

Quality Care For Kids Newsletter

June 2024 | Protecting Children's Environmental Health in Child Care Programs

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According to the EPA, Americans spend roughly 90% of their time indoors where concentrations of harmful pollutants can be 2-5 times higher than outside. Children are uniquely and disproportionately vulnerable to hazards in our indoor environments as they generally eat more food, drink more water, and breathe more air relative to their size than adults do. Consequently, they may be exposed to relatively higher amounts of environmental chemicals. Children's normal activities, such as putting their hands in their mouths or playing on the ground, can cause exposure to chemicals that adults will not have. Exposure to contaminants while their bodies and organs are still growing and developing can have negative, long-term impacts on their health.

The Children's Environmental Health's e-course, "Eco-Healthy Child Care® Protecting Children's Environmental Health", provides child care providers strategies for preventing children's exposures to commonly encountered indoor (and some outdoor) toxicants. These strategies are practical and have little to no cost for providers.



This course will help you:

- Gain a better understanding of environmental hazards that could be in your child care environment
- Choose safe furniture, playground equipment, toys, and pest control products
- Improve indoor air quality and select safe art materials
- Reduce exposure to household chemicals and unsafe plastics

The Center for Energy & Environmental Education at UNI is excited to be able to provide a scholarship, exclusive to Iowa-based child care providers, to cover the fees for this course. This course is approved for 3 clock hours through the HHS I-PoWeR training registry and is available in both English and Spanish.

To find the course in I-PoWeR:

- Search for "Eco-Healthy Child Care® - Protecting Children's Environmental Health"
- Follow the enrollment instructions
- Use the code: **UNICEHN24** at checkout

Contact Audrey Tran Lam with any questions.
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Lawns can also be unexpected sources of harmful exposures for children. Learn more about the impact of pesticides at GoodNeighborIowa.org.



Scan the QR code to find your local CCNC or visit online at

<https://hhs.iowa.gov/programs/programs-and-services/child-care/hcci>