



growing up green & healthy in Queens

outreach newsletter of the
National Children's Study
Queens Vanguard Center

winter 2011

About the National Children's Study

The National Children's Study is a long-term research project that will look at how children's environment—the air they breathe, the water they drink, and the communities they live in—affects their health and well-being into adulthood. More than 100,000 children from counties across the United States will take part in the Study—from before birth until age 21. The National Children's Study has been in Queens since January 2009.

In this issue:

- *In the community*—Profiles of Just Food and Study Investigator Dr. Barbara Brenner
- *Green & healthy at home*—What are pesticides? Plus, tips for a healthier diet in the new year
- Community events & outreach photos

Upcoming events

Stay warm and happy this winter—get out to some fun events in Queens!

- **Saturdays and Sundays**—Arts for Families Program at the Noguchi Museum, Long Island City, 10:30 am to 12:30 pm
- **Saturday, February 12**—Flushing's 15th annual Lunar New Year Parade. The parade begins on Union Street and 39th Avenue, and ends at Main Street and 39th Avenue, Flushing, 11 am to 1 pm
- **Saturday, February 19**—The Museum Explorers Club presents "In the Studio: A Program for Families Affected by Autism" at the Queens Museum of Art, Corona, 11 am to noon
- **Saturday, March 12**—HSBC Children's Garden Family Day at Queens Botanical Garden, Flushing, 2 to 5 pm
- **Sunday, March 20**—MillionTreesNYC Street Tree Care Workshop at Queens Botanical Garden, Flushing, 1 to 3 pm
- **Saturday, April 2**—Community Tree Planting at Rockaway Community Park and Beach, Far Rockaway, 10 am to 2 pm

For info about more upcoming events this winter, visit www.queenschildren.org



See inside
for our special
pull-out section
for kids!



HEALTH GROWTH ENVIRONMENT

Here's how YOU can help ensure that future generations of kids will grow up green & healthy in Queens

- Spread the word about the National Children's Study by giving this newsletter to 10 of your friends
- View and share our video—go to www.youtube.com/queenschildren
- Post "I'm a fan of the National Children's Study" on your Facebook and Twitter pages
- Invite us to your next community event
- Find out more about what you can do, at www.queenschildren.org

in the community

The National Children's Study can attend your event!
Please contact us at 1-877-782-6965, or email info@queenschildren.org

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www.queenschildren.org

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Members of the Outreach team
at the Futuristic Design
Workshop at Socrates Park, Long
Island City, in September.

See more photos on
the back page!

Community profile: Just Food

Since 1995, Just Food has been connecting New Yorkers to fresh, seasonal and locally grown foods, and educating communities on healthy eating. Working not only on increasing access and developing education programs, Just Food has also been instrumental in food advocacy at the state and national levels. In June of 2010, the National Children's Study (NCS) featured a nutritional cooking demonstration by Just Food at our first community event, Living Green and Healthy in Queens. Recently, the NCS team was able to catch up with Angela Davis, the Community Food Education (CFE) Program Coordinator at Just Food to talk a little bit about their work in the community.

Q: What are some of the Community Food Education programs that Just Food offers, and where do you typically do these workshops?

A: One of our programs is called the Community Chefs Program where we train people in the community who already have some cooking background on how to cook seasonally and how to put together nutritious meals. Once they have completed the workshop, they can share this knowledge with their neighbors and friends. We also work in collaboration with City Farms Markets and food pantries around the city to do nutritional cooking demonstrations, and bridge the gap between communities and their local farmers.

Q: How do you feel your work ties in with the mission of the National Children's Study?

A: If you look at the course of history, it is only recently that we've seen a problem with obesity, diabetes heart disease and other chronic conditions. A lot of these come from the fact that we are disconnected from our food. With all of the preservatives in food, our bodies just don't know how to process them. We are trying to get people away from factory foods and connect them back to "real" food that is grown by local farmers in a sustainable way. Also, many people don't know how to cook for themselves anymore so we want to make sure that they know how to prepare nutritious meals on their own. I think this is going to be a big part of getting both adults and children healthy again.

Q: What is your favorite healthy food?

A: My favorite food is kale and any dark, leafy green. I usually just sauté it with a little bit of olive oil, garlic and onions and it's delicious!

For more information about Just Food, please visit the website at www.justfood.org. If you'd like to learn more about their CFE programs or cooking demonstrations, please contact Angela Davis at angela@justfood.org.



Investigator corner: Dr. Barbara Brenner

Dr. Barbara Brenner is an Associate Professor in the Department of Preventive Medicine at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine. In her previous post as the Director of Community Relations, she built relationships with leaders in Harlem and Queens to ensure that community concerns are represented in research.

Dr. Brenner plays a key role in many projects, in addition to the National Children's Study, that examine the relationship between the environment and health. The Growing Up Healthy (GUH) study looks at the relationship between obesity and the built environment, including exposure to chemicals, diet, and the availability and use of physical activity opportunities. GUH also studied the relationship of exposure to pesticides to children's development.

In all of her work, Dr. Brenner has fostered an environment of collaboration between researchers and community members, making her a well-respected figure not only in the field of public health but also in neighborhoods around the city.

green & healthy at home

TIPS for a healthier diet in the New Year

These simple changes will keep you healthy and increase your energy!

Eat BREAKFAST

- Breakfast helps increase your focus and energy for the entire day.
- Choose whole grains, low-fat protein, low-fat dairy and fruits, and vegetables for breakfast.
- Take breakfast with you. Munch on fruits, veggies, crackers, nuts, or leftovers on your way to work or school.

PLAN ahead

- Plan ahead and prepare breakfast the night before.
- Make a list of all your meals to cook for the week before going to the grocery store; this will help you buy only what you need.

Eat HEALTHIER fast food

- Choose grilled items when eating at fast food restaurants; they are lower in fat and calories.
- Order smaller portions or share a meal with a friend.
- Choose a small side salad instead of fries to go with your meal.

Avoid excess FAT

- Choose canola, soybean, corn, or olive oil when cooking or frying foods.
- Remove skin from poultry and trim visible fat from meats.

Choose your FRUITS and VEGGIES wisely

- Vary your vegetables. Make sure to add dark leafy green vegetables to your diet which are high in fiber and nutrients.
- Choose seasonal, locally-grown fruits and vegetables to make sure you are buying the freshest produce.
- Buy organic fruits and vegetables. For the complete list of fruits and vegetables to buy organic or that contain the least amount of pesticides see article at right, "What are Pesticides?"

What are pesticides?

Pesticides are chemicals used to keep away pests, like bugs and rodents.

How am I exposed to pesticides?

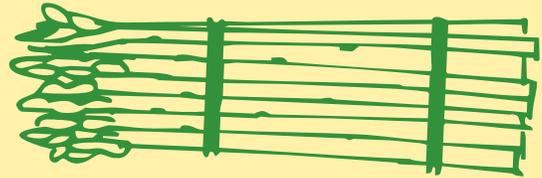
Farmers use pesticides to keep pests from destroying fruit and vegetable crops. Traces of these pesticides stay on fruits and vegetables, even if you wash them.

In the home, pesticides are often used to kill roaches, mice, and ants. If you use things like roach and ant sprays, they can leave harmful fumes in the air that you breathe.

How can I reduce my exposure to pesticides?

Buy fruits and vegetables that are organic or lower in pesticides (see below). Try to avoid using pesticides in your home; instead, keep pests away by:

- Storing food in tightly-closed containers
- Cleaning all surfaces after cooking
- Sealing holes and cracks in walls and floors
- Using boric acid and bait stations



These are **higher in pesticides**—buy organic:

apples
bell peppers
blueberries
celery
cherries
imported grapes
kale & collards
nectarines
peaches
potatoes
spinach
strawberries

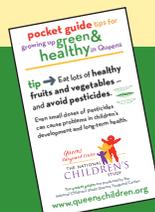


These have the **fewest pesticides**:

asparagus
avocado
cabbage
cantaloupe
eggplant
grapefruit
honeydew melon
kiwi
mangos
onions
pineapple
sweet corn
sweet peas
sweet potato
watermelon



Source: Environmental Working Group



Get our **FREE pocket guide tips for growing up green & healthy in Queens!** Email us at info@queenschildren.org, or call 877.782.6965

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Community events & outreach



Scenes from the community – *Top, from left:* Queens Botanical Garden event coordinators posing at the National Children's Study photo booth at the Pumpkin Patch event in October; Study team members and MillionTreesNYC coordinators at the Queens Botanical Garden NYC Tree Workshop in September; tabling at the National Children's Study "Safer Alternatives to Plastics" workshop hosted in September by the Queens Central Library.

Below: National Study Queens Community Advisory Board and Study team receiving the "Declaration of National Children's Study Week in Queens" from the Honorable Helen Marshall, Queens Borough President, in September.

