

COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM



CASE STUDY

Clean and Healthy New York Implements Pollution Prevention Strategies and Solutions in Child Care Settings Across Eastern New York State

Clean and Healthy New York (CHNY) was founded in 2006 as Clean New York, a partnership of two seasoned environmental health advocates. Tempered by the fight to ensure toxic waste sites were cleaned up, Kathy Curtis and Bobbi Chase Wilding saw a need to "turn off the tap" on toxic chemicals, to prevent the creation of new toxic waste sites, and to stop human contamination with toxic chemicals from their jobs, and from products in their daily lives by changing laws, shifting the market-place, and helping people make change in their homes, businesses, and child care settings. Some of CHNY's major accomplishments include restriction of Tris - a flame retardant chemical and banning of BPA (bisphenol A) in children's reusable drink containers, following four similar county-level bans.

Challenge

There is tremendous need for pollution prevention and toxics reduction information within the child care community. First, children are uniquely vulnerable to toxic chemicals, as their bodies are still developing. Many products made for children or used in the child care setting contain hazardous ingredients that do not appear on product labels, leaving child care providers and parents to do their own research into product safety. Environmental health education is not covered in required health and safety training for child care providers. Additionally, Child Care Resource and Referral agencies (CCRRs) have faced tightening budgets, forcing them, in the absence of programs like CHNY's, to focus solely on the required extensive and costly trainings. The chemicals often used in child care settings end up polluting New York's environment through ongoing releases and at the product's end of life.

Solution

With assistance provided by the New York State Pollution Prevention Institute (NYSP21) at the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT), in 2015 CHNY expanded its Pollution Prevention in the Child Care Setting program into the greater Capital Region and beyond. CHNY provided education and technical resources and materials to child care providers and child care trainers with assistance from CCRRs, which promote quality child care and are central to creating child care solutions in the community they serve.

Results

Over a two year timeframe, CHNY conducted trainings to 195 child care providers across eastern New York State, and offered 4 CCRR's and 74 trainers the Toxics Reductions in Child Care setting professional development training opportunity for little to no cost.

In 2015, with additional support from the Early Care and Learning Council, CHNY created a simple document explaining Best Eco-Healthy Practices for Child Care Design. In 2016, CHNY offered a monthly tips newsletter, prompting

CHALLENGE

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SOLUTION

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- CHNY provided education and technical resources and materials to child care providers and child care trainers with assistance from Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies

RESULTS

- CHNY conducted trainings to 195 child care providers, offered 4 CCRR's and 74 trainers the Toxics Reductions in Child Care setting professional development training opportunity, over a two year period
- CHNY tracked project impacts by measuring statistics from electronic communications, analyzing surveys conducted at trainings, and by phone, and calculating quantities of chemicals reduced based on provider self-reporting. Results indicated 118 actionable items would be completed as a result of the workshops and educational material received

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ongoing actions by providers to further reduce toxics. CHNY updated five fact sheets first produced in 2012, covering the topic of cleaners, the kitchen, furnishings, electronics and plastics and toys. Additionally, CHNY produced a new fact sheet specifically on flame retardant chemicals.

CHNY has uploaded and shared all their educational materials free of charge on the CHNY website and continues to support and promote New York State CRRs in their work to provide high-quality child care. Their guide for new providers, "Getting It Right from the Start" has been shared nationally with CRRs and allied organizations.

CHNY tracked project impacts by measuring statistics from electronic communications (web and email), analyzing surveys conducted at trainings, and by phone, and calculating specific quantities of chemicals reduced based on provider self-reporting. While only 4% of providers trained completed the phone post-survey, results indicated 118 actionable items would be completed as a result of the workshops and educational material received.



CHNY Staff Train Child Care Providers in a "Toxics Reduction in Child Care Settings" Workshop

Resources

Website
Facebook
Twitter
YouTube

<https://www.cleanhealthyny.org>
<https://www.facebook.com/CleanHealthyNY/>
<https://twitter.com/cleanhealthyny>
<https://www.youtube.com/user/cleanhealthyny>

"NYSP2I made it possible for our organization to continue its expansion of pollution prevention training to child care agencies and providers across the state. As a result of our successful projects, over 200 child care providers and trainers learned how to reduce toxics and create a safer environment. We appreciate the funding and support from NYSP2I."

- Bobbi Chase Wilding, Deputy Director
Clean and Healthy New York

NYSP2I PARTNERS

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