



THE COLLABORATIVE ON HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT

April 11, 2005

Dear Colleague:

You are cordially invited to attend the regional meeting of the Learning and Developmental Disabilities Initiative (LDDI), a national working group of the Collaborative on Health and the Environment (CHE). The meeting will be held on June 9, 2005 in New York City at the YAI/National Institute for People with Disabilities facility at 460 West 34th Street (near 10th Avenue) from 9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Enclosed is a flyer and draft agenda for the meeting.

Please note that the workshop will be followed by a CHE reception from 4:30-6:30 p.m. during which Charlotte Brody, RN, executive director of Commonweal, and other active CHE partners will speak briefly about the broader scope of environmental health concerns linked to the increases in chronic disease and disabilities, which CHE is working to address.

Background on LDDI:

CHE established LDDI in 2002 as one of its first major national working groups. The primary mission of LDDI is to foster collaboration among learning and developmental disability organizations, researchers, health professionals and environmental health and justice groups to address concerns about the impact environmental pollutants may have on healthy brain development. CHE asked me, as executive director of the Institute for Children's Environmental Health, to serve as the national coordinator for LDDI.

In May 2004, LDDI held its first major national conference at the National Institutes of Health and is now focused on organizing regional meetings to catalyze broader collaborative efforts to address these concerns. LDDI currently has over 160 organizational and individual members engaged in educational and policy initiatives. For more information, please see: www.iceh.org/LDDI.html.

Goals of the LDDI meeting in New York:

- 1) Enhance understanding of existing and emerging science linking certain chemical exposures to learning, behavioral and developmental disabilities.
- 2) Highlight current initiatives and encourage broader education of key stakeholder groups.
- 3) Foster effective collaborative educational and policy initiatives on a regional level between researchers, health care professionals, health-affected groups and environmental health and justice advocates in order to reduce environmental pollution that can undermine children's healthy development.

Registration:

Registration is free—however, we require that participants pre-register by contacting Heather Loukmas at the Learning Disabilities Association of New York (e-mail: statelda@ldanys.org; ph: 518-608-8992) no later than May 31st. We also welcome donations at the door from those organizations and individuals who are able to make a contribution to help defray costs.

Funders and co-sponsors:

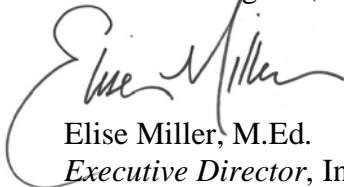
We are deeply grateful to our funders, the John Merck Fund and the Beldon Fund, which have invested in this meeting. In addition, we are pleased to have such a diverse and prominent set of co-sponsors, which include: American Academy of Pediatrics - District 2; Center for Children's Environmental Health, Joseph L. Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University; Center for Children's Health and the Environment, Mount Sinai School of Medicine; New York State Developmental Disabilities Planning Council; Grassroots Environmental Education; Healthy Schools Network; Institute for Children's Environmental Health; Learning Disabilities Association of New York; The National Association for the Dually Diagnosed; Premier HealthCare; Westchester ARC; and YAI/National Institute for People with Disabilities. We are particularly indebted to YAI/National Institute for People with Disabilities for offering us the use of their conference facility for free.

Food:

We will have a continental breakfast and coffee available when doors open for registration at 8:30 a.m. Participants will be on their own for lunch—in the packets we hand out at the meeting, suggestions for convenient places to get lunch will be included. At the reception, we will offer light appetizers and wine, beer and juice.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about this meeting (e-mail: emiller@iceh.org; Ph: 360-331-7904). I hope you will join us!

With warm regards,



Elise Miller, M.Ed.

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