American Academy of Pediatrics News!

Updated Policy and Technical Report: Chemical-Biological Terrorism: Impact on Children

Children are potential victims of chemical or biological terrorism, so it is necessary to prepare for and respond to the needs of children during these events. The updated American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) policy statement and new technical report from the former AAP Disaster Preparedness Advisory Council, Council on Environmental Health and Committee on Infectious Diseases provides clinical information for pediatricians regarding chemical and biological terrorism as well as recommendations for the health care sector and the government to improve pediatric preparedness and response. Carl Baum, MD, MPH, FAAP, FACMT, who serves as the national PEHSU program medical director, co-authored the two updated resources.

Click the text to read the Policy Statement: Chemical-Biological Terrorism: Impact on Children
Click the text to read the Technical Report: Chemical-Biological Terrorism: Impact on Children
Click the text to read the AAP News: Chemical-biological terrorism: AAP details Pediatricians’ role in supporting children
On December 18, 2019, Kim Manning, MA, CHES, NBC-HWC, Region 1 Health Educator, attended the “Community Action on Lead Project Meeting” hosted by the Boston Public Health Commission. The purpose of the multidisciplinary group was to begin discussions on how to reduce lead exposures and the inequitable burden of lead on low income communities of color in Boston.

Topics discussed that will be addressed in more detail at upcoming meetings are:

- increasing screening rates;
- resources for lead removal;
- addressing lead in consumer products;
- data sharing; current barriers/gaps; and
- related social determinants of health.

Numerous news reports highlighted the concerns of various school districts in New Jersey (as well as New York and other parts of the country) that discovered the presence of gym floors made with phenylmercuric acetate (PMA). PMA releases trace amounts of mercury vapor into the air over time. The Region 2 PEHSU, in partnership with the New Jersey Department of Health and the Region 2 Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), led the creation of two evidence-based fact sheets with key messages about mercury in gym floors at schools for both parents and health care professionals. To help address both school districts’ and parents' concerns, these PEHSU resources are publicly available on the regional website.
PEHSU NEWSLETTER

**Region 3**

Mid-Atlantic Center for Children's Health and the Environment (MACCHE)

**Presentations:**
On January 16, Lois Wessel, CFNP and Laura Anderko, PhD, RN presented at Thomas Jefferson University, Philadelphia, PA for FNP and DNP students at the first Pediatric Environmental Health Symposium.

On January 23, Dr. Anderko presented grand rounds for Christiana Care in New Castle, Delaware on per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in partnership with Region 3 ATSDR.

**Region 4**

Southeast PEHSU

Fulton County Public School System serves 94,000 children in and around the Atlanta Metro area. The school district has recently received a $1.9 million grant from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to continue the conversion of its diesel transportation fleet of nearly 800 buses to propane powered. Abby Mutic, PhD, CNM, Southeast PEHSU Director, spoke about the positive environmental health impacts for children at the EPA press release where the award was presented. By the end of January 2020, the Fulton County School System estimates 52% of their fleet will be propane fueled, with a goal of a 100% propane fueled bus fleet.

The Southeast Diesel Collaborative, a group of concerned manufacturers and diesel users, recently convened a meeting in Chattanooga, TN to discuss ways to encourage decreasing diesel emissions. Robert Geller, MD, FAAP, FACMT of the Southeast PEHSU noted that diesel emissions recently have been linked to increases in the rates of autism spectrum disorder as well as various respiratory illnesses.

**Presentation:**
Dr Philipsborn presented “Climate Change and Child Health: Global Impacts to Local Practice” at the Georgia AAP Fall Continuing Medical Education (CME) meeting in October and to the Emory University Planetary Health and Infectious Disease Research Group in December.
Southeast PEHSU and Break the Cycle of Health Disparities, Inc. is inviting university students from a variety of disciplines to participate in the 15th Annual Break the Cycle of Children’s Environmental Health Disparities training program, which focuses on social, economic and environmental influences on children’s health, growth and development. Each participating student is required to develop a project that focuses on preventing or reducing adverse environmental factors or their impact in order to improve the health of the children who live in these communities. At the end of the project, students will present their studies and findings at a national conference and write papers that will be published in a journal supplement and a book. This year, the 15th annual Break the Cycle Program’s students are from 10 universities in the United States, Mexico, and Chile. The conference will be in Atlanta, GA on April 20-21, 2020. The keynote speaker is Benard Dreyer, MD, FAAP and the Break the Cycle Director is Leslie Rubin, MD, FAAP. For more information, please click the text to visit Break the Cycle Program website.
Welcome to two new faculty!

Melissa Halliday Gittinger, DO, FACMT is a medical toxicologist and emergency physician at Emory University School of Medicine and the Georgia Poison Center. In addition to serving on the southeast PEHSU, she serves as the assistant program director for the Emory and CDC combined fellowship in medical toxicology, practices emergency medicine at Grady Memorial Hospital, and directs the resident and student clerkship in medical toxicology at Emory University School of Medicine. She is actively involved in the evaluation and management of patients with acute and chronic toxic exposures including environmental toxins.

Rebecca Pass Philipsborn, MD, MPA is a pediatrician at Emory University School of Medicine and Emory Global Health Institute. In addition to serving on the Southeast PEHSU, she practices pediatrics at Hughes Spalding Primary Care Center, conducts research with the Child Health and Mortality Prevention Surveillance (CHAMPS) Network, and is Associate Director of Emory’s Global Health Track for pediatric residents. Her scholarly work focuses on better delineating causes of global child mortality in order to guide prevention efforts with CHAMPS and understanding the influence of climate change on child health and mortality—including disaster preparedness in pediatric healthcare delivery. She serves on the Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change US Working Group and as the Georgia state climate advocate for the AAP.
Beth Neary, MD, MPH, FAAP the Wisconsin state champion for the Region 5 PEHSU, created a video that introduced environmental exposures to first year medical students. The 10-minute video covered how the environment impacts human health, vulnerable populations, windows of susceptibility, environmental justice, credible sources of information, and role of physicians. Please click the text to view the video.

**Activities:**
Susan Buchanan, MD, MPH, the director of the Region 5 PEHSU, presented findings from an ethylene oxide (EtO) surveillance project in Lake County, Illinois. The community meeting focused on results from a surveillance project conducted in August 2019 where participants provided blood samples and demographic and geographic information. The pilot surveillance project found that the mean EtO levels were approximately 1.5 times higher among non-smoking residents living closest to one of the two facilities that emit EtO compared to those living farther away.

The Western States PEHSU has been training Promotores de Salud on children's environmental health. As part of this work, a monthly newsletter has been developed for the Promotores de Salud and community health workers, which are available in both English and Spanish. Newsletters can be found by clicking the text here: Promotores and Environmental Health - Western States PEHSU
NEW FACT SHEET!

A new fact sheet has been developed and designed for the general public on why children have both higher exposures to toxins and increased vulnerability to those exposures relative to adults.

The fact sheet is available in both English and Spanish and be found on the Western States PEHSU website (English version).

Click the text for the Spanish version.

**Region 1: New England PEHSU**

Matilda Anderson, MBBS, MPH and Rose H. Goldman, MD, MPH co-wrote, “Occupational Reproductive Hazards for Female Surgeons in the Operating Room: A Review” for the JAMA Surgery. This research evaluates the higher rates of infertility and pregnancy complications found for female surgeons compared with the general population. Several reproductive hazards are present in the operating room and may be associated with these findings. Hazards should be identified and controlled to minimize risks.

Reproductive hazards exist in the operating room that may contribute to pregnancy complications and infertility in surgeons. Information and guidance should be given to female surgeons and trainees of reproductive age, and efforts should be made in the workplace to control exposures but not restrict female surgeons’ activities unnecessarily. The article was published and can be found online here.
Laura Anderko, RN, PhD, Emma Pennea, MSCH & Stephanie Chalupka, MS, BS published an article titled, “Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances: An Emerging Contaminant of Concern” in Annual Review of Nursing Research. This review article highlighted recent research on health impacts from PFAS and includes clinical implications.

Dr. Laura Anderko with Kelly K. Jones, PhD, RN and John Davies-Cole, PhD, MPH published a study, “Neighborhood Environment and Asthma Exacerbation in Washington, DC” in the Annual Review of Nursing Research. The study explored the association between neighborhood-built environment, socio-economic status, air quality and hospitalizations for asthma in Washington, DC.

Upcoming Events

The Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit (PEHSU) Program is excited to announce the addition of its newest, self-paced eLearning courses to its PEHSU National Classroom!

**Online Course Title: Reproductive Environmental Health Series: Plasticizers and Reproductive Health**

**Speakers:** Charles McKay, MD, FACMT, FACEP; Immediate Past President, American College of Medical Toxicology; Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Units, and Marya Zlatnik, MD, MMS; Professor of OB/GYN and MFM, University of California San Francisco

**Online Course Title: Reproductive Environmental Health Series: Radon and Reproductive Health**

**Speakers:** Charles McKay, MD, FACMT, FACEP; President, American College of Medical Toxicology; American College of Medical Toxicology; Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Units

**Online Course Title: Organic Solvents and Reproductive Health**

**Speakers:** Charles McKay, MD, FACMT, FACEP; President, American College of Medical Toxicology; American College of Medical Toxicology; Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Units and Erica Burt, MPH, Freelance Environmental Health Consultant.
PEHSU NEWSLETTER

Changing Health Behaviors to Avoid Environmental Exposures –
January 17, 2018
Grand Rounds: Susan Buchanan, MD, MPH
Expiration Date: February 20, 2020

Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals– February 21, 2018
Grand Rounds: Sheela Sargyanarayana, MD, MPH
Expiration Date: March 27, 2020

Perfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS): Potential Sources - March 14, 2018
Ground Round: Laura Anderko PhD, RN, Susan Buchanan, MD, MPH, and Alan Woolf, MD, MPH, FAAP, FAACT, FACMT
Expiration Date: March 17, 2020

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Any content suggestions for future issues? Please send to imontoya@aap.org