The mission of the jointly funded EPA/NIEHS Children’s Centers is to protect children from environmental threats and promote their health and well-being in the communities where they live, learn, and play. Since 1998, more than 20 Children’s Centers and 40 awards have been made.

**Intended End Users**

- **Research Community**
  - e.g., Dartmouth College Children’s Center
- **Decision Makers**
  - Federal, State and local (e.g., FDA arsenic and rice studies)
- **General Public**

**Lessons Learned**

Los Angeles Times

Proximity to freeways increases autism risk, study finds

> More research is needed, but the report suggests pollution could be a factor.

Source: Los Angeles Times, 9/6/2012

Children’s exposure to air pollution from roads near their homes may increase risk of autism, according to a recent study.

NY Times Magazine, 9/6/2012

- Living near a freeway while pregnant and around the time of birth is associated with increased risk of autism in children. Volk et al., 2011
- Prenatal exposure to PAHs is associated with behavioral issues e.g., anxiety, depression, and attention problems. Perera et al., 2012
- Specific maternal antibodies that target fetal brain proteins or antigens linked to maternal autoantibody-related (MAR) autism. Braunschweig et al, 2013

**Highlights - Asthma, allergy and children’s health**

- Traffic-related air pollution at schools and home may contribute to development of asthma in children. Residence within 75 meters (250 feet) of a major roadway associated with increased risk of asthma. McConnell et al., 2006, 2010
- Children exposed to higher levels of phthalates found in personal care and plastic products have elevated risk of asthma-related airway inflammation. Just et al., 2012

**Adverse health effects linked to flame retardant (PBDE) exposure**

- Children with higher PBDE cord blood levels scored lower on mental and physical development tests at 12-48 and 72 months Herbstman et al., 2010
- Poorer attention, motor skills, and IQ scores in children Eskenazi et al., 2012

**Application & Translation**

With more than 1,000 peer-reviewed publications, Children’s Centers research cited as evidence in policy decisions to protect human health by limiting exposure to air pollution, pesticides and endocrine-disrupting chemicals.

**Columbia Children’s Center** research findings and testimony on integrated pest management influenced the passing of:

- NYC Pesticide Reduction Law (Intro 329A), 2007
- Neighborhood Notification Law (Intro 328A), 2007

**EPA proposal for strengthened worker protection standard** for pesticides to protect agricultural workers and vulnerable groups including farmworker families cites Children’s Centers research from UW and UC Berkeley/Eskenazi.