

Children's Environmental Health International Initiatives

This is an international mailing list provided by [WHO](#) and [UNEP](#)
dedicated to promoting healthy environments for children

November 2009

20 years of the Convention of the Rights of the Child

On 20 November 1989, the United Nations adopted the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC), the first legally binding international instrument that incorporated the full range of human rights for children. These rights include the rights to survival, health, protection, education and full participation in family, cultural and social life. 193 countries have ratified the treaty.

[UNICEF and partners celebrated the 20 year anniversary of the treaty.](#)

“Over the past 20 years, the Convention has been our beacon, our template, our guide in protecting and nurturing the youngest and most vulnerable members of society,” UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

On the eve of the anniversary a special edition issue of UNICEF's flagship *The State of the World's Children* report, tracking the impact of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the challenges that remain was released.

View report: [State of the World's Children report](#)



CHILDREN'S ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH NEWS

Press Releases

[New HIV recommendations to improve health, reduce infections and save lives](#)

On the eve of World AIDS Day 2009 WHO released new recommendations on treatment, prevention and infant feeding in the context of HIV, based on the latest scientific evidence. (WHO 30/11/09)

[33 million children in Bangladesh live in poverty](#)

UNICEF Study on Child Poverty and Disparities in Bangladesh has shown that half of all Bangladeshi children are living in poverty while about one in four children is deprived of at least four basic needs among the following: food, education, health, information, shelter, water and sanitation.

(UNICEF 25/11/09)

[Children's Climate Forum](#)

160 children between the ages of 14 and 17 years from 44 developing and industrialized countries around the world will take part in the official Children's Climate Change Forum in Copenhagen, November 28 – December 4, the week leading up to the intergovernmental negotiations on climate change.

(UNICEF 25/11/09)

[New HIV infections reduced by 17% over the past eight years](#)

New data in the 2009 AIDS epidemic update, showed new HIV infections have been reduced by 17% over the past eight years, with the most progress seen in sub-Saharan Africa.

(UNAIDS 24/11/09)

REPORTS AND DOCUMENTS

[Climate Change, Child Rights and Intergenerational Justice](#)

The response to climate change will profoundly affect the quality of life of future generations of children, yet this intergenerational aspect has yet to be placed at the heart of climate change discussions. This briefing shows how a child rights approach to climate change would take the concerns of intergenerational justice into account and radically transform the policies and commitments of those in power. (UNICEF 18/11/09)

[Tracking Progress on Child and Maternal Nutrition](#)

200 million children under the age of five living in the developing world suffer from stunted growth as a result of chronic maternal and childhood undernutrition. This report shows that reducing and even eliminating undernutrition is feasible. Interventions such as exclusive breastfeeding in the first six months together with nutritionally adequate food for six months can have a significant impact on child survival and stunting. (UNICEF 16/11/09)

[Women and health: today's evidence tomorrow's agenda](#)

This WHO report reviews health issues that particularly affect girls and women throughout their life course. Many girls and women, particularly in developing countries, are unable to reach their full potential due to persistent health, social and gender inequalities and health system inadequacies. WHO calls for action beyond the health sector to improve the health of girls and women. (WHO 9/11/09)

[Global Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Pneumonia \(GAPP\)](#)

WHO and UNICEF have developed the Global Action Plan for the prevention and control of Pneumonia (GAPP) with the aim to increase awareness of pneumonia as a major cause of death and to spur action to deal with the problem more effectively in an important step to achieve the Millennium Development Goal on child mortality. (WHO & UNICEF 2/11/09)

[Community Driven Project in Sierra Leone Provides Education for Hearing and Speech Impaired Children](#)

The residents of Bo determined that their development needs included a sign-language training center. Using the Community Driven Development approach, they applied for, and received, funding to build a center that would enable them to better communicate with the city's hearing and speech impaired children. (The World Bank 20/11/09)

[H1N1 vaccine safe after millions of doses: WHO](#)

Doctors should give anti-viral drugs to pregnant women, young children and other at-risk groups as soon as they show clinical symptoms of swine flu to prevent them developing serious complications. (WHO 19/11/09)

[Yellow fever vaccination campaign to start](#)

The largest-ever yellow fever vaccination campaign has begun targeting 11.9 million people across three African countries, Benin, Liberia and Sierra Leone, all of which are at high risk of yellow fever outbreaks. (WHO 17/11/09)

In the Media

[World Bank to start agriculture fund with \\$1.5 bln](#)

- The World Bank will start a trust fund to boost agriculture in poor countries with an initial \$1.5 billion warning of the risk of another food price crisis (Reuters 25/11/09)

[Lead, chemicals found in toys despite stricter laws](#) - a public interest group in the US has found a number of toys that contain the chemicals and illegal amounts of lead (Washington Post 25/11/09)

[DDT benefits outweigh risks – Ntebela](#) - DDT reintroduced in Botswana to fight against malaria (MMegi 25/11/09)

[China executes 2 for role in tainted milk scandal](#) - a dairy farmer and a milk salesman were executed in China for their roles in the sale of contaminated baby formula (Forbes 24/11/09)

JOURNAL ARTICLES

Air Pollution

[Influence of Ambient Air Pollutant Sources on Clinical Encounters for Infant Bronchiolitis](#) - Air pollutants from several sources may increase infant bronchiolitis requiring clinical care (*Am J of Resp & Critical Care Medicine*)

[Disruption of MicroRNA Expression in Human Airway Cells by Diesel Exhaust Particles Is Linked to Tumorigenesis-Associated Pathways](#) - Exposure to Diesel Exhaust Particles changes the miRNA expression profile in human airway epithelial cells (*EHP*)

[Association between Local Traffic-Generated Air Pollution and Preeclampsia and Preterm Delivery in the South Coast Air Basin of California](#) - Exposure to local traffic-generated air pollution during pregnancy increases the risk of preeclampsia and preterm birth in Southern California women (*EHP*)

[Air Pollution, Aeroallergens, and Emergency Room Visits for Acute Respiratory Diseases and Gastroenteric Disorders among Young Children in Six Italian Cities](#) - Air pollution is associated with triggering of wheezing and gastroenteric disorders in children 0–2 years of age (*EHP*)

[Self-Reported Truck Traffic on the Street of Residence and Symptoms of Asthma and Allergic Disease: A Global Relationship in ISAAC Phase 3](#) - Higher exposure to self-reported truck traffic on the street of residence is associated with increased reports of symptoms of asthma, rhinitis, and eczema in many locations in the world (*EHP*)

[Meteorologically estimated exposure but not distance predicts asthma symptoms in school children in the environs of a petrochemical refinery: a cross-sectional study](#) – study shows increased prevalence of asthma symptoms among children as a result of refinery emissions (*Environ Health*)

[Study links asthma, pollutant exposure](#) - together indoor and outdoor pollutants cause more damage to young lungs (Cincinnati News 24/11/09)

[Toxic playgrounds](#) - study finds arsenic in 36% of playgrounds investigated in New Orleans (Science News 23/11/09)

[Climate change: What price will future generations pay?](#) What price will children have to pay for the three or four carbon-happy generations that have lived before them? (BBC 23/11/09)

[Smoking when pregnant is linked to hyperactive children](#) - children whose mothers smoked during pregnancy have more than double the chance of suffering hyperactivity (Mail Online 23/11/09)

[Starving: 6 million children](#) - report states that 6 million poor children die tragically of hunger and malnutrition illnesses each year (Gazette 23/11/09)

[80,000 asbestos sites at Qld \(Australian\) schools](#) - asbestos found in Australian schools, mostly in floor covering (Brisbane Times 21/11/09)

[Radioactive waste contaminating Canadian water supply: Report](#) - report claims nuclear facilities and power plants are contaminating local Canadian food and water with radioactive waste that increases risks of cancer and birth defects (Edmonton Journal 20/11/09)

[H1N1, asthma can be a dire combination in children](#) - Asthma as an underlying health problem with H1N1 infection (USA Today 17/11/09)

[Plastics ingredients could make a boy's play less masculine](#) - study links boys' fetal phthalate exposure to tendency toward gender-neutral play later on (Science News 16/11/09)

[Australia 'sorry' for child abuse](#) - Australian PM Kevin Rudd has apologized to the hundreds of thousands of people who were abused or neglected in state care as children (BBC 16/11/09)

Chemicals

[Effect of Supplemental Folic Acid in Pregnancy on Childhood Asthma: A prospective birth cohort study](#) - Babies born to women who have taken folic acid supplements during their pregnancy are up to 30% more likely than other children to develop asthma (*Am J of Epidemiology*)

[Formaldehyde Exposure and Asthma in Children: A Systematic Review](#) - Study shows a significant positive association between formaldehyde exposure and childhood asthma (*EHP*)

[Global Status of DDT and Its Alternatives for Use in Vector Control to Prevent Disease](#) – this paper reviews the status of dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane (DDT), used for disease vector control, along with current evidence on its benefits and risks in relation to the available alternatives (*EHP*)

[Evaluating Cumulative Organophosphorus Pesticide Body Burden of Children: A National Case Study](#) – this study suggests that approximately 40% of children in the United States may have had insufficient margins of exposure for neurological impacts from cumulative exposures to OP pesticides (*Environ Sci & Tech*)

Water And Sanitation

[Commensal bacteria regulate Toll-like receptor 3–dependent inflammation after skin injury](#) - Normal bacteria living on the skin may trigger a pathway that helps prevent inflammation when we get hurt (*Nature Medicine*)

[Diarrhea and Colds in Child Day Care Centers: Impact of Various Numerator and Denominator Definitions of Illness Episodes](#) – study correlated occurrence of illnesses with children's attendance at day care centres (*Epidemiology*)

[Missing out on brain food puts kids at risk](#) - a large proportion of children do not eat enough fish, placing them at risk of heart disease, asthma, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and retarded brain development (Sydney Morning Herald 15/11/09)

[Tobacco poison surrounds child workers](#) - tobacco industry exposure of child workers in Malawi (Times Online 15/11/09)

[Big rise in birth defects may be linked to war](#) - birth defects in Falluja have increased to 15 times the normal rate, in a spike that may be linked to the Iraq War (Scotsman 15/11/09)

[Under-18s to be banned from using sunbeds to cut cancer risk](#) - in an effort to reduce the risk of young people developing skin cancer under-18s will be banned from visiting sunbed salons (Guardian 13/11/09)

[Alarm at Zimbabwe's growing child sex abuse](#) - children vulnerable to sexual abuse in Zimbabwe while parents are in search of work (BBC 9/11/09)

[BPA in the womb shows link to kids' behaviour](#) - researchers have just linked prenatal exposure to bisphenol-A with subtle, gender-specific alterations in behavior among two year olds (Science News 7/11/09)

[Soy Foods: Eating too much of a good thing might be bad, scientists say](#) - new studies suggest that eating large amounts of soy's estrogen-mimicking compounds might reduce fertility in women, trigger early puberty and disrupt development of fetuses and children (Environmental Health News 3/11/09)

[New vaccine offers hope in Africa's malaria battle](#) - vaccine that appears to be able to prevent the disease in about 50 percent of children, is now undergoing the final stage of testing (San Francisco Chronicle 3/11/09)

[Climate change threatens lives of millions of children, says charity](#) - Save the Children Charity warn that a quarter of a million children could die

Global Change

[Environmental Health Indicators of Climate Change for the United States: Findings from the State Environmental Health Indicator Collaborative](#) – This study researched and developed environmental health indicators for inputs into human health vulnerability assessments for climate change (*EHP*)

Reproductive Health

[Antenatal and Postnatal Iron Supplementation and Childhood Mortality in Rural Nepal: A Prospective Follow-up in a Randomized, Controlled Community Trial](#) - Maternal iron-folic acid supplementation reduced mortality among children between birth and age 7 years (*Am J of Epidemiology*)

[Anogenital Distance from Birth to 2 Years: a Population Study](#) – Study examined the sexual dimorphism of anogenital distance in a large U.K. birth cohort (*EHP*)

[The effects of maternal body mass index on pregnancy outcome](#) - Excessive leanness and obesity are associated with different adverse pregnancy outcomes (*Eur J Epidemiology*)

[Alcohol Drinking Pattern During Pregnancy and Risk of Infant Mortality](#) - intake of at least 4 drinks of alcohol per week or binging on 3 or more occasions during pregnancy are associated with an increased risk of infant mortality (*Epidemiology*)

General

[Dynamic DNA methylation programs persistent adverse effects of early-life stress](#) - This study in mice has hinted at the impact that early life trauma and stress can have on genes, and how they can result in behavioral problems (*Nature Neuroscience*)

next year due to the effects of climate change (Guardian 2/11/09)

UPCOMING EVENTS

[40th Union World Conference on Lung Disease and Health: Poverty and Lung Health](#)
3 – 7 December 2009, Cancún Center, Conventions & Exhibitions. Cancún, Mexico.

[United Nations Climate Change Conference](#)
7 - 18 December 2009, Bella Center, Copenhagen, Denmark.

[Role of Environmental Stressors in the Development of Origins of Disease](#)
7 – 10 December 2009, Thu Miami Beach, Florida, USA.

[Eastern Mediterranean Regional Meeting on Adolescent Health](#)
15-17 December 2009, Beirut, Lebanon.

[5th International Conference on Children's Health and the Environment](#)
1 – 3 February 2010. Indian Institute of Science Campus, Bangalore, Karnataka, India.

[Fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health](#)
'Protecting children's health in a changing environment'
10 –12 March 2010. Parma, Italy.

[4th International Conference on the History of Occupational and Environmental Health](#)
19 – 22 June 2010. California. University of California, San Francisco, USA.

[15th International Conference on Heavy Metals in the Environment](#)
19 – 23 September 2010. Gdańsk, Poland

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Have news for us?

If you would like to submit information to future HECANET issues, email us at heca@who.int with the subject line "INFORMATION FOR HECANET".

Collated and distributed with the cooperation of the [WHO Collaborating Centre for Children's Environmental Health, Perth, Australia](#)