

Neurotoxic Chemicals Found in Biomonitoring Study on Developmental Disabilities Community

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61 toxic chemicals found in human participants pose the question: What is the relationship between toxic chemicals and rising rates of autism, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, and other learning and developmental disabilities?

The Learning and Developmental Disabilities Initiative (LDDI), a coalition of health and developmental disabilities organizations including the Autism Society, today released the first-ever biomonitoring report identifying toxic chemical pollution in people from the learning and developmental disability community. *Mind, Disrupted: How Toxic Chemicals May Affect How We Think and Who We Are* examines 61 toxic chemicals present in study participants in the context of rising rates of autism, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, and other learning and developmental disabilities.

"Given the increasing rates of learning and developmental disabilities - particularly autism - we need to recognize that costs associated with special education, health care and long term support services will also continue to grow," explained Jeff Sell, Autism Society Vice President of Public Policy and father of teen sons with autism.

A total of 61 chemicals (out of 89 tested) were found in the 12 participants, of which Mr. Sell was one. Each participant was found to harbor at least 26 and as many as 38 of the tested chemicals in their bodies. There were 16 chemicals detected in every participant.

The report was released in conjunction with today's [Senate Hearing](#) to be held at 10 a.m. before the Environment and Public Works Subcommittee on Superfund, Toxics and Environmental Health to examine current science on public exposures to toxic chemicals.

The Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) is the primary federal law governing chemical safety, and has never been significantly amended since its adoption in 1976. Of the 80,000 chemicals available for use in the U.S., the Environmental Protection Agency has been able to require safety testing of only 200. Since its passage, evidence has been accumulating that chemicals such as lead, mercury, bisphenol A (BPA) and PBDEs may harm the developing brain at levels much lower than those previously considered safe. New legislation to bring the toxics law into the 21st century will be introduced by Sen. Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ) and Rep. Bobby Rush (D-IL) in early 2010.

The report is now available at www.minddisrupted.org, where the Senate hearing will also be streamed live. For more information about the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee Hearing, [visit their Web site](#).