



[www.NationalHealthySchoolsDay.org](http://www.NationalHealthySchoolsDay.org)



### **MUST-READ RESEARCH STUDIES**

1. ***Towards Healthy Schools 2015: Progress on America's Environmental Health Crisis for Children***, Healthy Schools Network's 3<sup>rd</sup> triennial state of the states data and policy report (2013). <http://www.healthyschools.org/HealthySchools2015.pdf>

This third triennial state by state data and policy report comments on progress at the federal and states levels, but based on more information, concludes that "all children should be considered at elevated risk of health and learning difficulties" due solely to the unexamined or unaddressed threats to health in their schools and the lack of public health services for children at risk or with suspected exposures. Featured are snapshots of successful programs in the field and comments from local, state, and national partners.

2. ***Climate Change, the Indoor Environment, and Health***, Institute of Medicine (2011)  
[http://books.nap.edu/openbook.php?record\\_id=13115&page=1](http://books.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=13115&page=1)

*Poor indoor environmental quality is creating health problems today and impairs the ability of occupants to work and learn. Indoor exposures can be 100 -1,000 times more intense than outdoor exposure. By one estimate, poor indoor conditions cost the nation's economy tens of billions of dollars a year in exacerbation of illnesses and allergenic symptoms and in lost productivity.*

*Climate change may worsen existing indoor environmental problems and introduce new problems. There are opportunities to improve public health ... (including) prioritize health effects in research, program and policy, ... and **make prevention of adverse exposures a primary goal**.... (The report also observed that) the introduction of new materials and weatherization techniques also may lead to unexpected exposures and health risks.*

3. **Impact of the Return to School on Childhood Asthma Burden in New York State**, International Journal of Occupational and Environmental Health, January 2011  
<http://www.ijoh.com/index.php/ijoh/article/view/1462>

*Chronic asthma is a widespread condition among school-age children, and one of the leading causes of hospitalization and missed school days in childhood. This study's goal was to determine whether and how much "back to school" events are associated with increased asthma hospitalizations.*

*Researchers found that "returning to school after vacations substantially increases the risk of hospital admissions for asthma in children, and this has considerable public health and economic impact."*

*Elementary school children faced increased risks of asthma hospitalizations shortly after returning to school after summer, winter and spring vacations.... The days after summer*

*vacations were the most problematic – resulting in **up to 300 percent increase in pediatric asthma hospitalizations.***

*While there may be many factors for these back-to-school spikes ... none are enough to explain the significant increase in back-to-school asthma cases. .... Specifically, well known asthma triggers also found throughout New York State schools were moisture and poor ventilation, high levels of cockroach residues in school dust, cat and dog dander, and use of conventional cleaning products.*

**4. 2010 National School Nurse Survey, National Association of School Nurses**

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B-jj-Uqv\\_J65MIRIdWNoWW1wTFE/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B-jj-Uqv_J65MIRIdWNoWW1wTFE/view?usp=sharing)

*The NASN surveyed its members online to learn more about what they were seeing and experiencing in school environmental health. Read the full release of the results here. In sum, the release states: “Responses to the nationwide survey indicate over **40 percent of more than 350 respondents say that they know children and staff adversely impacted** by avoidable indoor pollutants and that virtually no agencies assist local schools.”*

**5. Who’s Sick at School: Linking Poor School Conditions and Health Disparities for Boston’s Children, MassCOSH, March 2006**

<http://drupal.masscosh.org/files/WholsSickAtSchool.pdf>

*The Boston Urban Asthma Coalition analyzed 2004-05 childhood asthma rates for Boston Public School students and compared them to the indoor environment quality audits of the top 10 schools with problems. The results showed that “**schools with the highest rates of leaks, mold and pest infestations also have higher than average asthma rates for children.**”*

**6. Green Schools: Attributes for Health and Learning, National Academies of Science, 2006.**

[http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?record\\_id=11756&page=1](http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=11756&page=1)

*The “green building” movement is now more than 20 years old. It envisioned buildings that had few, if any, negative environmental impacts. Today as we have learned more about indoor environments, “green” is a more ambiguous term. And for long it has remained unclear where exactly the health and well-being of those who live, work and study **inside** these new structures fits in. This expert panel study examined the history of the green building movement and the strength of indoor environments research. The study’s overall conclusion is that **current green school guidelines are not well-defined.***

*Citing the U.S. EPA’s IAQ Tools for Schools Program as a “well-recognized source of information on methods for achieving good indoor air quality,” this study makes some key recommendations ... (to) be addressed in future green school designs:*

- *School building attributes that support student and teacher health and development: dryness, good indoor air quality and thermal comfort, quietness, well-maintained systems, cleanliness (Executive Summary, p3).*
- *Design, detailing, construction and long-term maintenance should ensure that excess moisture is controlled and a building kept dry throughout its lifetime (Executive Summary, p6).*
- *Indoor allergen levels must be controlled and decreased through good cleaning practices (Executive Summary, p6).*

**7. A Summary of Scientific Findings on Adverse Effects of Indoor Environments on Students' Health, Academic Performance and Attendance, U.S. Department of Education, 2004.**

<http://www.healthyschools.org/downloads/USDeptofEducationStudy.pdf>