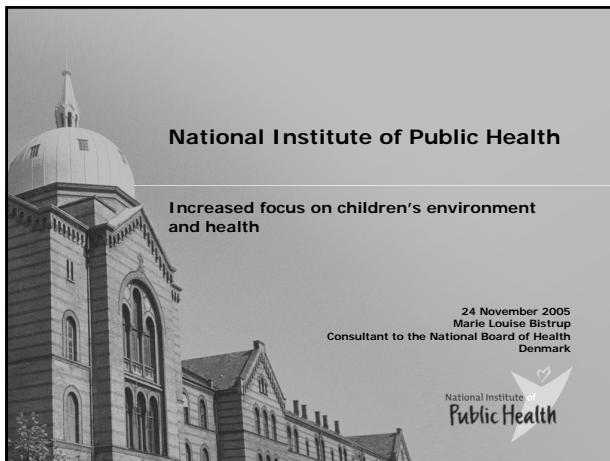


CHILD HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT: RESULTS FROM EU FRAMEWORK 5



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WHO's conference

The future for our children

The WHO Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health, June 2004

The future for our children

Ministers of the Environment and Ministers of Health in the 52 WHO member states in the European Region fully adopted the commitments made in the

Declaration

The ministers fully adopted the comments made in the Children's environment and Health Action Plan for Europe (CEHAPE)

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CEHAPE's Regional Priority Goals

This action plan highlights the main commitments on children's health and environment and focuses on four regional priority goals (RPGs) for Europe

- RPG I: ensure safe water and adequate sanitation
- RPG II: ensure protection from injuries and adequate physical activity
- RPG III: ensure clean outdoor and indoor air
- RPG IV: reduce exposure to chemical agents and physical risks, children's occupational environment; aim at chemical-free environments

The WHO underlined the importance of involving children and young people in decisions concerning them

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Children's environment and health action plan - national activities

The CEHAPE Task Force

Consists of WHO Focal points in each member state

Meet to present status and discuss national progress for each of the four regional priority goals

Role of focal point to organise the development of national activities related to CEHAPE:

- could be national CEHAP
- could be a version of the national environment and health action plan NEHAP
- something else

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Activities in Denmark

In 2003 the Danish Government published NEHAP

"The Environment and Health are Interrelated – Strategy and action plan to protect the health of the public against environmental factors"

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The Government's Interministerial Group on Environment and Health

The Interministerial group that prepared the strategy consists of representatives from the:

- Danish Environmental Protection Agency
- Ministry of the Interior and Health
- National Board of Health
- Danish Working Environment Authority
- Danish Veterinary and Food Administration (DVFA)
- National Agency for Enterprise and Construction
- Ministry of Transport and Energy

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Preparations for the Ministerial Conference

In 2003 and 2004 representatives of
The National Board of Health (NBOH), Ministry of the Interior and Health
The Danish Environmental Protection Agency (DEPA), Ministry for Environment
were involved in technical and political preparations for the Ministerial conference.
Each of the two agencies' delegations included a youth representative
The youth representatives contributed to a Youth declaration

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Children's environment and health action plan - national activities

The Government's Interministerial Group on Environment and Health handed it over to the NBOH to carry out the process of collecting ideas/proposals for activities with a focus on children's environment and health

In June 2005 an invitation was sent to a long list of stakeholders that were assessed to have an interest in children's environment and health
They were invited to submit maximum three ideas

21 public authorities and 21 interest organisations reacted
A seminar with stakeholders reviewed and added to the ideas/proposals


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Children's environment and health action plan - national activities

The collection of proposals was finalised in August 2005
114 proposals were received from
21 public authorities and 19 interest organisations etc
a number of proposals included more than one activity
a number of proposals were repeated, and
35 were assessed to fall outside the scope of the call for proposals for activities
14 proposals were from the Danish Board of Technology
WHO's definition of environmental health includes mental health and some lifestyles; DK definition: biological, chemical and physical factors


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Themes from the collection of ideas

- General ideas for improving children's environment and health
- Health promoting physical environment
- Nature and access to nature
- Focus on indoor air
- Hygiene and cleanliness
- Prevention of environmental tobacco smoke
- Noise and "child occupational health"
- Polluted soil, water and food
- Prevention of air pollution and sun protection
- Children and chemicals
- Child safety


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General ideas for improving children's environment and health CEH

- Prepare a national action plan on CEH
- Questionnaires to children and adults on environmental burden
- Train health professionals in CEH
- Upgrade local preparedness and environmental health skills
- Coordinate public information and advice on CEH
- Prepare CEH policy at schools, including action plans
- Involve children and young people in CEH decision making
- Collect social science research on CEH
- Initiate social science research on CEH

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Health promoting physical environment and nature

- Good community conditions for family PA
- Improve indoor area and play area at day care institutions
- Create physical environments that appeal to diverse PA and play
- Keep the gym + sports facilities open during breaks in schools
- Establish inspiring play grounds at schools
- Improve outdoor play options for children
- Establish nature play grounds
- Improve children's access to nature
- Establish nature schools and kinder gardens
- Research the health and social effects of children in nature
- Research how to motivate children to spend time in nature

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Health promoting physical environment and buildings

Inspire by information and advice the importance of developing schools and day care facilities that are useful as well as aesthetically inspiring

Car free and safe access to schools and day care facilities

Identify children's needs in urban planning

Develop and change sports facilities so they inspire children to use them and be physically active

Use safe and healthy building materials

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Public Health

Focus on indoor air and hygiene

Improve indoor air quality in day care centres and schools

Increase space (square metres) per child/student

Prevent moisture and mould

Increase maintenance and cleaning

Assess benefits of natural versus mechanical ventilation

Design schools and day care for children with asthma & allergy

Adopt a hygiene policy

Train good hygiene habits with children

Establish safe and easy access to drinking water

Improve toilet facilities in schools and day care

Prevent ETS, legal instruments

Campaign on smoke free sports facilities

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Public Health

Noise and "child occupational health"

Prevent noise in children's settings
Day care, schools, discotheques, concerts, portable equipment

Introduce "child occupational health legislation"

Full implementation of intentions in current "child occupational health" regulation

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Polluted soil, water and food

Link data on polluted soil with data on environmental related child diseases

Increase political prioritisation of reduction of compounds in food and water, that can harm the environment and health

Establish systematic monitoring and risk assessment of compounds in food, water and products that can harm environment and health

Study relationship between env. pollution, reduced sperm quality and incidence of malformation of male reproductive organs

Study child exposure to endocrine disrupting compounds

Study relation between environmental exposure and thyroid malfunction

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Prevention of air pollution sun protection

Protect children from negative effects of traffic

Establish shade from sun at play grounds

Campaign on the protection from UV-radiation

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Children and chemicals

Survey children's exposure to chemical agents, +allergens, in products (toys, clothes, cosmetic etc.)

Test new chemicals and products with chemicals prior to use so they are safe for CHE

Prohibit use of phthalates in toys and clothes for children

Teach about chemicals and allergy in schools

Inform about dangers of poisoning

Upgrade parent occupational health to reduce child exposure to harmful residues in parents clothes and body

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Child safety

Inspect regularly the safety of playground equipment

Inform about monitoring and prevention of accidents among children

Establish safe routes and transportation to school and day care

Upgrade and encourage options for children using bicycles

- Reduce car parking near schools
- Improve bicycle options and -lanes

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What happens now?

- The Nordic Council of Ministers' supports networking among the agencies that prepare national CEHAP/ activities

Public health staff from Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden meet and discuss strategies and plans

Sweden and Norway has political mandates to prepare CEHAP

Norway includes social environments and mental health

- Proposals on chemicals : DK-Environmental Protection Agency
- Proposal from Child Safety Action Plan (17 EU-partners); how to integrate?
- Funding?

The ideas are a basis for NBOH's increased focus on CHE

Possibilities: get political mandate to add to NEHAP or do a separate CEHAP?

WHO will convene member states in 2007 to assess progress

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