



Collaborative on Health and the Environment

November 2015



Upcoming Partnership Events

CHE Partnership call:
[Predicting Toxicity: Silent Spring Institute's High Throughput Screens for Chemicals Related to Breast Cancer](#)

Thurs, Nov 12

CHE Partnership call: [Brain Sex Differences During Gestation: The Role of Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals](#)



Shangri-la Goes Up in Smoke (mostly PM2.5s)

*Elise Miller, EdM
Director*

According to the [Yale Environmental Performance](#)

[Score in 2014](#), Nepal ranked 177 out of 178 countries in terms of poor air quality--stunningly, worse than China (ranked 176th). This would seem an abstract observation if it weren't for the fact that my family and I will be in Kathmandu in about 10 days. My husband and I adopted our son (now 10 years old) from Nepal, and we are returning to his

Wed, Nov 18

CHE Partnership call:

[Environmental Health and Complexity: Exploring the Ecological Model of Health](#)

Fri, Dec 11

Visit the [CHE Partnership call archives](#) and [CHE Working Group call archives](#) to listen to MP3 recordings of past calls.

Special Announcement

We want your ideas! CHE is in the process of evaluating various aspects of our services and initiatives and generating potential new ones. Given we are indeed a collaborative partnership, your innovative suggestions as to what CHE might do (within our mission) to address gaps or needs you see in the environmental health field would be genuinely welcome.

To facilitate this, we're formally opening our

old) from Nepal, and we are returning to his birth country for the first time since he was a baby. We'll see his early caretakers and help with rebuilding a school and a milk shed in a village devastated by last spring's earthquakes.

Not that long ago Nepal was seen to Westerners as a kind of Shangri-la, an earthly paradise. The term "Shangri-la" was coined in James Hilton's 1933 novel *Lost Horizon* as a place where people were almost immortal, aging slowly and living years beyond the normal lifespan. Currently, almost the opposite seems true. Many look far older than their years given the pollution and poverty that permeate their lives. As we've been preparing to go, we have been repeatedly told to bring filter masks and spend as little time in Kathmandu as possible because of the terrible air quality. If it gets really bad, we're of course the fortunate ones: Unlike the vast majority of residents, we can also simply leave.

Sadly many cities around the globe share this plight. And concerns about the health impacts of air pollution (particularly, exposure to fine particulate matter--PM2.5) only continue to mount. (Note: Indoor air pollution is even more of a concern in certain regions of the world, but I'm only focusing on outdoor air pollutants for this piece.) Just in the last 10 days several different research studies on air pollution were published--results, respectively, [showed](#)

[Partner Idea Forum](#).

As a major learning community for the field, CHE wants to do even more to serve our partners around the world. [Please take a few minutes to submit your thoughts](#).

The [Partner Idea Forum](#) will stay open only until December 15th, so please get your ideas in soon.

Resources

From the [CHE blog](#):

- [Breast Cancer Prevention Begins in the Womb](#), by Ted Schettler
- [Camp Lejeune Male Breast Cancer Study](#), by Richard Clapp

[CHE's Toxicant and Disease Database](#)

[CHE's searchable calendar](#) of events related to environmental health.

[CHE's podcast](#) of

[associations with brain tumors in children](#), [childhood leukemia](#), [type 1 diabetes](#), and [Alzheimer's Disease biomarkers in children](#).

That last one made me stop cold. What? Kids are now getting Alzheimer's? Of course it's more complex than that, but this research, conducted in Mexico City and published in the [Journal of Alzheimer's Disease and Parkinsonism](#), suggests that children's long-term exposure to air pollution increases their risk of Alzheimer's. Mexico City, like Kathmandu, is a huge metropolis in a valley surrounded by tall mountains. In this kind of geography, air stagnates under a high pressure thermal inversion that can trap the pollution for days, even weeks.

The more hopeful news is that cities such as [Mexico City](#), [Los Angeles](#), [Beijing](#), and [Delhi](#) have all instigated efforts to address these outdoor air pollution issues, a few with marked success. But we are far from reducing PM2.5 levels, not to mention other air pollutants, such as ozone, to what might be considered acceptable levels (if there is such a thing). Even [London's pollution is on the rise again](#), according to an article in last Sunday's *New York Times*. After thousands died in London in 1952 during the "great killer fog" (pollution mostly from coal and wood burning used for heating), the British passed a Clean Air Act. But with increasing car usage in London now, air pollution is apparently escalating too.

[teleconference call recordings.](#)

[CHE's news feed](#) of news articles, studies, reports, calls for proposals, job openings and other announcements. Relevant items are sent to CHE's listservs several times each week, or visitors can subscribe via RSS.

[A Story of Health eBook](#), usable by parents and individuals who have no formal training in science or medicine, but also with layers of additional information and materials for physicians, nurses, and other clinicians who want to dig deeper. [Free continuing education credits](#) are available from CDC.

All of this is to underscore that we can't wait until the last "Shangri-las" on the planet go up in smoke and Alzheimer's becomes a disease of younger generations. We encourage you to continue to use the best available science that CHE highlights in multiple forums to grow public demand for prevention-oriented, health-protective actions and practices.

Warm wishes,



Working Groups and Initiatives

Visit the webpages of CHE's groups for the latest news, research, and announcements:

Topic-based Working Groups

[Asthma](#)
[Autism](#)

[Cumulative Impacts Database](#)

[Integrative Health Learning and Developmental Disabilities](#)

[Breast Cancer](#)
[Cancer](#)
[Children's Health](#)
[Climate Change](#)

[Diabetes/Obesity](#)
[Electromagnetic Fields \(EMF\)](#)
[Fertility/Reproductive Health](#)
[Healthy Aging](#)

[Mental Health](#)
[Pet](#)
[Neurodegenerative Disease](#)
[Science](#)

State-based and International Groups

[Alaska](#)

[Oregon](#)

[Washington](#)

[Europe/HEAL](#)