



CHILDREN'S
ENVIRONMENTAL
HEALTH
NETWORK

CHILDREN'S ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH NETWORK

2021 ANNUAL REPORT



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A MESSAGE FROM NSEDU OBOT WITHERSPOON

CEHN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Last year I wrote that even with all of the public health challenges, layers of injustice prevalent in our communities, and division among our political leaders that I still found hope in the many successes that had been noted, supporting, encouraging, leveraging important protective work happening across the nation for children and all vulnerable communities.

Coming out of 2021, I acknowledge the critical hold that the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic continued to have on our lives, especially when we witnessed the range of challenges presented with the re-opening of most schools. I acknowledge our continued challenges facing humanity, our climate, our waterways, our crop fields,

our built environments, to name a few. I also acknowledge the incredible depth, perseverance, fortitude, determination, and grit that our CEHN team, partners, supporters, and larger network have continued to show over this last year. CEHN has continued to lead the children's environmental health movement, including critical partnerships and work in the equity, climate, and child health intersections. Our leadership in the cancer prevention arena, including childhood cancer prevention, continued to amplify over the year, attracting additional partners as work around a research prevention agenda and key advocacy moves forward. CEHN accepted a needed leadership role to assist our CDC/ATSDR partners in the development of early care and learning facilities on COVID-19 best practices in cleaning, disinfecting, and indoor air quality, while also providing technical assistance to 16 state health departments. I encourage you to check out our report for additional exciting highlights.

I find immense hope in the many children's environmental health wins from this past year. I am inspired by federal, state, and local policy changes that will protect our children's health, strengthen climate action, and reduce toxics in our economy and our environment. I am grateful to and inspired by the many child health champions who have worked so hard for these victories. I am invigorated by the ways we have collectively built on the challenges of 2020 to create opportunities for a better future.

Looking forward to CEHN's 30th year in 2022, I am hopeful. I am determined. We've heard from so many youth, parents, teachers, and community members who are worried, confused, and scared about what the future holds. We hear you, we fight for you and your right to a healthy life in a stable environment. For the children and families who are living in polluted communities, who are victims of environmental injustices: we fight for you and your right to be seen, heard, valued, and safe. For all, we will continue our fight for equity, justice, health, safety. Our future and that of our children depends on us examining the systems that brought us here and digging in to drive true systemic change.

Thank you each for continuing your fight in all ways that you do. Please reach out now or any time in the future and let us know how we may assist you.

May 2022 bring you health and happiness,

Nsedu Obot Witherspoon

GOALS OF THE CHILDREN'S ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH NETWORK



To stimulate prevention-oriented research



To educate health professionals, policy makers, and community members in preventative strategies



To elevate public awareness of environmental hazards to children



To promote development of sound public health and child-focused national policy

CHILDREN'S ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND CLIMATE CHANGE

CEHN has continued to position itself as a leading voice at the intersection of climate change and children's health. The CEHN climate change webpages continue to be updated to provide our community with valuable resources and information to protect children's health from climate change's direct and indirect impacts. Our work and expertise in this area include providing technical assistance, leadership, speaking and writing engagements, and other efforts for and with diverse audiences and across all levels of government with regard to climate change resilience, response, and recovery.

Specifically, CEHN holds leadership positions in key systems approach collaborative efforts, both nationally and internationally, that are working to advance equitable climate solutions that don't leave children and other vulnerable populations behind. More to come on work within the New Network and the Climate Equity Collaborative in 2022!

In the last half of 2020, CEHN launched our project with Homewood Children's Village, educating and driving action on renewable energy sources for children's health and equity. As part of this effort, CEHN developed educational materials for general audiences about energy sources, children's health, and equity, and the importance of moving towards clean, renewable energy sources. We also provided guest lectures to residents of Homewood, Pittsburgh in Pennsylvania, and hosted a youth art contest to envision a healthy energy future.



CEHN staff were also instrumental in organizing a cross-section workgroup focused on children's health and climate change between the American Public Health Association's Environment and Maternal and Child Health Sections.

CEHN serves on the leadership council of EcoAmerica, and is an academic partner with Mount Sinai in critical disaster preparedness training and education in Puerto Rico, with a recent invitation to engage in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

CHILD CARE IN THE TIME OF CORONAVIRUS

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted how vulnerable children and child care workers are during public health crises. Ensuring a strong child care system where staff has the resources necessary to offer safe and healthy child care is critical. During the last year, opportunities to reach child care professionals with the eco-healthy message increased as many were seeking science-based and low-cost best practices for keeping child care facilities open and safe. The Eco-Healthy Child Care® program can help to build a more sustainable child care system for ALL children, families, and staff.



CDC-ATSDR: EHCC COVID-19 OUTREACH AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR ECE FACILITIES

EHCC received funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to develop resources for early care and learning facilities on COVID-19 best practices in cleaning, disinfecting, and indoor air quality. EHCC used CDC's best practices to create science-based and user-friendly fact-sheets and social media toolkit (English and Spanish) and a COVID-19 resource page. EHCC partnered with the Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Units to offer two webinars for child care professionals on safer cleaning and disinfecting and improving ventilation, over 8000 people were reached. EHCC is providing technical assistance to the 16 state health departments that received CDC COVID-19 funding for child care.

CANCER FREE ECONOMY & CHILDHOOD CANCER PREVENTION INITIATIVE

CEHN continued to serve as the co-lead for the Health/Science Node of the Cancer Free Economy Network, along with the Lowell Center for Sustainable Production at the University of Massachusetts Lowell, and the Silent Spring Institute. CEHN also continues to serve on the leadership of the Childhood Cancer Prevention Initiative, launched in fall of 2020.

OVER THE YEAR THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS WERE PRIORITIZED BETWEEN BOTH INITIATIVES:

Shifting the Narrative: Collaborated with over 60 stakeholders and leaders in the health, science, business, policy, and advocacy sectors to release the first-ever report, [Childhood Cancer: Cross-Sector Strategies for Prevention](#)

Building Capacity: Continued to engage with the [Joint Statement on Cancer Prevention](#) signees on their amplification of environmental cancer prevention in their work, focusing on those with an equity focus. Continued participation in the Climate and Toxics Workgroup, working to link the intersections between climate change mitigation/adaptation needs to prevention from harmful chemicals.

Expanding Reach: CEHN participated in Cancer Prevention and Childhood Cancer Prevention Month awareness and education activities, including various presentations. Available science related to cancer trends is included in presentations, trainings, and public education events.

Leveraging Alignment: CEHN helps to co-lead a pesticides project that is working to engage with leaders in the pesticide prevention arena with



the aim of incorporating childhood cancer prevention science into effective strategies, business models, and policy efforts.

Advocacy: Engaged in the release of the resource: [A Path to Cancer Prevention And Environmental Equity: The Cancer Free Economy Network's Agenda for the Biden-Harris Administration](#)

PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM LEAD EXPOSURES IN FAMILY & CENTER-BASED CHILD CARE ENVIRONMENTS

In 2018, CEHN's Eco-Healthy Child Care® program in partnership with the National Center for Healthy Housing (NCHH) and the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC), received an initial two year grant from The JPB Foundation to help home-based child care professionals identify and prevent children's exposure to lead. The Lead-Safe Toolkit for Home-Based Child Care

was developed and released in October 2019. Webinars, co-hosted by Child Care Aware of America, promoting the Lead-Safe Toolkit were held. In 2020, EHCC and its partners received renewal funding from The JPB Foundation and expanded the Lead-Safe Toolkit to center-based facilities. EHCC is also working to update and develop lead-prevention standards for the child care field by adapting the nationally-recognized health and safety standards--Caring for Our Children put forth by the National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education and developing a new set of accreditation indicators for the National Association for Family Child Care. These new standards and indicators are based upon the Lead-Safe Toolkit.



CHILDREN'S ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH MOVEMENT

The COVID-19 pandemic presented some challenges to growing and strengthening the Children's Environmental Health Movement (CEH Movement). It also laid bare the existing inequities in our country's health systems, the chronic underfunding of public health, and the critical relevance of environmental justice and climate change. In addition, the crisis shed light on the essential but often overlooked child care industry and its critical role for families, providers (who are mostly women of color), and our economy as well as for the healthy development of our children.



CEHN lifted up these messages throughout the year and they resonated soundly with the Movement. Children's Environmental Health Day (CEH Day) continues to grow in terms of numbers of engaged partners and events and activities across the country. The momentum from the Day is carried forward throughout the year. CEHN empowers communities with tools to leverage their city and state CEH Day proclamations

to achieve progress in their CEH-related campaigns and initiatives. We continue to talk with our many partners in the field and encourage them to use the CEH Day platform to showcase the work they do in the environmental health, environmental justice, and climate action spaces and how that work protects children. This encourages partners to adopt a child-health lens throughout the year by which to evaluate their efforts.

CEHN also launched The Patron, a monthly policy e-newsletter with a children's environmental health (CEH) lens, in June 2020. This CEH-

curated, nonpartisan policy roundup provides the CEH Movement with federal policy landscape updates, reports on CEHN's leadership in the policy/advocacy space, and relevant calls to action. The new effort will support strategic CEH advocacy and movement-building, especially during this critical time of increased federal investments in infrastructure, early childhood, and climate and clean energy.

THE FIFTH ANNUAL CHILDREN'S ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DAY

The 5th annual Children's Environmental Health Day (CEH Day) on October 8, 2020 was a wonderful day of community, increasing awareness of the hazards facing US children. Continuing the historic increase in partnerships and actions taken in support of protecting children's health, we celebrated with 55 CEH Day Partners. In preparation for CEH Day, CEHN hosted two informational sessions for potential partners and created many resources to support partners in CEH Day promotion, hosting events and activities, or otherwise getting involved.



With the dedicated help from leaders throughout the country, 12 mayors, governors, and county officials declared October 8 as CEH Day. This dip in proclamations from previous years may be explained by the COVID-19 pandemic. Many government offices were partially closed and otherwise focused on responding to the acute crisis facing their citizens.

Due to the global pandemic, many of the 40 CEH Day activities were held virtually, including CEHN's 12-hour #CEHdayLive stream, broadcast over Facebook and YouTube on October 8. This event featured 70 individual scenes partner messages, educational presentations, fireside chats,

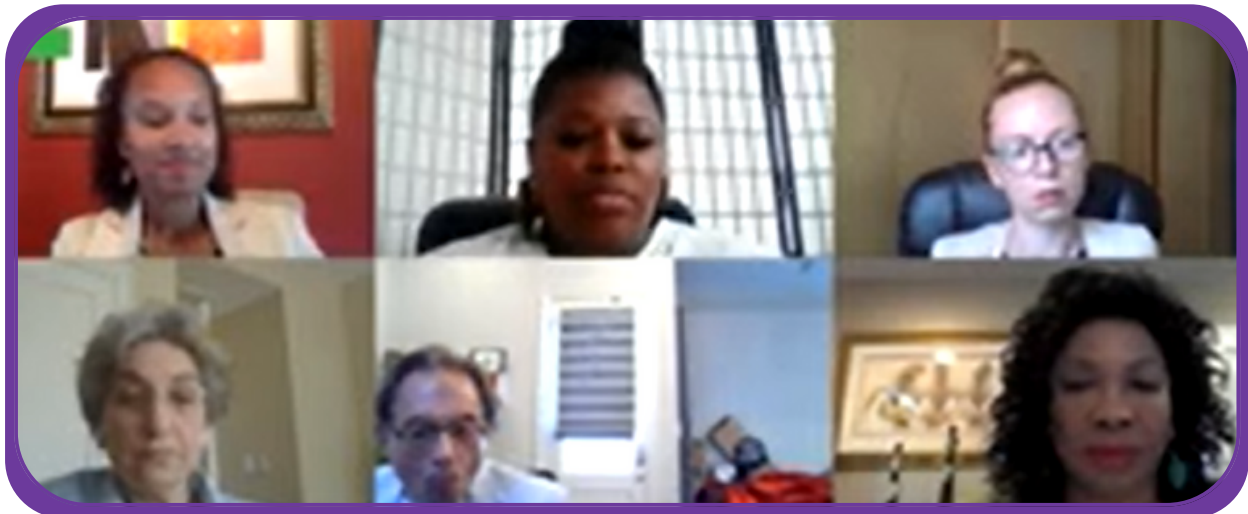
panels discussions, a sustainable children's fashion show, and children's read- and sing-alongs. This stream was watched by a total of 455 viewers live, and the videos have since been enjoyed by many more. You can find the recorded segments at bit.ly/CEHday2020Recording

CEHN hosted the annual #CEHchat on October 8, focused on children's environmental health and climate change. The Twitter chat was attended by 63 organizations and individual child health advocates who shared 393 tweets. On October 8, the #CEHday and #CEHchat hashtags reached approximately 2.7 million social media users.

CEH Day 2020 was made possible through the generous support of NaturePedic, More Vang, and the Sierra Club.



15TH ANNUAL CHILD HEALTH AWARDS



CEHN presented the 15th Annual Child Health Advocate Awards as a special segment of our Children's Environmental Health Day (CEH Day) virtual event on Thursday, October 8, 2020.

The awards honor outstanding children's environmental health leaders in Policy, Science, Community Advocacy, Business, and Arts/Media. These child health champions have devoted themselves toward a vision of a cleaner, healthier environment for children. The Nsedu Obot Witherspoon (NOW) Youth Leadership Award was created as part of CEHN's 20th-anniversary celebration in 2012, in honor of Executive Director Nsedu Obot Witherspoon. This award honors a young person who has demonstrated exceptional environmental health leadership focused on protecting human health, especially of our most vulnerable populations.

THE 2020 AWARDEES WERE:

Science Awards:

Dr. Mona Sarfaty, MD
Executive Director and Founder
Medical Society Consortium on
Climate

Dr. Beverly L. Wright, PhD
Executive Director
and Health Deep South Center for
Environmental Justice

Community Award:

Ms. LaTricea Adams, MAT, EdS
Founder, CEO, and President
Black Millennials for Flint

Policy Award (*posthumously*):

Ms. Janice Nolan, MA
former National Assistant Vice
President, Policy
American Lung Association

NOW Youth Leadership Awards:

Karina Samuel
Founder, Florida chapter
Bye Bye Plastic Bags

Sophia Kianni
Founder and Executive Director
Climate Cardinals

Dr. Kenneth Rothbaum, M.D., the late Ms. Nolan's, spouse, accepted the Policy Award on her behalf and paid a moving tribute to Ms. Nolan as an advocate, a leader, and a loving wife and individual. Both of the NOW Youth Leadership Awardees were unable to attend the virtual event. The awardees present participated in a rich panel conversation, moderated by Nsedu Obot Witherspoon, about children's environmental health, environmental justice and health equity, and climate change. While each address these issues from diverse fields and approaches, they all share the strong drive, talent, courage, and vision needed to effect true transformative systems change towards a healthier, more equitable future for all children.

ECO-HEALTHY CHILD CARE®

EHCC BY THE NUMBERS

16,641

Children protected by
EHCC endorsements July
2020- June 2021

25

States with EHCC
endorsements
(June 2021)



880

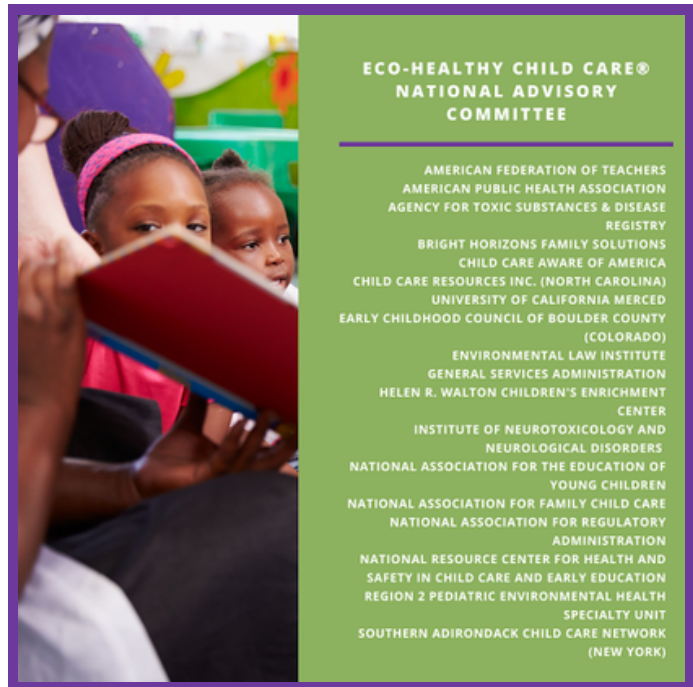
Total number of
facilities endorsed by
EHCC past & present

63,154

Children protected by all
EHCC endorsements past
& present

EHCC LEADERSHIP

CEHN staff members chair the EHCC National Advisory Committee (NAC). Since 2008, the EHCC NAC has ensured the growth and rapid adoption of the EHCC program. Leaders of both state and national child care agencies and national children's environmental health organizations comprise this committee. Committee members advise effective and efficient strategies for embedding children's environmental health considerations throughout recognized best practice standards for early care and learning environments. The NAC committee also reviews materials to ensure appropriate content, supports outreach to child care professionals and parents, and ensures that the program is culturally sensitive.



ONLINE CURRICULUM

Eco-Healthy Child Care®'s Protecting Children's Environmental Health e-learning course launched in April of 2017 and is available through ProSolutions and more recently Emory's School of Nursing. The course was updated in 2020 with the latest science-based environmental health best practices. Learners discover how children are exposed to harmful chemicals in their everyday learning environments, why these exposures are concerning, and realistic and cost-effective best practices for immediately reducing hazards. This course is ideal for providers, parents/caregivers, school administrators, and child care licensing professionals. Forty-eight states recognize EHCC's 3-hour e-learning course on the ProSolutions platform and offer adult learning clock hour credit to those who have successfully completed it. EHCC's new partnership with Emory's School of Nursing increases the reach of the e-course and allows nurses and other health professionals to take the environmental health curriculum and receive applicable continuing education credits. Both ProSolutions and Emory offer the e-course in English and Spanish.

NEW SPANISH LANGUAGE FAQS RESOURCE PAGE

The EHCC program created a Spanish language resource page that assists in expanding its reach to new communities. The page houses EHCC's FAQs, fact sheets, checklist, the Protecting Children's Environmental Health e-course, and videos all available in Spanish.

AGENCY FOR TOXIC SUBSTANCES & DISEASE REGISTRY - CHOOSE SAFE PLACES

In 2017, CEHN's Eco-Healthy Child Care® program began collaborating with the Environmental Law Institute (ELI) and the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) to assist the Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry (ATSDR) in providing support to their 25 APPLETREE (ATSDR's Partnership to Promote Local Efforts to Reduce Environmental Exposure) grantees (state health departments), in implementing the "Choose Safe Places for Early Care and Education" guidance manual. The manual encourages child care providers to consider environmental hazards when locating center-based early learning facilities. In year four of the project, EHCC staff and partners increased the impact of the Choose Safe Places project within the child care field by presenting at virtual conferences on the progress and lessons learned of the program; providing technical assistance to state health departments on safe siting activities; and co-hosting a virtual meeting among the 25 APPLETREE state health departments and ATSDR on Choose Safe Places program successes and lessons learned.

IMPROVING EHCC PROVIDER OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

Between July 2020 and June 2021 EHCC awarded 244 endorsements to family and center-based child care providers. These providers utilized EHCC's best practices checklist to reduce environmental hazards like lead in water and unsafe plastics in their child care settings--creating safer and healthier early learning environments for the children they care for.



The Provider Spotlight Series showcases endorsed child care programs that have gone above and beyond the best practice suggestions listed within the Eco-Healthy Child Care® Checklist. Programs are recognized for their commitment to protecting the health and well-being of the children within their care. Each Spotlight is featured via social media and on the EHCC webpage.

In 2020, the Eco-Healthy Blog launched! The blog is a mix of the latest environmental health news and science AND updates on how EHCC and CEHN are working to protect children's health on the local, state, and national levels. It is available in English and Spanish



EHCC WEBINARS, PRESENTATIONS, AND CONFERENCES

Getting the message out about environmental health and child care is a key strategy to EHCC's goal of creating safer and healthier early learning environments for ALL children. During the last year EHCC has presented at the below conferences/webinars:

- National Association of City and County Health Officials Conference, July 2020
- National Environmental Health Association Conference, July 2020
- American Public Health Association Conference, November 2020
- Lead, Healthy Housing, and Home Safety Conference, January 2021
- National Council for Science and the Environment Conference, January 2021
- University of Texas, Austin , February 2021
- Chemicals, Gender, and Health Workshop, March 2021
- CDC/Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry (ATSDR) COVID-19 Webinars, March 2021
- Child Care Aware of America /National Center on Health and Wellness May 2021

PROTECTING CHILDREN THROUGH POLICY

Through policy, CEHN works to protect children's health and their environments at home, school, and play.

THE YEAR IN SUMMARY



CEHN staff (L-R) Kathy Attar, Hannah Wilkerson, Nsedu Witherspoon, Roxana Amaya-Fuentes, and Hester Paul at the National Arboretum

This past year was a year of contrast, contrast between policy work during the Trump Administration compared to the Biden Administration. The first half of the year, from July 2020 to December 2020, much of CEHN's efforts along with our community of united advocates and champions was in defense of the administration's actions: actions to roll back environmental health policies

and laws; to ignore and dismiss the importance of science, and fair and due processes; and to decrease the funding and size of key federal agencies. During this period, moral was low; many federal agencies and programs were holding on to keep their programs and staff from complete erosion. All of these stresses were compounded by the challenges of the COVID pandemic. The election of President Biden created a dramatic shift in policy and the work of CEHN and partners. It seemed that overnight the focus was on more health protective policies and support for the agencies and professionals responsible for these protections, with that a renewed hope.

As noted, the first half of the year, CEHN (and partners) efforts were mostly to defend existing environmental regulations (mostly clean air and water) and push forward COVID policies that were sound, based on science, and would help those most impacted (Black, brown and LatinX communities). Late in November 2021, following the presidential election, CEHN engaged in discussions and transitioning planning for the Biden administration. In January 2021, when Biden took office, the nature and tone of policy discussions and activity became more positive and health-protective. Public health was now at the forefront of public and national policy.

The new administration took swift action to begin the process of restoring the laws, regulations, and agencies that protect the public's health. There was a focus on renewed the importance of science; on vulnerable populations and environmental and social justice; and on climate change. To that end, in the first few months, the Administration called upon the many public and environmental health leaders to help provide guidance and expertise, including CEHN.

CEHN leadership (staff and board members) was asked to offer recommendations on protecting children's health in the first 100 days and beyond. CEHN's executive director engaged in direct one-on-one communications with the new EPA Administrator, Michael Regan, and the Office of Children's Health Protection, both seeking advice and direction in protecting children's health.

In addition, during this time, CEHN reviewed and signed onto many letters through its coalition* work on appropriations and funding, clean air and water, environmental justice, safe baby food, clean vehicles, lead, and more.

POLICY HIGHLIGHTS

In January 2021, CEHN staff and board members met with the Biden Transition team to offer recommendations to protect children's health in the first 100 days. During this month, CEHN's Executive Director, Nsedu Obot Witherspoon, also met with the EPA's Office of Children's Health Protection and the newly appointed EPA Administrator, Michael Regan.

Early in February 2021, the Censuring Science Transparency Rule, a Trump EPA rule that would have weakened the agency's ability to protect our health, and that CEHN and partners were in strong opposition to, was overruled in court.

In May 2021, CEHN's Executive Director, Nsedu Obot Witherspoon, lead teams through Congressional outreach in support of the Safe Baby Food Act.

In May 2021, CEHN's Executive Director, Nsedu Obot Witherspoon, provided comments at a Department of Interior-Council of Environmental Quality Conservation briefing on President Biden's 30X30 plan (which has a national goal to conserve at least 30 percent of U.S. lands and freshwater and 30 percent of U.S. Ocean areas by 2030).

COALITION PARTNERS

Empower DC*Healthy Air Partners*Clean Water for All*Friends of National Environmental Health Institutes (FNIHIS)*CDC Coalition*National Environmental Health Partnership Council*Science Response Network*Cancer Free Economy Network

CEHN POLICY ACTIVITIES BY THE NUMBERS

This past year was challenging and full of ups and downs. Although there are many struggles ahead, and COVID is still a threat, CEHN is thankful for the new administration and its commitment to children's health.

**MORE THAN
800** Number of hours
CEHN staff logged
on behalf of children
and health-protective
policy

4 number of requests by
administration and federal
leaders for guidance from
the executive director and
other CEHN leaders

2 number of testimonials
given by Executive Director,
Nsedu Obot Witherspoon.

One on the need for stronger ozone standards at an EPA public hearing and another on a local/DC issue, support for the renovation of Crummel School in Ivy City (which would give youth in that area a much-needed safe place to play) before the Committee on Business and Economic Development for the Office of the Deputy Mayor.

**MORE
THAN
50** Number of sign-on letters to Congress and federal
agencies

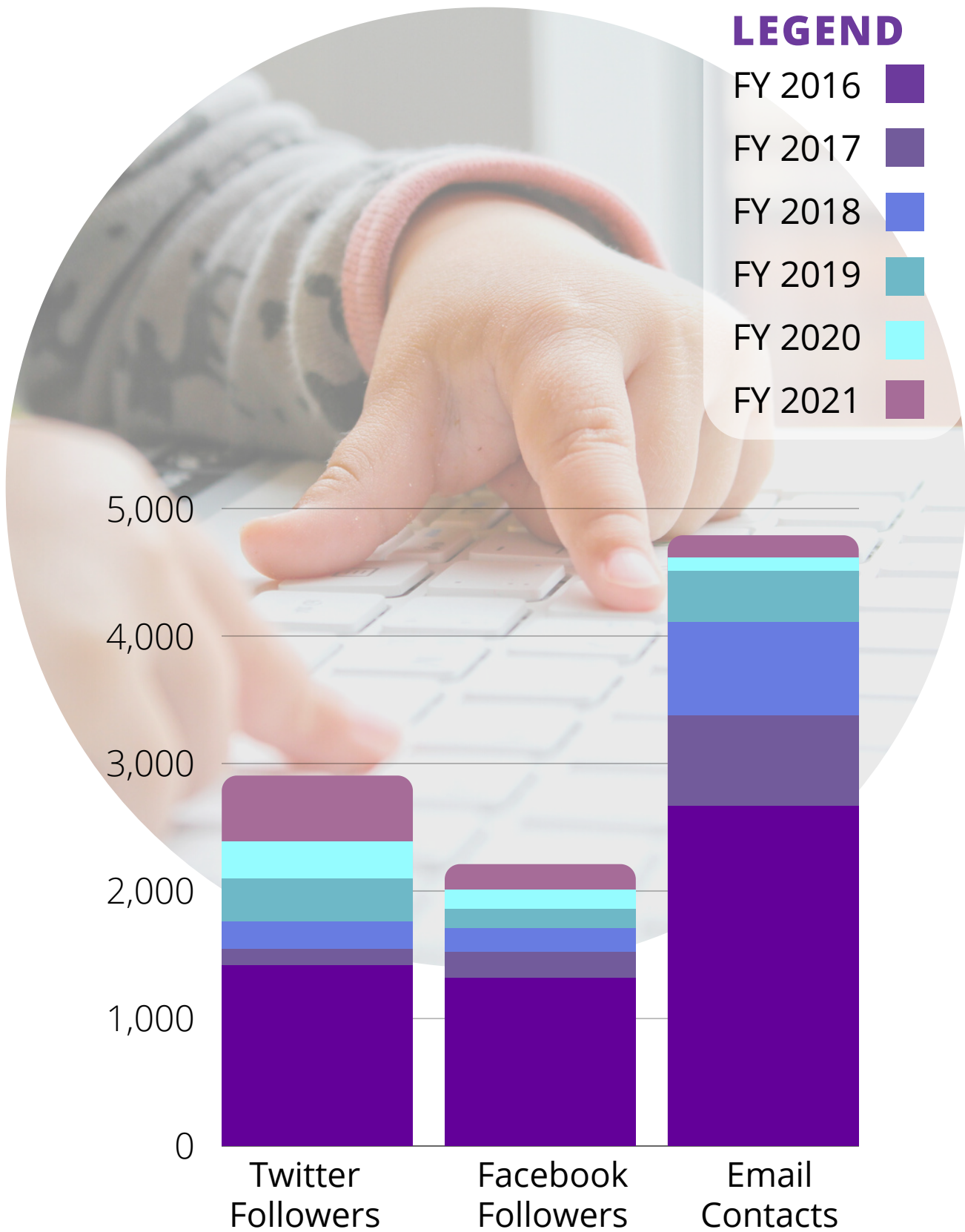
on a range of issues important to children's health including clean air, clean water, safe baby food, climate action, environmental justice, COVID-19, clean vehicles, funding and appropriations for infrastructure (water, public health, and transportation), healthy schools, funding for federal agencies and programs (CDC NCEH/ATSDR, NIH/NIEHS, and EPA), federal appointees for the new administration, lead and other toxics.

9 number of bill endorsements

on issues such as safe baby food; water during emergencies as a human right; climate change and children; environmental justice and the cleanup of legacy pollution; the importance of public health infrastructure; and black maternal health.



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& Community Partnerships
Program, Sierra Club*



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Nature & Former, Senior
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Sankar Sitaraman, PhD

*Associate Professor,
Mathematics, Howard
University*

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**Nsedu Obot
Witherspoon, M.P.H.**
Executive Director



**Kristie Trousdale,
M.P.H.**
Deputy Director



Hester Paul, M.S.
*Eco-Healthy Child Care®
National Director*



Kathy Attar, M.P.H.
*Eco-Healthy Child Care®
Program Manager*



**Roxana Amaya-
Fuentes, M.P.H.**
Program Assistant



Hannah Wilkerson
Program Assistant

CEHN CONSULTANT



Tracy Kolian
Health Policy Consultant

CEHN INTERNS

Summer 2020

Sarina Rajput
Eco-Healthy Child Care® Intern

Hannah Sawa
General Intern

Katie Bremmer
Carol Strobel Policy & Health Education

Fall 2020

Flor de Maria Rizo
General Intern

Spring 2021

Abberamee Visvanathan
Carol Strobel Policy & Health Education

Alyssa Pitt
General Intern

Summer 2021

Brittany Platt
Communications Intern

Kruttika Gopal
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Peggy Shepard

Executive Director WE ACT for Environmental Justice

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*Founding Executive Director, CEHN
Principal, J. Carlson Consulting Oakland, CA*

J. Routt Reigart, M.D.

Professor Emeritus and former Director of the Division of General Pediatrics, Medical University of South Carolina

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Professor Emeritus of Pediatrics, Medical University of South Carolina

James Roberts, MD, MPH

Professor of Pediatrics, Medical University of South Carolina

Allison Rich

Children's Environmental Health Specialist, Maryland Environmental Health Network

William Suk, PhD, MPH

Chief, Chemical Exposures and Molecular Biology Branch, Division of Extramural Research and Training, National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences

Babasaheb Sonawane, PhD

Chief, Effects Identification and Characterization Group, Environmental Protection Agency (Ret.)

David C. Bellinger, PhD

Professor, Neurology and Psychology Harvard Medical School - Senior Research Associate in Neurology Boston Children's Hospital - Professor, Department of Environmental Health Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health

Michael L. Weitzman, MD

Professor, Department of Pediatrics and Environmental Medicine at New York University School of Medicine and School of Global Public Health at New York University

Cynthia F. Bearer, MD, PhD, FAAP

Chief, Division of Neonatology at University Hospitals Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital

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Dean and Professor, Emory University N

Somdat Mahabir, Ph.D., M.P.H.

Program Director, Environmental Epidemiology Branch, Epidemiology and Genomics Research Program, National Cancer Institute

Michelle Naccarati-Chapkis

Executive Director, Women for a Healthy Environment

Karin Russ, MS, RN

National Coordinator of the Fertility/Reproductive Health Working Group Collaborative on Health and the Environment

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Nsedu Obot Witherspoon, MPH

Executive Director, Children's Environmental Health Network

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Communication Specialist, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, Office of the Director

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Professor Emeritus, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments (ANHE)

Leyla Erk McCurdy, MPhil - Chair

Environmental Health Consultant, and, Director Climate for Health ecoAmerica

Cynthia Merse

Office of Children's Health Protection, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Cynthia Moices

Assistant Director, Uprose

Michelle Naccarati-Chapkis

Executive Director, Women for a Healthy Environment

Allison Rich

Children's Environmental Health Specialist, Maryland Environmental Health Network

Karin Russ, MS, RN

National Coordinator of the Fertility/Reproductive Health Working Group Collaborative on Health and the Environment

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FINANCIAL STATEMENT

INCOME

Grants Government/Federal - \$250,987
Foundations - \$553,861
CEH Day - \$10,800
Contributions - \$25,368
Program Fees - \$19,137
FY 2020 Carry Over - \$178,843

Total Income = \$996,323



EXPENSES

Personnel/Labor Personnel - \$416,319
Fringe Benefits - \$26,782
Payroll Taxes - \$33,669
Unemployment Tax - \$2,638
Pension Expense - \$25,263
Professional/Consultant Fees - \$41,011
Temp/Contract Labor - \$4,250
Program Expenses - \$159,683
Travel - \$198
Insurance - \$3,909
Registration Fees - \$1,010
Rent - \$60,730
Utilities - \$202
Phone - \$10,119
Equipment Rental - \$10,520
Postage/Delivery - \$490
Printing & Reproduction - \$5,329
Computer/Web Services - \$8,594
Meeting Expenses - \$396
Office Supplies - \$5,359

Total Expenses = \$816,481

Net Income = \$179,842