

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release: Wednesday, Jan. 30, 2013

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Groups Partnering on Child Care Program to Reduce Toxics, Safeguard Kids' Health, Protect Great Lakes

(Rochester, N.Y.) Clean and Healthy New York and Child Care Council Inc. announced today a new partnership to educate child care providers in the Great Lakes basin about common toxic chemicals and how to choose safer products. Clean and Healthy New York received a two-year Great Lakes Restoration Initiative grant for "Toxics Reduction through Day Care Provider Engagement" from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Using the framework of the award-winning Eco-Healthy Child Care® program run by the national Children's Environmental Health Network, the two organizations will reach out to all the child care providers in New York state's Great Lakes basin, offering trainings and on-site technical assistance. The program goals are protecting children's health by making their daily environment safer, while reducing use of chemicals prioritized by U.S. EPA through the agency's Chemical Action Plans.

"Toxic chemicals, sadly, are nearly everywhere, including the child care setting," said **Katie Kelly, Program Coordinator for Clean and Healthy New York**. "The good news is they don't have to be, but avoiding them can be a challenge. This project is designed to protect children today in the child care setting while improving their environment for years to come by keeping toxic chemicals out of the Great Lakes basin."

"Our agency is dedicated to creating the safest and healthiest environment for children," said **Barbara-Ann Mattle, CEO, Child Care Council**, based in Rochester, N.Y. "We are pleased to be partnering with Clean and Healthy New York on this effort to help child care providers make their facilities safer for the children they care for."

"Children are uniquely vulnerable to the potential risks associated with exposure to chemicals," said **EPA Regional Administrator Judith A. Enck**. "Reducing the use of toxic chemicals in child care facilities is vitally important. This initiative will help child care centers identify less toxic and nontoxic products and thereby help protect children's health."

Child care providers can become endorsed by the Eco-Healthy Child Care® program to let parents know they have taken action to ensure the healthiest facility possible.

(more)

“As a child care provider for 30 years, I have spent most of my life taking care of children and trying to create a happy and safe environment for them in my home,” said **Betty Bentley** of Greece, N.Y. “I don’t always have the time to investigate all the children’s products and toys they use. I am really excited to be a part of the Eco-Healthy Child Care program to learn more about keeping the children I care for safe.”

Chemicals covered by EPA Chemical Action Plans include better-known chemicals like bisphenol A (BPA), the flame retardants PBDEs, mercury, and phthalates as well as lesser-known chemicals, including the flame retardant HBCD (found in insulation), benzidine dyes (found in cloth), and NPEs (nonylphenol ethoxylates, found in cleaning products and paints).

“The Children's Environmental Health Network is thrilled at this initiative. Our practical, science-based program meshes perfectly with the project’s goal of supporting child care providers in making simple choices to improve the health and well-being of all children in their care,” said **Eco-Healthy Child Care® National Director Hester Paul**. “We look forward to an exciting and productive partnership.”

Child care providers interested in learning more about Eco-Healthy Child Care®, and the trainings that will be offered, are encouraged to contact either Kate McArdle at Child Care Council or Katie Kelly at Clean and Healthy New York.

About Clean and Healthy New York

Clean and Healthy New York, Inc. (CHNY) conducts crucial research, education and advocacy in service of chemical policy and market reform. Our mission is to promote safer chemicals, a sustainable economy, and a healthier world. CHNY represents, connects and taps into the power of otherwise isolated constituencies, such as scientists, nurses, lawyers, organized labor, health-affected people, teachers, parents, child care providers and businesses.

About Child Care Council

Child Care Council Inc. is a comprehensive child care resource and referral agency working to improve the quality of care for all children. A Child Care Aware® Quality Assured agency, the Council provides information, training and resources to child care providers and parents in Livingston, Monroe and Wayne counties. The agency offers coordinated services to support child care programs, including a professional library, referral services, free notary public, fingerprinting waivers, reduced-cost business services, and a resource/recycle shop.

Resources:

- Clean and Healthy New York: www.cleanhealthyny.org
Contact: Katie Kelly, katie@cleanhealthyny.org, 607-793-1308
- Child Care Council: www.childcarecouncil.com
Contact: Kate McArdle, k.mcardle@childcarecouncil.com, 585-654-4752
- Child care provider: Betty Bentley, 585-392-5374
- Children’s Environmental Health Network Eco-Healthy Child Care®: www.cehn.org/ehcc
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Great Lakes Restoration Initiative grant listing: gri.us