

Children's Environmental Health International Initiatives

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

Sep/Oct 2018

AIR POLLUTION AND CHILD HEALTH: PRESCRIBING CLEAN AIR

This report summarizes the latest scientific knowledge on the links between exposure to air pollution and adverse health effects in children. It is intended to inform and motivate individual and collective action by health care professionals to prevent damage to children's health from exposure to air pollution. Air pollution is a major environmental health threat. Exposure to fine particles in both the ambient environment and in the household causes about seven million premature deaths each year. Ambient air pollution (AAP) alone imposes enormous costs on the global economy, amounting to more than US\$ 5 trillion in total welfare losses in 2013.

This public health crisis is receiving more attention, but one critical aspect is often overlooked: how air pollution affects children in uniquely damaging ways. Recent data released by the World Health Organization (WHO) show that air pollution has a vast and terrible impact on child health and survival. Globally, 93% of all children live in environments with air pollution levels above the WHO guidelines. More than one in every four deaths of children under 5 years is directly or indirectly related to environmental risks. Both AAP and household air pollution (HAP) contribute to respiratory tract infections that resulted in 543 000 deaths in children under 5 years in 2016.

[Report summary](#) (available in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish)

[Press release](#)

[Infographics](#)

INTERNATIONAL LEAD POISONING PREVENTION WEEK

CHILDREN'S ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH NEWS

Press Releases

[Climate action could prevent one million air pollution-related deaths](#)

New research from C40 Cities, the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy and the New Climate Institute shows that climate action, such as doubling bus network coverage and frequency in cities, could prevent the premature deaths of over one million people per year from air pollution and traffic accidents. Climate Opportunity: More Jobs; Better Health; Liveable Cities also argues that climate action, which include energy efficiency retrofits in buildings, enhanced bus networks and renewable energy initiatives, could generate 13.7 million jobs in cities and save 40 billion hours of commuters' time plus billions of dollars in reduced household expenses each year. Report authors argue that climate policies lead to positive public health and economic outcomes across countries and regions. UNEP (1/10/2018)

[WHO calls for increased investment to reach the goal of a toilet for all](#)

The world will not reach the goal of universal sanitation coverage – where every person in the world has access to toilets that safely contain excreta – by 2030 unless countries make comprehensive policy shifts and invest more funds, WHO warned today as it launched the first global guidelines on sanitation and health. By adopting WHO's new guidelines, countries can significantly reduce the 829 000 annual diarrhoeal deaths due to unsafe water, sanitation and hygiene. For every US\$ 1 invested in sanitation, WHO estimates a nearly six-fold return as measured by lower health costs, increased productivity and fewer premature deaths. Worldwide, 2.3 billion people lack basic sanitation

From 21 to 27 October 2018 the international lead poisoning prevention week of action took place, with a particular focus on eliminating lead paint. Lead poisoning is preventable, yet the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation has estimated that, based on 2016 data, lead exposure accounted for 540 000 deaths and 13.9 million years lost to disability and death due to long-term effects on health, with the highest burden in developing regions. Of particular concern is the role of lead exposure in the development of intellectual disability in children. Even though there is wide recognition of this problem and many countries have taken action, exposure to lead, particularly in childhood, remains of key concern to health care providers and public health officials worldwide.

[Objectives of the 2018 campaign](#)

Every year the Lead Paint Alliance provides resources to help campaigners plan events during ILPPW, including a campaign resource package, customizable posters, a fact-sheet, infographics, campaign icons, video messages, and sample social media messages. [All materials are available](#) in English, and most are also available in Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish.

DRINKING WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE IN SCHOOLS

Millions of children around the world do not have access to clean water or decent sanitation at school, putting their education – and those of girls in particular – at risk. The first ever global baseline report on drinking-water, sanitation and hygiene in schools – carried out by WHO and UNICEF – shows that 620 million children worldwide do not have access to decent toilets at school, and around 900 million children cannot wash their hands properly. Ensuring that children attend school and complete their education is crucial to a country's social and economic development, yet a lack of decent hygiene facilities discourages children, particularly girls, from doing so.

[Full report](#)

NEW WHO STRATEGY ON WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE

(with almost half forced to defecate in the open). They are among the 4.5 billion who are without access to safely managed sanitation services – in other words a toilet connected to a sewer or pit or septic tank that treats human waste. WHO (1/10/2018)

[Trachoma elimination: Iranians triumph against the world's leading infectious cause of blindness](#)

The World Health Organization (WHO) has validated the elimination of trachoma as a public health problem in the Islamic Republic of Iran. By achieving this milestone, the country becomes the third in WHO's Eastern Mediterranean Region, after Oman in 2012 and Morocco in 2016, to overcome this centuries-old disease. WHO is pleased to have supported the Islamic Republic of Iran through the validation process," said Dr Ahmed Al-Mandhari, WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean. "But this achievement was made possible by the Government and people of Islamic Republic of Iran, who have worked tirelessly over decades to eliminate trachoma as a cause of preventable blindness and unnecessary suffering. WHO EMRO (26/9/2018)

[Heads of State commit to lead response to beat noncommunicable diseases, promote mental health](#)

Heads of state and government today committed to 13 new steps to tackle noncommunicable diseases including cancers, heart and lung diseases, stroke, and diabetes, and to promote mental health and well-being. "Today, world leaders have taken a set of landmark steps to beat NCDs," said Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization. "These add up to a historic opportunity to promote health, save lives, and grow economies." World leaders agreed to take responsibility themselves for their countries' effort to prevent and treat NCDs. They also agreed that these efforts should include robust laws and fiscal measures to protect people from tobacco, unhealthy foods, and other harmful products, for example by restricting alcohol advertising, banning smoking, and taxing sugary drinks. WHO (27/9/2018)

[Road safety is improving, but more laws are required to control speed limits, helmet and seat belt use in the Americas](#)

Countries in the Region of the Americas have made progress on road safety throughout the past decade, particularly in the development and

The new WASH strategy 2018–2025 provides a framework for the direction and role of WHO to realize the vision ‘to substantially improve health through the safe management of water, sanitation and hygiene services in all settings’, within the context of the SDGs and WHO’s 13th Programme of Work. It describes how WHO will increase its impact to improve health through WASH and includes details on activities and outputs in eight priority intervention areas. The strategy is based on an organization-wide discussion on WASH priorities and challenges, and incorporates inputs and experiences from regional and country offices as well as feedback from WHO’s partners.

[WASH strategy 2018–2025](#)

JOURNAL ARTICLES

Air Pollution

[Longitudinal associations of in utero and early life near-roadway air pollution with trajectories of childhood body mass index](#)

Evidence suggests that childhood near-roadway air pollution (NRAP) exposures contribute to increased body mass index (BMI); however, effects of NRAP exposure during the vulnerable periods including in utero and first year of life have yet to be established. In this study, authors examined whether exposure to elevated concentrations of NRAP during in utero and/or first year of life increase childhood BMI growth. A two-standard deviation difference in first year of life near-road freeway NO_x exposure was associated with a 0.1 kg/m² (95% confidence interval (CI): 0.03, 0.2) faster increase in BMI growth per year and a 0.5 kg/m² (95% CI: 0.02, 0.9) higher attained BMI at age 10 years. Higher exposure to early life NRAP increased the rate of change of childhood BMI and resulted in a higher attained BMI at age 10 years that were independent of later childhood exposures. These findings suggest that elevated early life NRAP exposures contribute to increased obesity risk in children.

Environmental Health

[Residential Proximity to Major Roadways at Birth, DNA Methylation at Birth and Midchildhood, and Childhood Cognitive Test Scores: Project Viva \(Massachusetts, USA\)](#)

Epigenetic variability is hypothesized as a

designation of coordinating bodies to tackle these problems. However, reforms are still needed to improve laws on speed limits and the mandatory use of motorcycle helmets and seat belts. These are the conclusions of the final report on the Plan of Action on Road Safety (2012-2017), submitted this week by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) to its member countries during the 56th Directing Council, which brings together all the Region’s health authorities. The Plan, adopted in 2011 to address the need to improve road safety, established a series of guidelines for health sector actions and initiatives to prevent road traffic injuries. PAHO (26/9/2018)

[Ministers of Health of the Americas agree to strengthen actions to prevent vector-borne diseases](#)

Health authorities of the Region of the Americas agreed today to implement a series of actions over the next five years to more effectively control the vectors that transmit diseases such as malaria, dengue, Zika, and Chagas disease. The aim of the plan is to prevent communicable diseases of this type and reduce their spread. The Plan of Action on Entomology and Vector Control, presented at the 56th Directing Council of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), which is meeting this week in Washington, D.C., focuses on prevention, surveillance and integrated control of the vectors that transmit arboviruses, malaria, and certain neglected infectious diseases, through effective, sustainable, low-cost, evidence-based interventions. PAHO (24/9/2018)

[A child under 15 dies every 5 seconds around the world](#)

An estimated 6.3 million children under 15 years of age died in 2017, or 1 every 5 seconds, mostly of preventable causes, according to new mortality estimates released by WHO, UNICEF, the United Nations Population Division and the World Bank Group. The vast majority of these deaths – 5.4 million – occur in the first 5 years of life, with newborns accounting for around half of the deaths. “Without urgent action, 56 million children under 5 will die from now until 2030 – half of them newborns,” said Laurence Chandy, UNICEF Director of Data, Research and Policy. “We have made remarkable progress to save children since 1990, but millions are still dying because of who they are and where they are born. With simple solutions like medicines, clean water, electricity and vaccines, we can change that reality for every child.” WHO (18/9/2018)

regulatory pathway through which prenatal exposures may influence child development and health. Authors sought to examine the associations of residential proximity to roadways at birth and epigenome-wide DNA methylation. We also assessed associations of differential methylation with child cognitive outcomes. Living closer to major roadways at birth was associated with higher cord blood (and—more weakly—midchildhood blood) methylation of four sites in LAMB2. For each halving of residential-proximity-to-major-roadways, authors observed a 0.82% increase in DNA methylation at cg05654765 [95% confidence interval (CI): (0.54%, 1.10%)], 0.88% at cg14099457 [95% CI: (0.56%, 1.19%)], 0.19% at cg03732535 [95% CI: (0.11%, 0.28)], and 1.08% at cg02954987 [95% CI: (0.65%, 1.51%)]. Higher cord blood methylation of these sites was associated with lower midchildhood nonverbal cognitive scores. These results did not replicate in the Generation R Study.

Environmental Health Perspectives

Chemicals

[Environmental Chemicals in Breast Milk and Formula: Exposure and Risk Assessment Implications](#)

The authors' goal was to compile available information on infant exposures to environmental chemicals in breast milk and formula, describe methods to characterize infant exposure and potential for health risk in the context of a risk assessment, and identify research needed to improve risk analyses based on this type of exposure and health risk information. Measurements of chemicals in breast milk and formula are integral to the evaluation of risk from early life dietary exposures to environmental chemicals. Risk assessments may also be informed by research investigating the impact of chemical exposure on developmental processes known to be active, and subject to disruption, during infancy, and by analysis of exposure–response data specific to the infant life stage. Critical data gaps exist in all of these areas. Better-designed studies are needed to characterize infant exposures to environmental chemicals in breast milk and infant formula as well as to improve risk assessments of chemicals found in both foods.

Environmental Health Perspectives

[Infant Dietary Exposures to Environmental Chemicals and Infant/Child Health: A Critical](#)

[Countries in WHO South-East Asia to intensify efforts to control dengue, eliminate malaria](#)

Countries in WHO South-East Asia resolved to accelerate efforts to control dengue which threatens nearly 1.3 billion people with frequent and large scale outbreaks, and control malaria, that continues to be endemic in the Region. “We need to intensify multi-sectoral approach at the national as well as the grassroots level to reach the most vulnerable and marginalized communities, strengthen surveillance, operationalize cross-border collaboration and most importantly promote vector control,” Dr Poonam Khetrpal Singh, Regional Director WHO South-East Asia, said at the Seventy-first Regional Committee session, which concluded here today. WHO SEARO (7/9/2018)

[A third of all countries in the Americas have still not implemented effective tobacco control measures](#)

While progress has been made to address the tobacco epidemic in the Americas, over one-third of countries in the region has yet to implement the highest level of effective tobacco control measures. Governments must urgently increase efforts to apply these measures and save lives, says new Regional Report on Tobacco Control in the Americas 2018 from the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). The number of tobacco users in the region has dropped to just 17%, which is below the global average of 20%. However, this means that one in every five adults above the age of 15 still uses tobacco, one of the main causes of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs). PAHO (29/8/2018)

[Coming of age: adolescent health](#)

The world now has more young people than ever before – of the 7.2 billion people worldwide, over 3 billion are younger than 25 years, making up 42% of the world population. Around 1.2 billion of these young people are adolescents aged between 10 and 19 years. Adolescence is a critical time of life. It is a time when people become independent individuals, forge new relationships, develop social skills and learn behaviours that will last the rest of their lives. It can also be one of the most challenging periods. WHO

[Digital health: Promoting health, far and wide, in the 21st century](#)

Developing advice for better public health, and sharing this with all people, are priorities for the

[Assessment of the Literature](#)

In this paper, authors examine epidemiological literature to address the following question: Are infant exposures to background levels of environmental chemicals in breast milk and formula associated with adverse health effects? Authors critically review this literature a) to explore whether exposure–outcome associations are observed across studies, and b) to assess the literature quality. The available literature does not provide conclusive evidence of consistent or clinically relevant health consequences to infants exposed to environmental chemicals in breast milk at background levels. It is clear that more research would better inform our understanding of the potential for health impacts from infant dietary exposures to environmental chemicals. A critical data gap is a lack of research on environmental chemicals in formula and infant/child health outcomes.

Environmental Health Perspectives

[Occupational exposure to organic solvents during pregnancy and childhood behavior: findings from the PELAGIE birth cohort \(France, 2002–2013\)](#)

The objective is to explore whether occupational exposure of pregnant women to solvents may impair the neurodevelopment of their babies and consequently affect their behavior in childhood. Increased externalizing behavior score at age 2 was associated with prenatal exposure to solvents (standardized score: 0.34 (95% CI = 0.11, 0.57) for occasional exposure and 0.26 (0.05, 0.48) for regular exposure). This association was attenuated at age 6 (0.22 (– 0.02, 0.47) for occasional exposure and 0.07 (– 0.14, 0.28) for regular exposure). No association was observed for internalizing behavior. Pregnant women's occupational exposure to solvents may affect their children's behavior in early childhood. This effect may be attenuated with aging or diluted by the effects of other postnatal predictors.

Environmental Health

[Drilling and Production Activity Related to Unconventional Gas Development and Severity of Preterm Birth](#)

Studies of unconventional gas development (UGD) and preterm birth (PTB) have not presented risk estimates by well development phase or trimester. This study examined phase and trimester-specific associations between UGD activity and PTB. Authors found increased odds of PTB in the third tertile of the UGD drilling

World Health Organization. WHO is demonstrating this in numerous ways. In 2018, WHO launched Global action plan on physical activity to help make more people active for a healthier world. WHO is also leading the global agenda on digital health. At the Seventy-first World Health Assembly, governments recognized the potential of digital technologies to improve public health, promote universal health coverage and advance the Sustainable Development Goals. In bringing both streams together, WHO is working with Google to share health advice through new and innovative platforms. This is part of WHO's broader ambition to work closely with the digital world to promote and protect the health of all people. WHO

In the Media

[Ban entire pesticide class to protect children's health, experts say](#)

Evidence that an entire class of pesticides threatens the health of children and pregnant women is now so arresting that the substances should be banned, an expert panel of toxicologists has said. Exposure to organophosphates (OPs) increases the risk of reduced IQs, memory and attention deficits, and autism for prenatal children, according to the paper, published in Plos Medicine. More than 10,000 tonnes of OP pesticides are sprayed in 24 European countries each year and usage is higher in the US, where the Trump administration is appealing against a federal court ban on chlorpyrifos, one of the most popular agricultural insecticides. The Guardian (26/10/2018)

[Vietnam's children and the fear of climate change](#)

One little girl draws a nightmarish picture of people calling for rescue as they drown in rising water. Another sketches a huge snake with sharp teeth to show the power and danger of flooding. These disturbing images are the work of children at a primary school in Can Tho province, a region of Vietnam that is regularly swamped. They live in the Mekong Delta, a huge plain of rivers and rice-fields that's popular with tourists but lies only just above the surface of the ocean. The land itself is sinking and, at the same time, the level of the sea is rising, as global warming causes the water to expand and the ice caps to melt. That's why the delta, one of the world's greatest centres for rice production and home to 18 million people, is recognised as especially vulnerable to the effects of climate change. BBC News (4/10/2018)

{oddsratio(OR)=1.20 [95% confidence interval (CI): 1.06, 1.37]} and UGD-production [OR=1.15 (1.05, 1.26)] metrics. Among women in the third tertile of UGD-production, associations were strongest in trimesters one [OR=1.18 (1.02, 1.37)] and two [OR=1.14 (0.99, 1.31)]. The greatest risk was observed for extremely PTB [third tertile ORs: UGD drilling, 2.00 (1.23, 3.24); UGD production, 1.53 (1.03–2.27)]. Future studies should focus on quantifying specific chemical and nonchemical stressors associated with UGD.

Environmental Health Perspectives

Climate Change

[The 1.5 Health Report: Synthesis on Health & Climate Science in the IPCC SR1.5](#)

Following the release of the IPCC Special Report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5 °C, a “1.5 Health Report” was also released. This synthesis report provides a summary of all the implications of global warming on human health and lives, as described in the IPCC Special Report. The synthesis underlines three important messages. The first is that the greater the warming, the greater the risks to health overall. The IPCC special report makes clear that there are local variations and is frank about the uncertainties in attempting to give precise estimates of the health impacts under each scenario, particularly in specific locations.

E-waste

[A strong spatial association between e-waste burn sites and childhood lymphoma in the West Bank, Palestine](#)

A paper in the International Journal of Cancer analyzed Palestinian cancer registry data in the West Bank from 1998 to 2007, showing a cluster of elevated cancer incidence in rural villages in south-west Hebron, with a 4.10 risk ratio for childhood lymphoma ($p = 0.0023$). This research in these same villages shows them to be the center of an extensive informal electronic and electrical waste (e-waste) dismantling industry in Palestine, operating for almost two decades. Authors applied a novel multitemporal object-based method to map the prevalence and intensity of e-waste burn sites in the entire Hebron Governorate (1,060 km²) between 1999 and 2007. A weighted standard deviation ellipse of cumulative burn activity covers a smaller area (247 km²) very closely matching the childhood

[A Bad Move That Could End Up Exposing Kids to Chemicals](#)

Last week, the leadership of the Environmental Protection Agency took aim at its own Office of Children’s Health Protection by placing its director, Dr. Ruth Etzel, a distinguished pediatrician and epidemiologist, on “administrative leave.” At first glance, the action might look like mere bureaucratic shuffling, though the agency, while saying she was not facing disciplinary action, offered no explanation for the move. But we worry that it signals one of two actions: closing the office, which has argued for tougher regulations on industrial pollutants, or minimizing its role in rule-making. For its part, the E.P.A. says children’s health programs are not in jeopardy. But there is no question that if Dr. Etzel is pushed aside, the chemical industry will benefit and America’s children will be harmed. New York Times (2/10/2018)

[Outdoor air purifiers and inside play: Delhi gears up for annual pollution fight](#)

Like clockwork, the approach of winter in Delhi brings steadily worsening pollution levels in the city. It also heralds elaborate, sometimes hare-brained schemes to fix the problem. Last year, the Indian capital tried showering the city with water from helicopters; but the aircraft were unable to fly in smog. The outdoor purifiers are “a distraction”, says Anumita Roychowdhury, an executive director at the Delhi-based centre for science and environment. “We are saying, focus on the real action of cutting pollution at the source.” And quietly, Delhi is doing just that, she says. In the past two years, central and state governments, as well as the country’s supreme court, have pushed through a range of policies to curb the dust, fumes and carcinogenic smoke that blankets the city year-round and grows more acute during winter months. The Guardian (29/9/2018)

[UNEP and Boston College Launch Global Pollution Observatory](#)

The UN Environment Programme (UNEP, or UN Environment) and Boston College have announced a research partnership to quantify the impact of air pollution on human health and the economy. The partnership established the Global Observatory on Pollution and Health that will begin its work with estimating economic and human capital losses in India and China due to air pollution. The results from this first project are expected by June 2019. UNEP Executive Director

lymphoma cluster: it contains 85% of the core cluster area (RR of 4.1), and falls almost entirely (95%) within the broader area of elevated risk (RR of 2.8).

International Journal of Cancer

New Publications

[Environmental pollution and social factors as contributors to preterm birth in Fresno County](#)

Environmental pollution exposure during pregnancy has been identified as a risk factor for preterm birth. Most studies have evaluated exposures individually and in limited study populations. In this study of 53,843 births, risk of preterm birth was associated with higher exposure to cumulative pollution scores and drinking water contaminants. Risk of preterm birth was twice as likely for those exposed to high versus low levels of pollution. An exposure-response relationship was observed across the quintiles of the pollution burden score. The associations were stronger among early preterm births in areas of low SES. In Fresno County, authors found multiple pollution exposures associated with increased risk for preterm birth, with higher associations among the most disadvantaged. This supports other evidence finding environmental exposures are important risk factors for preterm birth, and furthermore the burden is higher in areas of low SES. This data supports efforts to reduce the environmental burden on pregnant women.

Environmental Health

[Vive más y mejor: Reduciendo tóxicos y contaminantes ambientales](#)

A New book by Miquel Porta on internal contamination, human chemical contamination has been published. The book focuses on causes, sources, pathways and ways to prevent it or decrease it. Addressed to the general public, in Spanish.

[Toxic environmental exposures in maternal, fetal, and reproductive health](#)

Environmental health occupies a unique place in perinatal and reproductive health counseling. The “environment” can be as omnipresent as the air a woman breathes, and as specific as the cosmetic product she chooses. It can encompass the epigenetics induced by several generations of nutrition—you are what your grandmother ate—as well as the food preparation of tonight’s meal or the selection of tomorrow’s baby bottle. Given

Erik Solheim launched the partnership, emphasizing that air pollution is “one of the biggest public health emergencies of our time” and that the partnership will provide early warnings of air quality issues. IISD (27/9/2018)

[Giving Malaria a Deadline](#)

Malaria is among the world’s worst scourges. In 2016 the disease, which is caused by a parasite and transmitted by mosquitoes, infected 194 million people in Africa and caused 445,000 deaths. But biologists now have developed a way of manipulating mosquito genetics that forces whole populations of the insect to self-destruct. The technique has proved so successful in laboratory tests that its authors envisage malaria could be eliminated from large regions of Africa within two decades. New York Times (24/9/2018)

[UK children inhaling toxic air on school run and in classroom](#)

Children in the UK are being forced to breathe dangerous levels of toxic air as they make their way to and from school – and even once they are inside their classrooms, according to new research. The findings from academics at Queen Mary University in London reveal that young children were absorbing a disproportionate amount of tiny black carbon particles during the school day with potentially devastating health consequences. Amy Gibbs of UNICEF UK said the results were deeply worrying: “Every day, thousands of children across the UK are setting off on a toxic school run that could impact [on] their lifespan and contribute to serious long-term health problems.” The Guardian (18/9/2018)

[The Risks to Children From Adults Who Smoke](#)

Children are at the mercy of the smokers in their lives — not just parents and other relatives who smoke but also babysitters, day care workers, school bus attendants, even teachers. Although smokers may refrain from lighting up around children, the youngsters they contact are exposed to health-robbing toxicants in thirdhand smoke, the residue that lingers on furniture, clothing and skin. If you’re a nonsmoker, I’m sure you can smell a smoker at arm’s length. Do you really want that person holding your baby? New York Times (17/9/2018)

[Gov Watchdog: EPA failed to properly monitor asbestos at schools](#)

The government watchdog overseeing the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) found

this wide range of exposures and the general inexperience with counseling patients on any of them, it is not surprising that most women's health providers simply ignore the topic. However, this approach is ultimately unfair to patients who need trusted sources of data to protect them from unknown toxins. Failure of such counseling misses the public health opportunity to intervene in outcomes as diverse as preterm birth (PTB), low birthweight (LBW), and neuro-developmental disorders like autism.
Contemporary OB/GYN

[Briefing: Children's rights and toxics](#)

Under the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) children are entitled to live, learn and grow in a physical environment that facilitates health, play, and education, and is free from undue risk. These rights are violated daily by toxic substances – especially in the air, water, soil, and consumer products – that harm millions of children worldwide. This briefing outlines the causes and extent of the problem, and proposes an approach towards effective remedy and prevention.

Child Rights International Network (CRIN)

[Call for Inputs: Air Pollution and Human Rights](#)

There is now global agreement that human rights norms apply to environmental issues. The previous Special Rapporteur on human rights and the environment, Mr. John Knox, developed Framework Principles on Human Rights and the Environment that set forth three sets of duties that engage both States and businesses: procedural obligations; substantive obligations; and obligations relating to those in vulnerable situations. The newly-appointed Special Rapporteur, Mr. David Boyd, will prepare a thematic report focusing on human rights obligations in the context of air pollution (both outdoor and indoor). For that purpose, he is seeking inputs from stakeholders on the topic through responses to the brief questionnaire: [English](#) | [French](#) | [Spanish](#)

[Call for inputs: Global Health in All Policies \(HiAP\) Survey](#)

The Global Network for Health in All Policies (GNHiAP) is pleased to announce that the Global Health in All Policies (HiAP) Survey is now open for completion. The attached letter provides further details about the purpose of the survey, how the findings will be used and who can participate. GNHiAP requests that only one

that the agency failed in its duties to properly monitor asbestos levels at schools. Between fiscal years 2011 and 2015, the EPA only conducted 13 percent of the school inspections it was responsible for statewide, an EPA Office of Inspector General (IG) report released Monday found. The EPA's management of its asbestos monitoring duties paled in comparison to states that ran their own programs, the study also found. States with jurisdiction over their own inspections performed 87 percent of the inspections they were tasked with. The EPA also significantly reduced — and in some cases eliminated — the resources available for asbestos monitoring, the report found. The Hill (17/9/2018)

[Air pollution particles found in mothers' placentas](#)

Scientists have found the first evidence that particles of air pollution travel through pregnant women's lungs and lodge in their placentas. Toxic air is already strongly linked to harm in fetuses but how the damage is done is unknown. The new study, involving mothers living in London, UK, revealed sooty particles in the placentas of each of their babies and researchers say it is quite possible the particles entered the fetuses too. The Guardian (16/9/2018)

[US Army mobilizes against lead hazards at bases around globe](#)

Inside the gates of the U.S. Army's Fort Benning, the din of power tools blared this week. Maintenance workers wearing respirators were busy removing old and potentially toxic paint from homes. Plastic tarps surrounded cordoned-off housing, with signs reading, "CAUTION POISON" and "LEAD HAZARD AREA." The activity is part of a larger effort, on Army posts around the world, to respond to residents' lead poisoning concerns after a Reuters report last month uncovered lead hazards lurking on U.S. bases. The report prompted a call for action by members of the U.S. Congress. Some 700,000 Americans, including approximately 100,000 small children, live in family housing on military posts across the United States. Reuters (13/9/2018)

[Air pollution is 'biggest environmental health risk' in Europe](#)

Air pollution is now "the biggest environmental risk" to public health in Europe but governments are failing to adequately deal with the crisis, the EU Court of Auditors has found. Europe's air pollution limits are "much weaker" than WHO guidelines – and most EU countries do not comply

survey is completed per jurisdiction. For the purposes of this survey jurisdiction is defined as a specific level of government, such as national, subnational, region, municipality, local or city. If HiAP is operating across multiple levels (e.g. national and city level), please complete a separate survey for each level (jurisdiction). The survey will close Wednesday 14 November 2018.

UPCOMING EVENTS

International Childhood Cancer Cohort Consortium (I4C) Annual Meeting
13-14 Nov 2018, Tokyo, Japan

[Excellence in Pediatrics Conference](#)
6-8 December 2018, Prague, Czechia

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

[WHO Children's environmental Health training modules translated into Japanese](#)

Three modules from the WHO Training Package for Health Care Providers "Why children?", "Children are not little adults" and "unsound management of chemicals" are now available in Japanese.

with them anyway, according to the damning new report. Toxic air kills an estimated 400,000 Europeans before their time each year – up to 40,000 of them in Britain. But the UK government has been in breach of EU air quality limits since 2010 and now faces multimillion pound fines at the European court. The Guardian (11/9/2018)

[Detroit Schools Turn Off Drinking Water, Citing Elevated Lead and Copper](#)

When public school students in Detroit return to their classrooms next week for the first day of the school year, the water fountains will be dry. Since 2016, water testing in the district has found elevated levels of lead or copper in dozens of schools. And while it is unclear how many of the district's 106 schools currently have water quality issues, the drinking water will be turned off in all of them, Superintendent Nikolai P. Vitti said on Wednesday. The latest round of water quality tests was conducted this year, and the results for 24 schools came in last week. Of those, 16 had at least one water source with elevated levels of lead, copper or both. That, coupled with testing results from 2016, brought the total number of schools with known water issues to 34. New York Times (30/8/2018)

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