participants</u>, but insecticide sparks opposition and <u>A battle to reverse California's methyl iodide approval</u>]

Sitting atop huge gas reserve, Maryland debates fracking.

Monday, March 28, 2011

In a vote that reflects growing national concern over hydraulic fracturing, state lawmakers on Wednesday passed a bill that would place a moratorium on drilling until the Maryland Department of the Environment completes a study to determine whether it endangers drinking water and public health. Washington Post.

[See other articles about fracking: N.J. proposal would outlaw 'fracking' process for natural gas drilling near Delaware River and Delaware River Basin gas drilling through 'fracking' process draws criticism]

Are plastics polluting your home?

Sunday, March 27, 2011

It's virtually impossible to go through a day without coming into contact with plastic. Take a second to think about everything plastic you touch each day. It could be your toothbrush, remote control, food containers, toys, pens, debit card, cell phone, and laptop. Olympia Olympian, Washington.

Alzheimer's could be prevented and treated with asthma drug: American Journal of Pathology.

Friday, March 25, 2011

A drug used to treat asthma has been shown to help reduce the formation of amyloid beta, a peptide in the brain that is implicated in the development of Alzheimer's disease, according to researchers at Temple University's School of Medicine. Health, Medical, and Science Updates.

[See another article about Alzheimer's disease: Researchers link herpes to Alzheimer's disease]

Brain-wasting prions found in fertility hormone.

Friday, March 25, 2011

Certain fertility hormones could theoretically put women at risk of developing brain-wasting Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease. The fatal disease is spread by prions, infectious and misfolded proteins that also cause BSE, commonly known as mad cow disease in cattle. CBC Canada.

FDA says tobacco law doesn't apply to two smokeless lozenges.

Friday, March 25, 2011

Star Scientific was surprised to find the FDA doesn't consider its two dissolvable tobacco lozenges to be forms of smokeless tobacco and thus aren't covered by the 2009 tobacco law. Los Angeles Times.

[See other articles about tobacco use: <u>The case against menthols</u>; <u>China renews push to ban smoking in indoor public places starting May 1, more venues listed</u>; <u>Parent's cigarette in car puts a child at risk for an hour and Exposure to environmental tobacco smoke among South Korean adults: a cross-sectional study of the 2005 Korea National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey]</u>

'Junk food' moms have 'junk food' babies.

Thursday, March 24, 2011

A new research report published online in The FASEB Journal suggests that pregnant mothers who eat high sugar and high fat diets have babies who are likely to become junk food junkies themselves. ScienceDaily.

[See another article about diet and health: <u>Pre-conception and early pregnancy iron deficiency harms brain]</u>

<u>CPSC warns: As button battery use increases, so do battery-related injuries and deaths.</u>

Thursday, March 24, 2011

Young children and senior adults are unintentionally swallowing the button batteries and in some cases, the consequences are immediate and devastating.

More than 25 million Latinos live in polluted areas.

Thursday, March 24, 2011

Two-thirds of Latinos in the United States live in areas that do not comply with federal standards for air quality and Hispanics are three times more likely than whites to die from asthma, the Center for American Progress says in a report released Wednesday. Fox News.

[See related articles: EPA releases U.S. - Mexico border environmental and health report; Ranking shows wealthier counties are healthier in Kentucky, Indiana and America's most distressed areas threatened by emerging infections of poverty]

EPA updates web tool providing clean water violation trends and state enforcement response.

Thursday, March 24, 2011

The web-based, interactive map includes "state dashboards" that provide detailed information for each state, including information on facilities that are violating the Clean Water Act and the actions states are taking to enforce the law and protect people's health

[See other articles about water quality: From art to intervention: Chicago native making water filters in Dominican Republic, Haiti that were inspired in art class; Radioactivity and chemicals in our drinking water?; Using candles to clean up groundwater; Talk of the day -- Groundwater contamination causes concern; Millions spent to keep water supply clean; EPA asks National Guard to pay \$5.9M for groundwater cleanup and A new perchlorate-level predicament]

<u>Diesel device hit for pollution rise.</u>

Wednesday, March 23, 2011

A government program to equip diesel vehicles with an emission reduction device may

have actually contributed to a surge in air pollution, a Chinese University study has found. Hong Kong Standard, China.

[See other articles about air quality: Parking permit surcharge to force diesel cars off the roads; Biomass fight a matter of trust; Atmosphere of concern; Safeguards in place for when air quality diminishes; Scientists monitor toxic air-borne chemicals; A switch to 'green' buses for Pace?; Find the polluters in your city; Court OKs air-pollution restrictions for ships; EPA accepts N.J.'s petition to cut pollution at coal-powered generating station on Delaware River; Air pollution is another potentially deadly threat for U.S. soldiers in Iraq; Freeway air pollution: appeals court upholds monitoring rules; EPA streamlines regulations for car and truck fuel conversion systems/New options encourage innovation, maintain air quality protections; Feds OK pollution complaint against Pa. power plant; Dioxin levels dropped 70% during Beijing Olympics and Soot filters snarl Valley school bus upkeep]

Lead, other chemicals taint some urban gardens.

Wednesday, March 23, 2011

With remnants of once-legal lead paint, leaded gasoline and other pollutants from the nation's industrial past tainting land in U.S. cities, soil researchers warn that the growing number of urban farmers and community gardeners need to test their dirt and take steps to make sure it's safe. Associated Press.

[See other articles about contaminated sites: <u>Tests identify problem playgrounds</u>; city shuts down three; <u>Massey wins lawsuit over coal dust at W.Va. school</u>; <u>Gold mines, a city's pride, leave toxic legacy</u>; <u>Parks begin lead remediation efforts today</u>; <u>Jury: plant contaminated air, water with chromium</u>; <u>PCBs cleanup cuts fish toxins</u>; <u>Has emissions cap and trade created toxic hotspots? A new study says no</u>; <u>Heavy metals pollution battle targets batteries and China vows to clean up rural environment</u>]

Gulf environmental health advocate wins human rights award.

Wednesday, March 23, 2011

Wilma Subra, an environmental chemist whose work has helped illuminate the ongoing health impacts of BP's Deepwater Horizon oil disaster, will be the recipient of a human rights award from Global Exchange, an organization that promotes social, economic and environmental justice around the world. Facing South.

Lessons Learned

Non-Stick and Non-Healthy, Iron Is Best by Steven G. Gilbert, PhD, DABT

Perfluorinated chemicals include perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS) a perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), also known as C8 and perfluorooctanoate. These chemicals are actually very interesting and useful chemicals, but they have a few

problems. Chemist Roy J. Plunkett (June 26, 1910 - May 12, 1994) accidentally discovered Teflon (polytetrafluoroethylene) on April 6, 1938. He was a research chemist by E.I. du Pont de Nemours and Company at their Jackson Laboratory in Deepwater, New Jersey. By chance he found tetrafluoroethylene in a container had polymerized into Polytetrafluoroethylene (Teflon), a waxy solid with amazing properties such as resistance to corrosion, low surface friction, and high heat resistance. The product, trademarked as Teflon in 1945, was first used by the military in artillery shell fuses and in the production of nuclear material for the Manhattan Project. After World War II, DuPont found a wide range of uses for Teflon including as electrical cable insulation, soil and stain repellant for fabrics, and coating for nonstick cookware. DuPont, which founded Kinetic Chemicals in partnership with General Motors, was producing almost two million pounds (900 tons) of Teflon per year in Parkersburg, West Virginia, by 1948.



Roy J. Plunkett

In 1968, organofluorine content was detected in the blood of consumers, and in 1976 it was suggested to be PFOA or a related compound such as PFOS. In 1997, 3M detected perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS) in blood from global blood banks. In 1999, the US Environmental Protection Agency began investigating perfluorinated compounds after receiving data on the global distribution and toxicity of PFOS, the key ingredient in Scotchgard. For these reasons, and US EPA pressure, the primary American producer of PFOS, 3M, announced in May 2000 the phaseout of the production of PFOS, PFOA, and PFOS-related products. Advances in analytical chemistry demonstrate the routine detection of low- and sub-ppb (parts per billion) levels of PFOS in food, wildlife and humans. In

animal studies, PFOS is linked to cancer, physical development delays, endocrine disruption and neonatal mortality. Female mice with blood levels of PFOS within ranges found in wildlife and humans demonstrated higher mortality when infected with influenza A, indicating immune-system effects. PFOS reduces the birth size of animals, raising concerns for humans.

Taking a precautionary approach, it is better to put that Teflon pan aside and take up the old-fashioned iron frying pan. To ensure our children reach and maintain their full potential it is best to limit their exposure to perfluorinated compounds such as Teflon and Scotch guard.

Roy J. Plunkett at Toxipedia: http://toxipedia.org/x/oJZb
Perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS) at

Toxipedia: toxipedia.org/display/toxipedia/Perfluorooctanesulfonic+acid



Looking back to go forward

Lessons Learned is a bulletin feature focusing on an historical event that provides an important lesson for ensuring a more sustainable and healthy environment. Please feel free to send suggestions to <u>Steve Gilbert</u>.

Past Lessons Learned: http://toxipedia.org/x/06Jb

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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