



## PEHSU NEWS

April 2021



### National News

#### ***Clean Away COVID Campaign***

The PEHSUs are excited to announce a new partnership with the Association of State Public Health Nutritionists. Through this partnership, the PEHSU has endorsed Clean Away COVID, a public service campaign. The Clean Away COVID Campaign created useful resources for the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) nutrition program clients and staff and includes important messaging about the proper steps to guard against COVID-19 in home environments. Visit [here](#) for resources on hand washing, tips on cleaning with soap and water, as well as safer disinfectants use if someone at home is sick. Congratulations to Western States PEHSUs for offering expertise and contributing to the development of the resources.



### National Program Office

#### ***PEHSU Virtual Annual Meeting***

The PEHSU Annual Meeting will be virtual this year and will be May 12-13. The meeting is a convening of approximately 100 reproductive and children's environmental health experts that includes experts and staff from all ten PEHSUs, partners from the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) and

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Did you know the PEHSU network has several resources on PFAS on its website? Check them out on the PEHSU [website](#).

## National Program Office Continued

the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The PEHSU Annual Meeting is a forum to review ongoing and emerging topics, discuss innovative approaches to reproductive and children's environmental health protection, and provide a platform for networking and collaboration with PEHSU colleagues.

## Region 1: New England PEHSU

### **Presentation**

On March 30, Region 1 PEHSU team met with the director of the Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Children's Health Protection Jeanne Briskin, MS and others. During this meeting, the team discussed: Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS), the development of future generations of Pediatric Environmental Health faculty, lead poisoning prevention, air quality and asthma initiatives, and emerging health concerns due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The presentation sparked lively conversations for future projects and opportunities. The region stated that, "It was a wonderful opportunity to meet Ms Briskin and visit with time-honored colleagues".

### **Project ECHO: Childhood Lead and the Pandemic Launch**

The Region 1 PEHSU will officially launched the Childhood Lead Poisoning and the Pandemic ECHO on May 5. During these sessions, Region 1 PEHSU Director Alan Woolf MD, MPH, FAAP, FACMT, FAACP and Assistant Director Marissa Hauptman, MD, MPH, FAAP will be discussing the intersection of COVID-19, lead poisoning, and the clinical management of elevated blood lead levels in children. Guest lecturers from the Massachusetts Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (CLPPP), Director of Environmental Epidemiology Alicia Fraser, DSc and Director of CLPPP Terry Howard, will discuss the current lead testing and exposure trends, as well as the status of home inspections, abatement rules, and financing options in Massachusetts. Free continuing medical education is available. For more details or to register for this 5-session ECHO, please go to the Boston's Children [website](#).



## Region 1: New England PEHSU Continued

### *Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)– Emerging Pollutants in New England White Paper*

Matthew Spence, MPH, Health Educator & Project Specialist and Dr Woolf continue to be actively engaged in a PFAS collaboration with the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health's National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) Center for Environmental Health.

Through this collaboration, the joint team developed a white paper titled, *Poly- and Perfluoroalkyl Substances– Emerging Pollutants in New England* and requested feedback from all 6 state health departments in the region. The next steps in the partnership include developing two community fact sheets based on the white paper and establishing best practices for applying health literacy tools surrounding PFAS.

## Region 2 PEHSU: Serving New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico, and US Virgin Islands

### *Presentation: Mount Sinai Diversity Innovation Hub*

On March 25, Region 2 PEHSU coordinators Christopher Bland, MPH and Joseph Wilson, Jr.,



MHS and Clinical Director Lauren Zajac, MD, MPH, FAAP facilitated the inaugural “Connection Chats” for the Mount Sinai Diversity Innovation Hub (DIH). The DIH is a Mount Sinai Venture tasked with brainstorming solutions to address Social Determinants of Health among community organization leaders and healthcare workers whose work intersect with Connecting the Neighborhood and the Clinic.

### *National Healthy Schools Day Social Media Campaign: “Ventilation Matters”*

On National Healthy Schools Day (April 6), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), American Public Health Association (APHA), and National Environmental Health Partnership Council (NEHPC) launched a ventilation matters social media campaign. Maida Galvez, MD, MPH, FAAP Region 2 PEHSU Director and Laura Anderko, RN, MS, PhD, Region 3 PEHSU co-Director, are participants on the NEHPC. Find social media posts about the importance of healthy indoor air on the APHA [web-site](#).



## May is National Asthma Awareness Month

Asthma can be stimulated by inside toxins, such as mold. For more information, check out PEHSU fact sheets for both health professionals and families on the [PEHSU website](#).

**Early Care  
and  
Education  
Webinars**

The *Safe and Effective Cleaning, Sanitizing and Disinfecting for Early Care and Education* webinar presented by Bobbie Rose, RN PHN, Marian Heyman, MPH, and Vickie Leonard, RN, NP, PhD provides an exceptional overview on how to protect the health of children, staff and the environment in childcare settings. The webinars can be viewed on the [PEHSU website](#).

## Region 2 PEHSU: Serving New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico, and US Virgin Islands Continued

### **PFAS Presentation**

On April 7, Dr Galvez presented with Luis Rivera-Gonzalez, PhD, MS, Toxicologist from Region 2 Agency for Toxicology Substance and Disease Registry (ATSDR), *What You Need to Know About PFAS in Drinking Water*. The presentation provided guidance for clinicians on PFAS and was in collaboration with an overview of the ATSDR PFAS Exposure Assessment in Orange County, Newburgh, NY.

### **Environment & Health Lunchtime Chat Series**

On April 14, Dr Maida Galvez presented to the Mount Sinai Institute for Exposomic Research's Environment & Health Lunchtime Chat series. The series is intended for families and the public to learn about environmental health research and how it can inform day-to-day decision-making to reduce harmful environmental exposures. Dr Galvez's presentation highlighted suc-

cess stories from Mount Sinai's work in bringing partners together to advance environmental justice issues. Over 100 community members and healthcare practitioners attended the webinar. To join the conversation, please visit [Mount Sinai Environmental Health Chats](#) website.

### **April Twitter Highlight: National Public Health Week**

The Region 2 PEHSU collaborated with the New York State Children's Environmental Health Network (NYSCEHN) for National Public Health Week's Twitter Chat on April 7. This chat highlighted their work and efforts related to racial equity, climate change, and engaging youth with environmental health topics and had a combined reach to thousands of people. For more information, follow Region 2 on Twitter: [@R2PEHSU](#)

## Region 3: Mid-Atlantic Center for Children's Health and the Environment (MACCHE)

### **Presentations**

On April 15, Ruth McDermott-Levy PhD, MPH, RN, FAAN presented, *A Public Health Perspective: How the Pandemic has Highlighted and Heightened Health Disparities* at Villanova University College of Nursing as a part of the Naratil Family Health and Human Values Lecture Series.

On April 8, Dr McDermott-Levy presented *Peeling Back the Onion: Unmasking Climate Change, COVID-19, Racism, and Health Disparities in Pennsylvania and Public Health and Sustainability: Partners by Nature* as the keynote speaker for the Pennsylvania Office of Rural Health: Community and Public Health Meeting.

## Region 3: Mid-Atlantic Center for Children’s Health and the Environment (MACCHE) Continued

On April 26, Dr Anderko participated as a panelist at the Nursing Leadership in Climate Change and Environmental Health conference. This event was hosted by the Jonas Nursing and Veterans Healthcare Program of the Jonas Philanthropies.

On April 27 & 28, Drs Anderko and McDermott-Levy with Emma Pennea, MSGH presented, *Exposures to per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS): reducing potential risks to Reproductive and Children’s Health* at the upcoming Emerging Contaminants in the Environment conference hosted by the University of Illinois, Illinois Sustainable Technology Center, and the Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant. For additional information, visit [here](#).

## Region 4: Southeast PEHSU

### **Collaborative Presentation**

The Region 4 PEHSU recently co-hosted a regional Healthy Learning Environments Conference with the Region 4 EPA. The conference included presentations from partners at Centers for Disease and Control Prevention, Agency for Toxicology Substance and Disease Registry, the Atlanta Public Schools, RTI International, and the Children’s Environmental Health Network. Leslie Rubin, MD, FAAP and Rebecca Philipsborn, MD, FAAP presented on environmental health disparities and cleaning and disinfecting practices in schools in the era of COVID-19.

Lois Wessel DNP FNP-BC has been teaching Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRN) students within the Georgetown’s Family Nurse Practitioner program about environmental health. As a students, they have developed a position paper, written a letter to the editor, and created a short presentation on environmental health topics including microplastics in food, pharmaceutical waste, the greening of hospital, Perfluorooctane Sulfonate (PFOS) and Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA), recycling, and the role increased access to public transit and bike/pedestrian trails could play in reduction of greenhouse gases.



### **Did you know?**

The PEHSU website has resources about children’s health in the aftermath of floods. Resources can be found on the [PEHSU website](#).

## Region 5: Great Lakes Center for Reproductive and Children's Environmental Health

### ***Welcome to the Team!***

Please join the Great Lakes Center for Reproductive and Children's Environmental Health (GLC-RCEH) to welcome Debyante Porter to the team. Debyante is the new Region 5 PEHSU program coordinator, and will be responsible in outreach, community engagement and other local and network initiatives. Region 5 has also recently added new "state champion" Emily Moody, MD, FAAP in the Twin Cities. Jennifer McDonald, MD will serve as the consultant for the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services on environmental issues.

### ***Community Outreach***

The GLC-RCEH responded to a request for information on the health effects of car idling during

school pick-up. Local sustainability partners, School and Community Assistance for Recycling and Composting Education (SCARCE) is working with a Chicago suburban chapter of the League of Women Voters on an anti-idling campaign, in which they want to educate parents who sit outside of local schools and idle for up to 45 minutes daily. Coordinator Debby Porter collected multiple resources with easy-to-read graphics for use by the group.

### ***New Fact Sheet***

Marie Cabiya, MD and colleague Susan Kaplan, JD developed a fact sheet on Quaternary Ammonium Compounds. They have been working with Evanston, IL schools on safe cleaning practices.

## Region 6 : Southwest Center for Pediatric Environmental Health (SWCPEH)

### ***Welcome Dr Jesica Urbina!***

The Southwest Center for Pediatric Environmental Health (SWCPEH) welcomes Jesica Urbina PhD as the Program Manager for the COVID-19 supplemental project. Dr Urbina holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Microbiology & Environmental Toxicology. She will provide education, consultation, and referral services on pediatric and reproductive environmental hazards associated with cleaning, disinfecting, and sanitizing for COVID-19 to both community members and healthcare professionals.



## Region 7: Mid-America Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit (MAPEHSU)

### **Committee Appointment**

Elizabeth Friedman MD, MPH, FAAP has been invited to serve on the Steering Committee for the Medical Society Consortium on Climate & Health. This organization represents over 600,000 medical professionals. They focus on the harms of climate change, awareness, and improvement in air and water for population health. *Congratulations Dr Friedman!*

### **Updated Fact Sheet**

The Region 7 PEHSU has updated its [fact sheet](#) for healthy schools and healthy buildings. This fact sheet provides detailed information on Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning

(HVAC) systems to promote cleaner air and a healthier work environment for students during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Presentation**

On April 2, Dr Friedman presented to faculty and graduate students at the University of Kansas in the Department of Geography and Atmospheric Science. The presentation brought attention to climate change and environmental justice and how these issues impact health.

## Region 9: Western States PEHSU

### **COVID-19 Child Care Webinar Series - Cleaning, Sanitizing & Disinfecting**

On March 11, the Director of the Improving Health in Early Care and Education Project, Victoria Leonard, RN, FNP, PhD, presented on the latest science-based cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting strategies for keeping children and staff safe for health care providers and the public. The videos can be viewed on the PEHSU [website](#).

### **The Age of Big Wildfires: Confronting an Urgent Health Threat**

On March 18, Stephanie Holm, MD, MPH spoke at the first session of a 3-part Climate Change and Health Speaker Series hosted by the University of California, San Francisco. As 2020 marked the West's worst fire season in modern history, this session explored the role of climate

change and the health and equity impact of wildfire exposure. The recording can be viewed on UCSF [website](#).

### **Rates of Parkinson's disease are exploding, a common chemical may be to blame - The Guardian**

Samuel Goldman, MD, MPH has [been quoted](#) in The Guardian regarding Parkinson's Disease and exposure to the ubiquitous solvent trichloroethylene (TCE), the most common organic contaminant in groundwater. The Story of Health includes a chapter on cognitive decline - Sam's Story, that includes more information on exposures throughout the lifespan and risk for Parkinson's, Alzheimer's and cognitive decline. For information, please visit the Western States PEHSU [website](#).

## Region 9: Western States PEHSU Continued

### ***A Story of Health Multimedia eBook and Continuing Education (CE) Course***

In March, *A Story of Health* had 486 new registrations for CE credits making a total of 15,395 to date! Each chapter in the eBook features the latest scientific research about the origin of the disease and helpful facts about prevention. It also describes how an individual's health is influenced not only by genes, but by the environments where people live, eat, work, play, volunteer, and socialize. Chapters include topics on childhood leukemia, infertility and reproductive health, asthma, developmental disabilities, and cognitive decline. A chapter on the health effects of wildfire smoke is currently in production. To learn more, please visit the Western States PEHSU [here](#).

## Publications

### Region 4

**Title:** Polybrominated Diphenyl Ether (PBDE) Serum Concentrations and Depressive Symptomatology in Pregnant African American Women

**PEHSU-Affiliated Author:** Abby Mutic, PhD, MSN

**Summary:** This study examined whether PBDE exposure in pregnant women was associated with antenatal depressive symptomatology. Data were collected from 193 African American pregnant women at 8-14 weeks gestation. Serum PBDEs and depressive symptoms were analyzed, and a mixture effect was calculated. Urban pregnant African American women in the Southeastern United States had a high risk of depression (27%) compared to the National average.

**Access the Article:** <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33807211/>

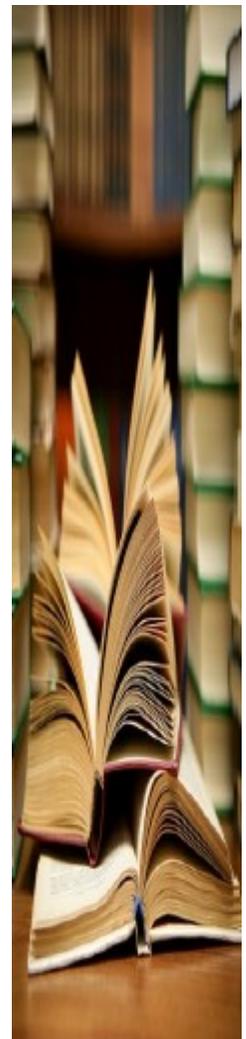
### Region 10

**Title:** Maternal exposure to PM<sub>2.5</sub> during pregnancy and asthma risk in early childhood

**PEHSU-Affiliated Authors:** Catherine Karr, MD, PhD, MS, FAAP and Sheela Sathyanarayana, MD, FAAP

**Summary:** This study included mother-child dyads from two pregnancy cohorts—CANDLE and TIDES—within the ECHO-PATHWAYS consortium (births in 2007–2013). Three child asthma outcomes were parent-reported: ever asthma, current asthma, and current wheeze. Fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) exposures during the pseudoglandular (5–16 weeks gestation), canalicular (16–24 weeks gestation), sacular (24–36 weeks gestation), and alveolar (36+ weeks gestation) phases of fetal lung development were estimated using a national spatiotemporal model.

**Access the Article:** <https://bit.ly/3a1QBaS>



## Publications Continued

**Title:** Associations of Pre- and Postnatal Air Pollution Exposures with Child Blood Pressure and Modification by Maternal Nutrition: A Prospective Study in the CANDLE Cohort

**PEHSU-Affiliated Authors:** Catherine Karr, MD, PhD, MS, FAAP and Sheela Sathyana-rayana, MD, FAAP

**Summary:** There is limited data suggesting air pollution exposures may contribute to pediatric high blood pressure (HBP), a

known predictor of adult cardiovascular diseases. This article investigated this association in the Conditions Affecting Neurocognitive Development and Learning in Early Childhood (CANDLE) study, a socio-demographically diverse pregnancy cohort in the southern United States with participants enrolled from 2006 to 2011.

**Access the article:** <https://ehp.niehs.nih.gov/doi/10.1289/EHP7486>

## Upcoming Events

### ***Hand Sanitizers in the COVID-19 Pandemic***

**Date:** May 5, 3:00pm ET

**Presented by:** Evelyn Mentari, MD, MS and Carl Baum, MD, FAAP, FACMT

**More Information:** [https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_T8sVD5xhQYGA-2p3T5i-A](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_T8sVD5xhQYGA-2p3T5i-A)

**About:** Hand hygiene is an integral part of the response to the COVID-19 public health emergency. Experts will discuss issues associated with the increased demand for hand sanitizers during the COVID-19 pandemic. New and increasing safety concerns with hand sanitizers, including accidental ingestion by young children, contamination with methanol or 1-propanol, and ocular injuries, will be discussed.

### ***Disaster Recovery and Indoor Air Quality Workshop***

**Date:** May 6, 2021; 4:00pm MT

**Presented by:** Panel of Community Experts

**More information:** <https://bit.ly/3sFEUbc>

**About:** This is Region 6's second presentation in the Disaster Recovery and Indoor Air Quality Workshop series in Houston-Galveston area. This session will consist of a panel of experts on pediatric environmental health and natural disasters including flooding. CME and CNE credits will be offered for this presentation.

### ***PEHSU Pediatric Environmental Health Grand Rounds***

**Date:** May 20, 2021, 11:00am MT

**Presented by:** Radosveta Wells, MD

**More information:** <https://bit.ly/3xt2NXF>

**About:** Dr Wells will present for the monthly Pediatric Environmental Health Grand Rounds. Dr. Wells is an Associate Professor and Residency Program Director for the Department of Emergency Medicine at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso. Dr. Wells will be presenting on *Lightning & Electrical Injuries*. CME and CNE credits will be offered for this presentation.



**Follow PEHSU National on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)!**

PEHSU Facebook and Twitter will highlight Air Quality Awareness Week (May 3 –7), World Asthma Day (May 4), National Nurses Week (May 6-12) and World No Tobacco Day (May 31).

Tune in for information, resources, and upcoming events.

Suggestions for content? Please email Isabel Montoya at [imontoya@aap.org](mailto:imontoya@aap.org)

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