

## HECANET October 2005

---

A service provided for HECA by [UNEP](#)

### IN THIS ISSUE

#### EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

\* To reflect activities in the next issue of HECANET send information to [heca@nyo.unep.org](mailto:heca@nyo.unep.org)

- (1) HECA Developments**
- (2) IPA/WHO/UNEP Workshop for African Pediatricians and others in the health-care sector on Children's Health and the Environment, Nairobi**
- (3) WHO Children's Environmental Health Indicators (CEHI) Seminar, Nairobi**
- (4) IFCS Publication: "Chemical Safety and Children's Health - Protecting the world's children from harmful chemicals exposures: a global guide to resources"**
- (5) Second International Conference on Children's Environmental Health: Healthy Environments Healthy Children: Increasing Knowledge and Taking Action**
- (6) Workshop on Advances in the Use of Biomarkers in Children**
- (7) International Network on Children's Health, Environment and Safety (INCHES)**
- (8) Policy Interpretation Network on Children's Health and Environment (PINCHE)**
- (9) International Society of Doctors for the Environment Latin America/Argentinean Society of Doctors for the Environment**
- (10) US/EPA 2006 Children's Environmental Health Excellence Awards**
- (11) Institute for Agriculture & Trade Policy (IATP's) Smart Plastics Guide**
- (12) University of Kansas Medical Center - Mid-America Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit**
- (13) Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) 8th Sustainable Development Conference (SDC - 2005)**
- (14) The "Education NOT Contamination" Statewide Conference**

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF ARTICLES

A new report by the World Bank underscored that close to one-fifth of the burden of disease in developing countries can be attributed to environmental risks including climate change and pollution – with unsafe water, poor sanitation and hygiene as leading risk factors, causing 1.7 million premature deaths/year; and urban air pollution estimated to cause about 800,000 premature deaths/year. Meanwhile, according to the research arm of the Chinese Government's environmental protection agency, over 400,000 people in China die prematurely annually from indoor and outdoor air pollution. 77% of schools in Beijing tested in a recent survey showed high levels of deadly pollutants, and new satellite data revealed Beijing's to be the 'air pollution capital of world'. A study in Brazil, concluded that high levels of air pollution are reducing the number of boys born and could be linked to increased rates of miscarriage. There were a number of articles in the American press related to pollution from school buses and new research linking childhood asthma to traffic pollution. Rising rates of asthma were also the subject of a number of articles, as were initiatives to reduce household environmental triggers of asthma, including tobacco smoke. Other environmental tobacco smoke articles were related to various state-level legal bids in the US to limit childhood exposure, including a proposed ban on smoking when child is in the car.

There continued to be a large amount of articles dealing with chemical exposures and the effects on children. A WWF study concluded that European children are absorbing dangerous chemicals into their blood from computers, textiles, cosmetics and electrical appliances, while another report indicated that toxic chemicals can be found in common baby products. A number of articles considered concerns that prenatal and childhood exposure to endocrine-disrupting chemicals may be responsible for a variety of abnormalities in human sexuality, gender development and behaviors, reproductive capabilities, and sex ratios. In another new report researchers argued that there is no clearly safe level of exposure to four of the most common environmental contaminants in the world, and more should be done to protect the public. An opinion piece in the Indian press argued that leading maternity and children's hospitals in India should begin collecting milk samples of mothers undergoing ante natal care sessions. The samples should be tested for PBD, arsenic and other toxic contaminants, and adequate preventive

steps should be taken. Meanwhile, a report for a panel of international experts concluded that nursing mothers should not let fears about environmental toxins in breast milk stop them from breast-feeding.

There were a large amount of articles on childhood lead poisoning, especially in the local US press - mainly related to lead paint. There were also a notable amount of articles dealing with lead in the media in developing countries: a study in two Indian cities finds over 50% of children under 3 have elevated blood lead levels; the Chinese SEPA urged punishment for a lead factory in Central China, which endangered a nearby village with its pollution (259 children in the village, more than four out of five were plagued with lead poisoning); in China, unprotected workers, including many children, strip recyclables out of electronic components; in South African consumers scored a major victory for child safety - following a newspaper investigation into toxic paint on toys, new laws to ban brain-damaging lead paint are "in the pipeline" at last, but the Health Department cannot say how soon it will be before paint and toy makers are brought to book for exposing the public to well-known harm and injury. Pesticides also continued to receive media attention, including their indiscriminate use in Punjab, India, and their suspected role with regard to abnormalities in four children born to Immokalee farmworkers in Florida. An opinion piece in the US press argued that it is time to set up a surveillance program on mercury. Other mercury articles dealt with mercury in vaccines (and the possible links to autism), mercury in emissions from power plants, mercury in fish (and supermarkets posting warnings in this regard), and whether last year's US federal warning for would-be moms to avoid fish with high levels of mercury did more harm than good.

Other notable articles in October dealt with the developmental origins of health and disease, the risks faced by children in the mountains of Pakistan following the devastating and deadly earthquakes in the region, and warnings that global warming threatens to ruin the international initiative to lift Africa out of poverty.

HecaNet readers are also encouraged to see the [October issue of Environmental Health Perspectives](#), which addresses the US National Children's Study (NCS), as one of the most ambitious research endeavors ever attempted, with plans to follow 100,000 people from birth to adulthood. The mini-monograph in this EHP issue details the experiences of the NIEHS/EPA children's environmental health centers in areas including general methodological issues for conducting longitudinal birth cohort studies and community-based participatory research, measuring air pollution exposures as well as, pesticide exposures, asthma, and neurobehavioral toxicity. This collection of papers focuses on lessons learned by the centers that will provide guidance to the NCS on what has and has not worked when studying diverse multiracial and multiethnic groups of children with unique urban and rural exposures. The issue also includes an [editorial from Dr. Philip Landrigan and Dr. Giorgio Tamburlini](#) on the steps to protect children against environmental threats to health have been taken over the past decade in both the United States and Europe and the fact that despite a common scientific foundation, developments in children's environmental health (CEH) on the two sides of the Atlantic have been quite different.

Summaries of articles grouped under the following themes appear below, with links to their full texts:

- (1) AIR POLLUTION: (a) Indoor air pollution, (b) Outdoor air pollution (c) Asthma (d) Environmental Tobacco Smoke/Smoking**
- (2) CHEMICALS: (a) General, (b) Lead, (c) Pesticides, (d) Mercury**
- (3) WATER AND SANITATION**
- (4) MISCELLANEOUS (a) Global (b) Africa (c) Americas (d) Asia-Pacific (e) Russia**

---

**Healthy Environments for Children Alliance (HECA)** is a world-wide alliance to reduce environmental risks to children's health that arise from the settings where they live, learn, play, and sometimes work, by providing knowledge, increasing political will, mobilizing resources, and catalysing intense and urgent action.

**HECANET** is an international mailing list dedicated to promoting healthy environments for children. The list provides updates on the activities of the Healthy Environments for Children Alliance (HECA) and its members, as well as an overview of media coverage of children's environmental health issues and relevant meetings, research findings and information and advocacy resources.

---

## EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

### (1) HECA Developments

The HECA Secretariat at WHO Headquarters and the WHO Regional Office for Africa are organizing an inter-regional consultation on "Improving Children's Environmental Health in Settings - Experiences and lessons for policies and action" in Entebbe, Uganda from 29 November to 2 December 2005. The objective of the meeting is to identify and capitalize on the strengths of settings-based action to address environmental risks to children's health. The consultation will bring together representatives from a number of HECA-supported pilot projects, as well as participants in the International Network to Promote Household Water Treatment and Safe Storage and the Global Initiative on Children's Environmental Health Indicators. The outcome will be used to move forward with HECA and other similar projects/programmes aimed at improving children's environmental health and using this to replicate and/or scale up actions. For more information contact the [HECA Secretariat](#).

HECA-supported pilot projects:

This month's spotlight is on the HECA-supported project in Nicaragua being carried out by the Nicaraguan Ministry of Health and the Pan-American Health Organization. This is a comprehensive joint project involving a national network of non-governmental and governmental organizations and is aimed at developing national capacities to promote health environments for children in the country. The project is identifying a whole range of relevant environmental risks to children's health and developing a national profile on CEH which includes information on the degree of children's exposure to environmental risks, major health consequences, and national capacities to cope with these environmental risks. The national profile will be used to establish priorities for different sectors and measures that need to be taken to alleviate risks. For a progress report to date and other materials from the project see the [HECA website](#).

### (2) IPA/WHO/UNEP Workshop for African Pediatricians and others in the health-care sector on Children's Health and the Environment, Nairobi

The International Pediatric Association (IPA), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Health Organization (WHO) organized a Workshop on '[Children's Health and the Environment](#)' in Nairobi, Kenya on October 12-14, 2005 with support from a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The workshop was hosted by UNEP at its headquarters in Gigiri. Participants were a group of about 60 medical professionals, nurses, and public health officials from 21 African countries. Some of the participants represented national or international pediatric organizations or governmental or intergovernmental bodies (such as WHO, UNEP, CARE, CDC and others). The workshop focused on pediatric diseases linked to environmental contaminants, using actual pediatric cases to illustrate the problems and solutions. The main challenges and controversies in the field of environmental pediatrics were presented, including time to discuss prevention strategies. The workshop built upon the recommendations of the Bangkok Statement (March 2002) that urged WHO to promote the recognition, assessment and study of environmental factors that have an impact on the health and development of children, and more specifically, to incorporate children's environmental health into the training of health care providers and to promote the use of the Pediatric Environmental History.

The workshop was designed to enable participants to achieve the following learning objectives:

1. Identify risks to children from environmental tobacco smoke, chemicals (e.g. lead, mercury, pesticides, persistent organic pollutants), air, water and food contaminants, emerging issues (e.g. endocrine disruptors, climate change), household and industrial products, and other environmental hazards.
2. Describe how to recognize, diagnose, prevent and manage adverse effects linked to these environmental risk factors.
3. Describe why children may be at increased risk of adverse health outcomes and developmental consequence from environmental exposures to chemical, physical and biological agents.
4. Describe when and how the fetus, the child and the adolescent may be exposed to environmental hazards in different rural and urban settings.
5. Discuss a spectrum of exposures including exposures to men and women prior to conception and exposures because of

particular cultural practices and diets, poverty, malnutrition, conflict or child labor.

6. Practice becoming leaders in environmental health education and prevention in the community.

Participants were encouraged to begin working towards certification in environmental health, and necessary steps for credentialing were outlined and included the need to present a seminar about children's environmental health at their home hospital or university, and propose and initiate a community project on an environmental health problem. The first Pediatric Environmental Health credentialing examination will be on August 24, 2007 in Athens, Greece, immediately before the 25th International Congress of Pediatrics. The possibility of a follow-up meeting in Nairobi for African Pediatricians and others in the health care sector in late 2007 was also proposed. Participants also worked on a 'Nairobi Statement' which encompassed the participants concerns, priorities and intentions for action. The final statement is currently being finalized in light of the lively discussion on the draft at the workshop.

This workshop provided an opportunity to test the WHO training materials for Health Care Providers (HCP) with a group of African participants, and at the close of the workshop, all participants received a CD with the training modules. Participants were encouraged to promote the topic within their own organization and country, as well as to use the WHO training material and organize training sessions in their own countries. Zambia is having a workshop in November 2005 and will use the HCP training modules. Other possible opportunities were mentioned, such as the 19th congress of UNAPSA (Union of National African Pediatric Societies and Associations) in December 2005. All participants completed a post-workshop evaluation and received the American Academy of Pediatric's book Pediatric Environmental Health (2nd Edition), and the WHO Resource Manual on Children's Health and the Environment: A Global Perspective. A Resource Manual for the Health Sector (to be published in 2005). Each participant also received a certificate of attendance. Please [contact IPA](#) for additional information.

### **(3) WHO Children's Environmental Health Indicators (CEHI) Seminar, Nairobi**

A Seminar on Children's Environmental Health Indicators was organized in Nairobi (Kenya) by the Global Initiative on Children's Environmental Health Indicators (CEHI) and the WHO Representative and WHO Country Office Kenya at the Nairobi Safari Club Hotel with support from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The objectives of this seminar were: i) to bring together different CEHI partners and others involved in CEH activities in Kenya and in the African Region; ii) to provide the opportunity for the Kenya CEHI pilot team to present their initial results; iii) to evaluate the experience of the work undertaken on reporting on CEH indicators; iv) to explore the expansion of a further CEHI pilot in the African Region & v) to strengthen CEH activities and efforts among partners. Projects related to HECA activities in the Trans-Nzoia district, work undertaken on the Kenya National Profiles and research on indoor air pollution in Kenya were presented and discussed. Other presentations included work by the non-governmental organization (NGO) CARE Kenya on 'Safe Water Systems' (SWS) intervention studies in schools. Some of the issues raised in the roundtable discussion included, among others, the challenges with respect to data collection and obtaining reliable information. This seminar was concluded with discussions about exploring ways of strengthening and replicating CEH efforts further and harmonizing work in the region to overcome the challenges discussed. More information on the initiative is available on the [CEHI web-site](#) or e-mail: [cehindicators@who.int](mailto:cehindicators@who.int)

### **(4) IFCS Publication: "Chemical Safety and Children's Health - Protecting the world's children from harmful chemicals exposures: a global guide to resources"**

The new IFCS publication: "Chemical Safety and Children's Health - Protecting the world's children from harmful chemicals exposures: a global guide to resources" is available on the IFCS website in English and Spanish: <http://www.who.int/ifcs/champions/Children/Children.htm> The French version will be available in December 2005. This publication responds to recommendations made at IFCS Forum IV and was prepared by an IFCS work group on Children and Chemicals where WHO/IPCS is a member.

### **(5) Second International Conference on Children's Environmental Health: Healthy Environments Healthy Children: Increasing Knowledge and Taking Action**

The Government of Argentina, the World Health Organization (WHO), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), and the Argentine Pediatric Society are pleased to announce [the Second International Conference on Children's Environmental Health \(CEH\): Healthy Environments Healthy Children: Increasing Knowledge and Taking Action](#) to be held in Buenos Aires,

Argentina from 14 through 16 November 2005 at Hotel Crowne Plaza. This conference aims to strengthen collaborative research, increase awareness of children's environmental health, facilitate the sharing of experiences and instigate actions to improve the environments of children in the Americas and around the world. The conference will focus on science-oriented issues, research needs and capacity-building while addressing the concrete needs for action and policies at the community, country, regional and international levels.

This conference is expected to respond to calls for action concerning children's environmental health that will be made by the preceding Health and Environment Ministerial of the Americas (June 2005) and the Summit of the Americas (November 2005). Science, research and policy experts will be able to interact and set an agenda to weave research and science into policy discussions and vice-versa. Participants will include healthcare and environmental professionals, members of organizations, active community members, scientists, researchers, public health and environmental health policy experts, engineers and healthcare practitioners. All sectors will be represented through their presence, active participation or concrete presentations, including government, academia, non-governmental organizations, industry, and professional associations. This conference will also offer the opportunity for pre- and post-conference courses and workshop that will address specific CEH issues. Children are the main and most precious resource of countries. They should live, grow, learn and play in environments that are supportive of good health and well-being. This conference proposes to increase awareness, set forth action, and contribute worldwide to improve the status of children's health and their environments.

#### **(6) Workshop on Advances in the Use of Biomarkers in Children**

The World Health Organization (WHO), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the International Programme on Chemical Safety (IPCS) jointly announce the [Workshop on Advances in the Use of Biomarkers in Children](#). This 1½ day workshop will be held on November 17-18 following the global conference, Healthy Environments, Healthy Children: Increasing Knowledge and Taking Action, at the Hotel Crowne Plaza in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

This workshop will convene experts from around the world to present and discuss the scientific advances made during the past decade in the availability and improvement of biomarkers in children. It will cover topics such as: The availability of biomarkers during the various development stages; Biomarkers of exposure to environmental chemicals; Discussion of biomarkers of susceptibility and effects; new technologies and their contribution to the development of new biomarkers in children; and How to incorporate biomarker data into risk assessment paradigms and risk communication. The agenda for this workshop will include presentations on biological tissues, major classes of chemicals and biomarkers of susceptibility and effect. It will discuss the incorporation of biomarker data into risk assessment and risk communication and present the role of new technologies in the development of biomarkers in children.

#### **(7) International Network on Children's Health, Environment and Safety (INCHES)**

The INCHES website has moved to [www.inchesnetwork.net](http://www.inchesnetwork.net). INCHES is currently co-ordinating the EU funded project CHEST, Children's Health, Environment and Safety Training. In this project INCHES works in close co-operation with WHO. In the project training modules are being prepared on several topics related to children's environmental health, such as air pollution, allergies, lead exposure, and consumer products. The training modules are written to be used to train medical professionals, public health professionals, but also policy makers. In addition to the preparation of these modules, the CHEST project is also making an inventory of environmental health priorities in the different countries in Europe, and the project is trying to list the institutes and organisations that are giving training on issues related to children's environmental health. A number of INCHES members are involved in writing of the modules. For all other members of INCHES and other people knowledgeable in environmental health and children INCHES requests the following: indication of what topics are most relevant for training in your country; indication of what professions are most relevant to train on environmental health in your country; and the names and addresses of the institutes you know that are currently giving training on environmental health, or fields close to environmental health. INCHES would like to cooperate with them to set up training sessions in the near future. INCHES has a form that will help its members contribute the necessary information, so please contact: INCHES, P.O. Box 163, 6950 AD Dieren, the Netherlands, or email to [Peter van den Hazel](mailto:Peter.van.den.Hazel@inchesnetwork.net).

#### **(8) Policy Interpretation Network on Children's Health and Environment (PINCHE)**

A conference entitled, 'Child Health And The Environment: Results From EU Framework 5 PINCHE project (Policy Interpretation Network on Children's Health and Environment) and Plutocracy project (Placental Uptake and Transfer of

Environmental Chemicals Relating to Allergy in Childhood Years), will be held from 23 to 25 November 2005. The meeting will take place in Central Brussels. At the conference, the final results and policy implications of the PINCHE and the Plutocracy projects will be presented, and oral and poster presentation in related scientific areas will be given. There is a special session with EU Parliamentarians. For more information on the Programme and the Call for Poster Abstracts: see the [PINCHE website: www.pinche.hvdgm.nl](http://www.pinche.hvdgm.nl). The PINCHE reports of the workpackages 1, 2, 3, and 5 have been completed, and are now available on the [PINCHES web-site](http://www.pinches.org).

### **(9) International Society of Doctors for the Environment Latin America/Argentinean Society of Doctors for the Environment (ISDE/AAMA)**

Buenos Aires, Argentina, November 12th-13th 2005: Organized by ISDE School, INCHEs, and the Argentinean Society of Pediatrics (SAP); co-organized by the Argentinean Nursing Federation, under the technical advice of WHO and with the special support of the Tuscany Region the "Training for Health Care Providers on Children's Health and Environment" will take place as a Pre-conference activity of the "Second International Conference on Children's Environmental Health: Healthy Environments, Healthy Children – Increasing Knowledge and taking actions". The new material: "WHO Training Package for Health Care Providers on CEH" will be presented with modules in Spanish and health care providers will learn about the special situation of children in relation to environmental factors, the "windows of vulnerability" during the periods of development, the harmful effects of air, water and food pollution, children and chemicals. International speakers will participate at the conference. This is a training for leader trainers and WHO material presented will be given to participants. Registration is free but limited. The agenda and more information will be posted at the [www.aamma.org](http://www.aamma.org).

### **(10) US/EPA 2006 Children's Environmental Health Excellence Awards**

The Office of Children's Health Protection at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is accepting applications for the 2006 Children's Environmental Health Excellence Awards. The awards are designed to increase awareness, stimulate activity, and recognize efforts that protect children from environmental health risks at the local, regional, national, and international level. The Children's Environmental Health Excellence Award is divided into five categories. Applications may be submitted in only one category. These include: Government, Non-Governmental Organizations, Corporate, Individual, and K-12 and Higher Education. EPA will be looking for projects that significantly impact children's environmental health issues through research; indicators; capacity building; regulatory and policy innovations; education and outreach; and interventions. Applications are due December 15, 2005, and an awards ceremony will be held for the winners in Washington, D.C., in spring 2006. To download an application go to:

<http://yosemite.epa.gov/ochp/ochpweb.nsf/content/news2.htm#cehawards> For further information or to receive a hard copy of the application, call 1-202-564-2188.

### **(11) Institute for Agriculture & Trade Policy (IATP's) Smart Plastics Guide**

Plastics are widely used to store and package foods and beverages. In IATP's latest Smart Guide, tips are offered for parents and children on how to avoid environmental and health risks from plastic packaging of food. The Smart Plastics Guide is the latest in a series of consumer guides developed by IATP. Other guides report on meat and dairy, produce and fish. Go to [IATP | Food and Health](http://www.iatp.org).

### **(12) University of Kansas Medical Center - Mid-America Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit**

The University of Kansas Medical Center is the home of the EPA Region 7 PEHSU, the Mid-America Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit. The PEHSU is hosting a Pediatric Environmental Hazards Conference on December 9, 2005 in Kansas City, Missouri. The conference will offer instruction in taking a pediatric environmental health history, discuss why children are particularly vulnerable to environmental hazards and where exposures take place, provide information regarding local hazardous waste sites, and explore some of the major environmental hazards to which children in our region are exposed. The keynote speaker will be Mark Miller MD, MPH, from University of California at San Francisco (one of Region 9 PEHSU sites), who has worked with Physicians for Social Responsibility to develop a Pediatric Environmental Toolkit for office physicians. To register and further information: <http://www.kuce.org/kumc/mapeh/> Phone: 1-877-404-5823

### **(13) Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) 8th Sustainable Development Conference (SDC - 2005)**

Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) will hold its 8th Sustainable Development Conference (SDC - 2005) from 7-9 December 2005 in Islambabd. Pakistan. Technical sessions will be held on children's health and environment.

Three pillars of the sustainable development are society, economy and environment; the "Heart" of the sustainable development is the future generation. Children represent the future of our societies, and therefore it is essential to protect the health of children and ensure that children live in safe environment, allowing them to reach their full potential. However, children happen to be the most vulnerable group to adverse health consequences of environmental factors such as polluted air, contaminated and polluted water, food and soil, radiation risks, chemicals, unhealthy housing, environmental noise, risks related to transport, and the consequences of armed conflict and environmental disasters and poverty. According to the WHO (2003) report, approximately 3 million children under the age of five years die every year due to environmental hazards. In South Asia, the average infant mortality rate (IMR) is about 70 per 1000 live childbirths (UNICEF 2000). The governments and stakeholders have a responsibility to take action to reduce the sources of chemical and other risks and prevent childhood exposure.

The Eighth SDC will look at the ways in which governments cooperate and exercise power over natural resource management (NRM) in their respective countries and in the region. The participants of the Conference will share their experiences and discuss national and regional environmental and health issues with a focus on the children's health. These, among others, include monitoring and situation evaluation of children of different age groups and toxic chemicals, preventive and educational activities for promoting safe use of chemicals and national environmental and health policies.

Abstract: A soft and printed copy of the abstract of not more than 400 words should be submitted directly to [Dr. Mahmood A. Khwaja](mailto:Dr.Mahmood.A.Khwaja@sdpi.org) (khwaja@sdpi.org) by Monday, 15 August 2005. It should clearly state the title, theme, objectives, sources of data, and major expected findings. It should include the author's full name, a brief bio-note as author of no more than 30 words, complete contact address (email as well as postal), telephone and fax numbers. SDC 2005 details also available at the [Eighth SDC](http://www.sdpi.org) web-site ([www.sdpi.org](http://www.sdpi.org)).

#### **(14) The "Education NOT Contamination" Statewide Conference**

Parents, teachers, students, principals/other school staff, and childcare providers are invited to attend an important upcoming conference focusing on child health, environmental toxins, and school siting. The "Education NOT Contamination" Statewide Conference will be held December 4th-6th, 2005 in San Francisco, CA, and will focus on why every child deserves a safe and healthy learning environment and how participants can be a powerful advocate for safeguarding children's health. Conference highlights include: Keynote speech by Lois Gibbs; Educational workshops about the effects of toxins on children's health, and learning; a youth track including media and advocacy training, and cultural events including performances by Colored Ink and other artists; and a legislative hearing with policy makers from Sacramento. Co-sponsors: Literacy for Environmental Justice, Natural Resources Defense Council, Urban Ecology, Del Almo Action Committee, California Community Against Toxics, The California Endowment, The United Educators of SF, California Safe Schools, Environmental Health, Legislative Working Group, and the Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice. Please see: Literacy for Environmental Justice [www.lejyouth.org](http://www.lejyouth.org) for more information, or contact: (415) 282-6840, or e-mail: [superfundschoools@lejyouth.org](mailto:superfundschoools@lejyouth.org).

---

## ARTICLES

### **(1) AIR POLLUTION:**

[400,000 people in China die prematurely from air pollution annually: expert](#) Over 400,000 people in China die prematurely annually from air pollution, according to the research arm of the government's environmental protection agency. Indoor pollution comes from the burning of coal, wood or agricultural waste for heating and cooking, he said. [Agence France-Presse](#). 25 October 2005.

#### **(a) Indoor air pollution**

[Indoor air pollution put children's health at risk](#) With people spending around 90% of their time indoors, health experts are warning how dangerous this invisible threat can be, fearing it could even prove fatal for some children. Nearly 77% of schools in Beijing tested in a recent survey showed high levels of deadly pollutants, such as formaldehyde, benzene and ammonia. Li Jing. China Daily. 27 October 2005.

## **(b) Outdoor air pollution**

[Satellite data reveals Beijing as air pollution capital of world](#) Data has revealed that the city is one of the worst environmental victims of China's economic growth, which has brought air pollution blamed for over 400,000 premature deaths a year. Health concerns, particularly regarding cancer and birth defects have been a major factor in recent protests. Jonathan Watts. Guardian, London. 31 October 2005.

[Black reputation](#) Editorial. Financial Times, England. 31 October 2005.

[A statistic clouding bright view in China](#) Jim Yardley. The New York Times. 31 October 2005.

[Pollution 'cuts boy baby numbers'](#). High levels of air pollution are reducing the number of boys born and could be linked to increased rates of miscarriage, research suggests. In a study in Brazil, in the least polluted areas, 51.7% of the babies born were male - but in the most polluted areas the percentage of males born decreased to 50.7%. BBC. 20 October 2005.

[Pollution makes for more girls](#). [Subscription required]. Nature. 22 October 2005.

[Study: Area residents breathing highly toxic air](#). Residents living near Map Ta Phut industrial estate are breathing cancer-causing toxic chemicals that are 60 to 3,000 times higher than safety standards. The substances include benzene, vinyl chloride, chloroform, volatile organic chemicals and sulphur compounds, which could cause birth defects. Kultida Samabuddhi. Bangkok Post, Thailand. 7 October 2005.

[School buses are supposed to protect kids, not make them sick from their pollution](#) What's being done to lessen the tremendous health risk from school bus diesel exhaust to the 24 million kids across the nation who ride school buses every day? Craig Mello. Modesto Bee, California. 25 October 2005.

[Valley's oldest school buses could be replaced by next fall](#). Jennifer Fitzenberger and Michael Mooney. Modesto Bee, California. 28 October 2005.

[School Buses may foul air for many years](#). In a city with asthma rates so high that in some neighborhoods - Harlem, for example - one in four children has the disease, officials have found that efforts to reduce emissions from school buses are hindered by the age of the fleet and by the fact that the buses are owned not by the city. [Purchase required]. Anthony DePalma. The New York Times. 11 October 2005.

[Students can breathe a little easier](#). The Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District granted the district the money to buy a new low-emission diesel school bus. Diesel fuel releases high levels of particulates into the air, and there research has shown there is a strong connection between the contaminant and cancer. Randi Block. Lompoc Record, California. 24 October 2005.

[A push to clear school bus air](#) Making the air on school buses cleaner is the goal of a voluntary program announced Monday that would pay for pollution control equipment on at least 500 of the state's 13,000 diesel-fueled school buses. Norman Draper. Minneapolis Star Tribune. Minnesota. 11 October 2005.

[DPS opts for biodiesel](#) Denver Public Schools has decided to run its entire fleet of 400 school buses on biodiesel, becoming one of the largest school fleets in the nation to switch to the renewable fuel. B20 biodiesel fuel emits less pollutants and greenhouse gases that are harmful for human beings, especially young children. Gargi Chakrabarty. Denver Rocky Mountain News, Colorado. 12 October 2005.

[Neighbors won't stand idle over diesel truck pollution](#) Diesel pollution and its associated ailments, notably asthma, long have shown a tendency to hit poor and minority communities harder than affluent and white ones. "We want to teach them that diesel pollution really exacerbates asthma and keeps children home." Douglas Fischer. Tri-Valley Herald, California. 18 October 2005.

### **(c) Asthma**

[Researchers link childhood asthma to traffic pollution](#) Living near a freeway brings an increased risk of asthma. Researchers found that children who had higher levels of nitrogen dioxide, or NO<sub>2</sub>, in the air around their homes were more likely to have developed asthma. NO<sub>2</sub> is a product of pollutants emitted from combustion engines. Alicia Di Rado. Los Angeles Downtown News. 17 October 2005.

[Asthma a growing threat for children](#) Of the approximately 20 million Americans with asthma, more than six million are children. There are ways to reduce the number of attacks, including avoiding exposure to environmental asthma triggers at home, school and other places where children spend most of their time. Connie Korbel. Mendocino Beacon, California. 21 October 2005.

[State report finds high asthma rates in area schools](#) Statewide, 9.5 percent, or nearly one out of 10 students, were reported to have asthma. Among schools in communities south of Boston, rates are significantly higher. A higher prevalence of asthma at a particular school does not necessarily mean there are environmental problems at that school. Emily Sweeney. Boston Globe. 6 October 2005.

[Asthma in Yakima Valley — A struggle to breathe.](#) Vanessa is among the 1 in 10 children in Yakima County who suffers from asthma. While its cause is unknown, asthma's most common triggers include smoking, exposure to secondhand smoke, air pollution and allergies to mold, dust mites, cockroaches and pets. Jessica Wambach. Yakima Herald Republic, Washington. 7 October 2005.

[Asthma-reducing program worth cost: study.](#) Home-based efforts to reduce the amount of allergy triggers in the homes of children with asthma not only work well but also appear to be worthwhile in terms of costs and savings. Asthma is particularly common among children living in the inner city, thought to be partially due to various environmental factors. Charnicia Huggins. Reuters. 28 October 2005.

[New program aims to improve asthma care for minority children](#) The program aims to help inner-city children who are hardest hit by asthma, the most common chronic childhood disease. Officials are making prevention and management of asthma a priority. Outdoor and indoor air sampling are part of a survey of potential triggers. Virginia Linn. Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, Pennsylvania. 12 October 2005.

[Milford fighting childhood asthma](#) Health Director Dr. McBride is planning a new offensive against childhood asthma. The campaign against the respiratory illness will target the environment where asthmatic children are often most at risk - their home. McBride's staff will work with pediatricians to identify conditions that could trigger asthma. Greg Shulas. Bridgeport Connecticut Post. 17 October 2005.

### **(d) Environmental Tobacco Smoke/Smoking**

[Parma Hts. councilman wants ban on smoking when child is in the car](#) Remember to put down that cell phone in Brooklyn, and when you roll into Parma Heights, you might have to put out that cigarette if there's a child in the car. "It's really just a common-sense thing." "We've learned so much about second-hand smoke." Mark Rollenhagen. Cleveland Plain Dealer, Ohio. 29 October 2005.

[Officials to push for tough smoke laws in Decatur](#) Health officials said they plan to keep trying until they fill the room and

change the law. Secondhand smoke is a carcinogen in the same category as asbestos, radon and benzene. Children of smoking parents have 70 percent more respiratory problems. Martin Burkey. Decatur Daily, Alabama. 28 October 2005.

## **(2) CHEMICALS: (a) General**

[Many dangerous chemicals in European blood-WWF](#) European children are absorbing dangerous chemicals into their blood from computers, textiles, cosmetics and electrical appliances, according to a [WWF study](#). Its first EU-wide family survey found 73 man-made hazardous compounds in the blood of grandmothers, mothers and children from 13 families in 12 countries. Reuters. 6 October 2005.

[EU citizens demand protection from toxic chemicals](#) Press Release. WWF. 28 October 2005.

[Toxic Chemicals Found In Common Baby Products](#) A study by a national consumer group says some baby products contain two chemicals that could harm your child, but a toy industry group calls the claim "baseless." [The report](#) documents toxic chemicals, including phthalates and PBDEs, in teething rings, bath books, and sleep accessories. Environment California. 12 October 2005.

[Toxic Chemicals Found In Common Baby Products](#) Associated Press. 14 October 2005.

[Toxic chemicals found in some children's toys.](#) Babies who use plastic toys may be at risk later in life, according to a report released Wednesday that shows that many products used by babies and young children contain toxic chemicals. [Registration required]. Bay City Newswire, California. 13 October 2005.

[Even low levels of common toxins may be a danger](#) There is no clearly safe level of exposure to four of the most common environmental contaminants in the world, and more should be done to protect the public, researchers argue in a new report. Lead, even relatively low-level exposure, can damage the developing brain in young children and fetuses. Amy Norton. Reuters. 26 October 2005.

[We should be worried. Mother's milk should be pristine](#) Leading maternity and children's hospitals in India should begin collecting milk samples of mothers undergoing ante natal care sessions. The samples should be tested for PBD, arsenic and other toxic contaminants, and adequate preventive steps should be taken. Manu N Kulkarni. Bhopal Central Chronicle, India. 31 October 2005.

[Breast Is \(Still\) Best.](#) Nursing mothers shouldn't let fears about environmental toxins in breast milk stop them from breast-feeding, finds a report from a panel of international experts in the Journal of Toxicology and Environmental Health. [Registration Required]. Rebecca Adams. Washington Post. 11 October 2005.

[Are EDCs Blurring Issues of Gender?](#) The nexus of the debate is the concern that prenatal and childhood exposure to endocrine-disrupting chemicals may be responsible for a variety of abnormalities in human sexuality, gender development and behaviors, reproductive capabilities, and sex ratios. Ernie Hood. Environmental Health Perspectives. Volume 113, Number 10. October 2005.

[Early puberty hard for girls.](#) For girls puberty develops earlier than a few decades ago. Scientists have not figured out the exact causes. Possibilities include chemicals that can be found in pesticides, plastic and even cosmetics. Bisphenol-A and Phthalates, DDT, PBC - all mimic hormones and are suspected to influence the maturation process. Jessica Schneider. Decatur Daily, Alabama. 12 October 2005.

[EU study suggests PCBs may damage human sperm](#) Toxic man-made industrial chemicals in the environment can damage sperm but do not seem to dramatically effect male fertility. Scientists also stressed the need for more information on the impact of exposure of unborn babies which could be more relevant to health and reproductive consequences. Patricia Reaney. Reuters. 12 October 2005.

[Girl's Illness Traced to 'Toxic' School.](#) Some doctors are alarmed by hidden chemicals at schools. Many of them have never been tested for possible impacts. Simple leaks can breed deadly mold behind walls and trigger an asthma attack; pesticides used to kill insects and weeds can damage a child's developing nervous system, lowering IQ and affecting attention span. ABC News. 12 October 2005.

[Preschools choose to teach without toxics.](#) More than 250 preschools and day-care providers in Oregon have asked for a checklist to apply for an 'Eco-healthy Childcare' designation. More than 20 statewide have been designated as "eco-healthy." [Registration required]. Julia O'Malley. Portland Oregonian, Oregon. 20 October 2005.

[Under the Microscope; ingredient in cosmetics, toys a health concern.](#) Scientists are raising questions about phthalates at a time when male reproductive disorders, including testicular cancer, appear to be on the rise in many countries. Some think it may be due in part to exposure to phthalates and other chemicals that interfere with male sex hormones. Peter Waldman. The Wall Street Journal. 04 October 2005.

[New law puts focus on cosmetics ingredients](#) Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger signed a law that will require any company that sells a personal-care product that contains any ingredient that's a human carcinogen or reproductive toxin to disclose that to the Department of Health Services starting in 2007. Elizabeth Jardina. Oakland Tribune, California. 16 October 2005.

[How toxic is your bathroom?](#) [Purchase required]. London Independent, England. 24 October 2005.

[Agencies widen study of toxins in fish.](#) Flame-retardant chemicals and compounds used to make stick- and stain-resistant products, may be among the targets in a widening study of fish tissue contaminants and health risks. These have been found throughout the environment and in a wide assortment of products, including baby pajamas. Jeff Montgomery. Wilmington News Journal, Delaware. 16 October 2005.

[GE to pay for dredging.](#) GE will pay for the first phase of a cleanup plan to dredge PCBs in the Hudson's mud. PCBs accumulate in fish and other wildlife. They may increase the risk of developmental problems and cancer. Women of childbearing age and children are advised not to eat any fish from the Hudson because of PCBs. Dan Shapley. Poughkeepsie Journal, New York. 7 October 2005.

[Newmont denies blame for baby's death .](#) An American executive said pollutants from his company's gold mine had nothing to do with a baby's death after the tearful mother showed a court a photo of the girl covered with red scales. He is accused of allowing a gold mine to dump toxins into a bay on Indonesia's Sulawesi Island. Associated Press. Forbes. 14 October 2005.

[Indonesian mother blames Newmont toxic waste for daughter's death.](#) Agence France-Presse. Forbes. 14 October 2005.

[Bucket brigade warns of toxins in St. Bernard.](#) A Louisiana environmental group said that the cake-like muck that Katrina dumped in much of St. Bernard Parish is loaded with toxic substances. Not all samples exceeded safety thresholds, but some did greatly. She said children, the elderly and pregnant woman should not re-enter the area. Manuel Torres. New Orleans Times-Picayune. 27 October 2005.

[City gets set to clean toxins](#) San Jose officials have set aside \$2 million for toxic cleanup in the Watson Park area "These are our little children, and there is lead right near them," said Jose Gardel, who has a niece and nephew at Empire Gardens. "We keep hearing that lead is dangerous. Why wouldn't we want to move them to a safer place?" April Lynch. San Jose Mercury News, California. 31 October 2005.

[School builders sued over Trenton toxins.](#) Trenton school officials yesterday filed a lawsuit demanding that the New Jersey Schools Construction Corp. tear down a partially built school that already has cost about \$10 million, charging it was erected on ground contaminated with carcinogenic pollutants. (Registration required). Dunstan McNichol. Newark Star-Ledger, New Jersey. 19 October 2005.

[DEP orders contaminated fill dug out of Trenton school site.](#) [Registration required]. Dunstan McNichol. Newark Star-Ledger, New Jersey. 25 October 2005

[Pittsfield](#) Parents and teachers are growing increasingly concerned about the well-being of children who attend Allendale Elementary School, because of a pile of PCB-contaminated waste that looms over the school's baseball diamond. Nearby residents are complaining that they see dust blowing off the mound and toward their homes. Jack Dew. Pittsfield Berkshire Eagle, Massachusetts. 24 October 2005.

[Teachers claim chrome-plating plant near school caused illnesses.](#) Teachers at a Los Angeles elementary school are suing a chrome plating plant located across the street, saying years of chemical leaks have caused cancer, brain damage and at least one death. They say Palace Plating has illegally released chemicals including Chromium-Six, a carcinogen. Associated Press. 20 October 2005.

[Toxic soil presents Kakaako challenge](#) Kakaako land is designated as a so-called brownfield, with soil and ground water tainted with arsenic, lead and petroleum hydrocarbons. The EPA's standard is that the level of soil contamination should be low enough for children to play in the soil with bare hands and feet. Prabha Natarajan. Dateline NBC. 17 October 2005.

## **(b) Lead**

[Childhood Correlates of Blood Lead Levels in Mumbai and Delhi](#) A study in 2 Indian cities finds over 50% of children under 3 have elevated blood lead levels. Increasing age, lower standard of living index, high body weight compared to height, higher total number of children ever born to mother were correlated with levels of blood. Nitin Jain/Howard Hu. Environmental Health Perspectives. 19 October 2005.

[Punishment urged in child lead-poisoning factory case.](#) SEPA urged punishment for a lead factory in Jiaozuo, in Central China, which endangered a nearby village with its pollution. In the examination of the 259 children in the village, more than four out of five were plagued with lead poisoning. 8 of the children had more than 300 milligrams of lead per litre. Xinhua News Agency, China. 19 October 2005.

[Getting the lead out of electronics](#) In China, unprotected workers, including many children, strip recyclables out of electronic components in a cottage industry of sorts. Lead exposure, even at low levels, is well known for its harmful effects on children, resulting in lowered IQ. Lead also affects the ability to pay attention. Harvey Black. Environmental Health Perspectives. October 2005.

[A Victory for Child Safety](#) South African consumers scored a major victory for child safety this week, following a Sunday Times investigation into toxic paint on toys. Thousands of potentially harmful toys that would have been sold this Christmas season, and many more in the future, will now not find their way into the hands of toddlers. Johannesburg Sunday Times, South Africa. 31 October 2005.

[Toy industry rushes to ban lead in paint](#) The South African Toy Association will ask its members to remove all painted toys from their shelves, unless suppliers can guarantee that each toy is lead-free. Rowan Philp and Ilse Fredericks. Johannesburg Sunday Times, South Africa. 30 October 2005.

[Ban on lead paint is in the pipeline.](#) New laws to ban brain-damaging lead paint are "in the pipeline" at last, but the Health Department cannot say how soon it will be before paint and toy makers are brought to book for exposing the public to well-known harm and injury. Tony Carnie. KwaZulu-Natal Mercury, South Africa. 24 October 2005.

[Shop owners yank toys with high levels of lead in paint from shelves.](#) Local toyshop owners awoke to the headline of their nightmares yesterday, having discovered that the amount of lead in paint on some wooden toys to be up to 1 300 times higher than international safety limits. Dominique Herman. Cape Town Cape Times, South Africa. 24 October 2005.

[Lead crisis](#) A crisis meeting has been called after latest studies showed blood-lead levels in Port Pirie children are climbing. The average blood-lead level for Port Pirie children aged zero to four years in 2004 was 10.6 micrograms per decilitre compared with 10.2 the year before. [Port Pirie Register](#), Australia. 13 October 2005.

[Children's lead levels mirror output](#) Fugitive emissions from the world's largest lead smelter increased temporarily as blood lead levels in Port Pirie's children were rising, even though overall emissions and metal production at the 116-year-old plant were falling. Andrew Trounson. [Sydney Australian](#), Australia. 27 October 2005.

[Residents the victims as authorities wash hands](#) Michelle Wiese Bockmann and Jeremy Roberts. [Sydney Australian](#), Australia. 22 October 2005.

[Ex-minister regrets smelter decisions.](#) Tom Richardson and Michelle Wiese Bockmann. [Sydney Australian](#), Australia. 21 October 2005.

[Emission controls on smelter](#) Michelle Wiese Bockmann. [Sydney Australian](#), 20 October 2005.

[Urgent talks on poisoned children.](#) [Sydney Australian](#), Australia. 19 October 2005.

[Lead in children five times safe level.](#) Adam Cresswell. [Sydney Australian](#), Australia. 18 October 2005.

[Mum tells how haze rains down at night.](#) Richard Sproull. [Sydney Australian](#), Australia. 17 October 2005.

[No lead emission target at smelter.](#) [Sydney Australian](#), Australia. 17 October 2005.

[Lead law may be on the way.](#) A landmark local initiative that requires all young children to be tested for lead poisoning could be adopted in Guilford County before Thanksgiving. "Our whole goal," Guilford Environmental Health Director Ken Carter said, "is to prevent children from becoming poisoned." [Greensboro News & Record](#), North Carolina. 18 October 2005.

[Lead ordinance goes to board.](#) Elyse Ashburn. [Greensboro News & Record](#), North Carolina. 12 October 2005.

[Lead-based paint harms kids, adults; get rid of it](#) The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that lead paint, the most common cause of high levels of lead-contaminated house dust, is present in 24 million U.S. homes. Pregnant women and young children should not be in the house when work is being done to remove the paint. Glenn Haege. [The Detroit News](#). 01 October 2005.

[Lead dust poses threat to children.](#) Children face more serious risks from lead exposure than adults. Growing bodies are very sensitive to the effects of lead. In addition, childhood behaviors, such as hand-to-mouth activities, make it easy for lead to enter their bodies. Lorene Bartos. [Lincoln Journal Star](#), Nebraska. 23 October 2005.

[Series of rallies to back tough bill](#) Public pressure for an aggressive city law to end childhood lead poisoning by 2010. Lead was banned from paint in 1978, but remains in thousands of homes. If ingested it can cause organ damage as well as cognitive, psychological and behavioral problems. Children under 6 are most at risk. Brian Sharp. [Rochester Democrat and Chronicle](#), New York. 13 October 2005.

[Lead Poisoning Still Happens.](#) Holly Maynard. Rochester WHAM TV, New York. 13 October 13, 2005.

[Lead paint testing expands but is criticized as inadequate](#) Child health advocates will release a report today criticizing New Jersey's efforts to test youngsters for lead poisoning, even as a new \$50 million inspection and removal program is unveiled by the state. Tom Hester. [Newark Star-Ledger](#), New Jersey. 25 October 2005.

[Lead-paint protesters disrupt meeting.](#) 400 activists crashed a meeting of national paint-industry executives, demanding accountability for decades of lead paint sales. The group claims paint companies continued to sell lead-based paint after learning it posed serious health risks to children, such as lead poisoning. [Registration required]. Jesse Tinsley. [Cleveland Plain Dealer](#), Ohio. 24 October 2005.

[Ohio High Court hears records suit.](#) The Enquirer took its battle to the Ohio Supreme Court, where the newspaper's lawyer insisted that Cincinnati Health Department citations concerning lead hazards are public records. The health department argued that it can not release them as they might identify the names of children tested for lead poisoning. John Craig. [Cincinnati Enquirer](#), Ohio. 13 October 2005.

[Pendleton residents so far showing no signs of lead](#) Lead is a metal commonly found in soil and water which at high levels can cause developmental and other health problems, especially in fetuses, infants and children. Used in many paints and other industrial products, lead can leach into water through plumbing or well contamination. Darrin Mortenson. [San Diego North County Times](#). 14 October 2005.

[Burlington works to stop lead poisoning](#) Burlington is working to get rid of lead-based paints. When the old paint is removed or disturbed, paint dust and chips can become a health threat, especially to small children who might ingest it. Lead can cause behavioral problems, learning disabilities, decreased intelligence and other health issues. Editorial. [Burlington Free Press](#), Vermont. 27 October 2005.

[Lead paint also a rural problem](#) Marnie from rural Marathon County, Wisconsin wants people to know just how dangerous lead poisoning is, and how it can affect anyone. Though there might not be a safe level, studies suggest health problems such as cognitive impairment are associated with 5 micrograms or more per deciliter of blood. Amy Olson. [Appleton Post-Crescent](#), Wisconsin. 27 October 2005.

[Putting the lid on lead](#) Lead paint dust can coat the floor and toys, and children, with their normal hand-to-mouth activity, digest the lead powder. Lead attacks the central nervous system, and long-term exposure can mean learning and behavioral problems in the future. Jeff Reinitz. [Waterloo Cedar Falls Courier](#), Iowa. 27 October 2005.

[Getting the lead out](#) Lead-Safe Roanoke is finally hitting its stride in abating a toxin from children's homes. The word is finally reaching families living in thousands of Roanoke's older houses. Old, chipped paint is more than an eyesore; it can stunt a youngster's physical and mental growth. Editorial. [Roanoke Times](#), Virginia. 25 October 2005.

[City tries to seal records on lead paint hazards](#) Investigative reporting on public health risks would suffer if the city of Cincinnati wins its effort to shield information on property owners who haven't fixed lead contamination that harmed a child, public records advocates say. [Registration required]. Carrie Spencer Ghose. [Associated Press](#). 13 October 2005.

[Getting the lead out ... safely.](#) Doe Run Company says lead is secured and strictly monitored when hauled to Southeast Missouri port but Doe Run does have a tarnished history of pollution. Lead contamination is especially harmful to children and infants and can cause severe brain damage at the right levels. Matt Sanders. [Cape Girardeau Southeast Missourian](#), Missouri. 19 October 2005.

[Lead poisoning worries in Waterloo](#) Waterloo tops the "dangerous list" of lead poisoning cases in children. Officials say the numbers are startling. That's why they're pushing a campaign called, "Put a Lid on Lead." They say the best place to start is in the home. Claire Kellett. [Cedar Rapids KCRG](#), Iowa. 29 October 2005.

[20 years of poison.](#) Residents of a Richland County neighborhood have as much as seven times the national average level of lead in their blood and they want to know why the health department did not keep the toxic metal out of their drinking water. For young children, ingesting even small amounts of lead can cause permanent brain damage. Sammy Fretwell. [Columbia State](#), South Carolina. 9 October 2005.

[4-year-old can't talk in sentences.](#) Sammy Fretwell. [Columbia State](#), South Carolina. 9 October 2005.

[DHEC tries to calm fears about lead in water.](#) Sammy Fretwell. [Columbia State](#), South Carolina. 25 October 2005.

[Some costumes may contain lead](#) It's buyer beware for some Halloween costumes this year. Several of the costumes K-mart is selling this year contain a lead warning. which says, "This product contains lead, a chemical known to the state of California

to cause cancer or other birth defects or other reproductive harm.” Kim Johnson. [KSL Radio](#), Utah. 25 October 2005.

[Halloween mask labels warn of lead](#) Ryan T. Fitzpatrick. [Troy Record](#), New York. 18 October 2005.

[Toxic lead levels prompt recall](#). Disney Princess Bracelet Keyrings are being recalled by Monogram International after the jewelry was found to contain high levels of lead, causing a potential lead-poisoning hazard to children. [Eureka Reporter](#), California. 5 October 2005.

[Some lunchboxes show traces of lead](#). Parents fill their cars with unleaded gasoline and carefully seal the lead paint on their windowsills to keep their households safe, but many unknowingly pack their children's sandwiches in lunchboxes that could contain lead. Misty Edgecomb. [Rochester Democrat and Chronicle](#), New York. 11 October 2005.

[Lead in Lunchboxes](#). What's in your child's lunch box could make them sick. [WTVG 13](#), Ohio. 12 October 2005.

[Tests Show Lunch Boxes Contain Lead](#) [WDIV TV](#), Michigan. 20 October 2005.

[Hall stores found with toxic treats](#). Many of these candies contain high levels of lead. Some of the lead comes from ink on the wrappers, but mostly it's from the unwashed chilis that are ground into powder. In Mexico, which only recently began phasing out leaded gasoline, the soil often is heavily contaminated with lead. Debbie Gilbert. [Gainesville Times](#), Georgia. 7 October 2005.

### (c) Pesticides

[Indiscriminate use of pesticides cause worry in Punjab](#) Is non-judicious use of pesticide in crops a reason for gap in sex ratio too? Premature aging in inhabitants, late menarche among girls and late secondary sexual character in boys have been caused by excessive use of pesticides in crops areas surrounding Bathinda in Punjab. [Malayala Manorama](#), India. 26 October 2005.

[Chemicals suspected in deformities](#) 4 children with abnormalities, all of whose mothers were Immokalee farmworkers, have been born in the past 10 months. "Something is amiss here," said Lisa Butler, who has worked on pesticide issues for nine years and is critical of the state's role in protecting worker safety. Melanie Payne. [Fort Myers News-Press](#), Florida. 8 October 2005.

[Birth defects report due](#) Melanie Payne. [Fort Myers News-Press](#), Florida. 7 October 2005.

[Birth defect probe widens](#) An agriculture company could pay \$111,200 for allegedly violating federal and state pesticide laws at 2 of its farms in Florida. A Plant City agriculture company under investigation after a number of birth defects among its workers' babies is facing fines of more than \$111,000 and accusations of violating federal and state pesticide laws. [St. Petersburg Times](#), Florida. 13 October 2005.

[Organic goods have fewer pesticides, chemicals](#). Many organic proponents claim that the major benefit of organics is avoiding toxic contaminants, particularly carcinogenic and neurotoxic pesticides. “These are certainly a concern to healthy people, but more so to toddlers and infants, who are extremely sensitive to carcinogens”. Charles Stuart Platkin. [Mason City Globe Gazette](#), Iowa. 12 October 2005.

[Pesticide law compliance lags in area](#). Five years after laws were passed to protect children from pesticides, 70 percent of day care centers and almost 30 percent of schools, including many north of Boston, are not complying with all or part of the law. Tim Wacker. [Boston Globe](#), Massachusetts. 30 October 2005.

### (d) Mercury

[Keeping Tabs on Mercury](#) It's time for the US to set up a surveillance program on mercury. A high body burden of mercury is already borne by women and children, who are most susceptible to its effects. Mercury affects the brain and central nervous

system, can delay fine motor skills, and lead to poor verbal memory and lower IQ. [Subscription required]. Larry Schweiger. The Scientist. 25 October 2005.

[Doctors urge action on mercury](#) It's not extreme environmental groups, but doctors, fishers and duck hunters who want to make sure mercury remains a high-profile issue in Utah. mercury's risks are clearly established especially for women and babies and physicians ought to be doing all they can to see how contamination might be affecting their patients. Judy Fahys. Salt Lake Tribune, Utah. 25 October 2005.

[Does danger lurk in that vaccine?](#) Millions of America's health-conscious parents are lining up their children for this year's flu shot, but many are unaware that some doses contain mercury, a potent poison. Even more do not know that a mercury-free flu shot exists. Judy L. Thomas. Knight Ridder. 14 October 2005.

[What was mercury doing in vaccines in the first place?](#) A group of parents and their supporters say the mercury is responsible for their children's autism. Government agencies say no such connection can be made. Jennifer Levitz. Providence Journal, Rhode Island. 9 October 2005.

[Parents seek answers for autism's many questions](#) Pamela blames her son's autism on a childhood vaccine, even though most studies show no link. She suspects her son's MMR vaccine or a shot she received while pregnant. Both contained a preservative derived from mercury, a metal that can contribute to neurological problems. Ann Wlazelek. Allentown Morning Call, Pennsylvania. 20 October 2005.

[New report slams autism-vaccine link](#) There's no credible evidence behind the theory that autism is triggered by the measles-mumps-rubella vaccine, scientists have concluded after reviewing 31 studies. Better studies is the rallying cry from autism advocacy groups, who don't think distrust of the vaccine is going to go away. Josh Fischman. US News & World Report. 20 October 2005.

[The Age of Autism: Connecting new dots](#) Until now, the debate over a possible link between ethyl mercury and autism has focused on its use in vaccines beginning in the 1930s, when the first children diagnosed with the disorder were born. Could fungicides based on ethyl-mercury be contributing to the autism epidemic? Dan Olmstead. United Press International. 18 October 2005.

[Sierra club tackles mercury](#) Residents gathered to make their voices heard for putting children's health before corporate polluters. A panel of experts informed community members about mercury risks. Mercury causes developmental problems and is especially dangerous to young children and women of childbearing age. Gretchen Cassidy. Roxborough Review, Pennsylvania. 14 October 2005.

[Mercury poisoning alert](#) A press conference disguised as a costume party told Gov. Pataki: "Regulate power plant mercury emissions." "The effects of mercury poisoning are truly wicked," said Scott Zotto. Zotto noted that mercury is a neurotoxin that can hinder a child's ability to walk, talk and learn. Michael White. New York Daily News, New York. 28 October 2005.

[Eating fish: There's a catch](#) Consuming fish is unquestionably healthy, but comes with two significant drawbacks: high levels of poisonous mercury and the destructive effects of overfishing. Some fish have so much mercury that eating them could be dangerous to the developing brain of a fetus. Mercury is known to affect the migration of brain cells in fetuses. Elizabeth Weise. USA Today. 26 October 2005.

[Fish warnings taken too far](#) Did last year's federal warning for would-be moms to avoid fish with high levels of mercury scare you off seafood too? The advisory may have done more harm than good. Many types of fish have higher levels of mercury that may harm the nervous system of a fetus or young child if eaten in enough quantity. Beth Daley. Boston Globe, Massachusetts. 24 October 2005.

[U.S. warnings against fish may be harmful, Harvard study says.](#) Paul Basken. Bloomberg News. 19 October 2005.

[Eating fish during pregnancy boosts baby's brain.](#) Poughkeepsie Journal, New York. 23 October 2005.

[All Safeways to carry mercury warnings.](#) Safeway has started posting warnings at its seafood counters about high methylmercury levels in fish. The warnings note that swordfish, king mackerel, shark and tilefish contain comparatively large amounts of the mercury compound and could pose developmental risks to young and unborn children. Maggie Galehouse. Phoenix Arizona Republic. 20 October 2005.

[Grocery chains post fish warnings.](#) Candace Heckman. Seattle Post-Intelligencer, Washington. 20 October 2005.

### **(3) WATER AND SANITATION**

[Not in My Water Supply.](#) Fueled by health concerns, cancer fears and a grass-roots campaign, citizens across the U.S. are increasingly suspicious of what the CDC considers "one of the 10 great public-health achievements of the 20th century," water fluoridation. [Purchase required]. Margot Roosevelt. Time Magazine. 17 October 2005.

[Local Michigan Schools Have Arsenic in Water.](#) More than 100 schools and daycares across the state may have higher levels of arsenic in their water than allowed when new regulations kick in in January. Long-term exposure to arsenic can cause health problems. Lansing WLNS TV, Michigan. 20 October 2005.

[Anti-arsenic measures at school get parental OK](#) Susan Vela. Lansing State Journal, Michigan. 25 October 2005.

[EPA warns Wright residents against using well water.](#) Federal officials this week plan to pass out fliers warning Wright, Kansas residents not to use private wells unless they've been cleared of containing the heavy metal thallium. EPA warns against using it on vegetables people may eat as well as in such things as kiddie pools where children might accidentally swallow it. Associated Press. 17 October 2005.

### **(4) MISCELLANEOUS (a) Global**

[Burden of Disease Increased by Environmental Degradation](#) Close to one-fifth of the burden of disease in developing countries can be attributed to environmental risks – with unsafe water, poor sanitation and hygiene as leading risk factors, causing 1.7 million premature deaths/year; urban air pollution estimated to cause about 800,000 premature deaths/year. Press Release. World Bank. 05 October 2005.

[Fifth of all deaths result of environmental factors.](#) Lahore Daily Times. Pakistan. 7 October 2005.

[Climate Change and Pollution are Killing Millions, Study Says](#) About 4 billion cases of diarrhea cause 1.8 million deaths a year, mostly among children under 5. A survey of child labour in several developing countries found over 60% of working children were exposed to hazardous conditions - over 25% of these hazards were due to exposure to chemicals. John Vidal. The Guardian, UK. 06 October 2005.

[Climate change 'could ruin drive to eradicate poverty'](#) Britain's most senior independent scientist has warned that global warming threatens to ruin the international initiative to lift Africa out of poverty. A reduction in rainfall is adversely affecting the growth of crops and increasing the need for food aid. [Purchase required]. Steve Connor. London Independent, England. 24 October 2005.

[Africa aid to be devoured by climate change](#) Jeremy Lovell. Reuters. 24 October 2005.

[POPs kill 5 million children a year](#) Toxic pollutants kill at least five million children each year around the world and another 18 million suffer neurological damage because of lead poisoning, according to a top official with the World Health Organisation. "An estimated 40% of the diseases in the world linked to environmental problems affect children below the age of five". ANSA, Italy. 20 October 2005.

[Developmental origins of health and disease](#) At first glance, it may seem implausible that your mother's exposure to stress or toxins while she was pregnant with you, how she fed you when you were an infant, or how fast you grew during childhood can determine your risk for chronic disease as an adult. [Subscription required]. Editorial. [New England Journal of Medicine](#). 27 October 2005.

[Help world's children and fight bird flu -experts](#). Moving swiftly against age-old child killers such as diarrhea and pneumonia could help the world get ready to combat a bird flu pandemic, health experts said. In June, WHO researchers said that 6 million children who die each year from preventable diseases could be saved if richer nations gave another \$5 billion a year. Maggie Fox. [Reuters](#). 19 October 2005.

[Tunza Youth Conference Kicks Off in Bangalore](#) Young environmental leaders meet in Bangalore, India. Over 150 youth leaders from 67 countries are meeting in Bangalore, India, for the second UNEP [Tunza International Youth Conference](#), with the theme 'the Millennium Development Goals and cooperation among youth organizations'. News Release. [UN Environment Programme](#). 13 October 2005.

## **(b) Africa**

[Diarrhea disease caused by contaminated food, water up in Africa](#). WHO said the incidence of diarrheal disease caused by the consumption of food and water is estimated at 3.3 to 4.1 episodes per child/ year. Speaking at the First Regional Conference on Food Safety for Africa, WHO said food borne diseases also have profound economic consequences. [People's Daily Online](#), China. 04 October 2005.

[African Ministers Weigh Environment's Role in G8 Debt Cancellation Debate](#) School attendance, especially among girls, can be boosted by improvements in freshwater supplies; malaria rates are likely to be affected by deforestation, global warming and improper disposal of wastes like plastic bags and old containers. Press Release. [United Nations Environment Programme](#). 26 October 2005.

## **(c) Americas**

[Children's disease study would be largest ever](#). Researchers hoping to determine the causes of many common diseases like autism and diabetes will follow 100,000 US children from birth through adulthood in the largest ever study of its kind. In particular, scientists will try to find out whether there is a link between environment and diseases. Maggie Fox, Reuters. [The Boston Globe](#). 03 October 2005.

[Boro paves the way in 25-yr. enviro study](#). Queens mothers and their children will take part in a nationwide environmental study - the largest and first of its kind - that will span 25 years, it was announced this week. The borough will be among the first of 105 communities to participate in a comprehensive National Children's Study. Warren Woodberry. [New York Daily News](#). 26 October 2005.

## **(d) Asia-Pacific**

[UNICEF warns thousands of children are at risk in mountains of Pakistan](#) In A Second Wave of Fatalities, Children Will Be First Victims. UNICEF warned tens of thousands of children are in peril in remote earthquake-affected parts of Pakistan due to weather, injury, and illness. WHO has warned of outbreaks of disease due to foul water and unsanitary conditions. Press Release. [UNICEF](#). 19 October 2005.

[Suffer little children](#). Australian children, who live in rural and remote areas, and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds, suffer poor health. The prevalence of asthma... and skin cancer are of major concern. The impact of socioeconomic factors cannot be underestimated. There are plenty of other factors as well, including environmental conditions. Clara Pirani. [Sydney Australian](#). 8 October 2005.

**(e) Russia**

[Sick Babies Add to Chechen Woes](#) The arrival of a new baby at Grozny's Maternity Hospital is often far from the joyous occasion it should be. Babies are born sick more often now than ever before, some made ill by the effects of environmental contamination. Environmental pollution is seen as a major health hazard for expectant mothers. Amina Visaeva. [Environment News Service](#). 21 October 2005.

---