



Learning and Developmental Disabilities Initiative

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



Biweekly Bulletin August 11, 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

Senate Hearing on Environmental Contributors to Autism

The Senate Subcommittee on Children's Health of the Environmental and Public Works Committee held a hearing on August 3rd: "State of Research on Potential Environmental Health Factors with Autism and Related Neurodevelopmental Disorders." The committee wanted to understand the state of neurodevelopmental research on the causes and treatment of autism and other neurodevelopmental conditions, specifically the relationship between environmental and genetic factors. [See more, including an archived webcast »](#)

Mental Health Working Group Meeting

The next Mental Health and Environment working group call will take place on Thursday August 26, 2010, at 10:00 a.m. Pacific / 1:00 p.m. Eastern time. To learn more about the initiatives of this working group visit the [working group's webpage](#). To join the working group contact info@healthandenvironment.org.

AAIDD Environmental Health Initiative Upcoming Teleconferences

Research and Science teleconference on Tuesday August 31st from 2:00-3:00 p.m. Eastern time. Sherry Everett Jones, PhD, MPH, JD, FASHA, will present on School Health Policies and Program Study 2006 to make up for the technical difficulties experienced in her previously planned session. For more information, see event #5 below or contact [Laura Abulafia](#).

Aging, Environmental Health, and IDD Teleconference Series. This fall, the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) with Greater Boston Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR) and our distinguished panels of guest speakers bring you a groundbreaking series of teleconference calls on aging, environmental health and disability. Scheduled webinars include these:

- 1) "Environmental Threats to Healthy Aging" with Ted Schettler and Maria Valenti
Tuesday October 12th, 2:00-3:00 p.m. Eastern time
- 2) "Built Environment" with Kathy Sykes, Rodney Harrell and Regina Gray
Tuesday October 19th, 2:00-3:00 p.m. Eastern time
- 3) "Psychosocial Environment" with Danny George and Peter Whitehouse
Tuesday October 26th, 2:00-3:00 p.m. Eastern time
- 4) "Chemical Environment" with Maye Thompson and Marybeth Palmigiano

Tuesday November 2nd, 2:00-3:00 p.m. Eastern time

5) "Food Environment" with Michelle Gottlieb and Emma Sirois

Tuesday November 9th, 2:00-3:00 p.m. Eastern time

For more information, please visit AAIDD's [Teleconference webpage](#).

New Members

The Learning and Developmental Disabilities Initiative welcomes these new members:

- Angelique Goetsch, Minot AFB, North Dakota
- Amanda Hudgens, Austin, Texas
- Man Bahadur Thapa, Kathmandu, Nepal
- Sarah Wade, Santa Barbara, California
- Leigh Wilcox, Frisco, Texas

Announcements

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

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

[EPA sets first national limits to reduce mercury and other toxic emissions from cement plants.](#)

This action sets the nation's first limits on mercury air emissions from existing cement kilns, strengthens the limits for new kilns, and sets emission limits that will reduce acid gases.

[New consumer guide: PVC-Free School Supplies.](#)

The Center for Health, Environment & Justice has published their third-annual Back-to-School Guide to PVC-Free School Supplies to empower parents to make smarter, healthier shopping choices for a toxic-free future.

[See a related article about health threats to students: [PCB threat lurks in Staten Island schools](#)]

[EPA issues new guide to improving stormwater management local streams, Chesapeake Bay to benefit.](#)

Improperly managed stormwater runoff from urbanized areas can damage streams, cause significant erosion, and carry excessive nutrients, sediment, toxic metals, volatile organic compounds, and other pollutants downstream.

[Updated Tables from CDC's National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey.](#)

The Updated Tables, July 2010 provides additional data from the 2005-2006 survey period for 51 of the chemicals previously reported through 2004 in the Fourth Report and the new addition of four parabens and two phthalate metabolites in 2005-2006.

[New website: Healthy Food Action.](#)

Healthy Food Action makes explicit the links between health, food and farm policy. Whether it's rising obesity in kids, the use of arsenic in animal feed, antibiotics being squandered to make livestock grow faster, or a Farm Bill that undercuts the nation's health, this site will provide timely information and make it easy to take action to influence public policy.

[See related articles: [Obesity rates keep rising, troubling health officials](#); [Extra pregnancy pounds hurt baby: Study](#) and [Under fire, Health Department pulls back on arsenic report](#)]

[EPA to hold listening sessions on potential revisions to water quality standards regulation.](#)

Potential revisions include strengthening protection for water bodies with water quality that already exceeds or meet the interim goals of the Clean Water Act; ensuring that standards reflect a continued commitment to these goals wherever attainable; improving transparency of regulatory decisions; and strengthening federal oversight. The public

listening sessions will be held via audio teleconferences on August 24 and 26, 2010, from 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. EDT.

[Job opening: Augusta, Maine.](#)

The Natural Resources Council of Maine (NRCM) seeks an executive director. Current advocacy work focuses in four program areas: energy efficiency and clean renewable energy, protection from toxic chemicals in consumer products, protecting Maine's North woods, and ensuring healthy rivers and watersheds.

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

US Environmental Protection Agency's Region 10, Office of Ecosystems, Tribal & Public Affairs, Ecosystems & Community Health Unit has an opening for an environmental protection specialist to serve as an environmental justice coordinator. Applications are due August 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) CHE Café Call: On the Ground in the Gulf Coast: A Conversation with Wilma Subra and Michael Lerner

Thursday August 12, 2010

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

Sponsor: Collaborative on Health and the Environment

Wilma Subra is one of the foremost resource scientists for low-income communities in the Gulf Coast. This MacArthur Prize-winning chemist has dedicated her career to helping low-income communities get the facts they need about their chemical exposures and the implications for their health. She has worked tirelessly since the BP oil disaster to help communities and disaster workers understand their exposures. This conversation will bring the CHE community up to date on her latest findings. Michael Lerner is vice-chair and co-founder of the Collaborative on Health and the Environment and president of Commonweal, a health and environment institute in Bolinas, California.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: CHE, info@healthandenvironment.org

2) How Chemical Policy Reform Can Spur Green Chemistry

Thursday August 12, 2010

2:00 p.m. Eastern time

Sponsor: American Chemical Society

In the wake of the largest Gulf oil disaster or public concern over the chemicals in a baby bottle, how will changing legislation affect chemical professionals? Public policy has the potential to transform the chemical industries and set a new course for the next decade. Join our speaker, Richard Denison, and learn about the latest green chemistry policy developments (Safe Chemicals Act/TSCA reform) and how they may affect chemical professionals, chemical industries, and the future of green chemistry. Richard A. Denison is a senior scientist at the Environmental Defense Fund.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

3) 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

4) Public Listening Sessions on Potential Revisions to Water Quality Standards Regulation

Tuesday August 24 and Thursday August 26, 2010
1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. Eastern time

Sponsor: US Environmental Protection Agency

The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will hold two public listening sessions on potential changes to the water quality standards regulation before proposing a national rule. The current regulation, which has been in place since 1983, governs how states and authorized tribes adopt standards needed under the Clean Water Act to protect the quality of their rivers, streams, lakes and estuaries. Potential revisions include strengthening protection for water bodies with water quality that already exceeds or meet the interim goals of the Clean Water Act; ensuring that standards reflect a continued commitment to these goals wherever attainable; improving transparency of regulatory decisions; and strengthening federal oversight. Water quality standards are the foundation of the water quality-based approach to pollution control, including Total Maximum Daily Loads and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permits. Standards are also a fundamental component of watershed management. At the sessions, EPA will provide a review of the current regulation and a summary of the revisions the agency is considering. Clarifying questions and brief oral comments (three minutes or less) from the public will be accepted at the sessions, as time permits. EPA will consider the comments received as it develops the proposed rulemaking. EPA will also hold separate listening sessions for state, tribal and local governments.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Dave Ryan, 202-564-7827 or Ryan.dave@epa.gov

5) School Health Policies and Program Study 2006: Healthy Physical School Environment

Tuesday August 31, 2010
2:00 - 3:00 p.m. Eastern time

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

As society continues to focus on the importance of academic achievement, the physical environment of schools should be addressed as one of the critical factors that influence academic outcomes. The School Health Policies and Programs Study (SHPPS) is a national survey periodically conducted to assess school health policies and programs at the state, district, school and classroom levels. SHPPS 2006 provides a comprehensive look at the extent to which schools have health-promoting physical school environment policies and programs. This presentation will provide an overview of SHPPS and findings

for topics such as inspection of school physical facilities; school plans for dealing with mold and moisture-related issues; indoor air-quality management; pest management procedures; purchase of low-emitting products; testing of drinking water; and the use, labeling, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials. This is a rescheduling of a teleconference from mid July.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Laura Abulafia, Laura@aaidd.org

News and Journal Articles

[Oil sands toxics growing rapidly.](#)

Tuesday, August 10, 2010

Canada's oil sands mining operations produce vast and fast-growing quantities of deadly substances, including mercury, heavy metals and arsenic, new data released by Environment Canada shows. Toronto Globe and Mail, Ontario.

[Fluoride helps, officials say, but fears persist.](#)

Tuesday, August 10, 2010

The CDC has recognized water fluoridation as "one of 10 great public health achievements of the 20th century" because it has reduced cavity rates. Some communities, though, are reluctant to add fluoride to their water systems because of campaigns claiming fluoride is dangerous. Gainesville Sun, Florida.

[Killer smog blankets Moscow.](#)

Tuesday, August 10, 2010

Moscow health authorities announced Monday that the number of deaths per day in the Russian capital had nearly doubled to 700 as the city and most of central Russia entered the seventh week of a heat wave. Los Angeles Times.

[See other articles about air quality: [The air near the BP oil spill](#); [Ambient air pollution exposure and full-term birth weight in California](#); [Outdoor particulate matter and childhood asthma admissions in Athens, Greece: A time-series study](#); [Idling buses bad for air, kids](#); [Air pollution link to cancer in Lebanon](#); [Case-crossover analysis of air pollution health effects: A systematic review of methodology and application](#); [Oxidative damage to DNA and lipids as biomarkers of exposure to air pollution](#); [Fears of pervasive air pollution stir up politics in Texas shale gas country](#); [North Texas residents want to protect economy as well as the air](#); [KDHE fires up coal debate](#); [NY coke plant, manager charged in pollution case](#); [BP's new headache: plant emissions suit](#); ['Smogtruck' charts big rig fumes](#); ['Desert dust' days may worsen kids' asthma](#); [Jefferson County Schools ask parents to stop idling, turn off engines during pickup time](#); [Airborne particulate matter and mitochondrial damage: a cross-sectional study](#); [MBTA ordered to cut toxic emissions](#); [Texas AG sues BP for Texas refinery pollution](#) and [Air pollution also affects heart, blood vessels, brain](#)]

[Eliminating diabetes and depression, and boosting education, most likely to ward off dementia.](#)

Friday, August 06, 2010

Eliminating diabetes and depression, as well as increasing education and fruit and vegetable consumption, are likely to have the biggest impact on reducing levels of dementia in the coming years, should no effective treatment be found, concludes a study published on the British Medical Journal website. ScienceDaily.

[The ugly side of beauty.](#)

Friday, August 06, 2010

In *No More Dirty Looks*, former Montrealers Siobhan O'Connor and Alexandra Spunt dish on the dangers of our beauty products, the trials and tribulations of finding natural alternatives and why we should change our habits now. Montreal Mirror, Quebec.

[Harmful content found in toy dolls.](#)

Thursday, August 05, 2010

Harmful levels of plasticizers and heavy metals found in popular toy dolls for children. Taipei China Post, Taiwan.

[See a related article: [Toxicity in toys no child's play for Indian scientists](#)]

Europe breaking electronic waste export ban.

Wednesday, August 04, 2010

Old televisions and computers containing hazardous substances are still being exported from Europe despite a ban aimed at stopping the trade, which poisons workers at makeshift recycling plants in Africa and Asia. BBC.

[See other articles about waste disposal: [UN incineration plans rejected by world's rubbish-dump workers](#), [Wisconsin begins recycling electronics Sept. 1](#), [Tribe denies trash and Crops absorb pharmaceuticals from treated sewage](#)]

Where's all that oil spill waste going? Much of it to 'communities of color,' study finds.

Wednesday, August 04, 2010

An analysis by the Environmental Justice Resource Center of Clark Atlanta University has found that much of the waste generated by the oil spill cleanup efforts is being winding up in common landfills located in majority-black areas. Mobile Press-Register, Alabama.

[See other articles about effects of the spill: [Survey finds broad anxiety among Gulf residents](#); [Dispersants in the wake of the Deepwater Horizon spill, with Dana Wetzel](#); [Fish, crabs and shrimp in Alabama waters appear free of contaminants](#); [Chemical dispersants in Gulf of Mexico not hurting seafood, FDA says](#) and [Emergency responder health: What have we learned from past disasters?](#)]

Arsenic deaths stalk Kandal village.

Wednesday, August 04, 2010

About 150,000 people living along the Mekong and Bassac rivers are consuming arsenic-contaminated drinking water for at least part of the year, according to government figures released last month. Phnom Penh Post, Cambodia.

[See a related article from Florida: [Arsenic find prompts tests on up to 300 Pinellas wells](#)]

Toxic pesticide banned in Jamaica.

Wednesday, August 04, 2010

Use of endosulfan, an organochlorine insecticide first registered in the 1950s, is being phased out in Jamaica. Kingston Jamaica Gleaner, Jamaica.

[See other articles about pesticide use: [Response is mixed on EEE strategy](#); [Landscaper: County chemical rules 'crazy, sad'](#) and [Poisonous pesticides on the doorstep](#)]

Tap water in south China town contaminated.

Wednesday, August 04, 2010

Environmental pollution in China has increased in recent years as the country's rapid economic development continues virtually unchecked. Associated Press.

[See other articles about water contamination: [EPA explains toxic cleanup plan for Quanta site in Edgewater](#), [DEP announces more Limerick well pollution](#), [Parties agree to treat underground toxins](#) and [Selenium hearing is underway in federal court](#)]

Long-delayed Green Chemistry rules take center stage.

Wednesday, August 04, 2010

Environmentalists and industry representatives will square off at a three-hour hearing Tuesday over Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's long-delayed Green Chemistry regulations. Sacramento Capitol Weekly, California.

[See a recap of the meeting: [Joint green chemistry hearing examines elimination of toxics from the marketplace](#) and an article about a possible green-chemistry discovery: [Scientist creates sunscreen from ivy](#)]

Autism Speaks on US Senate hearing on potential environmental health factors in autism.

Wednesday, August 04, 2010

As this hearing reviews studies funded by the Environmental Protection Agency and the

National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences on environmental factors associated with autism, including toxins and other factors that can influence brain development, Dr. Dawson reiterated that it is important to remember that, "Although genetic factors clearly contribute to the causes of autism, we also need to understand environmental factors and their interactions with genetic susceptibility." EurekaAlert!

[See related articles regarding autism: [Educators, officials face 400 % spike in autism](#); [Concern over controversial autism drug \[Lupron\]](#) and [Autism correlation to wealth affirmed](#)]

Wisconsin says: "Know nano."

Tuesday, August 03, 2010

The Wisconsin legislature just set up a study committee to gather information about nanotechnology and consider the policy implications. New Haven Independent, Connecticut.

NIEHS and the action agenda on chemical exposures.

Tuesday, August 03, 2010

Launched with fanfare at a meeting attended by some 500 people in Washington June 26, 2009, the National Conversation on Public Health and Chemical Exposures has mobilized more than 200 specialists, industry representatives, and environmental health advocates to participate on a leadership council and in work groups crafting statements on aspects of the issue. Environmental Factor.

[See a related article: [U.S. regulators lack data on health risks of most chemicals](#)]

Kids at risk of lead poisoning.

Monday, August 02, 2010

One child develops lead poisoning every nine days in the Queensland mining town of Mt Isa, researchers say. The new report published in the Medical Journal of Australia comes amid legal action against the mining company Xstrata that alleges its activities have left children brain damaged. Australian Associated Press.

[See related articles: [Groups seek ban on lead in sporting ammunition](#), [Lead paint problems still haunt Green Bay renters](#) and [The association between bone turnover, micronutrient intake and blood lead levels among pre- and post-menopausal women, NHANES 1999-2002](#)]

After stroke scans, patients face serious health risks.

Sunday, August 01, 2010

Among patients tested for strokes with a complex type of brain scan, radiation overdoses were more widespread than previously known, a New York Times examination has found. New York Times.

Activist urges others to become involved.

Saturday, July 31, 2010

Lois Gibbs, former Niagara Falls housewife-turned-activist who was at the center of the Love Canal controversy of the late 1970s that led to an overhaul of national pollution laws, made a stop in downtown Toledo Friday to generate support for area activists. Toledo Blade, Ohio.

[See a related article: [EPA developing tool to assist in Enviro Justice Initiative](#)]

Qualitative environmental health research: An analysis of the literature, 1991-2008.

Saturday, July 31, 2010

This analysis demonstrates the potential of qualitative data to improve understanding of complex exposure pathways, including the influence of social factors on environmental health, and health outcomes. Environmental Health Perspectives.

Manganese and Parkinson's disease: A critical review and new findings.

Saturday, July 31, 2010

The overwhelming evidence shows that Mn-induced parkinsonism does not involve degeneration of midbrain dopamine neurons and that L-dopa is not an effective therapy. Environmental Health Perspectives.

Can secondhand smoke hurt kids' grades?

Friday, July 30, 2010

Children and teenagers exposed to secondhand smoke at home may get poorer grades than their peers from smoke-free homes, a study of Hong Kong students suggests. Reuters Health.

[See related articles: [State ranks high in childhood exposure to secondhand smoke](#); [Surrey smoking ban in parks, beaches a success so far](#) and [The healthy skeptic: Electronic cigarettes](#)]

Chemicals in rivers linked to sexual changes in fish, researchers say.

Friday, July 30, 2010

Alberta researchers say gender-bending fish swimming in the province's southern rivers raise serious questions about whether the water is safe for people to drink. Canadian Press.

[See other articles about water quality concerns: [Pollution makes quarter of China water unusable](#), [Swimming in Md. rivers can be worse than a dip in the toilet](#) and [Little testing being done locally of prescription drug levels in water](#)]

Epidemiologic evidence on the health effects of perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA).

Friday, July 30, 2010

Epidemiologic evidence remains limited, and to date data are insufficient to draw firm conclusions regarding the role of PFOA for any of the diseases of concern. Environmental Health Perspectives.

Computational toxicology: Realizing the promise of the toxicity testing in the 21st century.

Friday, July 30, 2010

Even though the application of computational toxicology to environmental health decisions requires additional efforts, the merger of the power of computers with biological information is poised to deliver new tools and knowledge. Environmental Health Perspectives.

[See a related article: [Exposure science: A view of the past and milestones for the future](#)]

Subsistence diet not safe from toxins.

Thursday, July 29, 2010

They're in the foods we eat and the toys our children play with, that's why the safety watchdog group, Alaska Community Action on Toxics, is trying to increase awareness about the chemicals we encounter everyday and recent studies show some concerns about the freshest foods from the wild. Anchorage KTUU TV, Alaska.

[See another article about diet and health: [Western diet link to ADHD, Australian study finds](#)]

Prescription: More sun.

Thursday, July 29, 2010

If Stubbs is right about the autism/Vitamin D link, he and a growing legion of scientists across the country might also be right about their larger theory -- that lack of sun exposure and Vitamin D explains Oregon's high rates of depression, multiple sclerosis, bone disease, cancers and dozens of other maladies, including colds and flu. Portland Tribune.

Gas drilling companies claim to use safer chemicals.

Wednesday, July 28, 2010

In Texas and across the country, controversy is escalating over the practice of "fracking," which involves shooting water, sand and chemicals far underground to retrieve natural gas. Texas Tribune.

[See related articles: [Federal, state bills target fracking safety](#), [Concerns raised at gas drilling hearing](#), [US gas firms broke environment rules](#) and [Drilling industry and gubernatorial candidates move to weaken some state regulations](#)]

Pipeline leak pollutes major Michigan river.

Wednesday, July 28, 2010

Crews were working Tuesday to contain and clean up more than 800,000 gallons of oil that poured into a creek and flowed into the Kalamazoo River in southern Michigan, coating birds and fish. Battle Creek and surrounding Calhoun County declared a local state of emergency. Associated Press.

[See a related article: [Long-term odor exposure worries officials](#)]

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!](#)