



Health & Environment Alliance activities on Youth Participation and CEHAPE 2004-2007

“It’s our world our future too” - Youth participation project on environment and health: video and video manual (2004-2005)

The Health & Environment Alliance, formerly EPHA Environment Network, co-produced a participatory **video** with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine ahead of the Budapest Ministerial Conference in 2004. The overall objective of the project was to increase the voices of children and young people in European policy making on environment and health issues, with a special focus on disadvantaged and non-English language speaking communities. The excited but sometimes deeply concerned faces and voices of children in Russia, Belgium, Hungary and the UK, described how the deprived physical surroundings in which they found themselves were affecting their health. Many of them made valuable suggestions on what politicians - and they themselves - should be doing to improve the situation.

Why a video? On the one hand, videos give young people an opportunity to express themselves in a way that allows them to be spontaneous, fun and creative. On the other, showing the short film allows their voices more

impact because it can be shown to large audiences and in a wide range of situations.

A **Booklet on “Using video to involve children in Environment and Health”** was also developed with the aim of helping those working with children and young people to make a video on children’s involvement in environmental issues affecting their health. The approach involves the children themselves as much as possible. The content is based on the experience of all those involved in the making of the EEN/HEAL video. The target audience is health and environment NGOs, teachers and community, women’s and youth groups. The booklet outlines not only practical and technical tips but also suggests how the video can be used to make an impact on politicians and policy makers at different levels.

More information, video clip and electronic booklet are available at:

<http://www.env-health.org/a/1419>

Regional Priority Goal 1 – Water and sanitation

Waste in Water hurts our health – Danube Delta Teens research their environment (2006-2007)

The idea behind the project, co-funded by the Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) and International Friends of Nature, stemmed from the results of two regional environmental contests “Together for a Clean Delta” (2005) and “Let’s present our local community” (2006) organised by the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority (DDBRA), which drew attention to water pollution problems in the Danube Delta.

As a basis for this video, adolescents tested water and soil samples, gathered information on the cause-and-effect chain between environmental damage and health through

consultation with experts, and highlighted the links between the results of the practical field experiments and potential health impacts of the conditions in the Danube Delta. The key project aims were to: raise awareness of the connection between environmental problems and well-being; give young people a voice; make participants aware of the fact that they belong to the European Union; and encourage them to take action to improve local living conditions.

The project has been a resounding success. Not only has it helped to increase awareness of how clean water affects health among

children, it has also helped to inform the local community. The video has been shown to other communities along the Danube River in order to motivate further action to protect the river water.

More information is available at:
<http://www.env-health.org/a/2601>

Regional Priority Goal III – Air pollution

Dirty air and your lungs – Interactive fact sheet for 5-11 year-old children (2007)

The fact sheet was developed in cooperation with the European Lung Foundation, the public voice of the European Respiratory Society, with the aim of teaching children about outdoor air pollution, how it can affect our lungs and how it can be prevented. It includes various games and interactive tools as well as some recommendations on what can be done in practice to reduce pollution and make the

air clean (e.g. reduce private care use by walking, cycling or taking public transport). The fact sheet has been translated into English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Russian, Polish and Greek.

The various language versions of the fact sheet are available electronically at:
<http://www.env-health.org/r/90>

Regional Priority Goal IV – Chemicals

Young people's investigations into chemicals and health: toolkit and workshop (2005)

On 10 November 2005, the Health & Environment Alliance organised a workshop on "**Young people's investigations into chemicals and health**". European youth delegates met in the Committee of the Regions in the framework of a wide international conference on "Future Europeans" to discuss their findings on chemicals and associated health effects as well as their concerns about the inadequacy of the current chemical safety policy. Also, the workshop aimed to facilitate discussion between young people and European decision-makers (MEPs, WHO representatives, government officials) and provide concrete recommendations on forthcoming policy developments (adoption of REACH chemicals regulation and implementation of the Budapest CEHAPE goal on reducing exposure to chemicals).

(Armenia, France, Russia and the UK) with the support of a teacher and/or a project coordinator, asking questions such as: What chemicals are found in their daily surroundings? How easy is it to find out what chemicals products contain? What are chemicals used for? Are they necessary? Do they have health effects? The Health & Environment Alliance had provided both the students and the teacher/coordinator with a toolkit containing useful information and Internet links to start their research. The youth recommendations were sent to Members of the European Parliament, 25 EU Commissioners, and other Commission officials as well as the 25 EU national diplomatic offices in Brussels. Youth recommendations were also presented at the European Environment and Health Committee on 12-13 December 2005 in Helsinki, Finland.

The workshop built on a "**Chemicals in Home and School Survey**" carried out by students of four schools in different European countries

More information, investigation toolkit and youth recommendations available at:
<http://www.env-health.org/a/1893>