

**Where health meets LIHEAP-
Making the connection**

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NEUAC conference**

by

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Overview

- Weather related health risks
- Who's most at risk?
 - Elderly
 - Children under 5
- Energy insecurity & Poverty
- Connection the dots – LIHEAP
- Community Interventions

Heat

- A deadly heat wave moved across the United States during the third week of July 2006. Heat indices reaching above 115 F in some locations.
 - 22 deaths in 10 states were blamed on the excessive heat during that week.
 - In Missouri 500,000 homes without power during heat wave-some some for more than a week.

Ice Storms

- March 6, 2008 an Ice storm pours down on counties in Texas, leaving many families without power.
- A severe ice storm on January 26 2007 hit parts of the Midwest leaving 80,000 families without power in Missouri alone.

**Health risks caused by
increased extreme
weather events will adversely
impact those most vulnerable
even more in the future.**

Who's at highest risk

- At highest risk of potentially life-threatening illness and death from the effects of climate change or extreme weather are the isolated elderly.
- Children under five are also at high risk during extreme weather events.

Socioeconomic factors of those at highest risk

- In poverty
- Energy insecure/ high burden
- Inadequate housing
- Lack adequate information
- Live in urban areas
- Fear
- Social Isolation

Social Isolation

- A social network is an important factor in all of our lives.
- Many elderly find themselves without the support systems
 - outliving their close friends and family,
 - their children live away
 - unable to develop a new support networks.

FEAR

➤ Crime -

- Fear opening windows in home .
- Fear leaving home because of crime

➤ Fear of high utility bills

- prevents air conditioner use.
- Can lead to hunger
- Not seeking medical care or taking medication

- **Elderly over 85 increased by 274% between 1960 – 1994 and is expected to be the fastest growing age group in our population over the next 10 years.**

Poverty-Energy Insecurity

- Energy Insecurity: *“Lack of or inconsistent access to sufficient affordable energy of the type and quality necessary for a healthy, safe life where the household is located.”*
- 46% reported that they either “often” or “sometimes” went without food in order to pay their home energy bill. 45% reported that they either “often” or “sometimes” did not take their prescribed medicine.

–Roger Colton “Paid but unaffordable in Missouri” 2004

Children under 5

- **Babies and toddlers who live in energy insecure households are more likely to:**
 - be in poor health
 - have a history of hospitalizations
 - be at risk for developmental problems,
 - be food insecure

Children under 5

➤ **Food insecurity is associated with:**

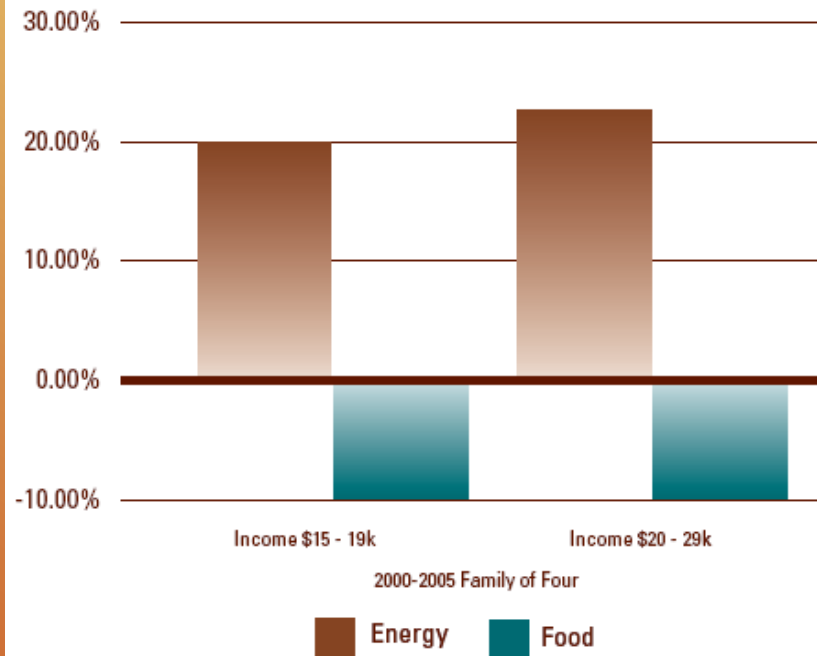
- more hospitalizations**
- poor health**
- iron deficiency anemia**
- problems with cognitive development**
- behavioral and emotional problems**

- Fuel our Future C-SNAP report/Citizens Energy

**see appendix*

Increasing Energy Costs Threaten Children's Health

**As Energy Expenditures Increase,
Food Expenditures Decrease**



Source: US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

-Fuel our Future C-SNAP report/Citizens Energy

Connecting the dots - LIHEAP

- Performance Measures:
 - Provide Access to most vulnerable
 - Protect the health & Safety
 - Outreach
 - Education
 - Efficiency
 - Leveraging with other services

LIHEAP – The Good News

- Families receiving LIHEAP:
 - Children less likely to have low weight
 - Need less hospitalization
 - More likely to be receiving other services such as WIC.

Conclusions

What should we all be doing?

- **Know the facts/ do the research**
- **Seek unlikely alliances**
- **Enhance outreach techniques**
- **Join a coalitions to address poverty**
- **Be involved in your community emergency response plan**

Food for thought

“Until both nutrition assistance and energy assistance are adequately supported, our society can expect accelerating disparities in the health and future prospects between children from low-income families and their higher-income peers. ”

Fuel our Future C-SNAP report/Citizens Energy

Food for thought

“Comprehensive response plans are necessary to reduce heat-related morbidity and mortality. Plans should provide for coordinated action across government authorities, involve private sector participants, and be responsive to variable risk factors.”

American Journal of Public Health 2004

Shameless Plug

- According to the CDC there are approximately 18 communities with community coordinated response plans. (2006)
- **If you would like to learn more about how to organize your community please attend:**
- ***Programs for Warm-Weather States***
At 3:45 PM today
This is **not** just for warm weather states!

Appendix

Excerpts from:

**A Logic Model for Considering Ways Energy
Insecurity Affects Child Health**

**A Child Health Impact Assessment of
Energy Costs and the Low Income Home Energy
Assistance Program**

**Prepared by the Child Health Impact Working Group
Boston, Massachusetts
November 2006**

Pathways of the Impacts of Unaffordable Energy on Low-Income Households

Mechanism →

Short-Term Impacts →

Medium &
Long-Term
Impacts

High energy costs force budget trade-offs that jeopardize child health.

Families spend less on food, medications, and housing in order to pay high energy costs.

- "Heat or eat" - food insecurity & other nutritional risk due to trade-offs between energy and food expenditures
- Seasonal food insecurity

- Poor growth
- Malnutrition - infection cycle leading to increased illness
- Cognitive, developmental deficits of malnutrition affecting school performance

Pathways of the Impacts of Unaffordable Energy on Low-Income Households (Contd.)

Mechanism	Short-Term Impacts	Medium & Long-Term Impacts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High energy costs combined with unaffordable housing force families to endure unhealthy housing conditions. - High energy costs contribute to budget constraints limiting families' ability to afford appropriate housing, resulting in exposure to unhealthy housing conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Rodent & cockroach infestation > Water leaks and mold > Peeling paint and lead paint 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased incidence & severity of asthma - Increased incidence of lead poisoning - Preventable injuries from fires, burns, falls - Increased rates of infectious diseases, such as diarrhea and respiratory conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased health care utilization, including emergency department visits and hospitalizations - Missed school due to illness - Cognitive and developmental deficits due to lead poisoning

Pathways of the Impacts of Unaffordable Energy on Low-Income Households (Contd.)

Mechanism	Short-Term Impacts	Medium & Long-Term Impacts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High energy costs result in unpaid bills, arrearages and utility disconnection. - Families make partial rent or mortgage payments or miss an entire payment because of unaffordable energy bills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cold exposure - Increased use of unhealthy heating sources - Possible loss of utilities required for basic health and safety: light, refrigeration, cooking, water heating - Increased risk of housing instability due to utility disconnection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adverse physical health impacts: e.g., lack of primary care, un/undertreated medical conditions, growth delay - Adverse mental health impacts: e.g., anxiety, depression, behavioral disorders - Adverse behavioral, developmental and educational impacts: e.g., developmental delay, grade repetition