



Learning and Developmental Disabilities Initiative

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



Biweekly Bulletin July 14, 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

LDDI Receives Autism Society Award

LDDI was one of six recipients of this year's Autism Society of America "Autism Champion" award. The champions were honored on July 9th at the Autism Society's 41st National Conference in Dallas. The LDDI award was described at the ceremony:

Learning and Developmental Disabilities Initiative (LDDI)

The Learning and Developmental Disabilities Initiative (LDDI) has been instrumental in creating awareness of the critical role of environmental factors in neurodevelopment and in galvanizing advocates to demand change in the way toxins are regulated. Elise Miller, MEd, director of the Collaborative on Health and the Environment, served as founding coordinator of LDDI, which is comprised of the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, Learning Disabilities Association of America, National Association for the Dually Diagnosed and Autism Society. The efforts of LDDI members have helped achieve what a few years ago people thought impossible: the introduction of national chemical policy reform legislation in May 2010 in order to better protect public health and reduce environmental contributors to chronic diseases and disabilities, including autism. In our community, where for decades families have seen first-hand the impact of the environment on the health and well-being of their loved ones with autism, LDDI's inspiring efforts to educate a far wider range of constituencies about environmental health science and leverage chemical policy reform gives us hope that we can attain a healthier future for all our children, families and communities.

Dr. Ted Schettler, science director of the Collaborative on Health and the Environment and science advisor to LDDI, accepted the award.

ASA National Conference a Huge Success

On July 8, 2010, the Learning and Developmental Disability Initiative, with the support of the John Merck Fund, cosponsored the 2nd annual *Science That Makes a Difference Annual Symposium* at the Autism Society of America national conference. This year's symposium, titled "Exposures and Child Development: The Latest on Environmental Health Sciences, Developmental Disabilities, and Public Health Policy", examined the growing evidence between environmental toxicants and disability. This all-day symposium, led by key researchers in the field, examined a variety of topics from an environmental health overview by Ted Schettler, MD, MPH, to the specific relationships between environmental health and autism led by Martha Herbert, MD, PhD. Surichi Chandra, MD, led the afternoon with a discussion of the impact of environmental toxins on psychological and neurological health followed by case study of Texas from Ray Palmer, PhD, looking specifically at that state's environmental pollutants and prevalence of disability. Joseph Guth, PhD, JD, offered the latest information on existing policy and

possible legislative remedies. Finally, Jeff Sells, JD, and Vernell Jessie concluded the session on a personal note by sharing their perspectives as participants in the *Mind, Disrupted* biomonitoring report. It was a full day of good information, great questions, and increased momentum for future discussions.

LDDI Presentation at the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Schools 2010 Conference

Laura Abulafia, director of education and outreach for AAIDD, will be speaking this Friday, July 16th, in Las Vegas on the topic of Environmental Toxic Exposures and Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. This builds on LDDI's previous engagement with ASHA. [Learn more on the conference website.](#)

Mental Health Working Group Meeting July 16th

The CHE Mental Health Working group will be having a phone meeting this Friday, July 16th, at 11:00 a.m. Pacific / 2:00 p.m. Eastern time. Please contact Erika Hagensen, LDDI national coordinator, for more information: ehagensen@healthandenvironment.org.

Save the Date: Research and Science Teleconference September 14th

The next teleconference in the Research and Science series from the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) will feature Dr. Isabelo Ribeiro speaking on "Cross-sectional Evaluation of Formaldehyde Levels of Portable Classrooms (= 3 years old) and Traditional Classrooms-Georgia, 2009 Pilot Study." For more information please [visit AAIDD's website](#).

New Teleconference Series Scheduled for Fall

AAIDD's Environmental Health Initiative (EHI) will be hosting a new teleconference series on aging, environmental health and disability. Guest speakers featured will include Ted Schettler from the Science and Environmental Health Network (SEHN), Maria Valenti from Greater Boston Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR), and many more. This is a groundbreaking series, and all are welcome to join, free of cost, with sponsorship provided by the John Merck Fund. More information will be posted on the [AAIDD EHI website](#) soon, or contact Laura Abulafia: laura@aaidd.org.

New Members

The Learning and Developmental Disabilities Initiative welcomes these new members:

- Jennifer Eaton, Wausau, Wisconsin
- Tracy Edinger, ND, Portland, Oregon
- Deborah Gray, BSN, RN, Gulf Breeze, Florida
- Roberta Irving, Avon, New York
- Lori Lindgren, Oakland, California
- Annabelle Lota, Federal Way, Washington
- Pierrette Mimi Poinsett, MD, Petaluma, California
- Farhan Abdul Rauf, MD(PT), MPH, PhD, Karachi, Pakistan

Announcements

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

[Working for environmental justice and children's health.](#)

What actions might EPA take to advance environmental justice and better protect the health of our children? The Environmental Protection Agency seeks comments.

[EPA proposes 2011 renewable fuel standards.](#)

Based on the standard, each refiner, importer and non-oxygenate blender of gasoline determines the minimum volume of renewable fuel that it must ensure is used in its transportation fuel.

[EPA launches a collaborative website for integrated environmental modeling.](#)

With the website, the agency is providing a state-of-the-art resource to the

environmental modeling community. The iemHUB supports the development of integrated models and their use in conducting research and informing the decision-making process.

[New video: Toxic Chemicals Lobby: Exclusive Leaked Footage.](#)

This cartoon from the Safer Chemicals, Healthy Families Campaign spoofs the toxic chemicals lobby.

[Call for comments: Strengthening Environmental Justice Research and Decision Making.](#)

EPA invites you to read the update from the March 2010 symposium, which outlines EPA's efforts and includes a summary of the Symposium participants' recommendations.

[EPA issues greenhouse gas reporting requirements for four emissions sources/Agency also to consider data confidentiality.](#)

EPA is finalizing requirements under its national mandatory greenhouse gas (GHG) reporting program for underground coal mines, industrial wastewater treatment systems, industrial waste landfills and magnesium production facilities.

[Job opening: Oakland, California.](#)

Worksafe, Inc., a California-based nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting occupational safety and health (OSH) through education, training and advocacy, seeks an experienced attorney with initiative and passion for advocacy on behalf of workers in the areas of OSH and workers compensation.

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) NIEHS Summer of Discovery Lecture

Tuesday July 20, 2010

10:30 a.m. - noon

Research Triangle Park, North Carolina
at the NIEHS Campus Rodbell Auditorium AB

Sponsor: National Institute of Environmental Health Science

Sophia Bolick, PhD, will speak on "Hormones and Diet."

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Deborah L. Wilson, 919-541-3205 or dewilson@niehs.nih.gov

2) NIEHS Summer of Discovery Lecture

Tuesday July 27, 2010

10:30 a.m. - noon

Research Triangle Park, North Carolina
at the NIEHS Campus Rodbell Auditorium AB

Sponsor: National Institute of Environmental Health Science

Amy Abdulovic, PhD, will speak on "Air Pollution."

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Deborah L. Wilson, 919-541-3205 or dewilson@niehs.nih.gov

3) National Environmental Justice Advisory Council Meeting

Tuesday through Thursday, July 27 - 29, 2010

Washington, DC
at the Fairfax at Embassy Row, 2100 Massachusetts Avenue NW

Sponsor: US Environmental Protection Agency National Environmental Justice Advisory Council

Information will be posted on the website. Public comments are also welcome via the website or telephone. The registration and comment deadline is July 16th, 10 a.m. Eastern time.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Meetings@AlwaysPursuingExcellence.com

4) The Human Health Effects of the Gulf Coast Oil Spill: A Summary of the IOM Workshop

Thursday July 29, 2010

1:00 p.m. Pacific / 4:00 p.m. Eastern time

Sponsor: Collaborative on Health and the Environment

The Gulf oil spill is now being called the largest single environmental disaster in our nation's history. The impact on the gulf ecosystem is only beginning to be assessed. And what of potential impacts on human health? The Institute of Medicine recently convened a meeting on that topic, and we will hear from some of the leading participants in that meeting about known and suspected health implications of the spread of crude oil and of efforts to contain and clean it. Featured speakers will include Linda Rosenstock, MD, MPH, dean of the UCLA School of Public Health and Lynn Goldman, MD, MS, MPH, dean of the Georgetown School of Public Health and Health Services.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: CHE, info@healthandenvironment.org

5) The Summer Institute on Neurodevelopmental Disorders

Friday August 6, 2010

7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Sacramento, California

at the University Union Ballroom, Sacramento State University

Sponsor: UC Davis Health System and Sacramento State University

Highlights include sessions on neurodevelopmental disorders across the lifespan: research to practice; behavioral health and developmental disabilities; and early childhood, school age, and transition to adulthood; plus opportunities for cross-fertilization between researchers, healthcare professionals, educators, caregivers, and family members. Pre- and postconference skill-based workshops are new.

Price: see page 8 of the conference brochure

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: UC Davis Health System, 866-263-4338

6) Get a HANDLE on Neurodevelopmental Differences

Saturday and Sunday, August 14 - 15, 2010

Sarasota, Florida

at the Fountains at Lake Pointe Woods, 7979 South Tamiami Trail

Sponsor: The HANDLE Institute

This hands-on workshop introduces an interactive approach for identifying and addressing underlying causes of learning and social difficulties related to attentional disorders (ADD/ ADHD) brain injury; autism; motor problems and hypersensitivities; learning challenges; dyslexia; OCD, anxiety disorders, and other behavioral or developmental challenges, issues of aging and more.

Price: Please contact the instructor regarding costs for this course.

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Carolyn Nuyens, carolyn.nuyens@handle.org

News and Journal Articles

[Brigham will recruit patients for gene study.](#)

Tuesday, July 13, 2010

Patients who go to Brigham and Women's Hospital for routine care will soon be asked to provide a blood sample for genetic testing, with the results used to build a massive database to help untangle how genes, lifestyle and the environment affect human health. Boston Globe, Massachusetts.

[See a related article: [Mito-conundrum: Unraveling environmental effects on mitochondria](#)]

[Three contaminants linked to skewed thyroid hormones in infants.](#)

Tuesday, July 13, 2010

Infants with higher exposures to three contaminants - perchlorate, nitrate or thiocyanate - found in water, food and tobacco smoke had increased levels of thyroid stimulating hormone (TSH), a sign that the thyroid gland may not be working properly. Environmental Health News.

[See other articles about exposures and thyroid function: [Childhood exposure to phthalates - associations with thyroid function, insulin-like growth factor I \(IGF-I\) and growth](#) and [Trouble as you boil and bubble](#) (about PFOA)]

[Message fits the times.](#)

Tuesday, July 13, 2010

This is not your grandparents' NAACP. Or even your parents'. That's a good thing. Those attending the NAACP's 101st annual convention have heard as much about health and environmental concerns as more traditional civil rights issues. The broader message fits the times. Kansas City Star, Missouri.

[Nanomaterials in the construction industry and resulting health and safety issues.](#)

Tuesday, July 13, 2010

A recent review by scientists at Rice University has looked at the benefits of using nanomaterials in construction materials but also highlights the potentially harmful aspects of releasing nanomaterials into the environment. Nanowerk Spotlight

[Ohio River study finds drugs, chemicals that slip through waste treatment.](#)

Monday, July 12, 2010

Dozens of chemicals and pharmaceuticals - antidepressants, veterinary hormones, even cocaine - have been detected in the Ohio River upstream and downstream from Louisville. Louisville Courier-Journal, Kentucky.

[See other articles about water quality: [Programs aim to keep medicine out of environment](#); [Don't flush old medicine, turn it into the cops](#); [How clean is Seattle's drinking water?](#); [Benefits and dangers of water fluoridation a contentious issue nationwide](#); [Drilling chemicals may pose hazard](#); [Water pollution spreading in the Valley](#); [Federal money flowing into Lake Erie to help reduce flow of bacteria](#); [Bacteria follow rainwater to Lake Michigan](#); [When E. coli levels spike, swimmers can be at risk](#); [Water quality hardly a clear issue](#); [SC company has a selenium solution](#); [Water crisis](#); [Water in some NH wells is worrisome](#); [Sewage spill leads to closure of beach in Monterey](#); [Camp Lejeune toxic exposure report released](#); [Water draws residents' attention](#); [Residents, environmentalists take on steel mill](#) and [Weighing safety of weed killer \[atrazine\] in](#)

[drinking water, EPA relies heavily on industry-backed studies\]](#)

[EPA considers tougher rules against fly ash.](#)

Sunday, July 11, 2010

The Environmental Protection Agency is considering regulating coal combustion residuals and has published two options in the Federal Register. Tulsa World, Oklahoma.

[A new analysis triples U.S. plutonium waste figures.](#)

Sunday, July 11, 2010

The amount of plutonium buried at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation in Washington State is nearly three times what the federal government previously reported, a new analysis indicates, suggesting that a cleanup to protect future generations will be far more challenging than planners had assumed. New York Times.

[See another article about nuclear materials: [Radiation exposure at Ontario nuclear plant prompts industry-wide investigation](#)]

[U.S. lags behind on worker safeguards.](#)

Sunday, July 11, 2010

In the United States, there's a lot of discussion about the difficulties of requiring hospitals and clinics to prove they are not contaminating their workers with toxic drugs. But several other countries already are requiring safeguards. InvestigateWest.

[See a related article: [Lifesaving drugs may be killing health workers](#)]

[Safety standards involve all food producers.](#)

Sunday, July 11, 2010

They highlighted the progress and accomplishments the USDA and HHS has achieved during the year in the area of prioritizing prevention, strengthening inspection and enforcement, and improving response and recovery. Natural Resource Report.

[See other articles about food safety concerns: [Feinstein's call for BPA ban bill riles lobbies](#) and [Arsenic collects in top soil, contaminating rice, reducing yield](#)]

[Children keep Egypt's cotton spinning.](#)

Saturday, July 10, 2010

Egypt is famous for its cotton. Vendors around the world boast of their luxurious Egyptian cotton sheets. But on many small farms, children are involved in all parts of cotton farming - and that includes exposure to harmful pesticides and harsh working conditions. MarketPlace.

[See another article about occupational exposure to pesticides: [Acute antimicrobial pesticide-related illnesses among workers in health-care facilities - California, Louisiana, Michigan, and Texas, 2002--2007](#)]

[Study debunks product claims.](#)

Thursday, July 08, 2010

It found many had exaggerated claims of Sun Protection Factor of SPF ratings above 50, and the group cited "potentially hazardous ingredients" in most of the products. Clackamas Review, Oregon.

[Lyme disease on the rise.](#)

Thursday, July 08, 2010

Trying to make sense of all the contradictory evidence and information about Lyme disease is overwhelming to those who believe they have contracted the disease. Toronto Star.

['Sick' lurks at home.](#)

Wednesday, July 07, 2010

Fumes from cleaning agents, air fresheners, insecticides and paint can make home an unsafe environment. Kingston Jamaica Gleaner, Jamaica.

[See related articles: [Sen. Klobuchar celebrates new formaldehyde use law](#); [Green cleaning is about protecting the health of people, animals and the planet](#); [Air scare - Your child may be at risk](#) and ['Green buildings' offer solution to health problems](#)]

[Quitting smoking during pregnancy may not be enough to prevent harm to baby.](#)

Wednesday, July 07, 2010

The authors conclude that quitting smoking during pregnancy without actively avoiding exposure to secondhand smoke may not protect the developing fetus. Scientific American.

[See other articles about prenatal exposures and health: [Mother's diet, genes raise birth defect risk in mice](#); [Placental transfer of the polybrominated diphenyl ethers BDE-47, BDE-99 and BDE-209 in a human placenta perfusion system: an experimental study](#); [Delayed reaction: The fetal basis of adult disease, with Deborah Cory-Slechta and Pregnant drinking 'affects sperm'](#)]

[EPA proposal cuts pollution from power plants in 31 states and DC.](#)

Wednesday, July 07, 2010

Along with local and state air pollution controls, the new proposal, called the transport rule, is designed to help areas in the eastern United States meet existing national air quality health standards.

[See articles about air quality concerns: [Childhood incident asthma and traffic-related air pollution at home and school](#); [Hearings set, public comments sought on new Kansas coal plant permit](#); [EPA flexes federal muscle on Texas air](#); [UA first to study contaminants in dust and water](#); [Adulterated fuel poses threat to kids](#); [The heat is on for change: coal](#); [Are air pollutants linked to bowel disease risk?](#); [Kids with asthma head indoors during smog season](#) and [Sun City West activist targets effects of mining pollutants](#)]

[Tension over cellular antennas mounts in city.](#)

Tuesday, July 06, 2010

The increasing popularity of smart phones is pitting companies looking to expand their coverage against city residents concerned about the dangers presented by a growing number of cellular antennas. San Francisco Chronicle.

[See a related journal article: [Epidemiological evidence for a health risk from mobile phone base stations](#) and others about radiation from phones and meters: [News analysis: Cell phone health hazards: Better safe than sorry](#), [Tinnitus and mobile phone use](#) and [Fairfax seeks ban on 'smart meter' installations](#); from scanners: [Columbia University: Body scanners increase risk of skin cancer](#) and [Heart tests add to U.S. radiation dose concerns](#) and from high-tension cables: [Highlighting the dangers of living under high tension cables](#)]

[A burning question.](#)

Tuesday, July 06, 2010

Incinerating garbage might be the most suitable disposal option for Chinese cities, but citizens are worried about side effects. The question has triggered wide disputes, as some cities planning to build trash incinerators have met strong opposition from local residents. Beijing Review, China.

[See another article about disposal and health concerns: [Metro Vancouver waste-to-energy incinerator opponents fired up for a fight](#), [India's poor risk 'slow death' recycling 'e-waste'](#) and [Ill ex-prison employees blame US gov. program](#)]

[The toxic truth about mega-farms: chemical fumes, distressed animals and poisoned locals driven from their homes and worse.](#)

Monday, July 05, 2010

In a 'mega-farm,' huge quantities of hormones and antibiotics are hosed away in the gallons of waste which they produce and stored in vast lagoons. And, terrifyingly, this could soon be the future of farming in Britain. London Daily Mail, United Kingdom.

[See a related article: [Utah study points to arsenic in backyard chickens](#)]

[Toxic sites take years, decades to clean up.](#)

Monday, July 05, 2010

Cleanup and identification of Illinois sites contaminated with hazardous chemicals has dragged on for years, or even decades, in a process that is expensive, often contentious and nowhere near complete. Utility companies are responsible for the cleanup but can follow their own timetables. Chicago Tribune, Illinois.

[Exposed: safety lapses at hi-tech firms.](#)

Sunday, July 04, 2010

A series of worrying safety lapses in the hi-tech microelectronics industry have been exposed in a new report from the Government's watchdog, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). Companies using highly toxic chemicals to etch silicon chips for computers are under fire for failing to protect the health of their workers. Glasgow Herald, United Kingdom.

Heavy metal.

Saturday, July 03, 2010

What is the risk posed by cadmium exposure? The growing prevalence of products tainted with cadmium spurred the Consumer Product Safety Commission to study safe levels of exposure, with the aim of setting a standard for acceptable levels. Time Magazine.

[See related articles about lead and cadmium: [Prevent poisoning from lead, cadmium](#); [Feds recall more children's jewelry due to toxic cadmium](#); [California cracks down on jewelry made of highly toxic lead](#); [Sepa plans action against recycling of lead batteries](#); [Lead-poisoned kids left untreated in Detroit](#); [Lead from gold mines may have poisoned more than 2,000 Nigerians. WHO says](#); [Toxic playthings: Lack of lead warnings angers local woman](#); [Lead screening still a dilemma in Silver Valley](#) and [Area faces gaps in lead testing for kids](#)]

BP Texas refinery had huge toxic release just before Gulf blowout.

Saturday, July 03, 2010

Two weeks before the blowout in the Gulf of Mexico, the huge, trouble-plagued BP refinery in the coastal town of Texas City spewed tens of thousands of pounds of toxic chemicals into the skies. ProPublica.

[See a related article about another refinery: [APNewsBreak: Groups say Exxon violates US air laws](#)]

Disease and intelligence: Mens sana in corpore sano.

Saturday, July 03, 2010

Scientists have discovered direct evidence that infections and parasites affect cognition. And this trend can be seen in countries all around the world. Economist.

California Assembly passes bill banning BPA in baby bottles.

Friday, July 02, 2010

The state Assembly passed a bill Thursday to ban the chemical Bisphenol-A from baby bottles and other items that come in contact with small children. Los Angeles Times, California.

[See related articles: [FDA is sued for failing to regulate bisphenol A, from Australia](#); [Baby bottles phased out](#), and [Sex and shopping - how retail therapy really is bad for men's health and fertility](#)]

Not enough folate may quicken hearing loss: Study.

Wednesday, June 30, 2010

Low blood levels of folate are associated with a 35 per cent increased risk of hearing loss, says a new study from Australia that strengthens the link between B vitamins and hearing.

[See another article about vitamins and health: [Vitamin D deficiency linked to Alzheimer's disease](#)]

Gulf seafood: Who decides how safe is safe?

Wednesday, June 30, 2010

AOL News spent the past two weeks chasing down precisely who is testing Gulf seafood, and how they decide what is safe to eat. The analysis is important. Public health experts say they are concerned less about E. coli or salmonella; what they fear is the possibility of cancer or neurologic impact. AOL News.

[See a related article: [Gulf seafood tested for oil but not dispersant](#) and others about fish advisories in Texas: [Health officials warn of high chemical levels in fish from Trinity River](#) and Massachusetts: [Education campaign aims to convince immigrants not to eat fish from river](#)]

[Seizure concern: Split up chickenpox, MMR vaccines.](#)

Wednesday, June 30, 2010

Combining two common childhood immunizations - the chickenpox vaccine and the joint measles, mumps and rubella shot, or MMR - slightly increases the risk of fever-related seizures in toddlers, a new study shows. USA Today.

[EPA releases first round of toxicity testing data for eight oil dispersants.](#)

Wednesday, June 30, 2010

EPA's results indicated that none of the eight dispersants tested, including the product in use in the gulf, displayed biologically significant endocrine disrupting activity.

[See another article about health concerns to come from the Gulf oil spill: [Banned trailers return for latest Gulf disaster](#) and [Mississippi agency says it can't stop BP from dumping spill waste](#)]

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

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)