



Learning and Developmental Disabilities Initiative

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



Biweekly Bulletin April 7, 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

Mind, Disrupted, can be found at www.minddisrupted.org. This project has been a major accomplishment of the LDDI working group and its partnering organizations, and we encourage you to visit our website and collaborate with us on continued outreach with this important tool!

Teleconference April 13th

The American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) is hosting its monthly Research and Science Teleconference Series on Tuesday April 13th from 2:00 - 3:00 p.m. Eastern time on "Adaptive Behavior and the School Environment" with Brent Ibata. For more information, please see event #2 below or email Laura Abulafia, Director of Education and Outreach for the Environmental Health Initiative (EHI): laura@aaidd.org.

Health Policy Webinar April 21st

AAIDD's EHI is also hosting a Health Policy webinar on Wednesday April 21st from 2:00 - 3:00 p.m. Eastern time. Speaking is Charlotte Brody from Blue Green Alliance on the Safer Chemicals Healthy Families (SCHF) Health Report. For more information or to register, see event #6 below or contact Joyce Martin, Director of Health Policy for the EHI: jmartin@aaidd.org.

New Members

The Learning and Developmental Disabilities Initiative welcomes these new members:

- William DuSold, Severna Park, Maryland
- Bernard Gaudet, Gatineau, Canada
- Daniel Keller, PhD, Dandridge, Tennessee

Announcements

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

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

[Consumer representatives needed for FDA Advisory Committees: Learn more at public meeting.](#)

Do you want to voice your opinion to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on its role in protecting and promoting the public health? Do you have ties to a consumer group or community-based organization? Can you analyze scientific data?

[EPA highlights recycling opportunities during National Cell Phone Recycling](#)

[Week.](#)

Cell phones and personal digital assistants (PDAs) are made of precious metals, copper, and plastics. Recycling or reusing these devices conserves materials, prevents air and water pollution, and reduces greenhouse gas emissions that occur during manufacturing and processing.

[EPA issues comprehensive guidance to protect Appalachian communities from harmful environmental impacts of mountaintop mining.](#)

Using the best available science and following the law, the comprehensive guidance sets clear benchmarks for preventing significant and irreversible damage to Appalachian watersheds at risk from mining activity.

[Combination effects of chemicals.](#)

The study entitled "State of the Art Report on Mixture Toxicity" was recently completed and will provide input to the Commission work on the recommendations requested by the December Environment Council. Organizations or individuals with interest and relevant experience who would like to comment or ask questions on the report, are welcome to write by April 30, 2010.

[EPA holds additional public hearings on proposed water quality standards.](#)

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is holding three additional public hearings in April to receive more input from Floridians on the agency's proposed Florida water quality standards.

[EPA releases public database on risk assessments.](#)

EPA is releasing the Health and Environmental Research Online (HERO) database, a milestone in transparency. HERO provides access to the scientific studies used in making key regulatory decisions, including EPA's periodic review of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for six major pollutants.

[Job opening: Seattle, Washington.](#)

The Northwest Environmental Training Center is seeking workshop instructors for a variety of courses, including "Mercury Effects on Ecosystems and Human Health." This position is contracted per course with flexible dates in major cities across the country.

[Job opening: Atlanta, Georgia.](#)

The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention seeks an associate director for science with the National Center for Environmental Health/Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry. Applications are due April 15, 2010.

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) Pacific Rim Conference on Disabilities

Monday and Tuesday, April 12 - 13, 2010
Honolulu, Hawaii
at the Hawai'i Convention Center

Sponsor: see the [Community Partners page](#)

A topic area devoted to environmental toxins includes this description: "What is the relationship between environmental toxins and disabilities? In this topic area, we explore this question by looking at the factors and conditions that give rise to disabilities as a result of exposure to heavy metals, including depleted uranium, and chemicals, which are more pervasive today than in any time in history. Current research suggests that the effect of these toxins is related to rising occurrences of disabilities including cognitive learning impairments and other disabilities."

Price: see the [Registration page](#)

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: 808-956-7539 or cccrocke@hawaii.edu

2) Adaptive Behavior and the School Environment

Tuesday April 13, 2010

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

Sponsor: American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

In *The School and Society* John Dewey writes: "From the standpoint of the child, the great waste in the school comes from his inability to utilize the experiences he gets outside the school in any complete and free way within the school itself; while on the other hand, he is unable to apply in daily life what he is learning at school. That is the isolation of the school - its isolation from life." This isolation is even more profound for children with intellectual and developmental disabilities. In *Schools of To-morrow* John Dewey expands this: "[t]he child is best prepared for life as an adult by experiencing in childhood what has meaning to him as a child." The present method of identifying an appropriate placement for child with a disability within a school frequently ignores the influence that the environment has on the child and instead focuses almost exclusively on the child's disabilities independent of the environmental confounders. Brent Iyata, PhD, JD, will present on this webinar; his talk will explore those environmental influences known to impact the health, behavior and academic achievement of the child. To achieve full societal inclusion and participation for children with intellectual and developmental disabilities reasonable accommodations to the school environment must be considered as part of any placement decision. Only with safe and healthy school environments will a disabled child be able to achieve full adaptive behavior potential as an adult.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

3) Lead and Beyond: Progress in Eliminating Lead Poisoning and New Opportunities for Collaboration in New Jersey

Friday April 16, 2010

7:00 a.m. - 4:15 p.m.

Edison, New Jersey

at the Sheraton Edison Hotel, Raritan Center, 125 Raritan Center Parkway

Sponsor: New Jersey Interagency Task Force on the Prevention of Lead Poisoning and the Governor's Council on the Prevention of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities

The goals of the conference are to update participants about the progress being made in the fight against lead poisoning in New Jersey and to introduce participants to other environmental health hazards found in homes, schools and workplaces. These hazards include radon, heavy metals, moisture, mold, poor ventilation, pest control, fungal allergens and others. Advance registration is required. Continuing education credits are available.

Price: \$50

[Visit the website](#)

4) Evaluating the Impact of Cumulative Stressors on Health

Monday April 19, 2010

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

Sponsor: Collaborative on Health and the Environment

This call will explore how cumulative impact science indicates that multiple factors - including social, psychosocial, economic, physical, chemical and biological determinants -

may contribute to disproportionate human health or environmental impacts. The risk of many diseases may be moderated by social and environmental factors, and some populations may systematically experience higher levels of these factors. This call on cumulative impact will present an overview of cumulative risk assessment and the need to incorporate key nonchemical stressors. Featured speakers include Rachel Morello-Frosch, PhD, of the School of Public Health, University of California, Berkeley; and Jon Levy, ScD, of the Harvard School of Public Health.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: CHE, info@healthandenvironment.org

5) Women's Health & the Environment: New Science, New Solutions

Wednesday April 21, 2010

time

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center

Sponsor: Teresa Heinz, the Heinz Endowments and Magee-Womens Hospital of UPMC

The conference will feature nationally renowned environmental scientists, writers and activists who will share the newest science examining the possible link between the environment and our health. Our morning speakers will share scientific data to support the way in which toxins affect us. Afternoon speakers will share solutions that will enlighten us about lifestyle choices we can make to create a healthier environment for ourselves and our families. Space is limited.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: 412-641-4059 or womensconference@heinz.org

6) Chemicals and Health: A Toxic Combination

Wednesday April 21, 2010

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

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

Charlotte Brody, director of chemicals and chemical policy for the [Blue Green Alliance](#), will discuss a recent publication of [Safer Chemicals, Healthy Families](#) entitled *The Health Case for Reforming the Toxic Substances Control Act*. The report details the growing scientific literature linking chemical exposures to six categories of chronic conditions that impact the daily lives of millions of Americans: 1) certain types of cancer, 2) learning and developmental disabilities, 3) Alzheimer's, 4) Parkinson's disease, 5) reproductive health and fertility problems and 6) asthma. It also incorporates the results of published studies that estimate the portion of our disease burden that is attributable to chemical exposures and the potential health cost savings from improved protection from toxic chemicals. Charlotte is lead author and editor of the report. Registrations are limited and required ahead of the teleconference.

Price: free, but long-distance telephone charges will apply

[Visit the website](#)

7) The Indoor Environmental Health & Technologies Conference and the Lead and Healthy Homes Grantees Conference

Tuesday through Friday, April 27 - 30, 2010

New Orleans, Louisiana

at the Astor Crowne Plaza Hotel

Sponsor: The Lead and Environmental Hazards Association and The National Association of Lead and Healthy Homes Grantees

The joint conference includes program tracks and technical assistance workshops dealing with lead hazard control, lead-poisoning prevention and Healthy Home program issues. Program tracks, technical assistance workshops and consultation roundtables are offered from Tuesday afternoon through Thursday afternoon to provide in-depth education and discussion. Sessions and workshops are organized under the two conferences listed on the website. Attendees are encouraged to participate in any session.

Price: \$270 with discounts for more than one attendee from the same organization

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Steve Weil, 301-924-0804 or the [contact web page](#)

8) ADHD and Environmental Toxicity

Tuesday April 28, 2010

6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Thiensville, Wisconsin

at the Mequon-Thiensville Library, 11345 Cedarburg Road

Sponsor: Developmental Delay Resources

This is part of a series. The speaker will be Dr. Norman Schwartz.

Price: free, but please RSVP before the event

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: 800-385-1655 or holisticneuro@gmail.com

9) teleconference: CHE Cafe call with Annie Leonard, author of *The Story of Stuff*

Tuesday May 4, 2010

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

Sponsor: Collaborative on Health and the Environment

In December 2007, Annie released *The Story of Stuff*, a hit 20-minute webfilm that takes viewers on a provocative and eye-opening tour of the often hidden costs of our consumer-driven culture. The film has won numerous awards, including a South by Southwest Festival award, and in 2008 Annie was named one of *Time Magazine's* Heroes of the Environment. Annie's films, writing and presentations combine solid information and first-hand investigative reporting with a profound sense of hope that we can, indeed must, find a more sustainable way to meet our material needs.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: CHE, info@healthandenvironment.org

News and Journal Articles

[Study identifies hundreds of obscure -- yet persistent -- chemicals.](#)

Tuesday, April 06, 2010

A new study suggests that hundreds of chemicals used commercially could persist and bioaccumulate, yet next to nothing is known about their actions and levels in the environment. Predicting exposures and if and how chemicals may pose a health threat is incredibly difficult. Now, researchers propose a unique way to screen and identify chemicals that may need further evaluation and monitoring.

[See related articles: [Report: Cosmetic products contain high levels of toxic chemicals](#), [Coalition rallies for more oversight on chemicals](#), [The toxic timebomb: Researchers say gender-bending chemicals are rife but are they just the tip of the iceberg?](#) and [Weak](#)

[rules on toxins and safety\]](#)

[40 years on, reserve mercury poisonings return.](#)

Tuesday, April 06, 2010

Forty years after mercury poisoning gripped remote northwestern Ontario native reserves, the story is still unfolding. Residents who weren't even born when the province banned fishing on the Wabigoon-English River system are showing the effects of mercury poisoning. Toronto Star, Ontario.

[See related articles: [Excessive dioxin in 8 percent of European food samples](#) and [Eating fish involves health tradeoffs](#)]

[Study reports hint of phthalate threat to boys' IQs.](#)

Tuesday, April 06, 2010

You may have a hard time spelling "phthalates," but there's no avoiding them. They're in the air you breathe, water you drink and foods you eat. And this ubiquity may carry a price, particularly for young boys, emerging data suggest. Including a drop in their IQ. Science News.

[WHO to kick off '1,000 cities' drive for urban health.](#)

Monday, April 05, 2010

The global campaign starting on World Health Day aims to rally 1,000 cities to "open up public spaces to health", by closing off portions of streets to traffic, to encourage exercise in parks and clean up campaigns. Agence France-Presse.

[See a related article: [Richmond's new priority: Taking health seriously](#)]

[Zinc levels in Poligrip scrutinized.](#)

Monday, April 05, 2010

Until very recently, the denture adhesive Super Poligrip contained high levels of zinc -- enough, scientists say, to cause neurological damage in people who used too much of it. All Things Considered, NPR.

[The hazards lurking at home.](#)

Saturday, April 03, 2010

With so many scary-sounding, potentially toxic compounds turning up in our household products, it's hard to know which agents are really worth worrying about. Here is a guide to some of the most commonly found toxins. Time Magazine.

[See related articles: [Baltimore takes a holistic approach to unhealthy housing, U.S. urges homeowners to remove Chinese drywall](#), [Hitting a drywall](#) and [Health Board expecting more lead paint cases](#)]

[Brain drain? PBDEs alter development of human brain cells.](#)

Friday, April 02, 2010

A new laboratory study demonstrating that polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs) can alter human fetal brain cells may explain at least in part the neurotoxicity recently documented in epidemiologic studies of young children exposed to PBDEs and previously shown in animal models. Environmental Health Perspectives. [See a related article:

[Polybrominated diphenyl ethers induce developmental neurotoxicity in a human in vitro model: Evidence for endocrine disruption](#)]

[The perils of plastic.](#)

Thursday, April 01, 2010

Chemicals in plastics and other products seem harmless, but mounting evidence links them to health problems -- and Washington lacks the power to protect us. Time Magazine.

[See related articles: [Hormones, plastics and paradigms](#); [Plastic nanoparticles can move from mom to baby through placenta](#) and [Assessment of metal contaminations leaching out from recycling plastic bottles upon treatments](#)]

[Pesticides and children: Danger with every breath.](#)

Sunday, April 4, 2010

Congress in 1996 passed - unanimously - the Food Quality Protection Act, which requires the Environmental Protection Agency to review by 2006 all of the 9,700 pesticide rules

with an eye to the risk they pose to children. But now the law is under siege as pesticide makers and agribusiness wage a publicity and lobbying campaign against its implementation, warning that ""our crop yields and income are at risk." The New Nation. [See related articles: [Residents worried about killer pesticides](#), ["Greening" conference focuses on overuse of pesticides](#) and [Harmful pesticide found in city creeks](#)]

Silent danger at the rinks.

Wednesday, March 31, 2010

Ice grooming equipment, like the Zamboni, leaves behind more than a smooth skating surface. It also creates a potentially hazardous trail of carbon monoxide and nitrous dioxide that lingers in indoor arenas. Minneapolis Star Tribune, Minnesota.

Mothballs deserve respect.

Tuesday, March 30, 2010

The active ingredient in many, para-dichlorobenzene, can poison the liver, skin, and central nervous system -- and is a "possible human carcinogen," according to the U.S. EPA. Huh? Isn't the whole idea of using mothballs to have their vapors permeate clothing? Science News.

Bracelets recalled from Garage stores because of lead levels.

Tuesday, March 30, 2010

Two styles of bracelets that are made almost entirely of lead have been recalled from Canadian store shelves. Canwest News Service.

[See related articles: [Chinese jewelry containing toxic chemicals seized](#) and [Folk 'cure' sold locally high in lead](#)]

VA to cover more illnesses from Agent Orange exposure.

Tuesday, March 30, 2010

The federal government wants to make free medical care and disability payments automatic for veterans with certain medical conditions linked to exposure to Agent Orange and other herbicides. Boston Patriot Ledger, Massachusetts.

[See other articles related to health effects of war: [Iraqi children's growth stunted by war, says study](#) and [Toxic exposure risk low for troops in Haiti](#)]

EPA to intensify its study of BPA.

Tuesday, March 30, 2010

The Environmental Protection Agency announced Monday that it is intensifying its look at how BPA affects the nation's wildlife and water supply and will designate the compound as a "chemical of concern." Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, Wisconsin.

[See related articles: [Bad chemistry: The poison in the plastic that surrounds us](#); [Urinary, circulating and tissue biomonitoring studies indicate widespread exposure to bisphenol A](#); [Gender-bender chemicals 'putting everyone at risk'](#); [Flushed away: BPA-free babies](#); [Revealed: the nasty secret in your kitchen cupboard](#) and [BPA found beached and at sea](#)]

Maternal well-being and its association to risk of developmental problems in children at school entry.

Monday, March 29, 2010

Risk factors for developmental problems at school entry are related to maternal well being and history of abuse, which can be identified in the prenatal period or when children are preschool age. BMC Pediatrics.

[See a related article: [Multivitamins during pregnancy may boost infant health](#)]

What's in the water?

Monday, March 29, 2010

Understanding chemical contamination can be confusing, particularly if you're not up to speed on acronyms like DCE, TCE or Cis. Here is a run-down on the chemicals found in 47 residential wells in Limerick and recorded in the U.S. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry. Pottstown Mercury, Pennsylvania.

[See related articles: [Pharmaceuticals in water -- an interdisciplinary approach to a public health challenge](#) and [Students say they have solution to removing pharmaceuticals from wastewater](#)]

Personal care products and ADHD.

Monday, March 29, 2010

There's been a rise in reports of behavioral disorders in kids over the past decade or so. Some researchers say genetics, lack of sleep, and chaotic households all contribute to things like ADHD. Now researchers say another cause could be personal care products. Environment Report.

Organic: What it means on different products.

Saturday, March 27, 2010

Some consumers are more than willing to pay higher prices for organically grown food and other products. But is the extra dollar worth it? The answer may depend upon personal priorities. Los Angeles Times, California.

[See a related article: [Is it really natural?](#) and another about toxics in food: [Making your family's food safer just by washing](#)]

Wal-Mart spurs sustainable toy animals into \$1 billion market.

Friday, March 26, 2010

Sales of green toys may balloon to \$1 billion, or as much as 5 percent of toy sales in the next five years, according to Earthsense, an environmental research firm. Bloomberg News.

Arsenic poisoning to buffet GDP, inviting health risks.

Wednesday, March 24, 2010

Bangladesh faces an estimated US\$ 23 billion in gross domestic product output loss over the next five decades due to health hazards arising from arsenic poisoning in groundwater, a new United Nations study warned Tuesday. Dhaka Financial Express, Bangladesh.

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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