

HECANET *** August-September2006

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ARTICLE HIGHLIGHTS

Many articles this month refer to air pollution and its health effects, particularly effects on otitis media, on pulmonary function, autism (September 2006) and neurodevelopment (August 2006). Environmental tobacco smoke has been linked to attention deficit (September 2006). In the area of chemicals, the publications listed deal with the compounds that remain in our bodies and affect our health as we grow (October 2006), some of those are transmitted through breast milk (September 2006). A highly interesting article in the August issue of Environmental Health Perspectives (EHP), connects arsenic exposure *in utero* and during early childhood to lung disease later on in life (cancer and bronchiectasis). The study was carried out in Antofagasta, Chile. According to another study carried out in the U.S. (August 2006), coagulants in water may create lead problems. Regarding pesticides, WHO has allowed the use of DDT against malaria (September 2006), whereas soft drinks still may contain unsafe levels of pesticides (August 2006). A study of female workers from the flower industry in Ecuador found that exposure to pesticides during pregnancy was associated with neurological impairment (EHP, August 2006). Finally, a study in the University of Granada found that 100% of pregnant women have at least one kind of pesticide in their placenta (July 2006). Water and sanitation articles include the partnership between Jay-Z and the UN to educate young people about the realities of the world's water crisis (August 2006) and the crisis in Gaza's water shortage (August 2006). In the global change area, a business mogul promises to invest 3 billion dollars over the next decade to fight climate change (September 2006) and another article explores the denial of the industry about the evidence that global change is dangerous to our health (September 2006).

Different environmental health issues are identified in various parts of the world. In Asia, UNICEF declared that children must be put first when improving South Asia sanitation (September 2006). Chinese suffer from lead poisoning from a smelter (September 2006), overweight and obesity (August 2006). Pakistan flood kills 120 people and leaves one million homeless in India (August 2006). In Africa, several UN Agencies send teams to coordinate the response to the deadly toxic waste crisis. In the Americas, Inuit children suffer from a high incidence of respiratory infections, possibly due to prenatal exposure to PCBs (August 2006). Finally, in Europe, the EU is to adopt global chemical classification rules (August 2006), and a Danish report prompts discussion of chemical use in children's products.

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) Environmental Tobacco Smoke/Smoking**
 - (2) CHEMICALS: (a) General, (b) Lead, (c) Pesticides, (d) Mercury**
 - (3) WATER AND SANITATION**
 - (4) GLOBAL CHANGE**
 - (5) MISCELLANEOUS (a) General (b) Americas (c) Asia (d) Africa**
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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.

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EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

(1) HECA Developments

For more information on HECA's latest developments, please visit the Healthy Environments for Children Alliance website: <http://www.who.int/heca/en/>
International Network to Promote Household Water Treatment and Safe Storage: http://www.who.int/household_water/en/

(2) Children's Environmental Health Indicators (CEHI) Newsletter

The CEHI newsletter has been set up to engage partners with the Global Initiative on Children's Environmental Health Indicators (CEHI). It aims to provide up-to-date information on relevant global, regional and national indicator activities.

To sign up to the newsletter, to contribute information or to find out more, please visit the website [WHO | Children's environmental health indicators newsletter \(CEHI\)](#) or contact: cehindicators@who.int

(3) Children's Environmental Health Indicators at ISEE/ISEA in Paris, France 2nd to 6th September 2006

Abstracts from contributing projects of the Global Initiative on Children's Environmental Health Indicators were submitted to and were presented at the International Society for Environmental Epidemiology ISEE/ISEA conference in Paris, France, that took place from 2nd to 6th September 2006, in either oral presentation, poster discussion or poster sessions as part of the following topics: i) Children's Health and the Environment; ii) Children's Health and Environmental Chemicals; & iii) Environmental Health Indicators.

For further information, please contact cehindicators@who.int

(4) Injuries and violence in Europe. Why they matter and what can be done. 2006 EURO book.

Injuries lead to huge human, financial and other costs to society. In the WHO European Region, road traffic injuries, drowning, poisoning, falls, fires, self-inflicted injuries and interpersonal violence are estimated to kill over 2000 people, put 60 000 others in hospital and necessitate outpatient emergency treatment for 600 000 more every day. But the evidence shows that they can be predicted and prevented.

This book by Dinesh Sethi, Francesca Racioppi, Inge Baumgarten and Patrizia Vida provides detailed data on the harm to individuals and societies that is done by unintentional injuries and violence. Describing injuries by cause and setting and violence by type, it specifies the damage done using the variables of gender, age and country income. It shows that the WHO European Region includes both high-income countries that are among the safest in the world, and low-to-middle-income countries with very high rates of death and disability from injuries and violence.

Injuries incur costs to the health sector and society at large estimated at billions of euros per year, and make demands on already overstretched health system resources. Most of the burden falls disproportionately on the most vulnerable groups: children, elderly people and the socially and economically deprived, particularly in the eastern half of the Region. Many households suffer not only pain, disability or death but also a loss in earning capacity. This in turn may lead to more poverty and greater social vulnerability. Having depicted the problem, the book turns towards solutions that can save not only lives but also social and economic costs, giving examples of programmes that could be more widely applied. A separate summary for policy-makers is also available. The authors argue that the most effective approach is for all sectors of society to tackle injuries and violence together, and propose a public health framework for action, highlighting some of the key steps that need to be taken. This book identifies unique opportunities for policy-makers, civil-society organizations and professionals in the health sector to improve health by reducing the burden of injuries on the WHO European Region.

For more information and to access the book, please go to

http://www.euro.who.int/eprise/main/WHO/InformationSources/Publications/Catalogue/20060601_1

(5) New Ozone Education Pack Targets Primary Schools

Looking at your shadow (the shorter it is, the more dangerous UV radiation is), and covering up with hats, sunglasses and sunscreen, are among the practical tips for children contained in a new guide on the ozone layer for primary school teachers. The OzonAction Education Pack, launched globally 15 September 2006 in English, French and Spanish, contains an entire teaching and learning programme, based on basic knowledge, practical skills and participation, to enable children to learn about simple solutions to protect the ozone layer and safely enjoy the sun.

"While we have hope that the atmosphere is healing and that the Montreal Protocol is working, we are still facing serious challenges," said Achim Steiner, UN Under-Secretary General and Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). "Children should be

aware of the huge risks that a weakened ozone layer poses to human health and the environment and they must know that much remains to be done. We must give them the means to protect their own future, and education is certainly key in this regard,” he said.

The pack, produced jointly by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Health Organization (WHO), has been released to coincide with the International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer on 16th of September. This year’s theme is “Protect the Ozone Layer, Save Life on Earth”.

Information about the Programme, including electronic copies of the OzonAction Education Pack, can be downloaded from <http://www.unep.fr/ozonaction>

(6) Environmental Health Update

The Environmental Health Update (EHU) newsletter is an attempt to connect with WHO and its affiliated technical community to share information about WHO's environmental health programme and its concerns. The first issue just came out. For more information, please contact sde@searo.who.int

(7) Graduate Certificate in Children's Environmental Health. 2007.

The WHO Collaborating Centre for Research on Children's Environmental Health in Perth, Western Australia, has developed a graduate certificate in Children's Environmental Health. This course is offered either part-time or full-time and will be delivered as a fully online course, commencing in March 2007. The course's content will be relevant to paediatricians and those interested in children's health. For more information contact Professor Peter D. Sly at peters@icmr.uwa.edu.au or visit the website www.icmr.uwa.edu.au

(8) Fourth meeting of CEHAPE Task Force, Limassol, Cyprus. 16th to 17th October 2006

The fourth Task Force meeting of environment and health focal points from the 53 Member States across the European Region will focus on the progress being made to implement Children’s Environment and Health Action Plan for Europe (CEHAPE) Regional Priority Goal 1, to "prevent and significantly reduce the morbidity and mortality arising from gastrointestinal disorders and other health effects, by ensuring that adequate measures are taken to improve access to safe and affordable water and adequate sanitation for all children". This meeting will be co-hosted by the Ministry of Health, Cyprus, and Cyprus International Institute for the Environment and Public Health in Association with Harvard School of Public Health. For more information, please go to http://www.euro.who.int/eehc/meetings/20060627_1

(9) Building Children's Environmental Health Capacity among Health Care Professionals in Canada. Vancouver, Canada. 19th October 2006

This training activity is part of the project

"Building Children's Environmental Health Capacity among Health Care Professionals in Canada and the Southern Cone Countries of Argentina, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay" lead by The Canadian Institute of Child Health (CICH) and AAMMA - ISDE with the support of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Canadian Institute of Child Health (CICH) and the Canadian Association of Paediatric Health Centres (CAPHC) have partnered to present a one-day education and training workshop for health professionals focused on increasing understanding and awareness about the influence of environmental factors on the health, development and well-being of children from conception through adolescence; developing an understanding of children's unique vulnerabilities and potential for exposure to environmental factors with current limitations in research and gaps in knowledge; improving understanding of environmentally related disorders in Canadian children as well as potential sources of exposure; building capacity to recognize and respond to paediatric environmental health issues and the barriers encountered in this process. The WHO Training Package for the Health Sector modules were adapted to the Canadian context. For more information, please go to: <http://www.cich.ca/projects/epa/Project.htm>

(10) 4th Annual Conference on Children's Health and the Environment, Pittsburgh, U.S. 21st October 2006

The Conference on Children's Environmental Health is organized annually by the Mid-Atlantic Center for Children's Health and the Environment. The 2006 4th Annual Conference is jointly sponsored by The Mid-Atlantic Center for Children's Health and the Environment, Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh, the United States Environmental Protection Agency, Region III and the Children's National Medical Center of Washington, DC and will take place on 21 October 2006. For more information, please go to <http://www.gwu.edu/~macche/conference/> or contact eohaoa@gwumc.edu or refer to [HECANET Newsletter](#) of June-July 2006

(11) Summit on Environmental Challenges to Reproductive Health and Fertility, San Francisco, U.S. 28th to 30th January 2007.

The 2007 University of California San Francisco (UCSF) Summit on Environmental Challenges to Reproductive Health and Fertility will take place at UCSF Mission Bay Conference Center, San Francisco. This conference will further the efforts of researchers, clinicians, policymakers and community health leaders to understand and mitigate the reproductive and developmental health impacts of exposures to environmental contaminants, including the periconceptional and fetal origins of adult disorders. The Summit will provide overviews by leading researchers of the science on these topics and will also explore translation of this research to: clinical care, medical training, and public health policy; to federal regulatory agency and research institute priorities; and to patient advocate and community health concerns, including health disparity issues. Collaborative working groups and partnerships will form to further explore and take action on these environmental health issues.

Specific questions may be directed to Mary Wade, Summit Manager: wadem@obgyn.ucsf.edu (415) 476-2563

For more information go to <http://www.ucsf.edu/coe/prhesummit.html>

(12) Children's Environmental Health Faculty Champions Initiative

This initiative by The National Environmental Education & Training Foundation (NEETF) creates a network of children's environmental health faculty champions at medical and nursing schools throughout the U.S, who take a leadership role in integrating children's environmental health into their academic institutions in a sustainable fashion, train their colleagues, teach courses, provide expertise and support in their institutions and surrounding communities, and serve as a model for how to integrate environmental health into health professional education. Twenty-eight paediatric faculty members participated in a train-the-trainer workshop held on July 14, 2006, in Washington, DC. The training was provided by leading paediatric environmental health experts. Over the next 12 months, these faculty champions will each train 10 additional faculty members and work to integrate children's environmental health into the curricula at their medical or nursing schools in a sustainable fashion. For more information, please go to: <http://www.neetf.org/health/champions/>

(13) Pediatric environmental health course at University of Texas, U.S.

This on-line course will be presented as both an undergraduate and graduate course at the University of Texas (UT) Tyler College of Nursing and Allied Health. It is open to all, nationally and internationally, who register at UT Tyler for the course, subject to the prerequisites listed on the links below. As it is asynchronous, it can be taken at any time during the day or week, a real advantage for working nurses, and for those outside the central time zone. This course fills a critical gap, that is, the increasing needs for nurses to be aware of some of the major environmental health issues impacting children's health.

The undergraduate course description can be found at: <http://www.telecampus.utsystem.edu/index.cfm/4,1543,82,97.html>

The graduate course description can be found at: <http://www.telecampus.utsystem.edu/index.cfm/4,1544,82,97.html>

(14) UNEP Tunza International Children's Conference for the Environment, Malaysia. 26th to 30th August 2006.

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Tunza International Children's Conference for the Environment, was held 26 - 30 August 2006 in Putrajaya, Malaysia, with the theme 'Save a Tree, Save our Lungs'. Two hundred children between the ages of 10 and 14 from more than 67 countries attended the conference. The children, all members of environmental clubs in their schools or communities, were selected based on the creativity and the inspirational qualities of their environmental projects. They presented their activities, voicing their concerns on the current state of the world's environment and sharing ideas on what they can do to promote environmental protection, conservation and sustainability. As well as highlighting the issues of forests and biodiversity, the conference focused on a different theme each day, including healthy communities, recycling and conservation. From the day's presentations, discussions, workshops and field trips, the children headed into action group meetings where they came up with a set of

challenges to world leaders and the United Nations and commitments for themselves related to the theme for the day. Next year's conference will be held in Norway.

For more information, please go to <http://www.unep.org/tunza/children/Events/ICC-2006/index.asp>

(15) Meeting of UNEP working group on lead and cadmium. Geneva, Switzerland. September 2006.

The UNEP Division of Technology, Industry, and Economics, Chemicals Branch's working group reviewed the draft scientific reviews on lead and cadmium. For more information contact metals@unepchemicals.ch or go to <http://www.chem.unep.ch>

(16) IFCS Forum V - Chemical Safety for Sustainable Development. Budapest, Hungary. 25th to 29th September 2006

The fifth session of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS-V) was held in Budapest, Hungary, from 25-29 September 2006. The event drew over 415 participants from governments, UN bodies and agencies, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), convening under the theme "Chemical Safety for Sustainable Development." The plenary agenda included consideration of the future of the IFCS in light of the final agreements on the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM), as well as a number of priority topics relevant to children's environmental health: toys and chemical safety, applying precaution in the context of chemical safety, the sound management of chemicals and poverty reduction, heavy metals (mercury, lead, cadmium). During the Opening Session, Dr Joel Forman, Mt Sinai School of Medicine, gave a keynote presentation on the early and delayed consequences to health due to early exposure to chemicals. In a side event organized by IPEN, Dr Sarah Janssen (Science Fellow at National Resource Defense Council) presented an update on environmental health research concerning toxic chemicals and health outcomes, and presented case studies focused on neurological and reproductive harm to humans that are connected to exposures to heavy metals, pesticides, and other toxic chemicals. Information on these presentations is available on the IFCS website listed below.

IFCS-V participants recognized the unique important role IFCS has as an open transparent and inclusive forum for discussing issues of common interest as well as new and emerging issues to implement the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) adopted in February 2006. Agreement was reached to establish a working group to draft a decision on the Future of IFCS to be presented at IFCS-VI. IFCS-V adopted "The Budapest Statement on Mercury, Lead and Cadmium" which recognized that the risks posed by these metals requires further action at all levels through a range of efforts. WHO and UNEP are specifically requested to take further action. A report on the heavy metals side event held in conjunction with IFCS-V can be accessed online at <http://www.iisd.ca/chemical/ifcs5/heavymetals> (all UN languages).

IFCS-V recommended a number of actions by designers, manufacturers, decision makers in supply and sales and governments and regulators to ensure that toys are safe including work to

fill the information gaps and working toward developing guidance for toy safety and harmonized international standards. The use of a full range of tools and approaches including prevention and precaution is encouraged. IFCS-V identified a series of potential next steps to assist developing countries and countries with economies in transition (CEITs) with tools and approaches for applying precaution in the domestic chemicals management decision-making processes.

Further information is available on the IFCS Forum V website:

<http://www.who.int/ifcs/forums/five/en/index.html>

(17) WHO Europe Children's Health and Environment Training Workshop: Expansion of the CHE Train the Trainers' Network. Florence, Italy. 20th to 22nd September 2006

WHO/EURO Children's Health and Environment programme organized a Training Workshop from 20-22 September 2006 in Florence, Italy in order to expand the WHO Europe train the trainers' network. The workshop aimed at increasing knowledge and improving the capacity of health and environment professionals in the respective countries to recognize and understand the beneficial and negative influences of environmental factors on children's health, to diagnose and manage health and developmental effects linked to the environment; at raising awareness about and discussing environmental risks with patients, parents, educators and the media; at advocating in favour of healthier, safer and cleaner environments for children and high priority issues for action at the level of decision-makers; and at identifying knowledge gaps and needs for cooperative research on environmental health and children. Selected modules from the WHO Training Package for the Health Sector were used as training materials and relevant case studies were presented and discussed. Participants are expected to carry out a similar course in their own countries; to develop a proposal for establishing and strengthening children's health and environment education for health and environment professionals and to serve as focal points on capacity building in their own settings and/or other places in the WHO Europe region.

For more information please contact childhealthenv@ecr.euro.who.int

(18) Course on "Existing and Emerging Toxic Risks in Children's Environment" in Chile. August 21st to 22nd 2006

This course was being organized in the context of the XII Congress of the Latin American Association of Toxicology and Chemical Safety and the XII Congress of the Latin American Toxicological Association (ALATOX) (21-22 August 2006, Santiago, Chile). WHO and PAHO contributed to its organization and provided the training materials on children's environmental health from the WHO Training Package for the Health Sector. The course targeted health professionals (toxicologists, pediatricians, family doctors, nurses, researchers, students and others), environmental health professionals and participants of the ALATOX congress. Its main objectives included: to disseminate new scientific knowledge on exposure to environmental toxicants during childhood/adolescence and during the critical windows of susceptibility, to analyze the main risks and to evaluate the tools and mechanisms available to protect children and communities from chemical/environmental exposures.

For more information, please go to <http://www.ritachile.cl/>
Or contact congreso_alatox@toxicologia.cl

(19) International Society for Children's Health and the Environment (ISCHE) meeting, Paris, France. September 2006.

A meeting was held on the potential creation of an International Society for Children's Health and the Environment and initial discussions took place based on the draft proposal presented. This society would be dedicated to the protection of children's health against environmental factors and would be open to anyone with an interest in and/or working children's environmental health issues. The society would aim to partner with ISEE and organize a CHE event annually.

(20) DTSC's public workshop in California to revise TTLC for lead. California, USA. 18th September 2006.

The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) conducted a public workshop in California to solicit comment and information for use in the development of draft regulations to revise the total threshold limit concentration (TTLC) for lead. The objectives of this workshop were to receive comment, answer questions and promote discussion of: the draft regulatory proposal and the basis for the threshold; the model, assumptions and parameters used to develop the TTLC and the impacts associated with a revised TTLC

For more information, please go to
http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/database/Calendar/event_details.cfm?event_id=2355&cur_date=09/18/2006

(21) It's our world, our future too: Video project and manual

This seven-minute video produced in 2004 contains the voices of young people from Russia, UK and Belgium - and explains why listening to them is important. The children and students describe how the environment is affecting their health, and what they think can be done for a better future. Three themes are highlighted: urban environment and mental health; water, chemicals and air quality; and, other issues, such as racism, drugs and violence.

A manual has also been developed to show how to involve children and young people using video to get their message across. Since July 2006, the video manual is available for download in electronic format (pdf). The project was based on work done by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM), who acted as one of the overall coordinators, along with ECO-Accord Center and Soros Foundation Hungary. The full DVD version of the video is available free of charge. For more information, please go to <http://www.env-health.org/a/1419>

(22) "Do it yourself" DVD, pest management for home/business

This DVD by R. Fagerlung will show you how to control common pests in your home or business without using toxic pesticides. This DVD will show you how to do your own pest control. The DVD breaks it down into categories of insects and then they tell you which product

you can use for each insect and how to use them properly. Beer, beef sticks, peanut butter and jelly, and duct tape are all useful ingredients for non-toxic home pest management.

For more information, go to

http://www.askthebugman.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=12&Itemid=31

(23) EPA activities on children's environmental health

During the month of October, EPA is celebrating Children's Health Month 2006. This year's theme is "Promoting Healthy School Environments" In observance of Children's Health Month, the Office of Children's Health Protection and Environmental Education is planning a series of Web casts on topics related to healthy school environments. For additional information and to sign up for the Web casts, go to <http://yosemite.epa.gov/ochp/ochpweb.nsf/content/chm.htm>

During this year's Children's Health Month, the Agency is raising awareness about environmental health risks in schools and urging action by school officials and others to create healthy school environments. EPA has developed a wide range of programs dedicated to preventing and resolving environmental issues in schools. These can be found on the comprehensive Healthy Schools Web Portal at <http://www.epa.gov/schools>

This month, EPA is also releasing the 2006 Children's Environmental Health Report. This annual publication highlights a variety of Agency-supported efforts to improve the environments where children live, learn and play. The report discusses programs to improve school environments, address indoor and outdoor air quality, and reduce exposures to chemicals and pesticides. It highlights research, regulatory, and data development work, as well as sun safety activities and efforts to train health care providers and provide international leadership on children's environmental health. The report is available at <http://yosemite.epa.gov/ochp/ochpweb.nsf/content/chm.htm>

(24) Activities of the International Society of Doctors for the Environment (ISDE) Latin America and Asociación Argentina de Médicos por el Medio Ambiente (AAMMA)

The latest issue of the newsletter of AAMMA (Asociación Argentina de Médicos por el Medio Ambiente) highlights several training activities in children's environmental health that they are helping develop. A training workshop on children's environmental health where modules from the WHO Training Package for the Health Sector and a round table on "Children's health and the environment in Argentina: current situation" will be organized by AAMMA, ISDE and the Argentinean Pediatrics Society as part of the events surrounding the 34th Argentinean Congress of Pediatrics (Buenos Aires, 4th to 7th October 2006). For more information, please go to <http://www.sap.org>

A Training Workshop for Children's Health and Environment Professionals will be organized in Chile by the Chilean Society of Pediatricians, AAMMA and ISDE on 21 November 2006 as part of the events surrounding the XLVI Chilean Congress of Pediatrics. Modules from the WHO Training Package for the Health Sector will be used for training. For more information on the

program, please go to www.sochipe.cl/nueva/html/cursos/2006/Programa-Congreso-Nacional-14-09-2006.doc

On September 24th 2006, ISDE members from Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, Latin and North America met in Budapest to discuss and evaluate strategies and actions taken in different regions of the world during the past six months. ISDE President reported on the international role and participation of ISDE in different negotiations and processes. ISDE members presented their regional work and shared experiences trying to harmonize strategies and share successful experiences. They coordinated actions and presented new tools for education and information as well as new scientific evidence on health and environment.

For more information on projects currently developed by AAMMA, please go to <http://www.aamma.org>

ARTICLES

(1) AIR POLLUTION:

(a) Indoor air pollution

[Asthma Emergencies Expected To Spike As Students Return To School](#) Back-to-school asthma is an annual predictable phenomenon triggered by students returning to school with viral infections. While asthma emergencies are predictable, parents of children with asthma are not taking basic steps to manage their child's asthma. Medical News Today. 22 August 2006.

(b) Outdoor air pollution

[Traffic-Related Air Pollution and Otitis Media](#) Otitis media is one of leading causes of doctors' visits in childhood. Given the nature of air pollution exposure and the importance of otitis media to children's health, these findings, which indicate an association between exposure to traffic-related air pollutants and otitis media, have significant public health implications. M. Brauer. EHP. September 2006.

[Lung Radiology and Pulmonary Function of Children Chronically Exposed to Air Pollution](#) Chronic exposures to severe urban air pollution were associated to an increase in abnormal CXRs and lung CTs, suggestive of a bronchiolar, peribronchiolar, and/or alveolar duct inflammatory process, in clinically healthy children with no risk factors for lung disease. L. Calderón-Garcidueñas. EHP. September 2006.

[Autism Spectrum Disorders in Relation to Distribution of Hazardous Air Pollutants in the San Francisco Bay Area](#) Our results suggest a potential association between autism and estimated metal concentrations, and possibly solvents, in ambient air around the birth residence, requiring

confirmation and more refined exposure assessment in future studies. G. Windham. EHP. September 2006.

[Effect of Prenatal Exposure to Airborne Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons on Neurodevelopment in the First 3 Years of Life among Inner-City Children](#) The results suggest that environmental PAHs at levels recently encountered in New York City air may adversely affect children's cognitive development at 3 years of age, with implications for school performance. F. Perera et al. EHP. August 2006.

[PAH-DNA Adducts in Cord Blood and Fetal and Child Development in a Chinese Cohort](#) PAHs are a class of toxic pollutants released by fossil fuel combustion. Findings suggest that exposure to elevated levels of PAHs, with the Tongliang seasonally operated coal-fired power plant, being a significant source, is associated with reduced fetal and child growth in the population. D.Tang. EHP. August 2006.

(c) Environmental Tobacco Smoke/Smoking

[Smoking, lead linked to attention deficit](#) The researchers analyzed data on nearly 4,000 U.S. children ages 4 to 15. Included were 135 children treated for ADHD. Children whose mothers smoked during pregnancy were 2 1/2 times more likely to have ADHD than children who weren't prenatally exposed to tobacco. L. Tanner. The Kansas City Star. 19 September 2006.

(2) CHEMICALS: (a) General

[The Pollution Within](#) Modern chemistry keeps insects from ravaging crops, lifts stains from carpets, and saves lives. But the ubiquity of chemicals is taking a toll. Many of the compounds absorbed by the body stay there for years—and fears about their health effects are growing. Any detectable lead can cause neurological damage in children, By D. E. Duncan. National Geographic. October 2006.

[Plasticizers go from breast milk to baby.](#) Infants imbibing breast milk may be sucking down a high dose of phthalates, the ubiquitous toxic plasticizers that are in many consumer products, from lipstick to food packaging. Benefits of breastfeeding, both social and physical, still outweigh hazards of phthalate consumption in infants. N. Lubick. Environmental Science & Technology online. 1 September 2006.

[Coca-Cola sued, others settle cases over cancer-causing benzene](#) Coca-Cola was sued Friday as part of an effort to force soft drink makers to eliminate ingredients in their products that can form cancer-causing benzene. The complaint against the soft drink giant came as two smaller companies settled a lawsuit over benzene, which is linked to leukemia. USA Today. 25 August 2006.

[A Guide to Avoiding Hormone-Disrupting Chemicals](#) The mounting evidence of hormone disruption serves as a start for efforts to reduce exposure to synthetic chemicals considered hormone disruptors. This Guide helps consumers in these efforts and encourages them to ensure

that industry and government reduce or stop the use of hormone-disrupters. World Wildlife Fund Canada. August 2006.

Increased Mortality from Lung Cancer and Bronchiectasis in Young Adults after Exposure to Arsenic in Utero and in Early Childhood These findings suggest that exposure to arsenic in drinking water during early childhood or *in utero* has pronounced pulmonary effects, greatly increasing subsequent mortality in young adults from both malignant and nonmalignant lung disease. A. Smith. EHP. August 2006.

(b) Lead

Lead in water linked to coagulant It's not just chloramines. Coagulants used in drinking-water facilities can create lead problems too. Paint, dust, or soil—not water—are generally considered major sources of lead exposure. In Greenville, it took a year to determine that water was responsible for high lead levels in children. R. Renner. Environmental Science & Technology online Science News. 2 August 2006.

Library toys tainted with lead A batch of bendable cat and dog toys given to thousands of Orange County children were tainted with lead, the toy's distributor confirmed. Tests show the children's prizes had almost five times the federal legal limit. Health officials want parents to return the toys to libraries or hazardous-waste sites. C. Bacalso. The Orange County Register. 10 August 2006.

EPA Denies Toy Petition EPA declined a petition that the Agency use its TSCA authority to gather information from manufacturers and issue orders regarding the use of lead and lead salts in toy jewelry. EPA remains concerned about the continuing use of lead in toy jewelry and is working with CPSC to develop effective means to address this issue. Business and Legal Reports. 9 September 2006.

(c) Pesticides

Fungicide exposure lasts generations Researchers find effects on pregnant rats fed vinclozolin reach great-grand-pups. The fungicide is such a potent hormone disruptor that exposures are able to cause diseases (breast tumours and altered testicles) over multiple generations, even if these animals were never directly exposed to the compound. M. Mittelstaedt. The Globe and Mail. 19 September 2006.

WHO gives indoor use of DDT a clean bill of health for controlling malaria Nearly 30 years after phasing out the widespread use of indoor spraying with DDT and other insecticides to control malaria, WHO announced that this intervention, one of three main interventions to fight malaria, will once again play a major role in its efforts to fight the disease. WHO Media Centre. 15 September 2006

A Longitudinal Approach to Assessing Urban and Suburban Children's Exposure to Pyrethroid Pesticides The article concludes that residential pesticide use represents the most important risk factor for children's exposure to pyrethroid insecticides. These findings are important for both

children's pesticide exposure assessment and environmental public health. C. Lu et al. EHP. September 2006.

[Soft Drinks Still Unsafe...](#) Finds the 2006 study by Centre for Science and Environment (CSE). Little done since 2003, when CSE found unsafe levels of pesticides in soft drink samples from Delhi. The government must notify the final product standards and make them mandatory, so that soft drinks, consumed particularly by children, are checked and regulated. CSE Press release. 2 August 2006.

[Successes and Lost Opportunities to Reduce Children's Exposure to Pesticides Since the Mid-1990s](#) This report synthesizes papers written by four scientists who presented at the 2006 American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) annual meeting symposium entitled "Opportunities and Initiatives to Minimize Children's Exposures to Pesticides". Organic Center. August 2006.

[An Ugly Picture for Flower Workers and Their Children](#) The study of female workers in Ecuador's flower industry and their children found that a mother's work exposure to pesticides during pregnancy was associated with neurological impairment, including a significant decrease in visuospatial performance. Pesticide toxicity may add to the adverse influence of malnutrition. D. Taylor. EHP. August 2006.

[According to a study conducted by the UGR, 100% of pregnant women have at least one kind of pesticide in their placenta](#) A doctoral thesis written at the University of Granada reveals an average presence of eight organochlorine contaminants in the organisms of pregnant women, which are usually ingested by means of food, water and air. UGR Science News. July 2006.

(d) Mercury

[Mercury Contamination Moves Beyond Fish](#) The report "underscored how pervasive mercury contamination has become," according to the National Wildlife Federation. "Nearly every aspect of our food web has been contaminated. It's difficult to find an ecosystem that's not contaminated, whether it's ocean or forest or coastal waters or wetlands." L. Marquez. ABC News. 18 September 2006.

[Exported mercury returns to haunt U.S.](#) Tons of toxic mercury from U.S. recycling programs are funneled each year to loosely regulated industries in developing countries, where much of the hazardous metal is released into the atmosphere. Dangers of mercury exposure affect particularly young children and women of childbearing age. M. Hawthorne. Chicago Tribune. 8 August 2006.

(3) WATER AND SANITATION

[FACTBOX - Water Everywhere, But Not Clean Enough to Drink](#) One billion people, about a sixth of humanity, lack access to safe drinking water. And 1 in 3 people live in regions with water scarcity. Diarrhoea and malaria, the main water-related diseases, killed 1.8 million and 1.3 million people respectively in 2002, almost all of them children under the age of 5. Planet Ark. 18 September 2006.

[Annan, Jay-Z announce UN-MTV global campaign on world's water crisis](#) Jay-Z will travel to Turkey and South Africa, and several other areas affected by water crisis, while being documented in an MTV series to educate, empower and involve young people regarding global issues. Nearly 2 million children die every year because of unclean water and poor sanitation. UN News Centre. 9 August 2006.

[Crisis worsens Gaza's already severe water shortage](#) Destruction of the Gaza strip's civilian infrastructure—including the territory's only power-plant—has left thousands of Palestinian children and their families confined to their homes without clean water or electricity. To help alleviate the water crisis, UNICEF has been working on a series of projects in Gaza. S. Dolan. UNICEF. 9 August 2006.

(4) GLOBAL CHANGE

[Branson pledges \\$3B to fight climate change](#) British business mogul Richard Branson pledged to invest about \$3 billion over the next decade to combat global warming and promote alternative energy, saying that it was critical to protect the environment for future generations. "We must hand the environment over to our children in as near pristine a condition as we were lent it". CNN. 21 September 2006.

[The denial industry](#) For years, a network of fake citizens' groups and bogus scientific bodies has been claiming that science of global warming is inconclusive. They set back action on climate change by a decade. But who funded them? Exxon's involvement is well known, but not the strange role of Big Tobacco. A new book tells a shocking new story G. Monbiot. The Guardian. 19 September 2006.

[Developing Cities Climb on Board for Sustainable Public Transport](#) A 21st century public transport GEF-backed project is getting underway in Jakarta in a move highlighting growing determination to cut greenhouse gas emissions in the fast growing cities of Africa, Asia and Latin America. It aims to cut greenhouse gas emissions by over 30 million tonnes over 20 years. UNEP News Centre. 21 August 2006.

(5) MISCELLANEOUS (a) General

[Tracking Progress on Child Survival](#) Political leaders and health experts gather in New York today to discuss how to prevent the deaths of millions of children before their fifth birthday. UNICEF and its partners have carried out a focused assessment of key maternal, neonatal and child survival indicators across the 60 countries with high child mortality. UNICEF Press Centre. 18 September 2006.

[Majority of world's child workers employed in agriculture, says UN agency](#) Agricultural work accounts for some 70 per cent of child labour worldwide, forcing children to work long hours, operate dangerous machinery, and carry loads that are too heavy for their growing bodies, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) said. UN News Centre. 14 September 2006.

[Prevalence Of Childhood Allergies Has Increased Over Past Decade](#) The prevalence of childhood allergies, such as hayfever, have increased over the past decade in many countries of the world, especially among younger age groups. The data have direct relevance for health-service delivery in the countries as well as providing a basis for understanding these disorders. Medical News Today. 27 August 2006.

[Childhood allergy epidemic on the rise worldwide](#) Asthma is responsible for millions of children missing school, ending up in hospital or even dying. Experts say a host of factors including air pollution, diet, lifestyle and exposure to bacteria in early life are likely to be linked to the rise in asthma and other allergies, but the reasons are likely to vary from place to place. B. Hirschler. Reuters. 25 August 2006.

(b) Americas

[A degree in a growing field: organic farming studies at UF](#) University of Florida is pioneering a program this semester to let students in on the hottest trend in food: organic farming. UF, as well as Colorado State University and Washington State University, is offering an organic agriculture degree for the first time this year. N. Bierman. The Miami Herald. 2 September 2006.

[Effect of Prenatal Exposure to Polychlorinated Biphenyls on Incidence of Acute Respiratory Infections in Preschool Inuit Children](#). Inuit children from Canada, United States, and Greenland suffer from a high incidence of respiratory infections. Prenatal exposure to PCBs could be responsible for a significant portion of respiratory infections in children of this population. F. Dallaire. EHP. August 2006.

[Nursery chooses 'worm poop' over pesticides](#) Can ornamental plants be grown successfully without pesticides? While Santa Cruz County has been a leader in promoting organic fruits and vegetables, it's unusual for growers of plants to opt out of insecticides and use worm castings to repel insects and beneficial nematodes to control insects in the soil. J. Gumz. Santa Cruz Sentinel. 13 August 2006

(c) Asia

[Children must be put first in improving South Asian sanitation, UNICEF says](#) With nearly a billion people in South Asia still lacking basic sanitation, children should be placed first in the debate on improving hygiene standards in the region, according to UNICEF. More than nine hundred and twenty million still don't have access to toilets. UN News Centre. 25 September 2006.

[Chinese Villagers Suffer Lead Poisoning](#) Hundreds of people were hospitalized with lead poisoning, likely caused by pollution from a nearby smelter. The poisonings in two villages in poverty-stricken Gansu province added to a string of recent pollution disasters in China that have prompted violent protests in some areas. The youngest victim was 5 months old. A. Ang. CBS News. 6 September 2006.

[Overweight and obesity in China](#) The once lean giant has a weight problem that is increasing rapidly. Although the prevalence of obesity in China is relatively low compared with Western countries such as the U.S., where over half of adults are either overweight or obese, it is the rapid increase of the condition, especially among children, that is particularly alarming. Yangfeng Wu. BMJ. 16 August 2006.

[Blackout fails to cover SAR](#) Pollution is damaging the city's image and the health of children. Hong Kong's skyline continued to shine brightly, despite a campaign to shroud the city briefly in darkness to protest worsening air pollution. The Lights Out campaign saw disappointing results on a day when pollution was high. L. Kwok, C. Kim. The Standard, Chinese Business Newspaper. 9 August 2006.

[Pakistan floods kill 120, one million homeless in India](#) Incessant rains and floods could lead to the spread of diseases like diarrhoea and other respiratory infections, especially among children. Flash floods triggered by torrential rains have killed at least 120 people in Pakistan's North West Frontier province, and forced hundreds of thousands out of their homes in India. Khaleej Times. 7 August 2006.

(d) Africa

[Côte d'Ivoire: UN sends team to help coordinate response to deadly toxic waste crisis](#) The UN OCHA sent a 3-member team to Côte d'Ivoire to help the Government respond to the contamination crisis following last month's dumping of toxic waste around Abidjan. WHO also sent a team and both WHO and UNICEF contributed medicines and medical supplies. UN News Centre. 11 September 2006

[Côte d'Ivoire: UN health team helps out in toxic waste emergency](#) WHO said a clinical toxicologist is assessing the severity and extent of ill health around Abidjan, a city of 5 million. An environmental health specialist and an emergency operations manager were already in the field while a further technical specialist will join the team shortly. UN News Centre. 21 September 2006

[Toxic shock: How Western rubbish is destroying Africa](#) Western corporations are exploiting legal loopholes to dump their waste in Africa. And in Ivory Coast, the price has been death and disease for thousands. One August morning people began to vomit, children got diarrhoea, and the elderly found it difficult to breathe. M. Selva. The Independent. 21 September 2006.

[DDT Makes a Comeback in Effort to Halt Malaria](#) In Swaziland, malaria control officials know all about DDT. T. Dlamini, a supervisor, joined the malaria control unit in 1988, a year after DDT spraying began anew in response to an outbreak in which "people were dying like flies". The country gives bed nets to pregnant women and embraces the latest drugs. S. Calvert. Baltimore Sun. 27 August 2006.

[Is lead poisoning your children?](#) A girl's high blood lead level has prompted the government to introduce legislation limiting the amount of lead in domestic paint. The child, from Johannesburg,

had a blood-lead level nearly five times above the accepted limit. Children with high lead levels score lower in intelligence tests and are unable to concentrate for long periods. W. Graham. IOL. 7 August 2006.

(e) Europe

[EU to adopt global chemical classification rules](#) European commission has drafted a proposed new EU regulation to align European chemical substance classification and labelling rules with the globally harmonised standard (GHS) developed through the UN. At the Johannesburg Earth Summit world governments agreed to implement the GHS by 2008. EPHA Environment Network. 30 August 2006.

[VOICE country sheet](#): VOICE : Vulnerable Road User Organisations in cooperation across Europe. Poland has more than 11 million drivers and 16 million cars. VOICE is a network to ensure that usually neglected VOICES are heard in the transport debate: vulnerable road users. Priorities and actions under GAMBIT focus mainly on pedestrians, children, and cyclists. VOICE. July 2006.

[Danish reports prompt call for discussion of chemical use in children's products](#) Based on a survey and risk assessment of fragrances and flavouring additives in toys, Denmark has asked to have a discussion on the use of these substances in toys and articles for children. Play with certain products may expose to many volatile organic elements. EPHA Environment Network. 26 June 2006.
