

Local Activities

Environmental health protection must start in the community. Therefore, the local level requires special action towards creating a healthy environment.

Model projects

Five model projects in different German cities are testing how a healthy residential environment for children and adolescents can be realised.

Being a child in Marzahn-Hellersdorf (Berlin)

The project is exploring how children and adolescents can be involved on a long-term basis in decision-making in schools, day-care centers and local administration.

Moving Kids (Hamburg)

Focusing on day-care centers, the project supports the development of areas for play and physical activity.

Learning how to live healthily (Braunschweig)

The project aims to create an environmental health office for the district.

District network "Social economy for children, environment and health" (Berlin)

This project initiates and links environmentally and socially oriented projects to help create a healthy living environment for children, adolescents and families.

Munich environment and health action (Munich)

The project aims to raise residents' awareness of environmental health issues and to involve people in activities to shape their quarter.

Local Agenda 21 manual

This manual seeks to give local decision-makers recommendations for concrete actions to promote public health through environmental protection measures. One emphasis will be on the participation of non-governmental organisations, citizens action groups, and the population in defining and implementing local environmental health objectives.

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Dealing with Risks

A precautionary environmental policy is committed to identifying, assessing and communicating risks early on.

Risk Commission

This Commission has reviewed risk assessment and management methods and standard setting procedures. It has developed proposals for remodelling existing approaches to the assessment of environmental health risks.

Risk perception

The feasibility study on early identification of environmental health risks gives an overview of early-detection methods and presents case studies. Based on this work, proposals for a system for the early perception of risks were developed.

Risk communication

This research project shows how authorities can improve risk communication. Principles and guidelines for different communication scenarios were developed, as was a training programme.

Risk assessment

Research projects are examining procedures and methods for the assessment of environmental health risks: comparison of methods for deriving health-based effect thresholds from data from animal experiments; evaluation of scaling doses from animal experiments to humans (interspecies extrapolation); estimation of pollutant concentrations using quantitative risk assessment methods.

For further information on the Action Programme Environment and Health, visit the APUG website at www.apug.de or contact the APUG-Secretariat directly.



**Action Programme
Environment and Health
Germany**

Children and Adolescents

Housing and Indoor Air

Environmental Medicine

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Children and Adolescents

Children and adolescents may react sensitively to many environmental influences. Their growing organisms therefore require adequate protection.

www.kinderwelt-org

This Internet website is aimed at children and adolescents. In addition to information about e.g. noise, radiation, allergies, the skin, indoor air, fitness and nutrition, it also offers games and a newsletter.

Environmental Survey for Children and Adolescents

For the first time, representative data of human body concentrations of pollutants as well as pollution levels in the domestic environment and domestic drinking water are being collected for children. The aim of the German Environmental Survey for Children is to analyse the impact of the environment on the health of children and adolescents in Germany.

Vulnerability to pollutants

Several projects are studying environmental health risks and children's vulnerability to pollutants.

Noise-induced health risks

Loud music, noisy toys or fireworks may impair the hearing of children and adolescents. Current projects will provide more information about hazards caused by noise from leisure activities.

Education in sustainable mobility in schools

This activity aims to integrate environmental and exercise aspects into mobility education. Children are encouraged to walk, bicycle or use public transport.

www.kinder-leicht.net

Overweight is the most common food-related health problem among children and adolescents in Germany. This campaign is aimed at preventing overweight.

Radiation as a health risk

Measures are being taken to protect children and adolescents from UV radiation, high-frequency electromagnetic radiation (mobile communications) and natural radioactivity (radon).

In June 1999, Germany's Federal Environment Ministry and Federal Health Ministry presented their joint **Action Programme Environment and Health** (German acronym: APUG) to the public. The Federal Consumer Protection Ministry joined the Programme in autumn of 2002.

Housing and Indoor Air

People in Central Europe spend on average 80 to 90% of the day indoors. Therefore, indoor air quality is a particularly important health factor.

Indoor air quality in rehabilitated buildings

Pollutants can accumulate in indoor air in buildings that have been insulated for energy-saving reasons. To counteract such build-up, this project is developing recommendations for good indoor air quality in buildings after energy-saving improvements.

Detecting and fighting moulds

This guide offers information on protection against moulds in buildings as well as tips on how to proceed with cleanup.

Building products as a health risk

Building products can release health-impairing gaseous components. An assessment scheme has been developed to take health aspects into account in the assessment of building products.

"Blue Angel" for healthy living

The Blue Angel eco-label takes into account environmental and health aspects of products such as floorings, wood structural panels, wall paints and wallpaper.

Indoor exposure to radiation

Radon is a natural radioactive gas that occurs in soil in some regions and enters buildings via cracks and joints. Activities are aimed at establishing legislation as well as design levels for new buildings in order to reduce exposure to radon.

Guide to clean indoor air in schools

The guide provides information on how students can be protected from health risks due to indoor air pollution in classrooms.

European Project on Housing and Health

The Bonn office of the World Health Organization (WHO)'s European Centre for Environment and Health is studying the impact of housing conditions on health. Germany is participating in the project.

The Action Programme Environment and Health aims to strengthen the links between environmental and health protection in order to offer better protection of human health against adverse environmental impacts. It emphasises the protection of children and adolescents.

Environmental Medicine

Environmental medicine seeks to uncover the causes of health complaints and help those who suffer from them.

Methods Commission

The Methods and Quality Assurance Commission was established in 1999 to validate methods and ensure quality in environmental medicine.

ZEBUM

The Central Registration and Assessment Body for Methods in Environmental Medicine (German acronym: ZEBUM) serves to harmonise methodological standards and procedures, with the aim of improving the quality of the methods applied in practical environmental medicine.

Environmental Medicine Information Service (German acronym: UMID)

The UMID offers information on research projects, results and activities in the field of environment, health, consumer protection.

Environment-related diseases

A joint research project of the Robert Koch-Institute and the Charité University Hospital, Berlin, is studying the factors involved in environment related health disorders.

Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS)

Patients who suspect they may have MCS ascribe their complaints to environmental factors. Various studies are looking into the causes of illness and the clinical symptoms.

Patient Register

A register of environmental medicine in-patients and out-patients has been set up at the Nordfriesland Specialised Hospital in order to identify progress in treatment and apply it to other patients.

Complex therapeutic approaches

A comparative study of three groups of patients has tested the efficacy of a complex therapeutic approach involving heat therapy, body exercises, lymphatic drainage etc. for treatment of MCS.

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