LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES INITIATIVE
CONFERENCE
National Institutes of Health
Bethesda, Maryland
Wednesday, May 19, 2004
AGENDA

Overarching goals:
1) Enhance understanding among groups in the LDD sector and key environmental health organizations of existing science linking certain chemical exposures to learning and developmental disabilities (LDDs);
2) Encourage further support for scientific research on these linkages;
3) Highlight existing initiatives of LDD groups that are already educating their constituencies about how to be more effective in protecting children and future generations from exposures to neurotoxicants;
4) Foster greater collaboration between LDD groups, researchers, health care professionals, environmental health advocacy organizations and others concerned with environmental contributors to neurological development;
5) Determine specific educational and policy opportunities regarding environmental contributors to LDDs; and
6) Engage a “critical mass” of those in the LDD sector and other interested organizations to help move these opportunities forward.

8:00 a.m.  Registration (Coffee and breakfast foods available for purchase in the Natcher Building cafeteria)

8:35 a.m.  Welcome
Frank Hatch, Chair of the Board of Directors, The John Merck Fund

8:45 a.m.  Overview of LDDI and the Conference Agenda
Elise Miller, MEd, Executive Director of the Institute for Children’s Environmental Health and National Coordinator of the Learning and Developmental Disabilities Initiative

9:00 a.m.  Keynote: Translating the Science on Neurotoxicants into Effective Policy
Lynn Goldman, MD, MPH, Professor, Bloomberg School of Public Health, Johns Hopkins University
9:30 a.m. **Morning Plenary: An Overview of Current and Cutting-Edge Science**  
*Moderator: Ruth Hennig*, Executive Director, The John Merck Fund  
- **Ted Schettler, MD, MPH**, Science Director, Science and Environmental Health Network  
- **Pete Myers, PhD**, Founder and Chief Executive Director, Environmental Health Sciences  
- **Martha Herbert, MD, PhD**, Pediatric Neurologist, Center for Morphometric Analysis/Pediatric Neurology, Massachusetts General Hospital

11:00 a.m. **Break**

11:15 a.m. **Break-out Sessions**

**A. Research** – Further discussion on current and emerging research  
*Moderator: Steve Gilbert, PhD, DABT*, Director, Institute of Neurotoxicology and Neurological Disorders  
- **Bruce Lanphear, MD, MPH**, Director of the Cincinnati Children's Environmental Health Center at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center and the University of Cincinnati.  
- **Jennifer Nyland, PhD**, Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of Environmental Health Sciences, Bloomberg School of Public Health, Johns Hopkins University  
- **Isaac Pessah, PhD**, Director, Center for Children's Environmental Health, University of California, Davis

**B. Education** – Further information on the basics  
*Moderator: Michele Gagnon*, Environmental Health Project Director, American Association on Mental Retardation  
- **David Wallinga, MD, MPA**, Co-Director, Food and Health Program, Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy  
- **Barb Sattler, RN, DrPH**, Director, School of Nursing, Environmental Health Education Center, University of Maryland School of Nursing  
- **Jo Behm, RN, MS**, Past President, Governmental Relations and Legislative Action Chair, Learning Disabilities Association of California

**C. Advocacy** – Current efforts of learning and developmental disabilities groups  
*Moderator: Sharon Davis, PhD*, Director of Professional and Family Services, The Arc of the United States  
- **Betty Mekdecii**, Executive Director, Birth Defect Research for Children, Inc.  
- **Sallie Bernard**, Executive Director, Safe Minds  
- **Sandy Cort**, Board Member and Past President, Learning Disabilities Association of Maine

12:45 p.m. **Lunch** (food available for purchase in the Natcher Building cafeteria)

1:40 p.m. **Afternoon plenary: Innovative New Initiatives**  
*Moderator: Stewart Hudson*, President, Emily Hall Tremaine Foundation  
- **Jane Browning**, Executive Director, Learning Disabilities Association of America  
- **Doreen Crosier, MS**, Executive Director, American Association on Mental Retardation
2:45 p.m.  **Break-out Sessions:**

A. **Research** – Research opportunities and needs
   *Moderator:* Pete Myers, PhD, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Environmental Health Sciences
   - Michael Friedlander, PhD, Director, Civitan International Research Center, University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Medicine
   - Sarah Knox, PhD, Behavioral Scientist, National Children’s Study, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, National Institutes of Health
   - Tom Zoeller, PhD, Professor, Department of Biology, University of Massachusetts-Amherst

B. **Education** – Strategies for reaching out to other constituencies and groups
   *Moderator:* Ted Schettler, MD, MPH, Science Director, Science and Environmental Health Network
   - Sharon Davis, PhD, Director of Professional and Family Services, The Arc of the United States
   - Kathy Lawson, Program Director of the Healthy Children Project of the Learning Disabilities Association of America
   - Wendy Nehring, RN, PhD, FAAN, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, College of Nursing, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

C. **Advocacy** – Creating further partnerships between learning and developmental disability groups and environmental health organizations
   *Moderator:* Amy Kostant, Program Director, Environmental Media Services
   - Monica Moore, Co-Director, Pesticide Action Network North America
   - John Balbus, MD, MPH, Director, Health Program, Environmental Defense Fund
   - Steve Boese, MSW, New York State Director, Healthy Schools Network

4:15 p.m.  **Break**

4:30 p.m.  **Wrap-up: Where do we go from here?**
- Brief review of the day’s highlights from break-out sessions
- Discussion on how we can effectively integrate research, education and advocacy efforts on these issues and collectively move towards stronger public environmental health protection

5:30 p.m.  **Adjourn**

5:30 – 6:30 p.m.  **Reception at Natcher Center**

**Thursday, MAY 20th**

For those interested in visiting with policymakers on specific legislation related to neurotoxicants, please meet at 8:15 a.m. at the Learning Disabilities Association offices in Washington, DC, located at Hall of States Building, 444 North Capitol Street, NW, phone number 202-624-8581. This office is within walking distance of Union Station and the Senate buildings.