

# Protecting All Children from Environmental Hazards & Promoting a Healthier Environment

The Voice in Washington for  
Children's Environmental Health

## 2012 Annual Report



Children's Environmental Health Network  
(CEHN)



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## Message from Board Chair and Executive Director CEHN 2012 Annual Report



In 2012, CEHN was very excited to expand on our work to promote the health and safety of our children from environmental hazards. CEHN celebrated our 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year by hosting a few key events. Our successful research conference *The Contribution of Epigenetics and Pediatric Environmental Health* was held May 30<sup>th</sup> and June 1<sup>st</sup> in San Francisco, CA. This event brought together 170 pediatric researchers and advocates from around the U.S. and beyond. CEHN lead a policy session and the final conference session that highlight opportunities for future directions. The



importance of communicating science effectively and the public health/public policy implications to this emerging and growing field of research was discussed. CEHN remains very grateful for all of the range of speakers, participants, sponsors, and partners that made this event a reality.

On June 11th, CEHN hosted a Congressional Briefing focused on the past, present, and future opportunities before us in the field of children's environmental health. We had the support of some fantastic [partners](#) which helped to also make that event quite engaging and successful.

CEHN received a new grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to update some key resources, support key advocacy work, and assist with strengthening our partnerships with the Children's Research Centers of Excellence. CEHN remains very grateful to the W.K. Kellogg Foundation for their support of CEHN over the last 4 years!

We encourage you to learn more about achievements made in CEHN's Health in all Policies Cooperative Agreement, funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, our DC Environmental Justice Showcase Healthy Communities Project, the expansion of CEHN's Eco-Healthy Child Care® Program , funded by the Cedar Tree Foundation and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, and other exciting advocacy initiatives.

CEHN welcomed a new Board member, [Dr. Richard H. Finnell](#), Professor in the Department of Nutritional Sciences and in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry at the University of Texas at Austin and Director of Genomic Research at Dell Children's Medical Center. We also welcomed [Joyce Martin](#) as CEHN's new health Policy Specialist!

CEHN envisions healthy environments for all children, just as every parent dreams of a happy and healthy future for their own children. It is because of your continuous support and collaboration we have been able to work towards this vision. A big thank you to all of you for your efforts to support and nurture CEHN's vision and our children in 2012 and the last two decades of work!

# Protecting Children Through Policies

The Network's mission is to protect the developing child from environmental hazards and promote a healthier environment. It will be neither a quick nor easy task to secure the needed changes in government policies -- at the local, state, and Federal level -- to achieve this goal. We have far to go before we can be assured that children's unique vulnerabilities, exposures and behaviors are considered when our decision-makers write laws, regulations, standards and other policies that impact our children.

The Network remains dedicated to this goal, and is joined by an increasing number of organizations and individuals in increasing awareness among our policy-makers and in promoting policy change to explicitly recognize that children are not just little adults, and that "one size fits all" protections do not protect our most vulnerable, including our children.

The Network is proud that its leadership as the Voice for Children's Environmental Health in our nation's Capitol continues.

## Children's Environmental Health: Past, Present, and Future

To help mark its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Network hosted a highly successful Congressional briefing in June 2012, bringing the topic of "[Children's Environmental Health: Past, Present, and Future](#)" to Capitol Hill. Experts Jerome Paulson, MD, Cynthia Bearer, MD, PhD, and Lynn Goldman, MD, MPH, focused on the development of the field of children's environmental health and on emerging research that finds unexpected connections between asthma, autism, learning disabilities and IQ and children's exposures to chemicals.



*From left to right: Ms. Nsedu Obot Witherspoon, Dr. Jerome Paulson, Dr. Cynthia Bearer, Dr. Lynn Goldman*

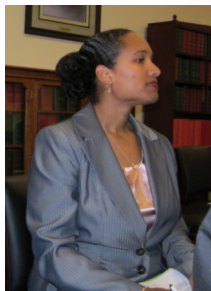
## Policy Shapes Health

The Network's efforts to educate policy makers this year have been supported in part by a cooperative agreement with the National Center for Environmental Health (NCEH), a small but vital part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Through this Health in All Policies initiative, the Network will educate policymakers and engage partner organizations to better protect children and to decrease exposures to toxic substances. To learn more, visit our [policy page](#).

## Testimony before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment & Related Agencies

In March 2012, CEHN Executive Director Nsedu Witherspoon testified before the House Appropriations subcommittee with jurisdiction over the U.S. EPA regarding the agency's funding for Fiscal Year 2013. Her

testimony was one of numerous times the Network raised its voice for children. The Network brought children's environmental health concerns to the relevant Congressional appropriators, urging their support for the Federal agencies and activities that protect children from environmental toxicants.



*CEHN Executive Director Nsedu Witherspoon waits to testify before a House Appropriations subcommittee on Interior, Environment & Related Agencies*



*CEHN Executive Director Nsedu Witherspoon, center, prepares to testify before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment & Related Agencies*

## Regulations and standards

The Network led a coalition of organizations calling on the Office of Management & Budget to release a long-delayed and much needed rule relating to research involving human subjects and pesticides, 'Revisions to EPA's Rule on Protections for Subjects in Human Research Involving Pesticides.'

In fall 2011, the Network and its scientists contributed to two successful Congressional briefings. As a member of the coalition of the Friends of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, the Network supported a briefing about "Discovering How Our Children's Health, Future and Ability to Learn is Influenced by Their Environment." CEHN Board Chair Cynthia Bearer moderated the panel and the Network helped to secure other scientists to present on their research. Dr. Bearer was also a presenter at a Congressional briefing to educate Congressional offices about the harmful effects of mercury exposure, especially to the fetus.

The Network also submitted docket comments to the U.S. EPA regarding health and safety concerns of nanoscale pesticides.

## Childhood Leukemia Project

CEHN has partnered with the University of California at Berkeley (UC Berkeley) to provide research translation and community outreach services for the latter's scientific research on childhood leukemia and environmental exposures. The network will make this research understandable, accessible and actionable through integration into on-going outreach and training for various stakeholders including care providers, health care professionals, parents, individuals concerned with children's environmental health, and policy makers. This partnership serves as a part of the proposed new Children's Environmental Health Center for Interdisciplinary Research on Childhood Leukemia and the Environment (CIRCLE) based at UC Berkeley and funded by NIEHS and EPA.

CEHN continues to build a [database](#) of peer-reviewed research articles focused on childhood leukemia and environmental exposures and is assisting in the development of the narrative to provide content for the research translation plan. The network has identified a number of opportunities within CEHN to incorporate and communicate key childhood leukemia findings. The CEHN 2012 research conference, "The Contribution of Epigenetics in Pediatric Environmental Health", included pediatric cancer as a specified theme. New

research in the field is highlighted via the Article of the Month series and CEHN social media accounts, and a new page on our website, “Children’s Environments and Cancer”, will provide factsheets for a variety of audiences and links to other resources, including the CIRCLE website. The first completed factsheet, reviewed by our scientific advisory board and aimed at parents and care-givers, has already been posted.

## Eco-Healthy Child Care® Program

CEHN’s National Eco-Healthy Child Care® program (EHCC) continues to be a success! EHCC partners with child care professionals to eliminate or reduce environmental health hazards found in child care facilities, thus improving the environmental health of children. EHCC supports child care providers as they make simple choices that benefit the health and well-being of all children in their care. The program offers training, technical assistance, resources, marketing and a two-year endorsement. By reducing exposure to toxics, the program creates healthier environments in and around child care facilities, and in doing so, it creates healthier kids. EHCC emphasizes low-to no-cost solutions to common environmental health hazards and empowers providers to maximize their children’s potential. EHCC is made possible through generous support from funders including: The Cedar Tree Foundation, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, The W.K. Kellogg Foundation, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

EHCC’s 30-member [National Advisory Committee](#) (NAC) supports the development and growth of this national program. The NAC includes representatives from Child Care Aware of America, the National Head Start Association (NHSA), Agency for Toxic Substances & Disease Registry, Environmental Law Institute, U.S. EPA’s Office of Children’s Health Protection, and the U.S. HHS’ Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Division of Child, Adolescent and Family Health, among others. In spring 2012, CEHN created the [EHCC Science Task Force](#), a committee of eight nationally renowned pediatricians, toxicologists and other children’s environmental health experts, to review EHCC’s curriculum and advise content with regard to the latest scientific research. The EHCC program is now legally protected, as the EHCC name and logo have been registered and the checklist, fact sheets and training manual have been copyrighted.

EHCC's reputation in the field has supported our efforts to collaborate with states to incorporate EHCC into state Quality Improvement Rating Programs. For example, CEHN and the relevant state agencies in Pennsylvania are in the process of incorporating EHCC into PA's *Keystone Stars* quality improvement program. EHCC’s reputation has also helped in forming a strong partnership with the National Center for Healthy Homes (NCHH) – our collaborative goal is to expand the reach of the EHCC TtT curriculum.

More than 1,900 facilities, serving over 90,000 children within 48 states, five Canadian provinces, five Australian states and Puerto Rico have qualified as Eco-Healthy.

EHCC has trained over 2,200 child care providers, trainers, directors, administrators and child care health consultants. EHCC continues to provide extensive technical assistance to child care professionals throughout the country.



By November 2012, the EHCC program will have expanded into 21 states – offering a 4 hour Train the Trainer (TtT) session to 25-50 key child care professionals within each state. This year, we expanded into the following new states: AK, GA, HI, IN, KY, OR, PA and made presentations at over 20 national, regional and state conferences, representing fields of environmental health, child care, public health, child care licensing, Head Start, and healthy homes. Every year, thousands of visitors come to our Website seeking information about Eco-Healthy Child Care®.

For more information on the EHCC Program and to download topical fact sheets please visit [EHCC website](#).

Supporters of the EHCC program:



THE KRESGE FOUNDATION



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## **Environmental Justice: Healthy Children, Healthy Communities: Building capacity to improve children's health in Washington, DC**

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region III established a Regional Priority, Partnerships for Community Health group that has agreed to work in close collaboration with the District Environmental Justice Showcase Community Project, offering Regional support and expertise to address concerns identified by the partnership. The focus of the Partnership for Community Health was in Washington, DC.

The Showcase Community Project was broken into three groups: 1) the green economy workgroup, 2) toxic sites, and 3) Children's Environmental Health Group.

The Children's Environmental Group was comprised of:

- The Mid-Atlantic Center for Children's Health and the Environment (MACCHE),
- The Children's Environmental Health Network (CEHN), and
- The DC Environmental Health Collaborative (DCEHC).

The Children's Environmental Health Network's (CEHN) overall project goals was to build capacity in Ward 8 to reduce environmental hazards and link child care owners and administrators to low to no cost remediation strategies and resources.

CEHN had launched a pilot program called Healthy Environments for Child Care Facilities and Preschools (HECCP) in California, Georgia, Texas, and Washington, DC. In DC, HECCP involved conducting assessments in 60 licensed child care facilities, and trained over 600 child care providers between 2007 and 2010. With this small project in Ward 8, CEHN worked on advancing its earlier effort to the next stage.



Specific objectives for this project included

1. To identify groups to outreach, by working with established D.C. Child Care Task Force.
2. To identify child care facilities in Ward 8.
3. To conduct a baseline evaluation in identified child care facilities and create action plans.

### **Outreach**

CEHN reached out to 12 centers in Ward 8 of the District of Columbia (DC) to participate in this program. Out of 12 centers, 3 agreed to participate in this program. One of the 3 centers is a former participant of CEHN's DC HECCP program previously, were provided with a description of the program, and an informed consent form.

### **Environmental Assessment**

CEHN trained staff went into each center twice to perform environmental assessments at each participating centers. The first visit took place in December 2011, and the second, three months later, in March 2012. This assessment evaluated the environmental health status of the centers with components that included: filling out a general information questionnaire, performing a walkthrough of the facility, and collecting samples for lead dust in areas mostly used by children attending the centers. The lead dust sampling was to identify any detectable levels of the metal in the centers. All samples were analyzed by the Accurate Analytical Testing Lab, based in Michigan.

Following each assessment, centers received personalized Action Plans with our recommendations for actions and a copy of their lab report for lead dust samples.

Supporters of this initiative:



## **Communicating the Science**

### **Children's Environmental Health Article of the Month**

Understanding the science that supports the field of children's environmental health can be daunting to lay people. The emerging scientific papers are usually highly technical. Judging the priority and translating the results of the growing number and wide variety of articles is confusing. But understanding the science is also key to adopting effective and protective practices and policies

To help journalists, policy-makers and the general public better understand the outcomes of pediatric environmental health research, CEHN's Science Committee launched the Children's Environmental Health Article of the Month. The Article of the Month covers a broad range of current children's environmental health topics hand-picked by the CEHN Science Committee; its findings and importance are summarized for the general public. The Article of the Month is disseminated via our listservs and on the [CEHN web site](#).

Efforts such as these increase communication about children's environmental health to broader audiences, promote the field within the science world and highlight the science-base of current issues with stakeholders.



## Events

### **Research Conference:** *The Contribution of Epigenetics and Pediatric Environmental Health*

The 2012 CEHN research conference highlighted an exciting frontier in environmental health research, specifically the role of epigenetics in determining the impact of the environment on pediatric disease and children's current and future health. Entitled "The Contribution of Epigenetics in Pediatric Environmental Health" and held at the Stanford Court Renaissance Hotel in San Francisco from May 30 – June 1, the event exceeded expected attendance estimates, with a total of 170 diverse participants. The conference program included 5 keynote presentations and mini symposium and poster contributions from some of the most highly respected researchers in the field. Time was also specifically reserved for networking and for well-attended discussions on public action and policy implications of the presented research findings.

Most of the participants were scientific researchers from the United States. However, 17 attendees represented non-profits or were children's health advocates from organizations such as Autism Speaks, the Pesticide Action Network of North America (PANNA) and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. In addition, a number of international guests from Malaysia, Italy, Brazil, India, the Netherlands, Canada, Australia, UK, South Africa, Austria, France, and China were in attendance. Health practitioners and clinicians also attended the conference, many of whom expressed great interest in the CEHN Pediatric Training Manual, now undergoing revision. Health Sciences universities were well represented, with 30 attendees present from Medical Schools or Schools of Public Health.

The Conference Planning Committee encouraged student and young investigator participation through reduced registration rates and volunteer opportunities. A total of 31 student and post doctoral researchers attended. Three Junior Investigator Abstract Awards were presented for outstanding research in the areas of epigenetic effects of prenatal BPA exposure, DNA methylation of a placental enzyme and infant growth, and epigenetic regulation of asthma genes after environmental intervention.

Several federal agencies were represented at the conference, including participants from the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA,) the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS), and the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD). The conference attendance also hosted two media representatives: Rebecca Rancourt for Epigenie and Sara Reardon for New Scientist. Rebecca Rancourt's write-up on the conference can be viewed [here](#).

Conference participants provided overwhelmingly positive reviews of the event. Fifty-eight percent of attendees completed and submitted conference evaluations, and 97% of them stated that their expectations of the conference were fulfilled. Of the respondents, 94% said that the conference successfully fostered collaborations across different scientific groups, 96% said that it identified research gaps, and 95% said it explored the contribution of pediatric environmental exposures to epigenetic regulation and how they vary by exposure, host characteristics and other factors. General feedback included the following comments:

- "Overall, a great conference--covered a lot in a relatively short amount of time"
- "Very well organized, almost flawless execution"
- "Wonderfully done. Great venue. Very organized. Impressive attendance. Impressive gathering of leading researchers within the field of epigenetics. Excellent job CEHN!"

The conference has directly led to CEHN being offered a community outreach and education role for the University Of Michigan School Of Public Health's Office of Public Health Practice, specifically providing translation for their research on obesity and possible prenatal environmental factors.

We continue to keep the conversation moving forward with our conference participants, and look forward to highlighting the next exciting frontier in children's environmental health research.

### CEHN 6th Annual Children's Health Advocate Award

As the field of pediatric environmental health has grown, the Network encountered more and more leaders in this emerging field. To recognize these leaders, in 2006, CEHN launched the Children's Environmental Health Advocate Awards. The purpose of the award program is to raise awareness of the effects of environmental hazards to children's health, to acknowledge effective children's environmental health advocates, and to raise support for our important programs. CEHN has benefited from the kind generosity of individual and organizational contributions each year since.



***Dr. Herb Needleman***



***Mr. Erik Olson***



***Queen Zakia Rafiq Shabazz***



***Dr. Sandra Steingraber***

CEHN's 6th Annual Children's Health Advocate Award Reception took place in October 2011, during Children's Health Month. Guests included distinguished health professionals, public health advocates, researchers, and community-based leaders within the field of children's environmental health. The event highlighted not only the history and work of CEHN but also children's unique vulnerabilities and susceptibilities when they are exposed to environmental toxicants. The Community Health Award was presented to Queen *Zakia Rafiq Shabazz* for her leadership, training management, publishing educational and awareness programs and inspiring community action against toxins. The Science Award was presented to Dr. Herb Needleman, a distinguished pediatrician and researcher who, having determined the developmental implications of excessive exposure to lead, has worked tirelessly and at great personal cost to force governments and industry to confront the implications of his findings. The Policy Award was presented to Mr. Erik Olson for his extensive work on environmental and health threats from toxic chemicals, including playing a key role in major environmental legislation and hearings on toxic chemicals, children's environmental health, drinking water, clean water and environmental justice. The Arts/Media Award was presented to Dr. Sandra Steingraber, an internationally recognized authority on the environment links to cancer and human health.

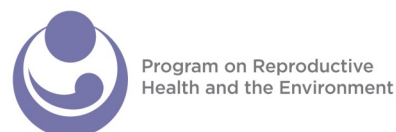
This event was graciously hosted at Pew Charitable Trusts at their Washington, D.C., facility. CEHN is very thankful for the great support provided by the host, friends, and partners to this now annual event!

### Sponsors:



## Collaborating with Partners

Partnerships are key to leveraging resources for CEHN. Here are some examples of the productive collaborations that have helped us to protect children.



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*The Beauty of Science is to Make Things Simple*



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It's time to listen.



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# About Us

**The Network focuses on policy, education and research. Our goals are to:**

- Promote the development of a sound public health and child-focused national policy, with an emphasis on children most at risk;
- Elevate public awareness of environmental hazards to children;
- Educate health professionals, policy makers, and community members in preventive strategies; and
- Stimulate prevention-oriented research.

## **Children are uniquely vulnerable to harmful chemicals**

Children's developing systems, exposure patterns and behaviors put them at risk of harm from chemicals in their environments. An exposure which may result in little or no damage for an adult may cause irreversible harm to a child.

Thus, the Network has been working since 1992 to protect children from exposure to potentially harmful chemicals. We are proud to serve as the voice for children's environmental health in our nation's capital.

The Network's Board and committee members include internationally-recognized experts in children's environmental health science and policy who serve on key Federal advisory panels and scientific boards.

## **Funders and Sponsors**

The Network is a non-partisan, 501(c)(3) organization and receives funding from federal sources, private foundations, and individual contributions.

## **Join us!**

To find out more about CEHN, visit our Website: [www.cehn.org](http://www.cehn.org)

You can also join the [CEHN Community List](#), which provides discussion about general advocacy within the field of children's environmental health. Scientists and academicians are invited to join the [CEHN Science List](#).

You can also follow latest trends on Twitter ([@CEHN](#)), or Facebook ([facebook.com/CEHNet](https://facebook.com/CEHNet)).

# Circle of Champions

## Thank You to Our Donors: 2012 Honor Roll List

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# Financial Statement

## Income

Grants	
Government/Federal	\$174,029
Foundations	\$180,000
Contributions	\$20,012
Research Conference Income	\$41,218
Program Fees	\$15,866
Carry Over from FY 2011	\$ 371,258
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 802,383</b>

## Expenses

Personnel/Labor	
Personnel	\$370,542.49
Professional/	\$69,556.88
Consultant Fees	
Program Expense	\$28,594.78
Pediatric Research Conference	\$74,256.81
Travel	\$27,796.79
Insurance	\$3,540
Rent	\$35,574.67
Utilities	\$76.91
Phone	\$5,279.72
Equipment Rental	\$3,015.17
Postage/Delivery	\$4,506.41
Printing & Reproduction	\$4,998.90
Computer/Web Services	\$3,997.36
Office Supplies	\$1,415.11
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$633,367</b>

**Net Income** **\$319,016**



**Children's**  
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