

# National Health Education Week

October 15-20, 2007

## Finding the Key: Healthier Homes and Communities



**Planning Guide  
and  
Tool Kit**

**Society for Public Health Education**  
[www.sophe.org](http://www.sophe.org)



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## FOREWORD

Dear Colleague,

Since 1995, **National Health Education Week (NHEW)** has been celebrated during the third week of October. This celebration focuses national attention on a major public health problem, provides public education on the issue, and improves consumers' understanding of the role of health education in promoting health. NHEW 2007-2008 is sponsored by the Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE). The overall theme for this year is: ***Finding the Key: Healthier Homes and Communities***. This year, in an attempt to further promote environmental health, SOPHE will expand NHEW from one week to a year-long effort with quarterly sub-themes highlighting specific areas of environmental health. These sub-themes will include:

- An overview and introduction to Environmental Health,
- A focus on Children and the Elderly as sub-populations that may be more susceptible to environmental health risks,
- A look at how our Built Environment impacts a variety of public health outcomes, and
- An overview of how the environment influences infectious diseases (including a variety of water-borne, food-borne, and vector-borne diseases).

This year's theme emphasizes the importance of environmental health literacy, meaning the choices we make as humans and consumers can affect our environment. It also points out that we can take action as individuals or as part of a community to keep our environment healthy and sustain its natural resources for future generations.<sup>1</sup>

Environmental literacy has made tremendous progress since 1970, securing inroads within the nation's formal and informal educational systems. Today, nearly two-thirds of the nation's 2.5 million K-12 teachers include Environmental Education (EE) in their classrooms, and the majority of all students at over half of all colleges take an environmental course - just two examples of the broad reach of environmental education.<sup>2</sup>

It's no surprise, then, that 95% of all parents with children in school support having EE incorporated as a central element of the classroom. Despite these efforts, the grim reality is this: Americans still widely lack the environmental knowledge that would enable them to safeguard public health, protect natural resources, support energy conservation efforts, and engage in the movement towards a more sustainable future.<sup>2</sup> This year's theme will focus on various aspects of environmental health and help develop skills for communities to increase their levels of environmental health literacy.

In an effort to support health education campaigns that address an array of important environmental health issues, SOPHE is proud to present the ***Health Education Week Planning Guide 2007***. This practical guide was designed to help individuals, organizations, and communities develop campaigns that recognize, promote, and encourage healthy behaviors.

The 2007 Planning Guide is intended to help campaign planners to:

- Learn more about the role of health education, and how health educators can promote environmental health at the community level
- Determine appropriate activities to promote healthier homes and communities
- Select and plan activities for your celebration not just during NHEW, but throughout the year
- Evaluate the success of your efforts
- Share your ideas and experiences with other health educators and health professionals around the Country

In addition to the ideas described in the guide, SOPHE encourages the added creativity of the campaign planners to personalize National Health Education Week for their own communities. We also encourage you to join us in promoting this important area of public health not just during NHEW, but throughout the upcoming year. SOPHE will support your efforts to do so, by providing additional resources and information on the sub-themes identified above.

Best wishes for a successful health education campaign!

*Libby H. Howze*

Elizabeth H. Howze, SCD, CHES  
SOPHE President

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<sup>1</sup> EETAP, Environmental Education and Training Partnership. Retrieved July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2007 from [http://eetap.org/html/environmental\\_literacy](http://eetap.org/html/environmental_literacy).

<sup>2</sup> Campaign for Environmental Literacy. The literacy Gap. Retrieved July 5, 2007 from <http://www.fundee.org/facts/envilt/litgap.htm>.

## **Overview of the Field of Health Education**

Some of the greatest accomplishments in public health have included the control of infectious diseases, advance in family planning, limiting environmental health hazards, and the recognition of tobacco as a health hazard. Our challenges today are no less severe as the public faces the threats of chronic diseases, AIDS, obesity, injuries, and environmental degradation. In conjunction with many other disciplines, health educators play an important role in addressing challenges to our nation's health. Through the knowledge base and skill set provided by the field of health education, prevention interventions can be better planned and implemented, and collaboration among professional groups can be more effective.

In an effort to briefly describe the field, the following section includes an overview of health education, the role of a health educator, a description of health advocacy, and an overview of environmental health literacy. Health education has been largely absent from the environmental arena and the need for health education within environmental health promotion efforts is needed at multiple levels.

### **WHAT IS HEALTH EDUCATION?**

Health education is a social science that draws from the biological, environmental, psychological, physical, and medical sciences. It aims to promote health and prevent disease, disability, and premature death through theory-based voluntary behavior change activities, programs, campaigns, and research. Health education is an essential public health service that requires the practice of three core functions of public health: assessment, policy development, and quality assurance. By focusing on prevention, health education reduces the financial and human costs that individuals, employers, medical facilities, insurance companies, and the nation would spend on healthcare and medical treatment.

In practice, health education adopts a broad, ecological approach in an effort to create healthy communities. Health educators work at the individual, group, institutional, community, and systemic levels to improve health knowledge, attitudes, and skills for the purpose of changing or encouraging behaviors that result in optimal health status.

The field provides a scientific backdrop that has established strong theories for disease prevention and health enhancing behaviors. This information is shared in theory-based journals that are renowned in the public health field for the latest research and best practice. These journals include *Health Education & Behavior*, *American Journal of Health Promotion*, *Health Promotion Practice*, and *Journal of Health Education*, among many others. In addition, professional organizations have been established in order to provide health educators with the opportunity to collaborate with other professionals in the field in an attempt to promote the goals of public health, all while adhering to a professional code of ethics.

## WHAT IS THE ROLE OF A HEALTH EDUCATOR?

The U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Outlook Handbook reports that, as of 2004, there are approximately 49,000 health educators employed in the United States.<sup>3</sup> As officially defined by the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC), health educators:

"... promote, maintain, and improve individual and community health by assisting individuals and communities to adopt healthy behaviors. Collect and analyze data to identify community needs prior to planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating programs designed to encourage healthy lifestyles, policies and environments. May also serve as a resource to assist individuals, other professionals, or the community, and may administer fiscal resources for health education programs."<sup>4</sup>

Today, health educators specialize in a variety of different settings including schools, colleges, worksites, medical care settings, public health settings, environmental health settings and community-based agencies and organizations. Additionally, some perform content-specific health education functions such as those working in food safety, social work, water sanitation, substance abuse/HIV counseling, and dental hygiene. The field of environmental health has been populated to great extent by specialists in toxicology, chemistry, industrial hygiene and engineering. While paraprofessionals and health professionals from other disciplines may offer health education services, they may not be familiar with the specialized body of health education and behavior change knowledge, skills, theories, and research, nor is it their primary interest or professional development focus.

Becoming a health educator requires specialized study. Over 250 colleges and universities in the U.S. offer professional preparation programs in health education with degrees varying from baccalaureate to doctorate. Health education has entry-level and advanced level competencies that serve as the basis for a professional practice. For example, in collaboration with medical staff and community agencies, health educators assess the need for, plan, develop, implement, manage, and evaluate health programs. Nationally, health educators may also receive a certification from the National Commission for Health Education Credentialing, Inc (NCHEC). The Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES) certificate attests to an individual's ability to:

- Assess Individual and Community Needs for Health Education
- Plan Health Education Strategies, Interventions, and Programs
- Implement Health Education Strategies, Interventions and Programs
- Conduct Evaluation and Research Related to Health Education
- Administer Health Education Strategies, Interventions, and Programs
- Serve as a Health Education Resource Person
- Communicate and Advocate for Health and Health Education

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<sup>3</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2006-07 Edition, Retrieved on July 31, 2006 from <http://www.bls.gov/oco/oco20052.htm>

<sup>4</sup> Standard Occupational Classification (SOC). (2000). US Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics. Retrieved on July 31, 2006 from [http://www.bls.gov/soc/soc\\_fju.htm](http://www.bls.gov/soc/soc_fju.htm)

Certified Health Education Specialists are re-certified every five years based on documentation of participation in 75 hours of approved continuing education activities. Employing Certified Health Education Specialists provides employers with professionals who will increase the effectiveness of health programs. These individuals not only have demonstrated expertise in health education, but also have contemporary skills and knowledge as demonstrated through completion of the continuing education requirements.

Recognizing the importance of defining skills required of a profession, environmental health specialists have also developed a set of 4 core competencies for those in the environmental health field. Professionals working in environmental health come from a wide variety of disciplines, including health education and promotion. The competencies are grouped into the three primary functions of an environmental health program – assessment, management and communication. Therefore, these professionals need to be able to:<sup>5</sup>

- **Assess**
  - The capacity to identify and compile relevant information to solve a problem, and the knowledge of where to go to obtain the relevant information
    - For example; identifying and seeking incidence and prevalence data of an environmental contaminant, whether through data sets, other tools, visiting the community site, or seeking experts in the field, such as toxicologists, epidemiologists, environmental engineers, etc.
- **Manage**
  - The capacity to understand and solve problems
    - For example; by using tools, systems, research to determine the nature of a problem and its broader context and by asking appropriate questions and reviewing documentation.
- **Communicate**
  - The capacity to use the environmental health practitioner's front-line role to effectively educate the public on environmental health issues.
    - For example; by emphasizing prevention an environmental health practitioner will explain to homeowners and grounds managers how to minimize the use of or safely use pesticides and fertilizers.

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<sup>5</sup>APHA: Environmental Health Competency Project: Draft Recommendations for Non-technical Competencies at the Local Level; July 2007. Available at <http://www.apha.org/programs/standards/healthcompproject/corenontechnicalcompetencies>.

## ▪ WHAT IS HEALTH ADVOCACY

In order for health educators and health professionals to support the goals of public health, an ecological approach that impacts health at a variety of levels including, individuals, communities, organizations and public policy is necessary. When addressing an issue, such as increasing environmental literacy in homes and communities, it is important to consider all areas that will impact behavior change, including policy change through health advocacy.

*"We must advocate. We must dare to step inside circles that are unfamiliar to us as public health leaders. We must advocate for a broader view than our own borders dictate. We must be willing to argue that public health should take a higher place on political and budgetary agendas."*<sup>6</sup>

*David Satcher, MD, PhD  
Former U.S. Surgeon General*

*Health advocacy* is defined as "the processes by which the actions of individuals or groups attempt to bring about social and/or organizational change on behalf of a particular health goal, program, interest, or population."<sup>7</sup> Through educating and influencing select individuals, health advocacy aims to change attitudes, policies, laws, and practices on behalf of communities affected by a particular health issue.

In the July 2004 issue of *Health Promotion Practice*, authors Regina A. Galer-Unti, Marlene K. Tappe, and Sue Lachenmayr introduced seven strategy areas for health advocacy. In their article, *Advocacy 101: Getting Started in Health Education Advocacy*, the authors presented a tiered approach to each of these seven advocacy strategy areas. After reiterating the independent value that each specific strategy has to the field of health advocacy, the authors explain that their three-tiered approach is intended to:

"... serve as a guide to initiating or assessing one's advocacy activities and a challenge to all health educators to engage in a variety of activities designed to advocate for health and health education."<sup>8</sup>

The following table highlights this three-tiered approach, using the terminology "*Good-Better-Best*" to indicate a range of advocacy strategies. A number of these strategies are further explored in this document.

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<sup>6</sup> Satcher, David. (2000) Eliminating Global Health Disparities. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 284: 2864.

<sup>7</sup> 2000 Joint Committee on Health Education and Promotion Terminology. (2002). Report of the 2000 Joint Committee on Health Education and Promotion Terminology. *Journal of School Health*, 72, 3-7.

<sup>8</sup> Galer-Unti, R. A., Tappe, M. K., Lachenmayr, S. (2004). Advocacy 101: Getting Started in Health Education Advocacy. *Health Promotion Practice* (5) 3, 282.

## ADVOCACY STRATEGIES: GOOD, BETTER, BEST <sup>9</sup>

STRATEGY	GOOD	BETTER	BEST
<b>VOTING BEHAVIOR</b>	Register and Vote	Encourage Others to Register and Vote	Register Others to Vote
<b>ELECTIONEERING</b>	Contribute to the Campaign Fund of a Candidate Friendly to Public Health and Health Education	Campaign for a Candidate Friendly to Public Health and Health Education	Run for Office or Seek a Political Appointment
<b>DIRECT LOBBYING</b>	Contact a policymaker	Meet with your policymakers	Develop ongoing relationships with your policymakers and their staffs
<b>INTEGRATE GRASSROOTS LOBBYING INTO DIRECT LOBBYING ACTIVITIES</b>	Start a petition drive to advocate a specific policy in your local community	Get on the agenda for a meeting of a policy making body and provide testimony	Organize a community coalition to enact changes that influence health
<b>USE THE INTERNET</b>	Use the Internet to access information related to health issues	Build a web page that calls attention to a specific health issue, policy, or legislative proposal	Teach others to use the Internet for advocacy activities
<b>MEDIA ADVOCACY: NEWSPAPER LETTERS TO THE EDITOR AND OP-ED ARTICLES</b>	Write a Letter to the Editor	Write an Op-Ed piece	Teach others to write letters and Op-Ed pieces for media advocacy
<b>MEDIA ADVOCACY: ACTING AS A RESOURCE PERSON</b>	Respond to requests by members of the media for health-related information	Issue a news release	Develop and maintain ongoing relationships with the media personnel

<sup>9</sup> Galer-Unti, R. A., Tappe, M. K., Lachenmayr, S. (2004). Advocacy 101: Getting Started in Health Education Advocacy. *HealthPromotion Practice* (5) 3, 280-288.

## UNDERSTANDING ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH LITERACY- ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY AND HEALTH LITERACY?



The overarching goal of environmental education is to create an environmentally literate citizen. The test of environmental literacy is the capacity of an individual to have a broad understanding of how people and societies relate to each other and to natural systems. This requires sufficient awareness, knowledge, skills, and attitudes in order to incorporate appropriate environmental considerations into daily decisions about consumption, lifestyle, career, and civics.<sup>10</sup>

**Environmental literacy** can be defined as the ability to read, understand and act on information regarding the environment. Environmental literacy may translate into taking simple actions or behaviors like buying “green” products or using natural alternatives to chemical-based pesticides. It may involve attending community meetings to discuss complex issues, such as whether to build a new stadium or renovate the old one- or whether to use the land for another purpose altogether, such as reserving it for parks and playgrounds. Other examples may include taking public transportation instead of driving a car to reduce air pollution, or working with businesses, urban planners, and policy makers to raise awareness about the health impacts of decisions they make regarding building materials or the design of the built environment in the local community.

To varying degrees, an environmentally literate person is able to participate in the ongoing public and private dialogues about the environment, health, science, policy, and politics. Environmental literacy evolves over one’s lifetime and is impacted by a range of factors, including educational, psycho-social and cultural factors, as well as community networks. This may also be referred to as social capital, or the “features of social life— networks, norms, and trust—that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives.”

In contrast, **health literacy** is the ability to understand, evaluate, and act on oral, written, and visual health information to mitigate risk and live healthier lives. Health literacy is more than the ability to read health information. Health literacy encompasses understanding the health care system, having enough information to make informed decisions and to advocate for yourself and your community, and ultimately leads to improved health and quality of life.

**Environmental health literacy** integrates concepts from both environmental literacy and health literacy to develop the wide range of skills, and competencies that people need in order to seek out, comprehend, evaluate, and use environmental health information to make informed choices, reduce health risks, improve quality of life and protect the environment.

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<sup>10</sup> Campaign for Environmental Literacy (2007). Retrieved July 6, 2007 from <http://www.fundee.org/facts/envilt/whatisenvlit.htm>.

<sup>11</sup> Putnam, 1995; Rudd & Kirsch, 2003; Wallerstein & Duran, 2002; WHO, 1986; Zarcadoolas, Pleasant, & Greer, (2004).

Environmental health literacy and social capital can come together in a research setting through community based participatory research, a methodology that emphasizes community involvement in the research agenda and joint sharing in the planning, implementation, analysis, and dissemination of research. Community based participatory research in the context of environmental literacy assessment can empower communities by giving them a voice in decision-making processes, thereby giving them a measure of control over their environment and engaging them in the larger civic dialogue. Environmental issues, and conservation and planning efforts are often not about nature as much as they are about humans and human behavior. Therefore, health educators can play an important role in promoting healthy behavior changes that would positively impact both public health and the environment.

## **ROLE OF HEALTH EDUCATION IN PROMOTING HEALTHIER HOMES AND COMMUNITIES**

The role of a health educator is to change policies and environments, as well as attitudes and behaviors that affect health, all while operating in close association with community groups. In efforts to address the nation's health challenges, health educators plan and direct programs, design workshops and forums, work closely with community groups, and otherwise serve a broad public health agenda. They may also conduct studies of public health education needs, evaluate the materials and methods used in programs, determine program effectiveness, and strive to improve the overall health of communities. A major role of health educators that can be linked with environmental health is the ability to understand and identify critical environmental exposures which may adversely impact human health.

Today, environmental health is being redefined with a view that the environment and the community are one and the same. The environment is not limited to the outdoors or Mother nature; it also refers to indoor environments, such as homes, offices, schools, as well as the larger built environment of our local communities. Pollution, whether it be air, water, soil, light, or noise, poses environmental health risks. In terms of the built environment, the design of our neighborhoods and communities contribute to a wide variety of public health outcomes, including chronic diseases, overall mental health and personal safety, among others. Urban and regional planning efforts should consider environmental health in addition to the wide range of larger public health impacts that could be influenced by community design. Health educators should have a basic understanding of these issues, so that they can effectively contribute to the planning and design process, and increase awareness of and advocate for actions that would promote healthier behaviors and lifestyles.

A health educator can also promote a healthy community by advocating for community-based participatory processes to improve the community's involvement in decision-making processes. This approach employs community development strategies and involves a wide range of local organizations, community groups and private citizens, as well as health professionals, in efforts to improve the conditions that encourage and support healthy living. The process re-engages citizens in realizing their visions for a healthier community and makes a positive change in the overall quality of life. The outcome can include a physical and civic environment that promotes healthy individuals in healthy communities.

Health educators can also collaborate with other environmental health professionals and to learn about emerging issues, and to exchange views openly and honestly, to build understanding and cooperation, and to forge consensus about the linkages between some of the country's most difficult environmental and health challenges. There are too few environmental health professionals trained in the behavioral and social sciences and too few health education specialist and social scientists working in environmental health. Public health professionals with health promotion training know how to work with communities and promote change at the many levels required with complex environmental issues.

Because environmental health is so important to the well-being of individuals, families and communities, health educators have a unique role in educating all segments of the population on environmental issues and behaviors that promote healthier homes and communities. These behaviors may include, but are not limited to: properly storing and disposing of potentially hazardous products, such as paint and other household items; properly handling and applying pesticides; gaining knowledge on the air and water quality of the local community; and becoming more aware of the environment as a whole, and how our environment can impact our health. Annual events such as the 2007 National Health Education Week, offer the perfect opportunity to increase awareness about environmental health education and promote healthier communities across the country.

## **Organizing and Planning for National Health Education Week**

There are many steps involved in preparing for National Health Education Week. To assist you in this process, the following section includes a brief overview of each planning component.

### **MAKING A COMMITMENT**

If you or your organizations have considered participating in National Health Education Week, keep in mind that national, state, and local coordination is essential to the impact of NHEW. Therefore, it is strongly encouraged that individuals and organizations commit to celebrating during the third week of October 2007: October 15 - 20. The focus on the theme, *Finding the Key: Healthier Homes and Communities* is expected to make a powerful impact this fall, but your efforts don't have to stop there. SOPHE will be extending efforts to promote this year's theme throughout this next year, by focusing on sub-themes such as:

- Environmental Health in relation to Children and the Elderly (January-March)
- The Public Health Impact of the Built Environment (April-June)
- Environmental Influences on Infectious Diseases, including vector-borne, water-borne, and food-borne diseases. (July- August)

We encourage you to make a commitment to help us in increasing environmental health literacy beyond NHEW by designing activities that coincide with these sub-themes.

### **FORMING A PLANNING COMMITTEE**



Setting aside sufficient planning time for your campaign will help to produce a successful and meaningful outcome. One way to structure this process is through the formation of a Planning Committee. Among other responsibilities, such a committee would be charged with:

- Establishing the goals and objectives of the campaign

- Developing a plan of action of activities and programs to accomplish the objectives
- Creating a timeline
- Identifying responsibilities
- Evaluating progress
- Addressing obstacles
- Evaluating outcomes

Recruiting planning committee members can be a challenging process. When approaching this process, consider a diversity of strengths and talents that individuals might bring to the group. These include leadership skills, technical skills, promotional skills, subject area expertise, or access to particular communities or organizations. You may also want to consider including members of the population of interest in an effort to better understand specific interests, needs, and wants.

In addition, make sure that each committee member is able to dedicate enough time to the project. Estimate the amount of time you think the process may take, and be up front with individuals. You don't want members to drop out at the last minute when you are relying on their expertise and contributions.

Although establishing planning committees appears to be time-consuming in the early stages, ultimately this process saves time by systematically organizing group efforts to create a successful campaign.

## ESTABLISHING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The overall goal of National Health Education Week is to highlight a timely theme. However, the specific objectives for a campaign can be determined locally, based on populations of interest and local needs. Examples of objectives for National Health Education Week 2007 might include:



- By the end of NHEW 2007, at least 60 percent of Community X will have participated in at least two educational sessions associated with methods for how to use insect repellents safely and protect children from pesticides as indicated by the event rosters.
- By the end of the NHEW 2007 Community Center X's Environmental Health Workshop, at least 80 percent of participating parents will know how to properly store and dispose of house paint safely as indicated by a post-workshop test.

### ARE YOUR OBJECTIVES...

... SPECIFIC?	<i>Are the objectives specific to the population of interest, the length of the campaign, and the desired change?</i>
... MEASURABLE?	<i>Are the objectives able to be evaluated?</i>
... ATTAINABLE?	<i>Are the objectives realistic in the given time frame?</i>
... GOAL-ORIENTED?	<i>Do the objectives support the campaign's goal?</i>

## ELICITING COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Whether led by an individual or a planning committee, successful campaigns are often grounded by community support. One way to elicit such support is to recruit community members and organizations that are involved in community health, school health, health education, and health promotion, both locally and nationally. Support can be fostered through advertising, networking, and one-on-one interviewing. By including the greater community in your campaign, you have the potential to:

- Gain a deeper understanding of community needs and assets
- Reach more of your population of interest
- Increase credibility of your campaign

- Gain access to additional materials
- Benefit from community talent and additional human resources
- Share financial costs associated with campaign materials, events, and/or activities
- Foster a collegial network within the community-at-large
- Build off past successful initiatives.

### **IDENTIFYING AND REACHING POPULATIONS OF INTEREST**

A successful campaign is grounded in an understanding of the specific needs and beliefs of a population of interest. Most likely, this population will be determined by the emphasis of the campaign's theme, as well as the defined campaign objectives. Then, focus on the characteristics that those individuals might have in common. Such characteristics might include age, life stage, gender, attitudes or beliefs, patterns of behavior, religion, ethnicity, origin, and health status. Once you determine certain similar characteristics, you have identified your population of interest. The more specifically defined your population of interest, the more successfully you can focus your campaign. In the case of this campaign, consider those individuals who are most affected by unhealthy homes and unsafe communities. While it's true that the population you ultimately want to benefit is public health professionals, other individuals and groups need to be identified as those who will act to make their homes and communities healthier for everyone. For example, *parents and guardians* need to ensure that poisons are locked away and out of reach of young children so that they do not unintentionally harm themselves. Another example may be that medical professionals need to disseminate environmental health risk issues to elderly patients. They are more likely to view air, water, lead and workplace pollutants as not harmful to their health.

Some examples of populations of interest for an array of health education campaigns include:

- School-aged children
- Older adults
- Environmentalists
- Teenagers
- Public Health Professionals
- Employees
- Teachers
- Environmental Health Staff
- Housing Staff
- Hospital personnel
- Medical Professionals



After identifying your population of interest, your next task is to consider how your campaign will reach those individuals. Two essential questions to consider are:

#### **1. WHERE can your population of interest be reached?**

Rather than locating a campaign at the most convenient place for an organization, consider finding places where you can reach the most

number of individuals from your population of interest. By learning in advance where a group's "hot spots" are located, you will be able to maximize the time you spend during your campaign. Be creative when deciding on such a location for your campaign. Locations to consider include neighborhood gathering spots, shopping centers or malls, schools, parks, places of worship, and bus stops.

## **2. WHEN will your population of interest be most open to the campaign?**

In addition to a prime location, an effective campaign also targets a population of interest at particular times. For instance, communities are a great place to reach individuals with environmental health messages. The benefits of recycling, minimizing waste and properly handling hazardous materials are numerous. Recycling and reusing materials saves energy, conserves natural resources, prevents pollution and reduces the volume of discards that are thrown into our area's landfills, all of which have long-term benefits for our society. Proper handling of hazardous materials prevents pollution, keeps people healthier and is good for the economy. Providing recycling tips and educating a community that recycling can reduce the cost of waste disposal. When working in the community, you might consider going on a weekend to a community fair or event. Not everything can occur in the normal 9-5 workday, so you'll have to be flexible.

After determining where and when your population of interest will be most open to an environmental health campaign, you can begin exploring different types of campaign strategies, including those mentioned in this Tool Kit. These strategies will vary depending upon:

- The goals and objectives of the campaign
- The ages and ability levels of the campaign's population of interest
- The length of the campaign
- The amount of planning time available
- The available resources, including human and material resources

By considering these factors, along with your organizational/planning committee approach to campaign planning, you will be well prepared to design an effective campaign.

## **MAXIMIZING YOUR RESOURCES**

Understanding and utilizing your resources is an integral component to a successful environmental health literacy campaign. Common types of resources include:

- Human resources (employees, volunteers, interns, etc. all offering important skills, contacts, education, and experience)
- Monetary Funding (available funds, grant money, donations, etc.)
- Materials (handouts, flyers, nutrition books, etc.)
- Space (physical space as well as airtime, television time, etc)
- Time (appropriate amount of time for planning, implementation, and evaluation)

Once you take inventory of your current resources, the next step is to establish resources that have not yet been met. To maximize your resources consider the following opportunities:

- Establish partnerships within the community (housing agencies, local government, environmental advocacy groups, environmental health department, teachers, parks and recreations, etc.)
- Draw on the strengths of your employees, contacts, and board of directors
- Seek out funding opportunities at the local, state, and/or national levels
- Offer volunteer and internship positions
- Gain community support through appropriate marketing of your campaign
- Hold fundraisers and encourage donations
- Save paper and the need for excess materials by making 2-sided handouts and posting information on the Internet
- Recruit members of your population of interest to conduct training/outreach

The best-planned campaign can only become a reality if the appropriate resources are secured. Be creative and draw on a variety of resources to make your campaign a success!

## SELECTING AND PLANNING ACTIVITIES

### *Levels of Influence*

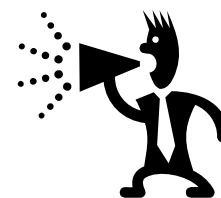
An environmental health education campaign can use a wide range of methods to address specific goals and objectives. When planning your specific events and activities for NHEW, consider impacting your intended audience at a variety of different levels.

<b>Individual</b>	To target individual members of your intended audience, you may plan to approach them directly. This might include providing research for new insights and innovative solutions to environmental health problems.
<b>Group</b>	Groups consist of any number of individuals connected by some commonality such as gender, family, religion, social interests, etc. Plan activities and programs related to the group's common bond such as informing, educating, and empowering people about environmental health issues. i.e., clean water, clean air, hazardous products and safety.
<b>Organizational</b>	In an effort to further reach your intended audience, consider addressing the organizations to which they belong. Start initiatives such as a mobilization partnership and take action to identify and solve environmental health problems
<b>Community</b>	Create an atmosphere at the community level that supports your creating healthier homes and communities. Sponsor community-wide events, such as cleaning up local playgrounds and parks, or diagnose and investigate environmental health problems and health hazards in the community.
<b>Public Policy</b>	To impact the policy level, you may wish to focus on developing policies and plans that support individual and community environmental health efforts. Enforcing laws and regulations that protect environmental health and also ensure safety.

### *Distribution Channels*

Depending on the amount of available resources, you might consider using multiple distribution channels in your campaign to increase the likelihood of reaching a greater percentage of the population of interest. Some of these channels might include:

- Email/Internet
- Radio
- Television
- Local Businesses
- Malls
- Health Clubs
- Schools
- Sports Teams
- PSAs
- Libraries
- Local Restaurants/Grocery Stores
- Health Departments/Organizations
- Playgrounds/Recreational Centers
- Laundromats
- Movie Theaters
- Daycare Centers
- Youth Centers
- Banks
- Hair Salons/Barber Shops
- Hospitals
- Government Organizations
- Political Associations



### ***Capitalize on Existing Events***

Capitalize on events promoting environmental health education that you may be already doing during that week and put a health education spin on it such as:

- Community Parks & Recreation Department (athletic leagues, cleaning up playground areas)
- Religious Institutions (picnics, festivals, youth groups, clean up events)
- Chamber of Commerce (business conferences, coalitions, meetings)
- Schools (back-to-school nights, PTA meetings, sporting events)

By taking advantage of the opportunities that already exist in your community, you can maximize the resources you have and reach a larger audience with your NHEW messages.

### ***Highlight Materials Previously Created***

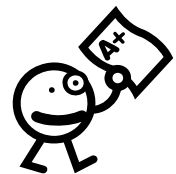
Health education organizations have created materials for distribution, many of which are already focused on environmental health. These materials could enhance the promotion and activities of National Health Education Week.

- Distribute copies of brochures, handouts, or fact sheets
- Hang up copies of the resources on a bulletin board or at a display booth
- Feature National Health Education Week on your personal or your agency's website
- Post a list of Internet links related to healthy homes and communities on your website

By accessing and sharing those materials (*with permission, if necessary*), you can focus less time on creating materials, and more time on reaching your intended audience. Refer to page 22 for a listing of *Internet Resources Related to Healthier Homes and Communities*.

## **EVALUATING YOUR CAMPAIGN'S SUCCESS**

After all of your hard work, don't forget to evaluate your campaign's success! In fact, evaluation is an essential component of any campaign and it's recommended that it be planned from the start, not left as an after-thought. Planners can learn the strengths and weaknesses of a campaign through Process Evaluation and Outcome Evaluation.



### ***Process Evaluation***

Process Evaluation answers the question, "*to what extent were the campaign plans implemented?*" This type of evaluation is important in understanding how each component of the campaign was carried out. Forms of process evaluation may include questions such as:

- How many flyers were created? Mailed? Posted?
- How many presentations were held? What was the average attendance?
- For the classroom lessons, was the teacher's manual used? To what extent?

## **Outcome Evaluation**

Outcome Evaluation answers the question, “*how effective was the campaign at producing its intended results among the population of interest?*” In order to achieve this type of evaluation, you must understand how your campaign impacted your audience. Outcome evaluation items might include:

- Did you test your home radon levels as a result of this campaign?

Process and Outcome Evaluation can include two forms of results: quantitative (*closed-ended responses such as multiple choice or true/false*) and qualitative (*open-ended questions such as "what did you learn from the healthier homes and communities campaign?"*). Although both forms can be independently beneficial, a balance of quantitative and qualitative feedback is ideal in creating a comprehensive description of the campaign's success.

If evaluation seems overwhelming or too complicated, do not forget that there are many resources that surround you. Consider enlisting the help of a local evaluator, a graduate student in the field, volunteer interns, or the services of professionally trained public health evaluators. In addition, there are a variety of Internet resources that you can access. For example:

- Program Evaluation in Environmental Health: Regional Academic Environmental Health Center  
[http://www.nwcphp.org/docs/eh\\_program\\_evaluation/index.htm](http://www.nwcphp.org/docs/eh_program_evaluation/index.htm)
- CDC Evaluation Working Group  
<http://www.cdc.gov/eval/>
- Community Tool Box (from the University of Kansas)  
<http://ctb.ku.edu/>
- W.K. Kellogg Foundation Evaluation Toolkit  
<http://www.wkkf.org>

As a core component of any campaign, evaluation enables you to continually improve your efforts over time.

## ADDITIONAL PLANNING TOOLS FOR YOUR CAMPAIGN



For more specific instruction and planning tools for an environmental health education campaign, consider the following:

### ***CDCynergy: A Multi-Media Health Communications Planning Tool***

CDCynergy is an innovative CD-ROM that uses an interactive framework for creating and testing a health communications campaign. The program provides real-life case examples from national and local communication campaigns, plus reference materials, consultants feedback, extensive tools for research, a diverse media library, and a cumulative evaluation plan. Developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), CDCynergy guides users step-by-step through a six phase marketing model, specifically arranged in a series of questions in which users can define, clarify, and analyze health problems that may benefit from program intervention. For more information about CDCynergy, including purchasing costs and training workshops, contact SOPHE at (202) 408-9804.

### ***Making Health Communication Programs Work ("The Pink Book")***

In coordination with the development of CDCynergy, the National Cancer Institute revised and reprinted *Making Health Communication Programs Work* accessible at <http://cancer.gov/pinkbook>. A Planner's Guide CD is also available. As noted on the National Cancer Institute's website:

This handbook presents key principles and steps in developing and evaluating health communication programs for the public, patients, and health professionals. It expands upon and replaces two earlier publications titled *Pretesting in Health Communications* and *Making PSA's Work*. The guide discusses specific steps in program development and includes examples of their use. Sources of additional information on each subject are included at the end of the chapters.<sup>11</sup>

### ***Protocol for Assessing Community Excellence in Environmental Health (PACE EH)***

Supported through the National Center for Environmental Health (NCEH) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO), PACE-EH provides technical assistance to local health departments to conduct community-based environmental health assessments. The PACE-EH methodology provides local communities with guidance for identifying and addressing environmental health priorities. PACE-EH may be downloaded from <http://pace.naccho.org/>.

### ***CDCynergy: Emergency Risk Communication***

This edition of CDCynergy is ideal for those to have a basic understanding of Emergency Risk Communication principles and how it is necessary to effectively plan a communication response.

<http://www.orau.gov/cdcynergy/erc/default.htm>









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<sup>11</sup> National Cancer Institute. (2002). Content Detail: Making Health Communication Programs Work: A Planner's Guide from <https://cissecure.nci.nih.gov/ncipubs/details.asp?pid=209>

## INTERNET RESOURCES RELATED TO HEALTHIER HOMES AND COMMUNITIES

- ◆ American Public Health Association- <http://www.apha.org>
- ◆ Agency for Toxic Substance and Diseases Registry- <http://www.ATSDR.cdc.gov>
- ◆ Center for Environmental Health- <http://www.cehca.org>
- ◆ Campaign for Environmental Literacy- <http://www.fundee.org>
- ◆ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention- <http://www.cdc.gov/nceh>
- ◆ Children's Environmental Health Network- [www.cehn.org](http://www.cehn.org)
- ◆ Collaborative on Health and the Environment- [www.healthandenvironment.org](http://www.healthandenvironment.org)
- ◆ Creating Healthy Environments for Children- <http://www.healthychild.org>
- ◆ Environmental and Education and Training Partnership- <http://www.eetap.org>
- ◆ Environmental Literacy Council- <http://www.enviroliteracy.org/article.php/603.html>
- ◆ Environmental Protection Agency- <http://www.epa.gov>
- ◆ Healthy Environments for Children Alliance- <http://www.who.int/heca/en/>
- ◆ Healthy Home Resources- <http://www.healthyhomeresources.org>
- ◆ Healthy People 2010- Environmental Health- <http://www.healthypeople.gov/Document/HTML/Volume1/08Environmental>
- ◆ Home Safety Council- <http://www.homesafetycouncil.org/index.aspx>
- ◆ Kids Health: First Aid & Safety- [http://www.kidshealth.org/parent/firstaid\\_safe/index.html](http://www.kidshealth.org/parent/firstaid_safe/index.html)
- ◆ Lead Safe by 2010- <http://www.lead-safe-by-2010.org/>
- ◆ The Lung Association: Your Healthy Home- <http://www.yourhealthyhome.org>
- ◆ The National Center for Environmental Health/Childhood lead- <http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/resources/LeadLiteracy/LeadLiteracy>
- ◆ The National Center for Healthy Housing (NCHH)- [www.centerforhealthyhousing.org](http://www.centerforhealthyhousing.org)
- ◆ NOAH- New York Online Access to Health- <http://www.noah-health.org/en/lung/conditions/asthma/issues/children/index.html>
- ◆ National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS)- <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/>
- ◆ Partnership for Children's Health and Environment- [www.partnersforchildren.org](http://www.partnersforchildren.org)
- ◆ World Health Organization- Children's Environmental Health- [www.who.int/ceh/en](http://www.who.int/ceh/en)
- ◆ National Safety Council- <http://www.nsc.org/>

# SOPHE'S TOOL KIT FOR CELEBRATING HEALTHIER HOMES AND COMMUNITIES

1.  **Coordinate a Job Shadow Day** to encourage careers in health education and promotion and to develop mentor programs.
2.  **Plan a Community Event** to provide environmental health education for the community.
3.  **Organize a Community-Wide Awards Ceremony** highlighting individuals and community agencies that promote environmental health literacy through health education.
4.  **Create a Display Booth** displaying captivating information related to healthier homes and communities.
5.  **Write about Environmental Health** to inform your community, support legislation, and voice your opinions.
6.  **Talk about Environmental Health** on the radio, television or at community events, conferences, and other special events
7.  **Hold a Community-Wide Contest** as a fun and creative way to challenge individuals and communities to show their support for healthier homes and community prevention approaches
9.  **Inform the Media** to promote awareness and gain support for National Health Education Week and Environmental Health.

# Encourage Careers in Environmental Health Education!

## Coordinate a Job Shadow Day



### **JOB SHADOW DAY MISSION:**

- \* To increase awareness of the opportunities for a career in health education or environmental health.
- \* To create partnerships between health educators, environmental health professors and academic institutions to allow future opportunities for students to experience diverse workplace settings in the field.
- \* To encourage health educators and environmental health professionals to become mentors to youth and interested individuals in their community.
- \* To prepare students and interested individuals for the possibility of a future career in health education.

### **Who Benefits?**

- \* Students \*
- \* Employers \*
- \* Health Educators \*

**EVERYONE!**

During **National Health Education Week, October 15-20, 2007**, health educators will have the opportunity to encourage youth and adults to consider careers in health education.

Through **job shadowing** an individual can spend a day on the job with a health educator to gain first-hand experience in the workplace.

The goal of this year's Job Shadow Day is to provide interested individuals with a better understanding of the role of a health educator in the area of Environmental Health. The event also serves as a means to create awareness of similar careers in health education.

By motivating prospective candidates to enter the field, job shadowing events help to secure the future of health education. Health educators in all work settings – schools, communities, healthcare organizations and businesses – must take an active role in promoting the future pool of our health education workforce.

### Suggested Local Organizations to Contact and Send Marketing Materials to:

- Area Health Education Centers (AHEC)
- National Organizations for Youth Safety (NOYS)
- Hospital Programs (i.e., Johns Hopkins Children's Safety Center)
- State and County Health Departments
- National Youth Leadership Forum
- National School-to-Work Opportunities Office (STW)
- Girl Scouts of America/Boy Scouts of America
- Chamber of Commerce
- Local school boards
- Junior Achievement (JA)
- Local school health education teachers and guidance counselors
- Community Kids Corp
- University health science/health education departments
- Young Entrepreneurs' Organization
- Young America's Foundation, Inc
- Local newspapers, radio and television stations
- Colleges and Universities- career counseling centers and Student lounges

## **TOOL KIT IDEA #1: COORDINATE A JOB SHADOW DAY, *continued***

NHEW 2007: HEALTH EDUCATION JOB SHADOW DAY  
*THE MORE PREPARED YOU ARE, THE MORE EFFECTIVE THE DAY WILL BE!*

### **Up to 8 Weeks before Job Shadow Day:**

- Set a date for Job Shadow Day 2007.
- Establish guidelines for Job Shadow participants.
- Develop materials describing NHEW's Job Shadow Day (brochures, handouts, etc.).
- Contact & send NHEW and job shadow day materials to community organizations, businesses, & schools to recruit health educators interested in being shadowed. Include marketing materials for the event and sample workplace descriptions.

### **Up to 6 Weeks before Job Shadow Day:**

- Contact & send NHEW and general Job Shadow Day materials to local youth organizations, and academic institutions to recruit students interested in shadowing a professional.
- Send the NHEW and Job Shadow Day marketing materials and workplace descriptions to academic institutions and youth organizations in your community.
- Prepare and send media kits for Job Shadow Day to local newspapers, newsletters, radio stations, and television stations.

### **Up to 5 Weeks before Job Shadow Day:**

- Follow up with community organizations, businesses, and schools to get the names of health educators who will be participating in Job Shadow Day.
- Create a contact list of participating health educators and a description of their workplace.
- Follow up with the academic institutions and youth organizations to get the names of individuals who will be participating.
- Create a contact list of participating individuals and a description of their background and/or interests.
- Create orientation packets for both students/individuals and health educators.

### **Up to 4 Weeks before Job Shadow Day:**

- Pair students/interested individuals with health educators, based on similar interests, if possible.
- Send orientation packets to health educators and students/individuals.
- Create an evaluation tool for the health educators and the students/individuals.
- Schedule a meeting for all participants.

### **Up to 3 Weeks before Job Shadow Day:**

- Keep the local media updated on national health education week and job shadow day highlights.
- Make sure all participants received their orientation packets.
- Host a joint meeting for all the health educators and students as a forum for any questions or concerns they may have.
- Send updates and confirmation letters to all participants summarizing critical information. Be sure to include contact information for both before the event and the day of the event (if different).

### **Up to 1 Week before Job Shadow Day:**

- Follow-up and take care of any loose ends!
- Make sure everyone has the materials they need; respond to any questions or concerns.
- Get ready to enjoy National Health Education Week and a successful Job Shadow Day!

### **Post-Event Activities:**

- Send thank-you notes to all participating agencies and individuals.
- Review evaluation forms from all participants.
- Evaluate the planning process of the event.
- Make recommendations for Job Shadow Day 2008!



## **TOOL KIT IDEA #1: COORDINATE A JOB SHADOW DAY, *continued***

### **Ideas for NHEW & Job Shadow Day Marketing Materials:**

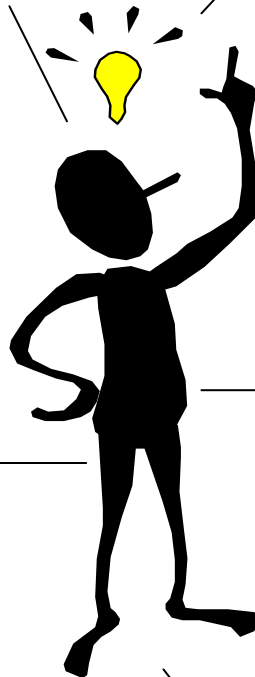
- Posters
- Brochures
- Sign up lists for interested students & health educators
- General List of Benefits for Participants
- Handouts

### **Ideas for the Participant's Orientation Packets:**

- A parental/guardian consent form and medical authorization form (in case of an emergency)
- Explanation of Job Shadowing
- The goal of Health Education Job Shadow Day
- List of benefits of participating in Job Shadow Day
- Summary of the Health Education field, including necessary skills and education
- Contact information & job description of the health educator the individual/student will be shadowing
- Description of the organization the student or individual will be visiting
- Pointers for visiting the workplace
- Sample resume and cover letter to help the student or individual create their own
- Evaluation forms

### **Ideas for the Health Educator's Orientation Packets:**

- Contact information of the participant who will shadow the health educator
- Explanation of Job Shadowing
- The goal of Health Education Job Shadow Day
- List of benefits of participating in Job Shadow Day
- Suggestions of activities
- Suggestions for discussions for Job Shadow Day
- Evaluation forms



### **Suggestions for Student/Individual Preparation:**

- Write down their expectations for Job Shadow Day
- Compose questions to ask the health educator in an interview
- Write down their expectations of job shadowing day, what they want to gain from the experience
- Prepare a resume or a description of your interests for a possible future career

### **Suggestions for Health Educator Preparation:**

- Prepare a brief introduction and workplace orientation for the student/individual's arrival
- Include an organizational chart of the workplace and your job description
- Allow student/individual to accompany you to meetings and/or presentations
- Organize workplace activities for the student/individual to benefit from
- Permit time for questions and discussion

### **What to include in Student/Individual Evaluations:**

- Enter the name and title of the individual you shadowed
- What about his/her job interested you? What did not?
- Would you choose a career in this field? Why or why not?
- Were your expectations met? Why or why not?
- What personal skills were you able to apply at the workplace?
- What skills would you need before choosing a career in this field?
- Were the orientation packets and materials sent helpful to you? Why or why not?

### **What to include in Health Educator Evaluations:**

- Enter the name of the student/individual that shadowed you
- Did you believe that the experience was valuable to the student/individual?
- What would you change about Job Shadow Day?
- What would you keep the same?
- Would you participate again in Job Shadow Day?
- Would you recommend others to participate?
- Were the orientation packets and materials sent helpful to you? Why or why not?



## TOOL KIT IDEA #2: COORDINATE A COMMUNITY EVENT



Providing hands-on learning opportunities for children, parents, and all members of the local community is a great way to bring attention to an important issue, such as environmental health.

### **Hold an Environmental Fair**

One potential way to raise awareness of a variety of environmental issues at one time is to hold an environmental fair or a day devoted to teaching the community about environmental issues and how they may impact health.

Interactive booths and live demonstrations can help kids learn science and health information in a fun and captivating way. (See Tool Kit Idea #4 for additional tips on creating effective display booths). Many adults will also enjoy spending the day with their kids in an educational environment. For an added bonus, plan the fair to be held outdoors such as at a nature center or a popular park so participants can reconnect with nature and experience hands on learning as appropriate.

Many local agencies, organizations, and educational groups can partner together to plan a successful fair that will provide community members with a wide range of information relevant to environmental health. Potential partners may include: local or state health departments, environmental protection or conservation agencies, local nature centers, parks and recreation departments, boy/girl scout troops, local colleges or universities, and local businesses such as garden centers or outfitters that sell outdoor gear and equipment. Some of these groups may also be willing to help sponsor such an event in addition to just providing materials or technical experts. Check with local businesses that may have an interest in supporting such a cause as well.

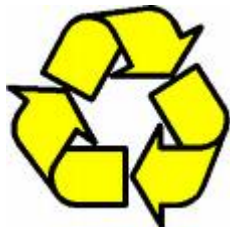
Some ideas for potential booths may include:

#### **Pollutants and Toxics**



Walking down the cleaning aisle in the supermarket you would think that we are a nation of very dirty individuals. People are exposed to chemicals every day. Chemicals are used in scientific experiments and industrial facilities, but also in schools, grocery stores, dry cleaners and homes. Chemicals are also found in thousands of consumer products including children's toys. There seems to be a chemical solution for every inch of your house, body, clothes, pets, furniture air around us. But have you ever thought about what these chemicals **actually** do? Have you thought about the health impacts and environmental impacts such products may cause? This booth could provide individuals and families with free information about cleaning products and chemicals, recipes to make their own chemical free "green" cleaning products, and hands on demonstrations that would reinforce how easy it is to make your own cleaners and allow participants to take home free samples.

#### **Recycling**



There are numerous health benefits of recycling, minimizing waste and properly handling hazardous materials. Recycling and reusing materials saves energy, conserves natural resources, prevents pollution and reduces the volume of waste added to our area's landfills, all of which have long-term benefits for our society. Proper handling of hazardous materials prevents pollution, keeps people healthier, and is also good for the economy. Recycling turns materials that would otherwise become waste into valuable resources and generates a host of environmental, financial, and social benefits. Materials such as glass, metal, plastics, and paper are collected and sent to facilities that can process them into new materials or products. This process redirects millions of tons of waste away from landfills and incinerators and helps reduce deforestation and the production of greenhouse gas emissions. Provide a booth where local residents can learn more about the benefits of recycling, what items can be recycled, how and where to recycle items properly. You might

also want to advertise an upcoming community day when residents can drop off old computers and electronics, batteries, or other household items to be recycled in a safe and cost effective manner.

### **Storing and Disposing of Paint**



Now that your paint project is over, you're probably wondering what to do with all that leftover paint. Well, the obvious choice is to save it for touchups later. You could also donate it to local non-profit agencies, community groups or churches. But if you just want to get rid of it, you should do so in an environmentally responsible manner. Hold an information session on how to dispose of and store paint and other common household chemicals properly. Also learn about tips to keep paint fresh for the next time it's used. Visit [www.homesafetycouncil.org](http://www.homesafetycouncil.org) for more information. This particular topic might also be a way to engage local retailers that supply paint and household chemicals in your environmental fair.

### **Pesticides**



Today, more people are aware of the potential harmful effects of pesticides. Pesticides, including insecticides and herbicides, are intentionally toxic substances. Children's low body weight and rapidly growing organ systems make them more susceptible to many toxic substances, including pesticides. Although not all organic products are safe simply because they are natural, they are typically, less toxic. Always read labels carefully! Consider having a booth that provides information on pesticide disposal, including herbicides, insecticides, and fungicides from agricultural, commercial, or residential uses. You might also consider inviting local farmers to provide fresh and organic produce at the fair.

### **Air Pollution**



Air pollution comes from many different sources such as factories, power plants, dry cleaners, cars, buses, trucks and even windblown dust and wildfires. Air pollution can threaten the health of human beings, trees, lakes, crops, and animals, as well as damage the ozone layer and buildings. Air pollution also can cause haze, reducing visibility in national parks and wilderness areas. EPA protects human health and the environment through the regulatory processes and voluntary programs such as Energy Star and Commuter Choice. Under the Clean Air Act, EPA sets limits on how much of a pollutant is allowed in the air anywhere in the United States. Although national air quality has improved over the last 20 years, many challenges remain in protecting public health and the environment. Invite your local environmental protection agency to provide information on local air quality

### **Healthy Drinking Water**



Water is basic to life and health. Over 1 billion people worldwide have no access to safe drinking water. The United States is fortunate to have one of the best supplies of drinking water in the world. Although tap water that meets federal and state standards is generally safe to drink, threats to drinking water quality in the United States still exist. Outbreaks of drinking water-associated illness and water restrictions during droughts demonstrate that we cannot take our drinking water for granted. Host a booth that provides information on keeping water sources safe and free of pollution. Consider providing fair participants with free bottled water, or better yet, promote the practice of refilling personal water bottles with filtered water from the tap, which often requires far less energy and wastes almost no resources relative to bottled water. Tap into local businesses that may be able to provide water filters, or local outdoor gear shops that may be willing to donate personal water bottles. For additional information on healthy drinking water, visit CDC's site at <http://www.cdc.gov/Ncidod/dpd/healthywater/index.htm>.

## Radon



You can't see radon. You can't smell it or taste it. But, it may be a problem in your home. Radon is estimated to cause many thousands of deaths each year. When you breathe air containing radon, you can increase your risk of developing lung cancer. In fact, the Surgeon General has warned that radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States today. Only smoking causes more lung cancer deaths. If you smoke and your home has high radon levels, your risk of lung cancer is especially high. Testing is the only way to know if you and your family are at risk for radon. Host a booth where residents can learn more about this silent risk, and consider providing free radon test kits to be distributed to fair participants. For additional information on radon, visit [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov).

There are many other events you can plan for the local community that focus on the environment and how it can impact community health. Some smaller scale events may include:

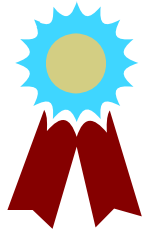
- **Hosting a “Clean Your Community Day”** where local residents and community members can spend a day removing litter and cleaning debris off of the streets of their community. This activity will not only help the local environment, but also get people up and moving and outdoors. For more information, please visit [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov).
- **Developing a community garden** for residents that don't have land for their own personal gardens. This is a great way to promote a sense of community, integrate different generations such as kids and the elderly, provide a safe environment for physical activity, as well as provide a source of fresh and nutritious produce to promote healthy eating habits. For additional information, visit <http://www.communitygarden.org/>.
- **Coordinating community walking tours.** Again, this is a great activity that can promote a sense of community and integrate different generations, all while also promoting a healthy lifestyle. Walking tours provide a safe environment for physical activity, while also promoting social activity as well. Plan a walking tour along a nature path or riverfront, or if in an urban setting, consider designing your tour around a theme, such as historical buildings in the community. Try to get community members to commit to participating on a weekly or monthly basis.



## **TOOL KIT IDEA #3: ORGANIZE A COMMUNITY-WIDE AWARDS CEREMONY**



Recognizing excellence in health education and health promotion within your community or organization is just one easy way to celebrate National Health Education Week. The 2007 NHEW theme, *Finding the Key: Healthier Homes and Communities*, is a prime way to applaud the efforts and achievements of an exemplary program, organization, company or individual in your community and their contribution to environmental health.



### How To Begin ...

#### **(1) IDENTIFY THE TYPE OF AWARD YOU WANT TO PROVIDE.**

*INDIVIDUAL* - Recognize the contributions of health educators, environmental health professionals and other health professionals in overcoming obstacles, as well as working on the cutting edge of the nation's public health issues.

*PROGRAM* - Recognize the contribution of a local or regional program that encourages environmental health literacy. Some of these programs may include local governments, schools and universities, environmental agencies, and voluntary community organizations.

*ORGANIZATION/COMPANY* - Recognize the contributions and achievements of a company or organization that supports healthier homes and communities. For example, the local health department, community health center, hospital or school.

#### **(2) SOLICIT NOMINATIONS**

Develop a promotional flyer and nomination form and distribute them in order to solicit nominations for the award category. The request for nominations may be limited to a target group, or it may be open for broader solicitation.

#### **(3) DEVELOP A SELECTION COMMITTEE**

A selection committee of approximately 3-7 individuals is recommended to develop the review criteria and decide upon the winning candidate(s).

#### **(4) HOLD AN AWARDS CEREMONY**

Identify a location to hold an awards ceremony, as well as the time frame of the event (early afternoon, evening, etc.). Determine the length and style of the program. Create a timeline of tasks to complete, including event promotions, speaker invitations, guest invitations, awards, food/drink, and other necessary details to make the event special.

#### **(5) PROMOTE THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE WINNING NOMINATION**

Whether the awards ceremony is convened at a physical location or not, it is important to develop a press release to announce the winners. Distribute the press release to local media, including television, radio, cable TV, website, and newspapers. See the following page for a *Sample Letter of Recognition for Health Educators*.



### Sample Letter of Recognition for Health Educators

<DATE>

Dear Colleague:

The week of October 15-20, 2007 is **National Health Education Week**. In honor of this week I would like to recognize our health educators, not only for their many contributions to improving the public's health by promoting healthier homes and communities, but also for sharing their specialized knowledge of environmental health education with staff and colleagues.

Health education is a social science that draws from the biological, environmental, psychological, physical and medical sciences to promote health and prevent disease, disability, and premature death through education-driven voluntary behavior change activities. By focusing on prevention, health education reduces the costs that would otherwise be spent on treatment services.

Health educators promote, maintain, and improve individual and community health by teaching individuals and communities how to assume responsibility for addressing health care issues. They collect and analyze data to identify community needs prior to planning, implementing, monitoring, and interpreting programs designed to encourage healthy behaviors. They often serve as a resource to assist the individual or community and administer fiscal resources for health education programs.

This past year our <HEALTH EDUCATOR/ HEALTH EDUCATION TEAM> has successfully completed numerous projects. For example, <ACTION VERB + PROGRAM +FOR TARGET POP + OUTCOME...>

To support **National Health Education Week**, the <AGENCY NAME> is presenting a display in our lobby at <ADDRESS>. Please take a few moments during the week to stop by the exhibit to learn about health education and the important work health educators are doing <ACROSS THE STATE/IN YOUR AGENCY> to promote environmental health.

Thank you in advance for your support of environmental health education and promoting healthier homes and communities.

Sincerely,

<NAME>

## **CREATING UNFORGETTABLE DISPLAY BOOTHS FOR NHEW**

*Organizations can celebrate National Health Education Week by simply creating a display booth for the 2007 theme **Finding the Key: Healthier Homes and Communities**. A single display can make an impact, or can be grouped with multiple booths, such as suggested in Idea #2 of Having an Environmental Fair. Regardless of the number, size, and style, there are certain tips that can make any display unforgettable!*

### **FIND THE PERFECT LOCATION**

Even the most exciting and beautiful display booth will not be effective if no one passes by! Before creating your display, make sure that you have access to a popular common area in your organization or at a public venue that is sure to have large numbers of people in attendance. Once you know your location, you will also have a better understanding of the size and scope needed for your display booth to be successful.

### **MAKE IT COLORFUL**

One of the most obvious ways to add life to any display booth is to include COLOR! Add colorful brochures, posters, lettering, and objects. If you find that your informational material is black-and-white, simply mount the material on pieces of colored construction paper or add other elements to spice it up.

### **USE INTERACTIVE MATERIALS**

Energize and engage participants at any display booth by involving them! Try introducing at least one activity that allows your viewers to participate in the display. Some options include offering an environmental health quiz, an opportunity to make a “green” cleaning product out of common household goods, or play a computer game related to environmental health.

### **CONSIDER THE OVERALL VISUAL APPEAL**

When creating your display booth, aim to create a balance between text, images, and blank space. Such a balance will prevent viewers from being visually overwhelmed, thereby allowing them to absorb more information.

### **KEEP IT INFORMATIVE**

With so much focus on the visual appeal of the display booth, don't forget the most essential element -- the content! Keeping in line with your campaign's objectives, aim to include information that highlight your key messages. Do try to include tips and actions that the viewers can immediately put to use.

### **INCLUDE CULTURALLY SENSITIVE MATERIAL**

Make sure that you understand your audience before you produce materials for them. Are there specific activities that would be particularly appealing or familiar to your audience? Is your audience bilingual? Make sure the information you present will be most useful to your audience, keeping in mind the need to cater to their different needs.

### **USE A VARIETY OF LEARNING TECHNIQUES**

Not all viewers learn the same way! To reach the most number of individuals, try to include materials for different types of learners. Choose a variety of techniques such as written text, visual images, objects to hold and manipulate, and interactive activities and demonstrations.



## TOOL KIT IDEA #5: WRITE ABOUT ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH



*Don't forget the power of the pen (or the keyboard)!*

### **Newspapers**

Newspapers remain popular avenues through which individuals can share facts, resources, and opinions. When advocating for a particular health issue, consider the following opportunities:

▪ *Feature Articles*    ▪ *Op-Eds*        ▪ *Letters to the Editor*    ▪ *Dear Abby*    ▪ *Advertisements*

For ideas related to the content of specific articles, refer to the following two pages for a *Sample Syndicated Columnist Letter on the Health Education Profession and Sample Press Release*.

### **Community or local health department Newsletters**

While newspapers often attract a larger, more diverse audience, school or community newsletters provide a smaller forum through which readers can learn about specific issues pertaining to themselves. Additionally, newsletters provide exciting opportunities to motivate individuals around an issue, or to highlight ways to advocate in their own communities.

### **Letters and E-mails to Politicians and Policy-makers**

In addition to general articles in newspapers and newsletters, individuals have the power to affect change at the local, state and national levels. By writing to politicians and policy-makers about specific issues, you can impact the legislative process. For more information and to find contact information for your Governor, Representatives, and Senators refer to *Additional Health Legislation Resources* in the Appendix.

As access to the Internet increases, so too does the opportunity to communicate with Policy-makers through e-mail. Many individuals now voice their opinions over the Internet, and this innovative method of communication has become increasingly popular. In fact, due to the recent problems experienced with delivered mail containing biological or chemical contaminants, it is best to fax or email your communication with legislators to ensure they receive your communication in a timely manner.

Generally, the same guidelines that apply to writing letters to policy-makers apply to emails, as well. The following additional tips will help increase the impact of your e-mail messages:

- Personalize all e-mails. Find out who the key policy-makers are in the topic area you're concerned with and e-mail them directly.
- Avoid form letter e-mails and electronic petitions.
- If you are a constituent, state that early in your message.
- Briefly identify why you are writing in the first paragraph of your message.
- Draft an outline of what you want to say, and then address each point as directly and concisely as possible by citing facts and any personal experiences to support your statements.
- Be brief; aim to keep your e-mail message on one screen.
- Avoid excessive complaining.
- If you are writing about legislation, identify it by name and number.
- Realize that your message will be taken more seriously if you appear to have done your research.
- Include your full name and mailing address; most policy-makers still respond to emails by snail mail.

For more tips on communicating with Members of Congress, visit

<http://capwiz.com/apha/issues/basics/?style=comm>, [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) or [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov)



**Sample Syndicated Columnist Letter on the Health Education Profession**

<DATE>

<SYNDICATED HEALTH COLUMNIST>

<ADDRESS>

<CITY, STATE, ZIP>

Dear <NAME>:

One of the best-kept secrets in the United States health field is the health educator. We're writing to request your support in promoting National Health Education Week, October 15-20, 2007. The purpose of National Health Education Week is to celebrate and recognize the contributions of health education to improving the public's health by identifying a prominent health issue facing our nation. This year's theme is "*Finding the Key: Healthier Homes and Communities,*" which is designed to promote the importance of environmental health and increase environmental health literacy. While many health professionals often take on health education roles in the performance of their primary professional responsibilities, health education is an independent profession in its own right and health educators are an integral part of any community's health promotion and health care team. Health care consumers, health professionals, people interested in getting and/or staying healthy, and young people interested in exciting health-related careers could benefit greatly from your presentation of the facts about the health education profession and to encourage the American public to keep the environment healthy and sustain its natural resources. There are approximately 49,000 health education professionals, and we have an impressive track record!

Grounded in behavioral and social science theories and based on our training in the social, medical and behavioral sciences, health educators can help communities, groups, and individuals identify their health concerns, develop appropriate plans of action, create and implement programs, and identify resources to address public health issues. Using our education and communications training, Health Educators educate people, not just inform them, about diseases, and disabilities through presentations, educational materials, and mass media campaigns. Americans still widely lack the environmental knowledge that would enable them to safeguard public health, protect natural resources, support energy conservation efforts and engage in the movement towards a more sustainable future. Trained in community organizing and group dynamics, we can organize community health initiatives, build coalitions, and advocate for political and organizational policies conducive to health. Whether the challenge is environmental health, bioterrorism, AIDS, substance abuse, or other health issues, professional Health Educators have the core diagnostic, planning, evaluation, communication, and coordination skills to educate for the prevention, early detection and treatment.



## **TOOL KIT IDEA #5: WRITE ABOUT ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH, *continued***



Where do we do our health education? We work in healthcare facilities, colleges/universities, K-12 schools, workplaces, government agencies, voluntary agencies, and community organizations. No other profession is trained in the competencies associated with professional health education since 1989.

We encourage you to remind your readers that health educators are an important resource in improving our environment. A major role of health education is to understand and identify those critical environmental exposures which may adversely impact human health.

For more information about health education, contact the Society for Public Health Education ([www.sophe.org](http://www.sophe.org)). For more information about promoting environmental health, visit the National Center for Environmental Health website at [www.nceh.org](http://www.nceh.org). You can also visit the US Environmental Protection Agency at [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov) and also the Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry at [www.atsdr.cdc.gov](http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov).

Yours in health,

<NAME>

## **TOOL KIT IDEA #6: TALK ABOUT ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**

### **Voice your opinions!**

Serve as an Agency Spokesperson

Educate your School Boards

Call your local, state, or national representatives

Be Interviewed on a Radio Talk Show

Speak at Community Events

Appear on a Local Public Television Station







Attend a local, state, or national rally

Present at Conferences

### **How to Reach Your Intended Audience through the Spoken Word**

1. Determine which forum (business, organization, school, agency, etc.) will best reach your intended audience.
2. Solidify your main message or major communication objective(s).
3. Prepare a speaking guide, if needed.
4. Contact a representative at the specific forum, while building a positive relationship, if possible.
5. Inquire within the participating forum about speaking opportunities that may already exist (time slots, meeting dates, programs)
6. Determine the format of the speaking opportunity, including: the length of the program or event; the possibility for audience participation; whether the program or event is live, etc.
7. Send or fax content-related information to the particular forum for publicity
8. Prepare in advance notes, statistics, phone numbers, websites, quotes and/or “sound bites” to which you will refer during the program or event
9. Arrive 20 – 30 minutes prior to the start of the program or event
10. Talk away!

### **ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH LITERACY TALKING POINTS**

-  Childhood lead poisoning, respiratory diseases, and quality-of-life issues all have been linked to inadequate, poorly maintained, and substandard housing.
-  Asthma accounts for 14 million missed school days each year.
-  300 million U.S. citizens drink tap water every day, but they do so without a second thought about its quality.
-  Neighborhoods should be free of potentially hazardous nuisances such as toxic waste, illegal dumping, noise pollution, unsafe structures, mosquito breeding areas, and unvaccinated animals.
-  Most people will have no reaction at all when exposed to molds. Allergic reactions, similar to common pollen or animal allergies, are the most common health effects for individuals sensitive to molds.
-  Take action in your community from October 15<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> by celebrating the National Health Education Week’s theme, “*Finding the Key: Healthier Homes and Communities.*”

## ***GET INSPIRED TO HOLD A...***

# **NHEW 2007 COMMUNITY-WIDE CONTEST**

Involve schools, agencies, and businesses in National Health Education Week by providing them with the opportunity to participate in a community-wide contest. Focused on the theme *Finding the Key: Healthier Homes and Communities*, a contest could be the perfect way to recognize the efforts of youth and adults in your community.

### **NHEW 2007: Community-Wide Contest Ideas**

- Photo Contest:** Challenge adults or youth to photograph an image that promotes environmental health. Twelve winning photos would be used in the design of a community calendar, with proceeds going to local school programs.
- Sticker Contest:** Challenge children or youth to design a bumper sticker that promotes environmental health. Winning stickers would be sold in the community, with proceeds going to the local community centers.
- Essay Contest:** Challenge school-aged youth to write an essay about the importance and awareness of environmental health in their school or community. Winning essays would be published in the local newspaper during National Health Education Week.
- Poster Contest:** Challenge school-aged youth to create a poster that encourages healthier homes and communities in their areas. Winning posters would be displayed in schools or libraries within the community.
- PSA Contest:** Challenge local businesses to create a public service announcement (PSA) supporting environmental health. Winning PSAs would be aired on the public television stations.

### **Contest Considerations**

- Specify contest guidelines and deadlines.
- Create and publicize judging criteria.
- Promote the contest in a variety of different settings, using a variety of different promotional methods.
- Leave ample time for participants to respond to the contest challenge and complete the applications.
- Leave ample time for judges to determine contest winners.
- Don't forget to reward the winners and publicize their success!

**Check out the Appendix to apply for the NHEW 2007 National Contest!**



## **STEPS TO INFORMING THE MEDIA**

### **Step 1: Identify your key audiences.**

You may have different key messages for specific communities as well as a general set of messages for the general population.

### **Step 2: Decide upon key message(s)**

Possible key messages:

- Attendance at schools that are protected from environmental hazards and threats, including, but not limited to, indoor air contaminants such as mold, unsafe food, and poor drinking water.
- Lead exposure can harm young children and babies even before they are born.
- You can get lead in your body by breathing or swallowing lead dust, or by eating soil or paint chips containing lead.
- Asthma is the most common chronic childhood disease affecting about 4.8 million children.
- Secondhand smoke, dust mites, pets, molds and pests are major indoor asthma triggers.
- Water-related diseases are a growing human tragedy, killing more than 5 million people each year.
- Community X or program X or school X does an excellent job in teaching and reinforcing environmental health by \_\_\_\_\_.
- National and local environmental health education programs are targeting environmental health. (Insert CDC examples, and others that represent a regional diversity.)
- Neighborhoods free of potentially hazardous nuisances such as toxic waste, illegal dumping, noise pollution, unsafe structures, mosquito breeding areas, and unvaccinated animals.

### **Step 3: Get the facts**

Research the facts that support your key message(s), such as healthier homes and communities and environmental health at schools, community centers, and local organizations.

### **Step 4: Decide which media outlets you want to utilize**

Possible media outlets include television, radio, newspapers, and newsletters, among others.

### **Step 5: Develop a current media contact list**

Include local and regional radio, television, print outlets and key journalists.



## **TOOL KIT IDEA #8: INFORM THE MEDIA, *continued***



### **Step 6: Develop a press release** (*Refer to the sample press release below.*)

- Include a background page about National Health Education Week and Environmental Health. The background page can include key facts, statistics, and information resources.
- Identify a member of your organization as a local spokesperson to answer journalist questions and be quoted.
- Identify any local stories that reflect good health education programming in regards to environmental health awareness and promote to journalists through the press release kit.

### **Step 7: Develop a strategy for utilizing media outlets**

- See your information through the eyes of a journalist. Fashion your story to fit their needs and interests.
- Leverage local or regional issues of media interest to promote NHEW, as well as to promote your organization, and the value of health prevention efforts as a major way to lower health care costs for your community, organization, employers, and the nation.
- Create media interest through the use of specific stories about people helped, health programming undertaken, and policy stands that speak to environmental health.
- Find people who can talk to the media about the need for environmentally safe communities and schools, the role of health educators in preventing and lowering environmental health risks in the local community.
- Attain support for efforts for creating healthier homes and communities from government agencies and other health organizations.

### **Step 8: Disseminate your information to media outlets & priority media targets**

- Include a brief cover letter with your press release.
- Mail, fax, email and telephone calls are all delivery mechanism to get your message to media outlets. Check to see how your local journalists like to be contacted. They are often busy professionals who appreciate clarity and brevity.
- Don't wait for them to contact you— follow-up with a call, fax, or email.
- Follow through on media requests.
- Be timely in responding to media requests for more information and connecting them to experts on the topic.

### **Step 9: Begin to establish a relationship with the media**

- Send thank you notes to those media that covered your story.
- Add contacts to distribution lists for newsletters and other publications.
- Send additional news of interest to those media contacts.
- After the story, invite the media to cover your organization, program, worksite for events.
- Follow the interests of specific journalists and send them relevant stories.
- Help establish your organization as a credible source for information on health issues.



## **TOOL KIT IDEA #8: INFORM THE MEDIA, *continued***



### **ORGANIZATION, COMPANY OR PROGRAM LETTERHEAD HERE**

<DATE>

**For immediate release**

<CONTACT PERSON NAME>

<TELEPHONE NUMBER>

<EMAIL ADDRESS>

### **Finding the Key: Healthier Homes and Communities is the Focus of National Health Education Week 2007**

<CITY, STATE> –The theme for National Health Education Week, October 15-20, 2007 is Finding the Key: Healthier Homes and Communities. To encourage environmental health awareness and action, <NAME OF PROGRAM/ORGANIZATION> <DESCRIBE THE ACTIVITY/EVENT/PROMOTION BEING CONDUCTED>.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Environmental Health at CDC strives to promote health and quality of life by preventing or controlling those diseases or deaths that result from interactions between people and their environment. <sup>1</sup> It encompasses the assessment and control of those environmental factors that can potentially affect health. It is targeted towards preventing disease and creating health-supportive environments. <sup>2</sup>

Quote from <CREDIBLE ORGANIZATION/PROGRAM INDIVIDUAL>

Quote from <HEALTH EDUCATION OR NUTRITION EXPERT>

National Health Education Week is celebrated each year during the third week of October in an effort to focus national attention on a major public health problem, to provide public education on the issue, and to improve consumer understanding of health education's role in promoting the public's health. SOPHE's celebration of National Health Education Week, 2007 focuses on providing support to schools, communities, and health education professionals throughout the nation to enable them to plan and conduct activities around the designated annual theme, Finding the Key: Healthier Homes and Communities.

<sup>1</sup>Environmental Health, Department of Health and Human Services, retrieved August 1, 2007 from <http://www.cdc.gov/node.do?id=0900f3ec8000e044>

<sup>2</sup>World Health Organization, Environmental Health, Retrieved August 1, 2007 from [http://www.who.int/topics/environmental\\_health/en/](http://www.who.int/topics/environmental_health/en/)



## TOOL KIT IDEA #8: INFORM THE MEDIA, *continued*



<PARAGRAPH ABOUT YOUR ORGANIZATION HERE>

###

The Society for Public Health Education is a non-profit professional organization founded in 1950 to provide leadership to the profession of health education and to contribute to the health of all people through advances in health education theory and research, excellence in health education practice, and the promotion of public policies conducive to health. Located in Washington, DC, SOPHE has more than 4,000 members and 24 chapters located throughout the United States, Western Canada and Northern Mexico. The Society publishes two scientific journals, *Health Education & Behavior* and *Health Promotion Practice*. For more information, go to [www.sophe.org](http://www.sophe.org).

###

# ***Finding the Key: Healthier Homes and Communities Activity Guide & Tool Kit***



**Facts and Stats Sheet: Different Topics in Environmental Health**

**Additional Health Legislation Resources**

**Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE)**

**National Center for Health Education (NCHE)**

**Coalition of National Health Education Organizations**

**National Health Education Week Contest**

**National Health Education Week Evaluation Form**

## **Fact Sheet: Healthier Homes and Communities**

### **Asthma**



Asthma is a serious lung disease that affects roughly 17 million Americans.<sup>1</sup>



Asthma may be triggered by allergens and irritants that are commonly found inside homes.<sup>1</sup>



Asthma can also be triggered by the smoke from the burning end of a cigarette, pipe, or cigar and the smoke breathed out by a smoker.<sup>1</sup>



Your pet's skin flakes, urine, and saliva can be asthma triggers. Consider keeping pets outdoors or even finding a new home for your pets, if necessary.<sup>2</sup>

### **Dust Mites**



Dust mites are too small to be seen, but are found in every home.<sup>2</sup>



Dust mites live in mattresses, pillows, carpets, fabric-covered furniture, bedcovers, clothes, and stuffed toys.<sup>2</sup>



Wash sheets and blankets once a week in hot water.<sup>2</sup>



Choose washable stuffed toys, wash them often in hot water, and dry thoroughly. Keep stuffed toys off beds.<sup>2</sup>



Cover mattresses and pillows in dust-proof (allergen-impermeable) zippered covers.<sup>2</sup>

### **Molds**



Molds grow on damp materials. The key to controlling mold is controlling moisture.<sup>3</sup>



If mold is a problem in your home, clean up the mold and get rid of excess water or moisture.<sup>3</sup>



Lowering the moisture also helps reduce other triggers, such as dust mites and cockroaches.



Wash mold off hard surfaces and dry completely.<sup>3</sup>



Fix leaky plumbing or other sources of water.<sup>3</sup>



Keep drip pans in your air conditioner, refrigerator, and dehumidifier clean and dry.<sup>3</sup>



Use exhaust fans or open windows in kitchens and bathrooms when showering, cooking, or using the dishwasher.<sup>3</sup>



Vent clothes dryers to the outside.<sup>3</sup>



Maintain low indoor humidity, ideally between 30-50% relative humidity.<sup>3</sup>

### **Radon**



Radon is a naturally occurring gas that is a decay product of uranium. It can be found everywhere but levels vary from building to building and season to season.<sup>4</sup>



Radon gas has been identified as the second leading cause of lung cancer, second only to cigarette smoking, and it is estimated to be responsible for 21,000 deaths from lung cancer annually.<sup>4</sup>



The reason that radon is harmful indoors is that it can become trapped and grow to hazardous levels.<sup>4</sup>



Home test kits labeled "meets EPA requirements" should be used. Both long-term and short-term tests can be done.<sup>4</sup>



Radon levels can be lowered through a variety of repairs, from sealing cracks in floors and walls to changing the flow of air into the building.<sup>4</sup>

## Air Pollution



Estimates of the annual human health costs of outdoor air pollution range from \$14 billion to \$55 billion annually.<sup>5</sup>



Each year, pollution claims 70,000 lives in the United States.<sup>5</sup>



Globally, an estimated 200,000 to 570,000 people die each year from ambient air pollution.<sup>6</sup>



Air pollutants commonly found in home and school environments – aerosol sprays, fireplace smoke and fumes from wood burning, gas or oil stoves – can irritate the airways of people with asthma.<sup>6</sup>

## Climate and Health



Extreme temperatures can cause potentially fatal illnesses, e.g. heat stress or hypothermia, as well as increasing death rates from heart and respiratory diseases.<sup>7</sup>



In cities, stagnant weather conditions can trap both warm air and air pollutants -- leading to smog episodes with significant health impacts.<sup>7</sup>



Approximately 600,000 deaths occurred world-wide as a result of weather-related natural disasters in the 2006.<sup>7</sup>



Changes in climate are likely to lengthen the transmission seasons of important vector-borne diseases.<sup>7</sup>

## Water



One in six people still have no regular access to safe drinking water.<sup>8</sup>



2.4 billion people lack access to adequate sanitation facilities.<sup>8</sup>



Within 25 years, half the world's population could have trouble finding enough freshwater for drinking and irrigation.<sup>8</sup>



Although tap water that meets federal and state standards is generally safe to drink, threats to drinking water quality in the United States still exist.<sup>9</sup>



Over 1 billion people worldwide have no access to safe drinking water.<sup>9</sup>

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## ADDITIONAL HEALTH LEGISLATION RESOURCES

*Take a stand! Voice your opinion! Make a difference!*

To find the contact information of your **Governor**, visit the following website:

[http://www.nga.org/governors/1%2C1169%2CC\\_GOV\\_ADDRESS%2Coo.html](http://www.nga.org/governors/1%2C1169%2CC_GOV_ADDRESS%2Coo.html)

To find the contact information of your **Representatives**, visit the following website:

<http://www.house.gov/writerep/>

To find contact information of your **Senators**, visit the following website:

[http://www.senate.gov/general/contact\\_information/senators\\_cfm.cfm](http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm)

For information on communicating with **Elected Officials**, visit the following website:

<http://www.capwiz.com/apha/issues/basics/?style=comm>



# 10 KEY ACTIONS TO LOWER ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS



**DID YOU KNOW** people born today, on average, have a life expectancy about twice that of folks just over a century ago? Most of those additional years have been gained by healthful environmental changes - including improved sanitation, purified water, cleaner air, the safer use of chemicals in our homes, gardens, factories and offices, and the restriction or elimination of unsafe practices.

Here are 10 simple things you can do to lower your exposure to environmental risks!

- 1. DECLARE YOUR HOME A SMOKE-FREE ZONE-** Secondhand smoke can cause serious health problems, especially for children. Ask smokers to take it outside.
- 2. USE LESS HOT WATER-** Be aware of the water you drink and bathe in! It takes a lot of energy to heat water. You can use less hot water by installing a low flow showerhead (350 pounds of carbon dioxide saved per year) and washing your clothes in cold or warm water (500 pounds saved per year) instead of hot water.
- 3. DISPOSING OF HAZARDOUS HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTS-** Keep paints, used oil, cleaning solvents, polishes, pool chemicals, insecticides, and other hazardous household chemicals out of drains, sinks, and toilets. Many of these products contain harmful substances -- such as sodium hypochlorite, petroleum distillates, phenol and cresol, ammonia and formaldehyde -- that can end up in nearby water bodies.
- 4. USE NATURAL FERTILIZERS-** Apply natural fertilizer such as compost, manure, bone meal or peat whenever possible. Ask your local hardware and garden supply stores to stock these natural fertilizers. Try composting—it decreases the need for fertilizer and helps soil retain moisture!
- 5. BE "GREEN" WHEN WASHING YOUR CAR-** Hand-wash your car on the lawn with a bucket of soapy water, rags and a hose. Or, if you don't want to do it yourself, choose a car wash that recycles its water! By turning off the hose between rinsings, you can save up to 150 gallons!
- 6. RECYCLE AND DISPOSE OF TRASH PROPERLY-** Never flush non-degradable products -- such as disposable diapers or plastic tampon applicators -- down the toilet. They can damage the sewage treatment process and end up littering beaches and waters.
- 7. BUY LOCALLY GROWN AND PRODUCED FOODS-** The average meal in the United States travels 1,200 miles from the farm to your plate. Buying locally will save fuel and keep money in your local community.
- 8. CREATE A COMMUNITY PARK OR GARDEN-** Clean up and beautify your neighborhood! This is also a great way to make friends, share ideas with others, and create a source of locally grown food!
- 9. RADON TESTING-** Test your home for radon. Use a radon test kit labeled "Meets EPA requirements".
- 10. KEEP DUST MITES AND ALLERGENS TO A MINIMUM-** Clean regularly! Wash bedding materials in hot water (at least 130°). Consider replacing carpet with area rugs that can be taken up and washed often.



**To stay up-to-date on environmental health & other health related legislation, visit:**

- [www.healtheducationadvocate.org](http://www.healtheducationadvocate.org) - Information about advocating for public health education legislation and health promotion funding
- <http://actionnetwork.org/> - Online environmental activism community; support and learn about campaigns performed by this group and how they may apply to your own advocacy efforts.
- [www.apha.org/legislative/](http://www.apha.org/legislative/) - Provides information on the legislation process, how to approach your legislators, background on various pieces of public health related legislation and how to support these measures.
- <http://thomas.loc.gov> - Search for federal pieces of legislation related to injury and violence prevention.
- [www.ncsl.org](http://www.ncsl.org) - National Conference of State Legislators; search this website to find state and local pieces of legislation on environmental health.
- [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov) - Search for federal pieces of legislation related to environmental health that were introduced and are being considered by the U.S. Senate.
- [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) - Search for federal pieces of legislation related to environmental health that were introduced and are being considered by the U.S. House of Representatives.
- [www.citizenspeak.org](http://www.citizenspeak.org) - This is a free email advocacy service for grassroots campaigns, enabling organizations to launch email campaigns and to track participation.



## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

SOPHE supports professional development by:

- (a) Offering two continuing education conferences annually, each attracting 300-600 health professionals. The SOPHE Annual Meeting is held the weekend immediately prior to the American Public Health Association (APHA) annual meeting, and the SOPHE Midyear Scientific Conference occurs in May or June.
- (b) Promoting and providing distance learning opportunities such as webcast, video teleconferences, audiotapes, and self-study journal articles to enhance CE opportunities for health professionals at the local level. SOPHE is the largest multiple-event provider of continuing education contact hours for certified health education specialists.
- (c) Providing a nationwide network of trainers for the CDC health communications program/CD-ROM, *CDCynergy*, as well as experts for CDC's Corporate University courses in Health Communications.
- (d) Sponsoring the award-winning Public Health Education Leadership Institute, in cooperation with the Directors of Health Promotion and Education and now in its eighth class in 2005-06.

## **ADVOCACY**

SOPHE's Advocacy Committee meets monthly, with representation from all 24 Chapters. A listserv facilitates rapid communication and action on national legislative issues. SOPHE also adopts resolutions that provide an organizational foundation for national/local action on selected issues. SOPHE has taken the lead for the last 9 years in organizing a health education-wide Advocacy Summit, with advocacy training and visits to Capitol Hill. In 2004, SOPHE was invited to provide oral testimony to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health & Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies.

## **PARTNERSHIPS**

Alliance for Behavioral and Social Science  
American Association for Health Education  
American Psychological Association "Decade of Behavior"  
Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors  
Directors of Health Promotion & Education  
Brady Center to Prevent Handgun Violence/Coalition to Stop Gun Violence  
Campaign for Public Health  
CDC Coalition  
CDC Guide to Community Preventative Services  
Children's Defense Fund Coalition  
Coalition of National Health Education Organizations  
Council on Public Health Linkages  
Friends of HRSA  
International Union for Health Promotion and Education  
March of Dimes Prematurity Campaign  
NFPA International  
NHLBI National Asthma Education Coordinating Committee

NHLBI National Cholesterol Education Committee  
NIMH National Partnership Network  
NLM Partnership for Health Information Access  
National Coalition for Promoting Physical Activity  
National Coalition to Support Sexuality Education  
National Commission for Health Education Credentialing  
National Competency Update Project  
National Coordinating Committee on School Health  
National Council on Folic Acid  
National LGBT Health Coalition  
National Public Health Partnership  
Partners for Effective Tobacco Policy/Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids  
Partnership for Anthrax Vaccine Education  
Research!America  
Research 2 Prevention Coalition  
Society for State Directors of Health, Physical Education & Recreation  
Society of Behavioral Medicine  
United Nations Public Information Division

## **RECENT & CURRENT ACTIVITIES**

- (a) Sponsorship of an invitational summit, ***"Disparities and Social Inequities: Framing a Transdisciplinary Research Agenda in Health Education,"*** August 2005 in collaboration with CDC, NCI, Office of Minority Health, The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and the Kaiser Family Foundation. Two forthcoming issues of HEB and HPP on conference outcomes, and special supplement on REACH 2010. Webcast in July/Aug 06.
- (b) Implementation of five-year cooperative agreement with the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) to support improved collaboration between the fields of health education and environmental health. Implementation of two-year cooperative agreement with CDC's Division of Adolescent & School Health (DASH) to provide technical assistance and training in DASH-funded states for support of coordinated school health programs dealing with youth obesity, inactivity, tobacco, and other chronic disease risks.
- (c) Publication of special *HPP* issues: Focus issue on Cancer Prevention and Control in Special Populations (10/05) with CDC; Focus issue on Eliminating Health Disparities (1/06) with the Office of Minority Health; Supplement on Asthma (4/06) with Allies Against Asthma.
- (d) Major upgrade of SOPHE's database and website for enhanced membership services and capacity.

Updated 6/06



## **Coalition of National Health Education Organizations**

To learn more about the field of health education, please contact one of the following member organizations of the *Coalition of National Health Education Organizations*.

### **American Academy for Health Behavior**

P.O. Box 31264  
Charlotte, NC 28231  
704-330-6592  
[www.aahb.org](http://www.aahb.org)

### **American Association for Health Education**

1900 Association Drive  
Reston, VA 20191  
800-213-7193  
<http://www.aahperd.org/aahe>

### **American College Health Association**

PO Box 28937  
Baltimore, MD 21240  
410-859-1500  
<http://www.acha.org>

### **American School Health Association**

7263 State Route 43, PO Box 708  
Kent, OH 44240  
330-678-1601  
<http://www.ashaweb.org>

### **Directors of Health Promotion and Education (formerly ASTDHPPHE)**

1101 15th St NW, Suite 601  
Washington, DC 20005  
202-659-2230  
<http://www.dhpe.org/>

### **Eta Sigma Gamma**

2000 University Avenue  
Muncie, IN 47306  
800-715-2559  
<http://www.etasigmagamma.org>

### **National Center for Health Education**

375 Hudson Street, 13<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10014  
212-463-4050  
[www.nche.org](http://www.nche.org)

### **Public Health Education and Health Promotion Section and School Health Education and Services Section, American Public Health Association**

800 Eye Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20002  
202-777-APHA (2742)  
<http://www.apha.org/>  
<http://www.jhsph.edu/hao/phehp/>

### **Society for Public Health Education**

750 First Street NE, Suite 910  
Washington, DC 20002  
202-408-9804  
<http://www.sophe.org>

### **Society of State Directors of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation**

1900 Association Drive  
Reston, VA 20191-1599  
703-476-3402  
<http://www.thesociety.org>

# CELEBRATE NATIONAL HEALTH EDUCATION WEEK

**October 15-20, 2007**

## *Finding the Key: Healthier Homes and Communities*

**The Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE) invites YOU to participate in NHEW and tell us what you or your community did by entering the NHEW Contest!**

### **Contest Rules:**

- Any organization or individual may apply.
- Submit a description (100 words or less) of activities and sample of items that demonstrate or describe how NHEW was celebrated in your community or organization.
- Winners will receive a special certificate signed by Elaine Auld, SOPHE's Executive Director.

**Contest Deadline: November 30, 2007**

*Visit the SOPHE website [www.sophe.org](http://www.sophe.org)  
for an application.*

Contest winner(s) will be notified by **December 14, 2007**

**National Health Education Week**  
**October 15-20, 2007**  
***CONTEST APPLICATION FORM***

**1. Tell us about you:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Organization Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Contact Person

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/Zip

\_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone

\_\_\_\_\_  
Fax

\_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail Address

**2. Check any setting(s) and audience(s) that NHEW activities were promoted:**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Schools (K-12)                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Children               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> University/College campus         | <input type="checkbox"/> Adults                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medical care (Hospital or Clinic) | <input type="checkbox"/> Older Adults           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local or State health department  | <input type="checkbox"/> Employees              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Worksite                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Ethnic/Racial Groups   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary organization            | <input type="checkbox"/> Women                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Membership organization           | <input type="checkbox"/> Men                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify): _____            | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify): _____ |

**3. Describe your NHEW 2007 Activity in 100 words or less.**

**4. Send the (1) application form, (2) NHEW activity description and (3) supporting documentation (which can include, but is not limited to, brochures, flyers, newspaper articles, etc.) to:**

**SOPHE**  
**750 First Street NE, Suite 910**  
**Washington, DC 20002**  
**ATTN: NHEW 2007 Contest**  
**(202) 408-9815 fax**

## NATIONAL HEALTH EDUCATION WEEK 2007 EVALUATION FORM

The Society for Public Health Education would like to know how you celebrated National Health Education Week 2007. Your response to the following questions is much appreciated.

Did you celebrate National Health Education Week (NHEW) 2007?  Yes  No

Did you celebrate NHEW during the week of Oct. 15-20, 2007?  Yes  No

Did you celebrate the theme *Finding the Key: Healthier Homes and Communities?*  
 Yes  No

**Toward whom did you target your NHEW 2007 efforts?** (Check all that apply.)

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Schools (K-12)                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Colleges/Universities | <input type="checkbox"/> Schools (other): _____    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parents/Caregivers             | <input type="checkbox"/> SOPHE members         | <input type="checkbox"/> Ethnic/racial groups      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local businesses               | <input type="checkbox"/> Community agencies    | <input type="checkbox"/> Health care settings      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adults                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth (in school)     | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth (outside of school) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employers                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Employees             | <input type="checkbox"/> Local health experts      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please describe): _____ |  |  |

**With which community partner(s) did you collaborate?** (Check all that apply.)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Schools (K-12)                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Schools (other): _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Colleges/Universities          | <input type="checkbox"/> Parents/Caregivers     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community agencies             | <input type="checkbox"/> SOPHE Chapters         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health care industry           | <input type="checkbox"/> Local businesses       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please describe): _____ |   |

I did not collaborate with a community partner.

How many individuals did your celebration...	1 - 25	26 - 50	51 - 75	76 - 100	100+
... plan to reach?					
... actually reach?					

**Which activity/activities did you use to celebrate NHEW 2007?** (Check all that apply.)

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teach related classroom lessons | <input type="checkbox"/> Job Shadow Day         | <input type="checkbox"/> Health Fair     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Awards Ceremony       | <input type="checkbox"/> Inform the Media       | <input type="checkbox"/> Display Booth   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper/Newsletter Article    | <input type="checkbox"/> Contact a politician   | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Event |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Radio/Television Appearance     | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Proclamation | <input type="checkbox"/> Hold a Contest  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Speak /Present at an Event      |   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please describe): _____  |   |  |

Circle the number that best represents your answer to the following questions.	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The goals of my NHEW celebration were met.	1	2	3	4	5
I plan to celebrate NHEW next year.	1	2	3	4	5
SOPHE's Activity Guide & Tool Kit was useful to my planning.	1	2	3	4	5
I plan to use SOPHE materials to plan other health education campaigns.	1	2	3	4	5

**What were your greatest strengths in planning and implementing your celebration?**

- Strong interest from the community
- Past experience in campaign planning
- Strong interest from school/organization

Theme relevant to school/organization's goals  
 Available resources (please describe): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other (please describe): \_\_\_\_\_

**What were your greatest obstacles in planning and implementing your celebration?**

Lack of interest from the community  
 Lack of experience in campaign planning  
 Lack of interest from the school/organization  
 Theme not relevant to the school/organization's goals  
 Lack of resources (please describe): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other (please describe): \_\_\_\_\_

**In what setting(s) do you work? (Check all that apply.)**

Colleges/Universities       Health Departments       SOPHE Chapter  
 Health care settings       Community agencies       Local businesses  
 Schools (K-5)       Schools (6-8)       Schools (9-12)  
 Schools (other) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other (please describe): \_\_\_\_\_

**What is your profession?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please describe your community:**       Urban       Suburban       Rural

**Please use the space below to share any additional comments or suggestions related to National Health Education Week 2007.**

*Please send your completed evaluation form to:*

**SOPHE**  
**ATTN: NHEW 2007**  
**750 First Street, NE Suite 910**  
**Washington, DC 20002**  
**Phone: (202) 408-9804**  
**Fax: (202) 408-9815**  
**Email: [info@sophe.org](mailto:info@sophe.org)**