



COLUMBIA CENTER
FOR CHILDREN'S
ENVIRONMENTAL
HEALTH

MAILMAN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH
Columbia University

Translating Science to Policy
Protecting Children's Environmental Health

CCCEH Fact Sheet

Mission – The Columbia Center for Children’s Environmental Health (CCCEH) carries out community-based research in northern Manhattan and the South Bronx to examine the health effects of prenatal and early postnatal exposures to common urban air pollutants, with the aim of preventing environmentally related disease in children. The Center is unique in the field of scientific research because it applies the results of its research to interventions that reduce toxic pesticide use; conducts a community education campaign to increase environmental health awareness among local residents, parents, health professionals and educators; and informs public interest groups, elected officials, and other policymakers who can shape policies to improve the environmental health status of underserved neighborhoods. The Center’s overall mission is to improve prevention and clinical treatment, and work with community-based organizations to improve their neighborhood’s environmental health. Our lead community partner is WE ACT for Environmental Justice.

History – CCCEH was founded in 1998 when a team of researchers that had been working together at Columbia University was awarded the distinct status of becoming one of eight “Centers for Children’s Environmental Health and Disease Prevention.” The award, which was given to recognize over a decade of cutting-edge scientific investigation, was established jointly by the National Institutes of Environmental Health (NIEHS) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Expertise – Dr. Frederica Perera is Director of the Center, which is part of the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University. The Center’s three deputy directors, Dr. Robin Whyatt, Dr. Virginia A. Rauh, and Dr. Rachel Miller have particular expertise in exposure assessment, neurodevelopment, and asthma, respectively. The Center draws upon the leading scientists throughout the University to form its core team of researchers. That team includes professors from such diverse fields as environmental health, immunology, pulmonary care, psychiatry, epidemiology, biostatistics, and community research, as well as leaders in communities on which our research focuses.

Community Education – From its inception, the Center has worked in close partnership with a Community Advisory Board of direct health service and environmental advocacy organizations in Northern Manhattan and the South Bronx, including WE ACT. The Center’s community education campaign, *Healthy Home Healthy Child*, informs families of preventive measures they can implement at home to reduce toxic exposures and make their children’s environments safer. The healthcare community is another important target audience of the Center’s environmental health awareness campaign. We distribute our findings and conduct regular Ground Rounds to educate physicians and the medical community about our findings.

Policy Translation – The Center’s scientific research is policy-relevant. The contaminants under study are widespread, affecting both urban areas and less densely populated surrounding regions. CCCEH applies its scientific findings to the policy arena by making them readily available to organizations and policymakers that are leading efforts to reduce environmental toxicants most harmful to children’s health. Our research has helped to lower toxic chemical exposure in New York City, affected local and state policy in New York, and has aided national initiatives led by public interest groups.

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