



Learning and Developmental Disabilities Initiative

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



Biweekly Bulletin June 16, 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

LDDI Highlights

New Resource on Chemical Policy Reform

CHE has created a new webpage with information on upcoming teleconferences, legislation and analysis; the initial focus will be on the "Safe Chemicals Act of 2010." [Visit the webpage.](#)

AAIDD Conference Recap

AAIDD held its annual conference in Providence, Rhode Island, throughout the week of June 8th. AAIDD's Environmental Health Initiative (EHI) was a prominent part of the conference, and EHI events were very well attended. Some highlights:

- On June 11th, AAIDD's EHI held a symposium on [Mind, Disrupted](#). Speakers included biomonitoring participants Laura Abulafia from AAIDD, Joseph Meadours from People First of California, and Robert Fletcher from the National Association for the Dually Diagnosed.
- During an EHI breakout session on June 12th, Joyce Martin, director of health policy for AAIDD's EHI, presented an update on EHI activities and provided opportunities for people to get involved in both health policy and education and outreach.
- On Thursday June 13th, the EHI presented a poster on [Mind, Disrupted](#) during an all-morning poster session and handed out relevant materials including the executive summary of *Mind, Disrupted* as well as the "[Environmental Health Risks and Your Pregnancy](#)" educational pamphlet for expectant moms.
- Past Executive Director Doreen Croser gave a touching farewell speech where she highlighted AAIDD's ongoing leadership and successes in the field and specifically included the groundbreaking work of the Environmental Health Initiative.

Autism Society of America Meeting July 7 - 10th

The Autism Society (ASA) is hosting a full-day environmental health symposium at their [annual meeting](#) on July 8th in Dallas, Texas. Speakers will include Joe Guth, JD; Ted Schettler, MD, MPH; and other prominent environmental health leaders. There will also be a session on the *Mind, Disrupted* biomonitoring project. To get more information, please see event #2 below or contact Donna Ferullo: dferrullo@autism-society.org.

Announcements

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

Children First: Promoting Ecological Health for the Whole Child

\$35 early bird registration ends July 1st. Register for this groundbreaking one-day symposium highlighting a range of interacting factors that influence child health and development, including nutrition, education, socioeconomic status, exposures to toxic chemicals, and access to preventive health care. [Visit the website](#).

CHE Now Podcasts Teleconference Calls.

Podcasts of CHE's recorded Partnership and Working Group calls are now available on [CHE's website](#).

Poisoned for Profit.

This is an updated and expanded version of *Poisoned Profits*, including significant political, economic and scientific developments since the hardcover book was published in 2008, an Afterword that discusses what those developments mean, and new resources for parents.

IRIS Toxicological Review of Formaldehyde- Inhalation Assessment.

This draft assessment is provided for public viewing and comment. The public comment period ends August 31, 2010, and includes a listening session on July 27th.

Comprehensive report's focus is on nanotechnology, health and the environment: Greenberg Traurig and Intertox to present.

The beneficial effects of nanotechnology innovation on human health and the environment are the focus of a comprehensive report to be presented at the Nano Science and Technology Institute's Nanotech Conference and Expo 2010 in Anaheim, CA, June 21-24, 2010.

EPA and states complete first phase of unprecedented school air monitoring initiative.

EPA experts will now analyze the data to understand whether air quality at these schools poses long-term health concerns for children.

Job openings: Anchorage, Alaska.

The Alaska Conservation Foundation has openings for a director of finance and operations, a communications intern, and a director for the Alaskans for Energy Freedom campaign.

Job opening: Ann Arbor, Michigan.

The Ecology Center is seeking a communications director who can work with the newest communications techniques as well as traditional communications methods to promote the Ecology Center and its local, state and national campaigns. Applications received prior to July 1 will be given priority, but EC will continue to receive applications until the position is filled.

Job opening: Omaha, Nebraska.

The Center for Human Nutrition is seeking a research scientist with strong leadership skills and advanced analytical abilities to conduct research in the area of childhood obesity prevention. Please submit a cover letter, resume or vitae to Dr. Amy Yaroch, Executive Director, The Center for Human Nutrition, 505 Durham Research Plaza, Rm. 1024, Omaha, NE 68105, or ayaroch@cfhnutrition.org. Applications must be received by July 16, 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) The New Science of How Herbicides Affect Health and the Environment - Dispelling the Myth of "The Dose Makes the Poison": A Case Study of Glyphosate and the Alaska Railroad

Wednesday June 30, 2010

9:00 a.m. Alaska time / 10:00 a.m. Pacific time

Sponsor: Collaborative on Health and the Environment - Alaska

New scientific evidence from the fields of toxicology, endocrinology, developmental biology and biochemistry shows that a core assumption of toxicology, "the dose makes the poison," is inadequate as a basis for regulatory standards to protect human health. Evidence shows that pesticides have interactive effects and adverse health effects at extremely low levels - below EPA allowable levels. These effects include adverse neurological, endocrine, immune, reproductive and developmental health outcomes. Over the past three decades, citizens of Alaska have consistently voiced strong opposition to the use of herbicides by the Alaska Railroad and have successfully prevented the Railroad from applying herbicides since 1982. Alaskans have particular concern about the use of herbicides along the rail belt because of the many streams, wetlands, rivers and groundwater sources of drinking water. In addition, many people harvest wild plants, wildlife and fish along the rail belt. This year, however, the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation granted the Alaska Railroad a permit allowing them to spray the harmful pesticide glyphosate, as well as additional solvents and surfactants that make the herbicide more persistent and toxic. Join us for a discussion of the current science of low-dose effects of glyphosate, the status of the EPA's review of glyphosate, and why communities throughout Alaska oppose herbicide use along the railroad. We will explore what policy changes are necessary to protect public health.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Alaska Community Action on Toxics, 907-222-7714 or diana@akaction.org

2) 41st Annual Autism Society National Conference and Exposition

Wednesday through Saturday, July 7 - 10, 2010

Dallas, Texas

at the Hyatt Regency Dallas, 300 Reunion Boulevard

Sponsor: Autism Society

The Autism Society recognizes that families and individuals living with an autism spectrum disorder have a range of issues and needs. The National Conference of the Autism Society is the only conference that addresses the range of issues, including early intervention, education, employment, behavior, communication, social skills, biomedical interventions and others, across the entire lifespan. Bringing together the expertise and experiences of family members, professionals and individuals on the spectrum, attendees are able to learn how to more effectively advocate and obtain supports for the individual with ASD. The ultimate goal is to empower family members, individuals on the spectrum and professionals to make informed decisions.

Price: see the [Registration page](#)

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Sarah Mitchell, 301-657-0881, ext. 9010 or conference@autism-society.org

3) School Health Policies and Program Study 2006: Healthy Physical School Environment; CDC's School Health Policies and Programs Study (SHPPS)

Tuesday July 13, 2010

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

Sponsor: Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Environmental Health Initiative

The speaker will be Sherry Everett Jones, PhD, MPH, JD, FASHA, health scientist in the Division of Adolescent and School Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

4) NACCHO Annual 2010

Wednesday through Friday, July 14 - 16, 2010

Memphis, Tennessee

at the Memphis Cook Convention Center, Marriott Memphis Downtown

Sponsor: National Association of County & City Health Officials

The goal of the NACCHO Annual 2010 Conference is to enhance the ability of participants to create and build upon a forward-looking vision of local public health through disease-prevention interventions and wellness promotion, elimination of health inequities among individuals and communities, and expanded leadership capacity within local health departments.

Price: see the [Registration page](#)

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: NACCHO, 202-783-5550 or info@naccho.org

News and Journal Articles

[Food combination and Alzheimer disease risk.](#)

Tuesday, June 15, 2010

We identified a dietary pattern strongly associated with lower Alzheimer disease risk characterized by higher intakes of salad dressing, nuts, fish, tomatoes, poultry, cruciferous vegetables, fruits, and dark and green leafy vegetables and a lower intake of high-fat dairy products, red meat, organ meat, and butter. Archives of Neurology.

[Pesticides, genes combine to up risk of Parkinson's.](#)

Tuesday, June 15, 2010

Men with certain genetic variations who were exposed to some toxic pesticides which are now largely banned run an increased risk of developing Parkinson's disease, French scientists said Monday. Reuters.

[See related articles about other effects of pesticides: [Good for you? Choose veggies that are pesticide-free](#) and [Atrazine binds to the growth hormone releasing hormone receptor and affects growth hormone gene expression](#)]

[A natural return to the earth.](#)

Monday, June 14, 2010

'Green burials' eliminate toxins and nonbiodegradable material from end-of-life rituals, and the movement is gaining ground. Houston Chronicle, Texas.

[Millions of litres of sewage, dangerous liquids accidentally dumped in cities.](#)

Monday, June 14, 2010

Far more sewage has been spilled in Canadian urban centres over the last six years than any other harmful contaminant, newly released figures show. Canadian Press.

[EPA rule targets lead paint stirred up by renovations.](#)

Sunday, June 13, 2010

A recent study showed that young children living in homes during renovations were 30 percent more likely to have unsafe levels of lead in their bloodstreams than children in houses not undergoing renovation, the EPA says. New Orleans Times-Picayune, Louisiana.

[See related articles: [Health department urges vigilance in preventing lead poisoning in kids](#) and [Painting this old house will cost more if it has lead paint](#)]

[U.S. lawns getting an eco-makeover.](#)

Sunday, June 13, 2010

From coast to coast, eco-concerned homeowners are ripping out their manicured,

chemically-treated lawns and replacing them with organic food gardens, native flowers and sometimes, just rocks. Inter Press Service.

[See a related article: [Homeowners weigh lawn mower options](#)]

[Environmental nurses hold first U.S. conference at the UM School of Nursing.](#)

Friday, June 11, 2010

For the first time, nurses from across the nation came together at a conference to address the relationship between health and the environment. University of Maryland, Baltimore.

[Congress looks at making cities more "livable."](#)

Thursday, June 10, 2010

The Senate moved closer on Wednesday to making the concept of "livable communities" a part of national law that would provide federal grants to help local governments implement comprehensive city planning. Reuters.

[Scientists debate: Are recessions good for health?](#)

Thursday, June 10, 2010

During recessions, idled factories spew less pollution and fewer people commuting to jobs means fewer traffic deaths. These and other factors have led some economists to overturn assumptions that recessions are bad for your health. But an Associated Press analysis suggests that view may not be true for the most recent recession. Associated Press.

[Slightly early births linked to autism, dyslexia.](#)

Thursday, June 10, 2010

Babies born just 1 or 2 weeks before their 40-week gestation due date are more likely to develop learning difficulties such as autism or dyslexia, according to a British study published on Tuesday. Reuters Health.

[See related articles: [Slightly preterm, healthy babies do OK later on](#) and [Autism not necessarily inherited, scientists say](#)]

[Concerns over PCBs.](#)

Wednesday, June 09, 2010

Denver environmental health officials were in East Denver yesterday at the site of a transformer explosion testing to see whether dangerous chemicals were released into the air. Denver Daily News.

[Adverse effects of methylmercury: Environmental health research implications.](#)

Wednesday, June 09, 2010

Imprecision in exposure assessment and other forms of uncertainty tended to cause an underestimation of methylmercury toxicity, but repeatedly led to calls for more research rather than prevention. Environmental Health Perspectives.

[Health watch: Skin deep danger.](#)

Wednesday, June 09, 2010

The cosmetics you use or even the cream you put on your baby could contain ingredients linked to cancer or reproductive harm, according to an environmental group that says consumers need to beware. El Paso KTSM TV, Texas.

[See other articles about warnings regarding consumer products: [Some plastic school materials highly toxic, says EcoWaste](#); [McDonald's pulls cadmium-tainted Shrek glasses](#) and [Major retailers agree to limit lead in handbags](#)]

[Waiter, there's a potential carcinogen in my soup.](#)

Wednesday, June 09, 2010

BPA is ubiquitous. Simply put, just about anything you eat that comes out of a can -- from Campbell's Chicken Soup and SpaghettiOs to Diet Coke and BumbleBee Tuna -- contains the same exact chemical. The exposure to BPA from canned food "is far more extensive" than from plastic bottles, researchers say. Reuters.

[See related articles about BPA: [BPA crosses the placenta, remains active in the fetus, show rat and human studies](#) and also one about phthalates: [Prenatal exposure to phthalates is associated with reduced masculine behavior in boys](#)]

[Ex-Union Carbide officials jailed over Bhopal leak.](#)

Monday, June 07, 2010

A court Monday found the Indian unit of U.S. chemicals firm Union Carbide guilty of negligence and sentenced seven Indian former employees to two years in jail over one of the world's worst industrial accidents that killed thousands in 1984. Reuters.

[See a related article: [Bhopal gas leak one of several man-made disasters](#)]

[Nigeria -- lead poisoning kills 100 children in north.](#)

Sunday, June 06, 2010

More than 100 children have died of lead poisoning in Nigeria in recent weeks, health officials say. BBC.

[See related articles from China: [Lead poisoning sickens 16 children in central China](#), Peru: [Full Frame: Peruvian poison town](#) and India: [Reports confirm, Uranium presence in Punjab water responsible for retarded children](#)]

[Madison's water utility faces a difficult job and tough choices.](#)

Sunday, June 06, 2010

Though Madison sits atop a deep and bountiful aquifer, pollutants from past industrial practices, as well as naturally occurring contaminants, such as manganese and iron, are complicating the utility's efforts to improve service to its customers by drilling new wells. Madison Wisconsin State Journal, Wisconsin.

[See related articles about water pollution from Washington State: [Investigators seek source of PCBs in Spokane River](#), from Wisconsin: [Court sides with paper mill in Fox River cleanup](#), from India: ['Soft drink plants cause chromium pollution'](#) and [Friendly bacteria can fight Ganga pollution](#) and from Canada: [Clean water source on way for Shannon, Que.](#)]

[Manufacturing facilities release pharmaceuticals to the environment.](#)

Saturday, June 05, 2010

In a 2004-2009 study, USGS scientists found that pharmaceutical manufacturing facilities can be a significant source of pharmaceuticals to the environment. U.S. Geological Survey.

[Urine test could be first biological autism diagnosis.](#)

Saturday, June 05, 2010

A simple test that would revolutionise the diagnosis of autism is being developed by British scientists. Like a pregnancy test, it would detect the condition from just a few drops of urine, providing doctors with a simple 'yes' or 'no'. London Daily Mail, United Kingdom.

[See another article about autism diagnosis: [Accepting difference](#)]

[Neighborhood rife with health hazards.](#)

Friday, June 04, 2010

An Indianapolis neighborhood struggling with poverty and crime also faces serious environmental health hazards, according to a new study. Indianapolis WRTV, Indiana.

[See a related article: [Stress and the city: Measuring effects of chronic stress and air pollution](#)]

[Federal officials set out 13 options for long-term cleanup.](#)

Friday, June 04, 2010

With oil reaching Louisiana's marshes, the next stage in the spill response may come from microbes. USA Today.

[See related articles: [Gulf oil spill: human health effects debated; Even with a cleanup, spilled oil stays with us](#); [La. to OSHA: Investigate oil spill cleanup safety](#); [Skeptical public fears oil-spill health issues](#); [Reproductive health concerns in the aftermath of the Gulf oil disaster](#); [Oil spill invades beaches: Is it a health threat?](#) and [Oil spill's health impacts scrutinized](#)]

["LEED standards insufficient to protect human health," finds new report.](#)

Thursday, June 03, 2010

A new report released last week concludes, "[LEED] 'platinum,' 'gold,' and 'silver' status

conveys the false impression of a healthy and safe building environment, even when well-recognized hazardous chemicals exist in building products," and, "LEED standards are insufficient to protect human health." Healthy Building Network.

[There's no place like home for babies to pick up toxins.](#)

Thursday, June 03, 2010

Infants may take in two to five times as much household dust as adults, says Alan Greene, a pediatrician at Stanford University's Lucile Packard Children's Hospital. Because of that dust, babies are more likely to be exposed to pesticides and other potentially harmful chemicals inside the home than outside, he says. USA Today.

[See related articles: [The poison crib: When protective chemicals harm](#), [Blood concentrations of PBDE flame retardants mirror levels in dust](#) and [Toxic chemicals finding their way into the womb](#)]

[EPA proposes new permit requirements for pesticide discharges.](#)

Wednesday, June 02, 2010

This action is in response to an April 9, 2009, court decision that found that pesticide discharges to U.S. waters were pollutants, thus requiring a permit.

[See articles about pesticide regulation in the US: [EPA moves to terminate all uses of insecticide endosulfan to protect health of farmworkers and wildlife](#), in California: [Farm worker health act passed by Calif. State Assembly](#) and [State poised to OK supertoxic pesticide](#) and Australia: [WWF calls for insecticide ban](#) and approval in Alaska: [State allows railroad to use herbicides, objections raised](#)]

[Intellectual function in Mexican children environmentally exposed to manganese living in a mining area.](#)

Wednesday, June 02, 2010

The findings from this study suggest that airborne manganese environmental exposure is inversely associated with intellectual function in young school-age children.

Environmental Health Perspectives.

[Alert: protein drinks.](#)

Wednesday, June 02, 2010

Some protein drinks can pose health risks, including exposure to potentially harmful heavy metals, if consumed frequently. All drinks in our tests had at least one sample containing one or more of the following contaminants: arsenic, cadmium, lead, and mercury. Consumer Reports.

[See another article about problematic ingredients (food colorings): [Colour me bad](#) and others about food contaminants: [Lake Berrvessa's mercury levels a concern](#) and [EPA warns of dioxin in food](#)]

[More cancer-causing agents in U.S. cigarettes.](#)

Wednesday, June 02, 2010

Americans inhale more cancer-causing agents with their cigarettes, probably because of the tobacco blend, while smokers in Canada, Britain and Australia get less, U.S. researchers reported on Tuesday. Reuters.

[See other articles about cigarette's health effects: [Secondhand smoke linked to mental distress](#); [England smoking ban cut heart attacks, health cost](#); [Smoking and public health: Breathe easy](#) and [Smoke-free air laws effective at protecting children from secondhand smoke](#)]

[EPA faults Calif. hazardous-waste landfill's testing of contaminants.](#)

Wednesday, June 02, 2010

A hazardous-waste landfill suspected by Kettleman City residents of causing birth defects has been inaccurately testing treated contaminants for five years, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency says. McClatchy Newspapers.

[See other articles about the hazards of waste in India: [Recycling India's e-waste brings jobs to poor -- and health, environmental fears](#) and Qatar: [E-waste law soon; draft in the works](#)]

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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