



Learning and Developmental Disabilities Initiative

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



Biweekly Bulletin July 27, 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

Webinar August 9th: Can Exposures to Toxic Chemicals Contribute to Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities?

Which toxics are associated with IDD's? Which ones pose the greatest threat? Is there anything that can be done to minimize the risk of exposure? Join The Arc for this webinar about how environmental toxics may contribute or exacerbate IDD's and how one chapter is putting this knowledge into action. For more information, please see event #2 below.

New Members

The Learning and Developmental Disabilities Initiative welcomes these new members:

- Donald Fox, PhD, Houston, Texas
- Kathleen Michels, PhD, Silver Spring, Maryland

Announcements

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

[The Endocrine-Disrupting Chemicals Exposure Elimination Act of 2011.](#)

On July 13, 2011, The Endocrine-Disrupting Chemicals Exposure Elimination Act of 2011 was introduced in the US Senate and House. This act is essential to facilitate and strengthen current chemical legislation such as the Safe Drinking Water Act, the Clean Water Act, and the Clean Air Act, as well as new legislation such as the Safe Chemicals Act of 2011, the Endocrine Disruptor Screening Enhancement Act of 2010, and others.

[New report: Transportation and Health: Policy Interventions for Safer, Healthier People and Communities.](#)

This report examines the effects of transportation policies on public health in three key areas -- environment and environmental public health, community design and active transportation, and motor vehicle-related injuries and fatalities.

[EPA seeks public comments on new air quality permits for Shell and ConocoPhillips Arctic oil exploration activities.](#)

EPA will accept public comments on the revised draft permits through September 6 and at public hearings in Barrow, Alaska on August 23 and 24, and in Anchorage on August 26.

[Obama Administration officials and industry leaders unveil federal strategy to](#)

[promote U.S.-based electronics recycling market and jobs.](#)

The announcement today includes the first voluntary commitments made by Dell, Sprint and Sony to EPA's industry partnership aimed at promoting environmentally sound management of used electronics.

[Investigating PAHs: your own mini-epi study.](#)

This lesson plan for high school and college students is based on a recent article in Environmental Health Perspectives.

[Other environmental health lessons have been created: [Consider the source](#) and [Using a spoon to clean the air](#)]

[Epi Info 7 webinar demonstrations.](#)

Epi Info 7, scheduled for release in fall 2011, represents a complete technology overhaul of the Epi Info platform. The Epi Info development team invites interested public health professionals who work with epidemiological data to attend one of these upcoming LiveMeeting webinars.

[EPA strengthens key scientific database to protect public health.](#)

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency today announced plans to improve its Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS) program as part of an ongoing effort initiated in 2009 to strengthen the program.

[Call for proposals: Using Systems Science Methodologies to Protect and Improve Population Health.](#)

This FOA solicits Exploratory/Developmental applications from institutions/organizations that propose to apply one or more specific system science methodologies to public health and health care systems problems and contribute knowledge that will enhance effective decision making around the development of and prioritization of policies, interventions, and programs to improve population health.

[Job opening: Anchorage, Alaska.](#)

Alaska Conservation Foundation, the single largest grant maker to Alaska conservation efforts, has openings for an executive director and for a major gifts officer.

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) How To Bring About Large-scale Behavior Change

Three parts, all held on Saturdays: July 30, August 13 and September 10, 2011

10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Seattle, Washington

at the Seattle Public Library main branch, Wright-Ketcham meeting room

Sponsor: Sustainable Seattle

One of the most confounding challenges facing the sustainability movement is how to bring about a massive shift in human behavior. This master class series explores a variety of powerful insights from cognitive science for developing successful social change strategies. You'll learn how meaning arises in the workings of the human brain, why emotions are absolutely vital for engaging people in a process of persistent change, and what the root causes are that have driven societal institutions to the edge of ecological collapse. Participants will explore the evolutionary origins of morality and discover the psychological foundations of identity that merge values, ideology, and institutions into the powerful stories we collectively live in the modern world. Techniques will be provided to begin using this knowledge to communicate effectively, increase civic engagement, and design better structures for bringing about large-scale behavioral

change. Participants can register for the entire series or individual sessions.

Price: see the website

[Visit the website](#)

2) Can Exposures to Toxic Chemicals Contribute to Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities?

Tuesday August 9, 2011

2:00 - 3:30 p.m. Eastern time

Sponsor: The Arc

Which toxics are associated with IDD? Which ones pose the greatest threat? Is there anything that can be done to minimize the risk of exposure? Join us for this webinar about how environmental toxics may contribute or exacerbate IDD and how one chapter is putting this knowledge into action. You will walk away with research-based facts that will be helpful for the individuals and families your chapter serves. Session speakers include Elise Miller, MEd, executive director of the Collaborative on Health and the Environment, and Meredith Salmi with The Arc of the Greater Twin Cities in Minnesota.

Price: \$60, with discounts for affiliated chapters of The Arc and NCE members

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Laurie Ertz, ertz@thearc.org

3) Epi Info™ 7 Webinar Demonstrations

four dates from August 9 - September 27, 2011

Sponsor: US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Epi Info™ 7, scheduled for release in fall 2011, represents a complete technology overhaul of the Epi Info platform. The Epi Info™ development team invites interested public health professionals who work with epidemiological data to attend one of these upcoming LiveMeeting webinars.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Sara Bedrosian, eri7@cdc.gov

4) 2011 Environmental Justice Conference: One Community-One Environment

Tuesday through Friday, August 23 - 26, 2011 (August 23 is an optional training day)
Detroit, Michigan

Sponsor: Co-sponsored by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); and EPA's Offices of Air and Radiation (OAR), Water (OW), Solid Waste and Emergency Response (OSWER), and Research and Development (ORD); the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS); and Greendoor Initiative

Conference participants can learn about the following: 1) models for effective community engagement and capacity building; 2) strategies for addressing pollution sources that impact EJ communities; 3) federal interagency working group on EJ; 4) workforce development training and job creation; 5) updates: federal agencies' priorities for EJ; 6) hands-on demonstrations of tools and resources; and 7) funding opportunities.

Price: unknown

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Lena (Vickey) Epps-Price, 919-541-5573 or epps-price.lena@epa.gov

5) Symposium on Ethics of Environmental Health

Wednesday through Saturday, August 24 - 27, 2011

Prague, The Czech Republic

at the Courtyard by Marriott Prague Flora

Sponsor: The Society of Radiation Research and Emergency Planning in the Czech Medical Association

This first Symposium on Ethics of Environmental Health will address highly topical issues at the intersection of radiation protection, toxicology, ecology, medicine, risk ethics and bioethics.

Price: around 480 EUR

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: see the [Contact page](#)

News and Journal Articles

[Epigenetic 'memory' key to nature versus nurture.](#)

Tuesday, July 26, 2011

Researchers at the John Innes Centre have made a discovery, reported this evening (24 July) in *Nature*, that explains how an organism can create a biological memory of some variable condition, such as quality of nutrition or temperature. ScienceDaily.

[Climate change forcing buried toxics back into atmosphere, scientists say.](#)

Monday, July 25, 2011

Climatologists have found that as climate change heats up oceans and melts sea ice and snow, buried pollutants, known as legacy POPs, or persistent organic pollutants, are being re-released back into the atmosphere. Solve Climate News.

[Toxic Substances in Consumer Products](#)

Friday, July 22, 2011

International POPs Elimination Network (IPEN) has undertaken a study to test levels of these toxins in products sold internationally. Results are provided.

[See other articles about consumer product safety: [Toxic toys sold in Metro malls, shops; Children's Safe Products -- Reporting Rule](#) and [Furniture linked to PBDE levels in pregnant women](#)]

[Environmental pollutants lurk long after they 'disappear.'](#)

Thursday, July 21, 2011

The health implications of polluting the environment weigh increasingly on our public consciousness, and pharmaceutical wastes continue to be a main culprit. Now a Tel Aviv University researcher says that current testing for these dangerous contaminants isn't going far enough. ScienceDaily.

[Stress during pregnancy and offspring pediatric disease: a national cohort study.](#)

Thursday, July 21, 2011

Maternal life stress during pregnancy may be a common risk factor for impaired child health. The results suggest new approaches to reduce childhood diseases. Environmental Health Perspectives.

[See a related article: [Parents' stress tied to pollution's effect on kids](#)]

[Safety of dissolvable tobacco products disputed.](#)

Thursday, July 21, 2011

The tobacco industry says that the products contain far fewer cancer-causing chemicals such as tobacco-specific nitrosamines and are a "harm reduction" strategy that, like electronic cigarettes, might help people turn to less risky tobacco habits or eventually quit smoking. Los Angeles Times, California.

[See related articles: [State's low smoking rate masks ethnic disparities](#) and [Mothers using nicotine gum to avoid smoking in pregnancy 'put unborn babies at risk'](#)]

[Audits show health violations in drinking water.](#)

Wednesday, July 20, 2011

Environmental Protection Agency audits show that many states are failing to accurately

note health violations such as elevated levels of arsenic and chlorine in drinking water, - according to a new report. Washington Post.

[See other articles about water quality: [First Nation drinking water quality discussed](#); [NRC chairman urges stronger steps to address groundwater contamination at nuke plants](#); [County drinking water tests show traces of harmful chemicals at many sites](#) and [EPA issues final guidance to protect water quality in Appalachian communities from impacts of mountaintop mining](#)]

Access to grocers doesn't improve diets, study finds.

Sunday, July 17, 2011

The study, which tracked thousands of people in several large cities for 15 years, found that people didn't eat more fruits and vegetables when they had supermarkets available in their neighborhoods. Los Angeles Times, California.

[See other articles about food and nutrition: [Japan adds beef to the contaminated menu](#); [Years of eating seafood from county waters could raise health concerns, state report says](#); [Testing Gulf seafood](#); [N.J. DEP warns of health risks of eating blue claw crabs from Newark Bay, Lower Passaic River](#); [Omega-3 reduces anxiety and inflammation in healthy students](#)]

Illness associated with exposure to methyl bromide--fumigated produce -- California, 2010.

Friday, July 15, 2011

An environmental investigation revealed the potential for methyl bromide to accumulate in enclosed areas during the transportation and storage of fumigated grapes. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report.

[See other articles about pesticides: [Suicide and pesticide use among pesticide applicators and their spouses in the Agricultural Health Study](#); [Newfoundland and Labrador joins provinces outlawing cosmetic pesticides on lawns](#); [Group: Arsenic found in Mott's apple juice](#) and [Farmers at risk of pesticide poisoning](#)]

Feds plan environmental reforms in state's poor urban neighborhoods.

Tuesday, July 12, 2011

A renewed focus on environmental justice by officials with the U.S. Department of Justice and Environmental Protection Agency could bring a new level of federal scrutiny to air pollution and other violations that disproportionately affect poor urban neighborhoods. Asbury Park Press.

[See other articles about environmental justice and poverty issues: [Coal plant assailed by NAACP](#); [Massachusetts health care reform increased access to care, particularly among disadvantaged](#); [Appalachian poverty concentrated around mine sites, WVU study says](#) and [EPA Chief Lisa Jackson speaks at NAACP convention in Los Angeles](#)]

After styrene warning, concern about who's at risk.

Thursday, July 14, 2011

Last month's health warning from the Department of Health and Human Services' National Toxicology Program has set off a bruising battle with the makers of styrene, a chemical compound derived from crude oil. Reuters.

Government agency vote means lower lead in toys.

Thursday, July 14, 2011

The amount of lead allowed in toys and other children's products sold in the U.S. will soon be reduced to one of the lowest limits in the world. The move was praised by consumer advocates but denounced by critics worried about job losses and shuttered businesses. Associated Press.

[See other articles about lead: [A geospatial analysis of the effects of aviation gasoline on childhood blood lead levels](#); [Lead paint regulations spark training sessions](#) and [Follow-up study on lead exposure in children living in a smelter community in northern Mexico](#)]

U.S. House votes to end EPA water pollution oversight.

Thursday, July 14, 2011

Fueled by coal industry complaints about the Obama administration's crackdown on

mountaintop removal, legislation passed the U.S. House of Representatives on Wednesday that would strip federal regulators of their authority to make state agencies properly police water pollution. Charleston Gazette, West Virginia.

[See other articles about regulation: [Coal ash could be treated as city trash](#) and [Data gaps threaten chemical safety law](#)]

Study: BPA leaches from aluminum water bottles.

Wednesday, July 13, 2011

Viewed as an alternative to plastics for consumers seeking a BPA-free water bottle, metal water bottles are not all created equal. See which bottles to buy, and which to avoid. Daily Green.

[See other articles about BPA exposure: [Even BPA-free plastic not always safe](#) and [High levels of bisphenol A in paper currencies from several countries, and implications for dermal exposure](#)]

Court limits Sparrows Point pollution liability.

Wednesday, July 13, 2011

In a ruling that's left Dundalk-area residents shaking their heads, a federal court has declared that recent owners of the century-old steel-making complex at Sparrows Point can't be made to clean up past contamination of surrounding waters. Baltimore Sun, Maryland.

[See other articles about contaminated sites: [The U.S. Army struggles to unload a tainted asset](#); [EPA unveils plans for Crown Vantage Landfill Superfund site in Milford](#); [Toxic sheep dip sites warning](#); [Love Canal women had higher pregnancy risks](#); [EPA official delivers status report on cleanup of Hudson River PCBs](#); [State sticks Payson with Superfund cleanup costs](#); [EPA: No delay for river plans](#); [Merced to pay \\$1.5M in subdivision contamination](#); [Groups say \[Spokane\] river cleanup is flawed](#); [South Africa 'not managing' impact of uranium mining, says new report](#); [EPA announces measures to protect Raritan River from ground water contamination seeping from the American Cyanamid Superfund Site in Bridgewater Township, N.J.](#); [Study maps mercury fallout from Indianapolis power plant](#); [EPA seeking public input on significant remaining cleanup area on Camp Edwards](#); [Lawsuit blasts city PCB plan](#); [California Latinos sue EPA to force action on toxic dumps](#); [EPA provides update on efforts to address dioxin contamination in the Woonasquatucket River](#); [EPA: Haverford residents safe](#); [The Enbridge oil spill one year later](#); [Mideast lung disease up with chemical wars](#) and [Environmental groups unite, want more upgrades to cut lead from Exide plant in Frisco](#)]

Air pollution linked to depression, forgetfulness.

Wednesday, July 13, 2011

Feeling a bit slow and depressed? It just might be the Inland area's foul air. Riverside Press-Enterprise, California.

[See other articles about air pollution: [New report reveals toxic air near natural gas operations](#); [Schools tested for road fumes](#); [Chemical plume hovers in the air over Ward 8](#); [A toxicogenomic comparison of primary and photochemically altered air pollutant mixtures](#); [Port of Seattle won't speed up cleanup of trucks' air pollution](#); [Summer skies may hold an unseen health risk](#); [NAACP draws attention to air quality](#); [Dirty trucks in port targeted](#); [Fort Worth air quality study: good news and a call for action](#); [Hydrofracking's impact on air quality concerns some](#); [EPA is sued over smog in Los Angeles Basin](#); [Metra will clear the air in its train cars](#); [Study ranks air pollution from coal and oil-fired power plants](#); [Plant to cut emissions](#) and [MIT study says high RSPMs in Delhi's air poses threat to residents](#)]

Are toxins in seafood causing ALS, Alzheimer's, and Parkinson's?

Wednesday, July 13, 2011

Neurologist Elijah Stommel enlisted students to punch the street addresses of about 200 of his patients into Google Earth. These patients have one diagnosis he particularly dreads: ALS, which kills motor neurons in the brain and spinal cord, progressively paralyzing the body. The distribution of cases that emerged on the computer-generated map of New England shocked him. Discover.

[See other articles about brain function: [NIH investigators discover new mechanism that](#)

[may be important for learning and memory; Is meditation the push-up for the brain?; Keeping up your overall health may keep dementia away; Single traumatic brain injury may prompt long-term neurodegeneration; Over half of Alzheimer's cases may be preventable, say researchers; Physical activity linked to lower rates of cognitive impairment and Vascular changes linked to dementia, experts say\]](#)

Relative bioavailability and bioaccessibility and speciation of arsenic in contaminated soils.

Wednesday, July 13, 2011

The multifaceted approach described here yielded congruent estimates of arsenic bioavailability and evidence of interrelations among physicochemical properties and bioavailability estimates. Environmental Health Perspectives.

Lessons Learned

E-waste - a Badly Managed Hazard by Steven G. Gilbert, PhD, DABT

"Do unto those downstream as you would have those upstream do unto you."
Wendell Berry, Citizenship Papers, 2003

"If we are really serious about protecting the environment, the discharge pipes and stacks of industry would all plug directly into their intake side, and costs would not be externalized to a voiceless environment."
Wes Jackson, 1987

"I've always thought that underpopulated countries in Africa are vastly underpolluted."
Lawrence Summers, chief economist of the World Bank, explaining why toxic wastes should be exported to Third World countries

How we manage the waste we create reflects our concern for human and environmental health. Nowhere is this more telling than in how we manage our electronic waste. Take a moment to scan the room you are in for things that plug in or require electricity to operate. Next walk around your workplace, home or school and consider all the gadgets that use electric power, and don't forget the car. While the numbers vary, the United Nations estimates that 20 to 50 million tonnes of electronic waste are produced every year. Some of the most hazardous waste is from televisions, computers and cell phones- e-waste-that contain lead, cadmium, mercury, PBDE, PCBs and other hazardous chemicals. How is this material managed? Who is responsible for the recycling or disposal of these products? In the US, approximately 20 million computers are discarded every year, and as little as 11%-14% of e-waste is appropriately recycled.

Tragically, e-waste is all too often shipped to China, India, Africa or other developing areas where people use 19th-century techniques to extract metals or other components from our 21st-century discards. The workers, including women and children, are mostly unaware of the hazards and unprotected from exposure to the hazardous materials. These chemicals cause cancer, respiratory disease, neurotoxic problems and other effects. Furthermore, waste such as lead is spread around the environment to expose young children and rob them of their intellectual abilities. In Guiyu, Guangdong Province, China, where primitive recycling / dismantling techniques are employed, a 2007 study of children's lead exposure found that children's blood-lead levels ranged from 4.40 to 32.67 µg/dL with a mean of 15.3 µg/dL. 81.8%



(135 of 165 children) had BLLs greater than 10 µg/dL.

From Basel Action Network
www.ban.org

The Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal was adopted in Basel, Switzerland, on March 22, 1989, and entered into force in 1992. Its aim is controlling the environmental impacts of e-waste shipped from developed to developing countries. Initially, 118 nations signed the treaty and, to date, 172 countries have ratified the treaty. However, the United States has neither ratified the treaty nor adequately controlled shipments of e-waste to other countries.



When we buy our new computers or cell phones we do not pay an extra charge to ensure that at the end of use the product is recycled safely. In essence we have externalized the cost to someone else, such as the children in a developing country. No new technology is needed to safely recycle our waste; we only need to manage the problem. One simple approach is to require that the manufacturers take their products back at the end of use. Fortunately, some states have started requiring safe recycling of e-waste.

From Basel Action Network
www.ban.org

We have an obligation to manage the waste we create and not externalize the costs to others. We have an ethical responsibility to ensure that children all over

the world can reach and maintain their full potential, free of exposure to the hazardous chemicals found in our e-waste.

E-waste at Toxipedia: <http://toxipedia.org/x/zYRT>

Basel Action Network - BAN: <http://ban.org/>

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 [Steve Gilbert](#).

Past Lessons Learned: <http://toxipedia.org/x/O6Jb>

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 Hepp
Collaborative on Health and the Environment

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)