

Priming for Prevention: An Ecological Approach to Research, Education and Policy

The Learning and Developmental Disabilities Initiative's 2007 National Conference

**Morehouse School of Medicine
Atlanta, GA**

DRAFT AGENDA

revised 4-4-07

Goals for the conference:

- 1) Enhance understanding among learning and developmental disability (LDD) groups, researchers, health professionals and environmental health organizations about research linking certain critical factors – nutritional, toxicological, socioeconomic and genetic – to learning and developmental disabilities (LDDs);
- 2) Encourage further support for scientific research on these linkages;
- 3) Highlight existing initiatives of LDD groups that are already educating their constituencies about how to be more effective in protecting children and future generations from exposures to neurotoxicants;
- 4) Foster greater collaboration between researchers, health professionals, LDD groups, environmental health and justice advocacy organizations and others regarding these issues;
- 5) Define specific educational and policy opportunities to mitigate factors that may contribute to or exacerbate LDDs; and
- 6) Engage a “critical mass” nationally of those interested in collaborating to effectively reduce environmental exposures and other factors that may impact healthy neurological development.

Thursday, May 10th

7:30 a.m. **Registration** (continental breakfast available)

8:30 a.m. **Welcome and conference overview**

- *Elise Miller, MEd*, Executive Director of the Institute for Children's Environmental Health and National Coordinator of the Collaborative on Health and the Environment's Learning and Developmental Disabilities Initiative

- 8:45 a.m. **Opening remarks**
- *Ted Schettler, MD, MPH*, Science Director of the Science and Environmental Health Network – “An ecological approach for understanding and enhancing child development”
- 9:15 a.m. **Plenary panel – Overview of the science and contributors to child development**
- *Leslie Rubin, MD*, President of the Institute for the Study of Disadvantage and Disability and Visiting Scholar at the Morehouse School of Medicine Department of Pediatrics – “From Substances to Society”
 - *David Bellinger, PhD, MSc*, Professor of Neurology at Harvard Medical School and Children’s Hospital – “Lead, Socioeconomic Factors and Child Development”
 - *Jane Houlihan*, Vice President for Research at the Environmental Working Group – “Toxics in Cord Blood and Body Burden Studies: Implications for Child Development”
- 10:45 a.m. **Break**
- 11:00 a.m. **Plenary panel – Research in relation to specific learning and developmental disabilities**
- *Martha Herbert, MD, PhD*, Clinical Associate in Neurology at Massachusetts General Hospital Center for Morphometric Analysis and Assistant Professor in Neurology at Harvard Medical School – “The Emerging Whole-Body, Gene-Environment-Epigenetics Approach in Autism Research and Treatment”
 - *Susan Schantz, PhD*, Professor at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign – “Neurodevelopmental Effects of PCBs, MeHg and Other Contaminants: Evidence from Animal and Human Studies”
 - *Allison Davis, PhD, RN*, Clinical Instructor at the University of Maryland School of Nursing and Affiliate of The Arc of Anne Arundel County – “A Vulnerable Population: Environmental Health Exposures and the Developmental Disabilities Community”
- 12:30 **Lunch**
- Keynote: *David Satcher, MD, PhD*, Director of the National Center for Primary Care at Morehouse School of Medicine and former Surgeon General of the United States – “Addressing Multiple Interacting Influences on Child Health Outcomes”
- 1:45 **Matrix of other emerging research – Plenary panel**
- *Yvonne Fry-Johnson, MD*, Chief of Maternal and Child Health at the National Center for Primary Care – “Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and Developmental Disabilities”

- *Virginia Rauh, ScD*, Professor of Public Health and Deputy Director of the Columbia Center for Children’s Environmental Health, Columbia University Joseph L. Mailman School of Public Health – “Effects of Prenatal Exposure to the Organophosphate Pesticide Chlorpyrifos in the Urban Environment”
- *Tom Zoeller, PhD*, Professor and Chair of the University of Massachusetts Amherst Biology Department – “Classes and Consequences of Thyroid Disruptors”
- *Isaac Pessah, PhD*, Professor and Director of the Center for Children's Environmental Health, University of California, Davis – “Gene-Environment Interactions and Autism”
- *Sandra Steingraber, PhD*, Distinguished Visiting Scholar Division of Interdisciplinary Studies, Ithaca College – “*Consequences of Early Puberty in U.S. Girls – Implications for Learning*”

3:30 **Break**

3:45 **Multi-disciplinary problem solving**

- *Barbara Sattler, RN, DrPH*, Director and Associate Professor at the Environmental Health Education Center, University of Maryland School of Nursing (facilitator)
(Participants will divide up into small groups of 8 to 10 people each to discuss one of six topics related to research-oriented, educational and policy opportunities that groups might individually and collectively address.)
 1. Building a strong research agenda around environmental health concerns and effective means to leverage necessary appropriations
 2. Helping professional associations integrate environmental health issues
 3. Developing clinical competencies for practitioners around environmental health
 4. Affecting chemical policy reform on state and national levels

5:15 **Adjourn**

6:00 - 8:30 **Reception at Sheraton Hotel – Interior Courtyard**

Friday, May 11th

8:00 a.m. **Registration** (continental breakfast available)

- 8:30 a.m. **Leading learning and developmental disabilities organizations:
New model environmental health initiatives**
- *Elise Miller, MEd*, Executive Director of the Institute for Children’s Environmental Health and National Coordinator of the Learning and Developmental Disabilities Initiative
 - *Maureen Swanson*, Director of the Healthy Children Project, Learning Disabilities Association of America
 - *Laura Abulafia, MHS*, Director of the Environmental Health Initiative, American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
 - *Lee Grossman*, President and CEO of the Autism Society of America
- 9:45 a.m. Break
- 10:00 a.m. **Innovative approaches – What do a community-based researcher, an environmental design analyst and a chemist have in common?**
- *Peggy Shepard*, Executive Director of West Harlem Environmental Action, Inc. – “Translating Research Findings into Policy”
 - *Lorraine Maxwell, PhD*, Director of Graduate Studies in the Cornell University Department of Design and Environmental Analysis – “Addressing the Physical Environment’s Role in Children’s Learning and Health”
 - *Terry Collins, PhD*, Lord Professor of Chemistry at Carnegie Mellon University – “Green Chemistry and the Future”
- 11:15 **Creative next steps:** Report backs from previous day’s multidisciplinary brainstorming session and discussion of specific next steps
- Noon **Children’s Health Pioneer Award**
Presented to *Herb Needleman, MD*, Professor of Child Psychiatry and Pediatrics, University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine for his visionary research and political courage to reduce lead exposures and help children reach their fullest potential
- 12:30 **Adjourn**

(Box lunches available)