WE ACT for Environmental Justice Presents:

Healthy Home, Healthy Child Campaign
February 2007
Specific Aims of the Healthy Home, Healthy Child Campaign

The specific aims for the community partner entail:

(1) expanding the capacity of low-income communities of color to improve children’s environmental health by educating area residents and organizations about the Center’s work and other supporting research.

(2) training community stakeholders to apply this information in ways that will help modify current policies to improve community-wide environmental conditions.

(3) coordinating their efforts to translate Center findings into policy results.
Too Much Exposure

Pests: Cockroaches, Rats, Mice

Mold, Mildew & Moisture

Garbage

Pesticides

YOU

YOUR HOME
Our Major Goals for the Healthy Home, Healthy Child Campaign

• To **Win** healthier homes for tenants across the city

• To **Illustrate** the connection between poor quality housing & poor health

• To **Reduce** the use of dangerous household products (ex: Tempo & Tres Pasitos)

• To **Empower** residents to respond to the health risks associated with poor quality housing.

• To **Organize & Mobilize** residents to win safe and affordable housing
Summary of Specific Goals - Phase Two:

- Translate and disseminate the research of the Center to the larger community.

- Form a Housing and Health Leadership Council comprised of motivated residents and organizations from communities in Northern Manhattan and the South Bronx, that will identify and pursue a needed change in housing policy and practice.

- Develop a citywide network of housing and health organizations to share information and resources related to housing and children’s health, and to serve as a platform to discuss and address the policy issues identified by the Leadership Council on a citywide scale.
Organized the “Mold is Taking Hold: Creating Healthier Indoor Environments” held on March 28th, 2006

Recruited 15 community based organizations to the Our Housing is Health Network – held 2 network meetings- 4/27 and 5/23.

Made formal presentations Brooklyn Borough President Cabinet meeting, Project Remain/Slumlord Accountability, “Black Equity Alliance Roundtable.”

Delivered bi-lingual “Mold is Taking Hold” and Safer Ways to Eliminate Pests” workshops to 75 residents.

Presentations to key NYC and NYS legislators.

Organized a “Know Your Rights” workshop for residents living in substandard housing. 6/27/06
Mold is Taking Hold - Policy Platform

1. Develop an interagency taskforce to address the mold problem.
2. Increase and advance the training of Housing Preservation and Development inspectors.
4. Develop mechanisms to regulate and license mold remediation in NYC.
5. Increase awareness of the mold epidemic by educating landlords, insurance companies and financial institutions on mold prevention, health effects and mold protocol.
6. Advocate for a resolution out of the NYC Council calling on the Governor and NYSDOH to expedite the creation of the NYS mold taskforce.
Healthy Home, Healthy Child Campaign Asks:

1. Modify the building codes by local amendment or at the code development level to phase out the use of construction materials that promote mold growth

2. Funding support for NYCHPD/NYCDOB to conduct additional research into construction practices, building materials, building designs and occupant practices to identify factors associated with mold growth in indoor environments

3. More required actions on the part of landlords and owners including-inspection, disclosure, public housing, liability.

4. Support Assembly bill AO11108 – requires the disclosure of indoor mold history
Healthy Homes, Healthy Child
Street Team

15 northern Manhattan community residents working to make the correlation between poor garbage management and pests and pesticides use

Street Team Activities
• Meeting with the Department of Sanitation
• Lights, Camera, Action Project
• Poster Project
Garbage, Garbage Everywhere...

Let's Clean It Up

Contact WE ACT for Environmental Justice to Get Involved!

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www.weact.org ~ 212 961-1000
The Healthy Homes Street Team is a dynamic organizing project, comprised of community leaders from across New York City, who are committed to creating healthier communities through research, peer-to-peer communication and direct intervention.
Putting it All Together: Housing, Health & Justice

- Learn what is in our home environment that might affect our health
- Minimize or eliminate exposures that might be linked to health problems – pesticides, mold, lead, etc.
- Know Your Rights- Everyone has the right to live in a healthy environment.
- Take action at a Community level that will impact local, state and federal policy
Training HIGHLIGHTS

• “Safer Ways to Eliminate Rats and Roaches: Creating a Healthier Home” (March 2006)

• Made a presentation to the Harlem Strategic Action Committee-policy workgroup. 06/13/06. “Improving birth outcomes and maternal health in Central Harlem.”
Delivered 10 smaller trainings, reaching over 75 community residents to tenant associations, block groups and parent associations in Northern Manhattan.

For example, Sample Training Curriculum includes:

• How healthy is your home?

• How does mold and mildew affect my child’s asthma?

• What can my family do to reduce our exposure to lead, mold, and pesticides inside our homes?
• Each training strengthens the capacity of residents and community-based organizations, serving as a basic foundation that equips stakeholders with the scientific research, knowledge of legal rights, healthier alternatives, and resources necessary to create and sustain healthier home environments.
Training Outcomes

- The trainings increase resident’s level of engagement, directly involving them in the design and implementation of comprehensive solutions.

- Through our interactive and capacity-building trainings, a broad spectrum of citywide, community-based organizations and residents primarily in Northern Manhattan and the South Bronx have acquired an increased awareness of housing related environmental health issues and deficiencies in current policies.
A community Resident’s story

- Lives in northern Manhattan
- Resident is an African American woman about 40 years old
- Has 2 children about 8 and 12 years old
- She has been living in her apartment for about 20 years
- Former NYC bus driver
- Is currently a Columbia University student majoring in Political Science
- Has been fighting to create safe and healthy living conditions for the last 2 yrs.
Mold - Bathroom Ceiling
How Do we Create Healthier Home Environments?

• Personal & Family Actions
  – Change cleaning methods & materials
  – Reduce use of pesticides
  – Know our Rights

• Neighborhood Actions, Community Organizing
  – Demand cleanup of neighborhood streets
  – Improve garbage pick-up and procedures (pests)
  – Demand landlords improve building maintenance and make necessary repairs
  – Ask landlords to use IPM

• Beyond (City, State, National):
  – Demand accountability of elected officials and agencies
  – Change deficient policies, procedures and or guidelines
  – Increase awareness that Housing Is A Health Issue!
HHHC POLICY IMPACTS:

• 1) The Diesel Emission Reduction Act of 2006. A.11340 (Grannis et al) / S.8185 (Marcellino et al)—This bill, which was signed into law, will reduce the public’s exposure to a diesel—a huge health threat. It will also lower health care costs for all and it will increase economic opportunity for companies engaged in emissions control technology.

• Major Provisions: This legislation requires all New York State-owned heavy duty vehicles, and in addition all vehicles that are working on state contracts, to use the best retrofit technology and ultra low sulfur fuel. These measures address the public health threat posed by the combustion of diesel fuel. By implementing these measures, emissions from on-road and non-road vehicles will drop by approximately 10% overnight.
2) Assemblyman Peter Rivera’s “Children’s Clean Air Act” (A. 9874), the proposal to strengthen the state’s anti-idling regulations for school buses. This legislation requires school administrators to enforce and report violations of the state’s anti-idling laws. It also calls for school districts to create Clean-fuel Program Advisory Councils that will recommend ways and timelines for the replacement of aging school buses with clean-fuel burning technologies.
3) Assemblyman Peter Rivera’s A.10504, requiring public and private schools to maintain at least two nebulizers and their proper connecting devices for asthmatic pupils. This proposed legislation will keep students that currently require nebulizers for emergency treatment of asthma attacks from being sent home or being sent to the emergency room, thus playing an important role in reducing the high absenteeism of children with chronic asthma that must currently leave school during an asthma attack. This proposal will also reduce the high economic burden borne by the families of asthmatic children stemming from child hospitalizations and emergency room visits and from parents’ missed work days.
HHHC Policy Impacts

Int. No. 544-A, purchasing legislation to reduce the City’s purchase of PVC plastic and other products containing extremely hazardous chemicals. Polyvinyl chloride or PVC is dangerous to public health, workers, and the environment throughout its entire life cycle of production use and disposal.
Notable HHHC Policy Impacts

9) A. 2253 (ENGLEBRIGHT et al.) – An act to amend the education law, the environmental conservation law and the public health law, in relation to plans and specifications of school buildings

10) A. 2254 (ENGLEBRIGHT et al.) – An act to amend the education law, in relation to integrated pest management requirements for schools

11) A. 2255 (ENGLEBRIGHT et al.) – An act to amend the education law and the state finance law, in relation to the procurement and use of environmentally sensitive commodities and services

12) A. 2189-A (ENGLEBRIGHT et al.) – An act to amend the education law, in relation to parent notification of environmental health and safety hazards in schools
5) New York State Public Health Protection Act (A. 7256 (DiNapoli)/S. 04544 (Marcellino). This legislation would require that where threats of harm to human health or the environment exist, lack of full scientific certainty about cause and effect will not be viewed as enough reason for state or local government to postpone precautionary measures to protect public health or the environment.

6) New York State Safe and Sustainable Procurement Act (A.7257 (DiNapoli) / S. 4544 (Marcellino). This bill provides guidelines for state agencies to implement safe and sustainable procurement practices for services and commodities purchased by such state agencies; requires consideration of the protection of public health and the environment as part of the normal state procurement practice.

7) NYS Green Cleaning and Maintenance Products for Schools Law and have participated in the advisory meetings regarding the development of “Guidelines and Specifications for Environmentally-Sensitive Cleaning and Maintenance Products for Use in Elementary and Secondary School Facilities.”

8) A.6905a/S.3061a (ENGLEBRIGHT et al.)—An act to establish an advisory council on children's environmental health and safety, creating a New York State Children’s Environmental Health Advisory Council.
• Develop and Distribute the **Healthy Homes Resource Manual**
• Translated existing HHHC materials into French to service the emerging West African community

• Continue publishing the Healthy Homes Newsletter
• Increase communication of Healthy Home, Healthy Child activities via electronic action alerts, the HHHC hotline, and web pages of community boards, community based organizations, and local media outlets.
Developing the HHHC Infrastructure for Public Policy Development

• **The Healthy Homes Leadership Council (HHLC):** this twenty person group is comprised of motivated residents from communities in Northern Manhattan and the South Bronx to identify and pursue a needed change in housing policy and/or practice.

• **Citywide Healthy Homes Network (HHN):** This entity is a collection of housing and health organizations created to share information and resources related to housing and children’s health, and to serve as a platform to address and implement the policy/practice issues identified by the Leadership Council on a citywide scale.
1. Worked with Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum to release a report on Mold in December of 2006.

2. Work with the State legislature to ensure that there is transparency of the NYS Mold Taskforce.


4. Continue to disseminate the findings of the research center to members of the OHOHN and policy makers