



ChildProtect ★
**Protecting Children from
Hormone Disrupting Chemicals**



After Life Communication Plan

**Protecting Children's Health from Endocrine Disrupting
Chemicals**

LIFE 2012 ENV/NL0008833



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ChildProtect-Life The Project

The ChildProtect-Life Project aims to speed up implementation of EU regulations

Endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs) are found in our daily lives. Up to now around 800 to 1000 chemicals are identified with endocrine disrupting properties, although only very few were even tested. Phthalates, BPA, flame retardants and other EDCs are used e.g. in flooring, toys, cosmetics, curtains, mattresses, plastics, papers, food packaging and furniture. Pesticides and biocides can contain EDCs and exposure can occur not only via food but also from spray in homes, gardens, public parks and playgrounds.

The most important aim of the 'ChildProtect-life-Life' project is to speed-up implementation of EU regulations with regard to the substitution of EDCs, in line with the EU 2020 goal of minimizing adverse effects of chemicals on public health. The project sought to develop innovative and multi-sectorial modular actions that speed-up policy measures and voluntary actions that protect children and pregnant women, in particular, from the harmful effects of EDCs. Such modules could then be replicated in other EU Member States

Picture

Main aims of the project, including the specific target groups, were:

- Providing information to **policy makers** in order that they can proactively strengthen the implementation of EU chemicals and plant protection regulation, leading to a quicker replacement of products containing EDCs;
- Increasing voluntary substitution by the **business sector** of products containing EDCs, thus speeding up implementation of EU regulations;
- Increasing access to **consumer information** on EDCs in products in order to affect a change in consumption patterns and further acceptance for policy measures on EDC substitution;
- Creating a 'Health Sector Alliance' that involves **health experts and health insurance companies** with an interest in preventing health effects from EDC exposure.



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Project Development:

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The project ran for 21,5 months. Originally we identified four main groups: policy makers, businesses and professional sectors, consumers and the health sector as strategic allies. During our project it became evident that with the lack of co-funding the primary targets of our work were the groups that were the easiest to target with the financial and technical tools available; consumers/parents and businesses and professional sectors.

The dissemination objectives that we have been working on were:

- Combining complementary expertise of partners and targeting multiple target groups
- Developing a science policy round table module
- Developing a training module for civil society organisations on EDC's
- Publishing EDC information packages for professional sectors
- Building on Business-Civil Society partnerships

We have been able to put this new health threat under the attention of the public at large, media and policy makers. Media are still contacting us today to ask more background information about both the European and the Belgian and Dutch developments on EDC's. People and in particular pregnant women contact us for information about EDC's. The Belgian Senate is preparing a proposal for legislation to ban BPA in food contact materials and Dutch parliamentarians have been asking questions in Parliament about EDCs on various occasions. We are pleased with the brochures produced within the LIFE+ project, we wish that our governments would have taken up this duty and made sure that every pregnant women is informed about EDC's and about what she can do to decrease exposure.



In the longer term, the project will continue to lead to increasing awareness and knowledge to to a reduction of exposure to EDC in particular of (pregnant) women and children, thereby leading to a reduction



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of children with developmental defects which can be linked to endocrine disrupting chemicals. Although our budget was

limited, we have seen a major influence of our work amongst policy makers and consumers, where our work has generated most impact.





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DISSEMINATION TOOLS

A USER FRIENDLY PRACTICAL WEBSITE

- A public portal for all four target groups
www.childprotectfromchemicals.eu
- A page project news has been set up for the communication on news regarding the project by the project partners
- A page scientific news has been set up to highlight latest scientific developments in laymen's language concerning EDCs
- The main dissemination tools are available on the website: newsletters, press releases, publications...

DISSEMINATION EVENTS

- Sustainable Plaza, Nine Months Fair 2014, Amsterdam
- Sustainable Plaza, Nine Months Fair 2015, stand and demonstration Sustainable Nursery, Amsterdam
- Workshop for Sustainable Entrepreneurs in the children's sector on REACH and EDCs
- Baby Fairs in Belgium
- Transition Festival, Vooruit, Ghent, 2014

- 6 newsletters have been published on the ChildProtect-Life website
- One canvas banner and one stand up banner have been designed
- More than 80,000 leaflets, brochures and guides in Dutch and English have been distributed in the Netherlands and Belgium, with French versions available for dissemination
- 5 press releases have been sent in Dutch and English



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The Communication Strategy

The ChildProtect-Life activities will continue after the end of the project through dissemination activities. Different channels will be used such the ChildProtect-Life website, communication campaigns and events related to raising awareness on SVHC (Substances of Very High Concern) and EDCs.

DISSEMINATION ACTIVITY

Given that the ChildProtect-Life website will be active for the next five years, the awareness tools developed during the project will continue to exist, thus making the four stakeholder groups aware of latest scientific news or available brochures and films regarding Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals. For journalists the website will continue to function as an archive on EDCs and health.

We have disseminated our work and results continuously on several occasions, meetings. We consider we have reached our four target groups well during the project, even though we did not have time to accomplish all tasks. The work we published was picked up by journalists and we had regular calls from journalists and offers for writing free material or giving input for cover articles for popular magazines. We will use the research among pregnant women for the development of future communication tools, and monitoring twitter and seeing the rise of the hashtag #hormoonverstoorders shows that public interest and interest and worries of consumers has grown considerably.

To ensure the sustainability of the project and to promote the best practices from ChildProtect-Life, the results of the project will continue to be disseminated at both national and at EU level.

In order to ensure the impact of the project in future terms of dissemination, the project will be highlighted and presented during future conferences and events on EDCs and REACH.

Disseminating the results of the project in The Netherlands and Belgium through platforms for parents, retailers and branche-organisation and decision makers will spread awareness of national importance of strict EU criteria on EDC regulations.

DISSEMINATION TOWARDS STAKEHOLDERS:

- Diffusion of communication tools such as brochures and guides will continue
- Dissemination of information on EDCs and SVHC will continue towards SMEs



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Developments in the field of pregnancy

ChildProtect did have many tools and channels to communicate its message. On the one side ChildProtect-Life advocates and tries to influence policy makers regarding EDC regulations. On the other side ChildProtect set itself an aim to engage in activities that would create awareness among consumers and parents in the Netherlands to possess enough knowledge and tools to realise this. But for reaching out to consumers you need much more financial and human resources.

In the Netherlands for example, there won't be an EDC free policy on cosmetics and personal care products unless the evidence is confirmed by the RIVM. Due to the absence of confirming this scientific evidence the Dutch Ministry of Health won't inform the public completely. As a result the KNOV, the organisation for midwives and obstetricians can't give concrete advice to pregnant women about EDCs yet. Therefore lobbying at the Dutch level won't change much unless a shift occurs in the policy of the RIVM. This was clear when questions were asked in Dutch parliament to Health Minister Schippers. Her answer was that she would ask the RIVM to look into this.





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Communication about pregnancy is not limited to the medical fields anymore. It has adopted a social character, that created a platform for pregnant women to interact, learn and share experiences and ideas with each other. It has ensured the existence of mommyblogs and mamacafes, that are becoming very popular.





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PROJECT DATA

Partner data

WECF www.wecf.eu and www.eenveilignest.nl

Contact person: Chantal Van den Bossche

Gezinsbond www.gezinsbond.be

Contact person: Danielle Van Kalmthout

PAN Europe www.pan-europe.info and www.disruptingfood.info

Contact person: Angeliki Lysimachou

Project Type: Life+

www.childprotectfromchemicals.eu

Coordinating Beneficiary: WECF

Associated Beneficiaries: Gezinsbond, PAN Europe

Implementation countries: The Netherlands and
Flanders (and Brussels for the EU part)

Project duration: 21,5 months (early termination)

Total budget: € 701,068

EU Contribution: €349,184

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