



National Fuel Funds Network

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Energy Safety Net Bulletin #99

Dear Member: A new study released today shows that children living in households receiving energy assistance were less likely to be undernourished, less likely to suffer from childhood obesity and had lower odds of being hospitalized than children in comparable households not receiving aid.

The study, conducted by the Children's Sentinel Nutrition Assessment Program (C-SNAP) assessed the relationship between participation in the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and the growth and development of young children.

Entitled "Heat or Eat: The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program and Nutritional and Health Risks Among Children Less Than 3 Years Old," the study evaluated 7,000 low-income families from 1998 to 2004 in Baltimore, Boston, Little Rock, Minneapolis, and Washington, D.C. The study is being released today in the November issue of *Pediatrics* and can be found on the Internet at <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/current.shtml#ARTICLES>

Dr. Deborah A. Frank, a principal investigator in the study and a professor of Pediatrics at the Boston University School of Medicine said, "When babies or toddlers in food-insecure families are stressed by cold, their immature bodies have to allocate scarce calories to generate heat rather than sustain normal growth."

"Also, undernourished bodies lack the energy to fuel the immune system so more young children whose families have to choose to heat or eat end up in the hospital. LIHEAP works to give babies' bodies energy assistance for growth and health, and prevents the expense of hospitalization."

Dr. Diana Cutts, a pediatrician at Hennepin County Medical Center in Minneapolis and a C-SNAP principal investigator, said, "Doctors don't understand the budget battles. We see in our clinics how LIHEAP is very good medicine that protects kids from health risks and hospitalizations. The problem is that the dose is never enough. Each year the

program is severely under-funded leaving out more than 80 percent of the families who need it. It's tough to play politics with malnourished infants.”

While the study deals only LIHEAP, we can safely extrapolate the importance of charitably funded assistance programs to the health of children in low-income households as well. The authors of the study, taking note that LIHEAP funds are usually depleted before the end of the heating season, suggest that pediatric health providers consider encouraging families to apply for assistance early in the season.

National Energy Assistance Report

We are gathering information for two articles for the 4th quarter issue of the National Energy Assistance Report. We are planning stories on statewide energy assistance meetings and innovative fund raising activities.

If you have information on either one or both of these subjects please call, email, write or fax us before November 9th. We want to include your activities in our next issue.

Utility Actions

- Progress Energy is now offering its employees and customers more options for making contributions to its Energy Neighbor Fund. For the holiday season, employees can make donations on behalf of friends and neighbors, and the utility will send gift cards to the employee and the honoree showing a gift was made in their name.

Customers now can use the internet to sign up to make monthly donations to the Energy Neighbor Fund. Previously, customers had to download a form from the utility's website and mail it in with a check to make a contribution or to request a monthly billing be added to their electric accounts.

Progress Energy is a Raleigh, NC based utility with a service area that also covers South Carolina and Florida.

- In September, Con Edison ran a special three-week program to help low-income residents of New York City and Westchester County offset their summer energy bills and give them a head start on their winter bills. The program was open to applicants with disconnection notices and provided 326 households with grants of up to \$200.
- In October, KeySpan Energy identified 324 households that had received federal energy assistance last winter but had not applied for assistance through the Neighborhood Heating Fund and provided them with \$200 assistance grants.

The customers were also encouraged to apply for the Neighborhood Heating Fund again in December when its regular season begins.

- During the summer, Entergy Nuclear Northeast (Indian Point) expanded their warm weather program, the Neighbor Fund, to encompass all of New York City. The program provided grants of \$50 to low income residents who could not afford to pay their electric bills. Entergy assisted 658 customers in this program totaling over \$32,000.

This winter Entergy has announced plans to further expand their assistance efforts by establishing a fuel fund in the area around their Fitzpatrick plant site in upstate New York

Fuel Fund Activities

- Boyer's Coffee has launched a three-month campaign to help raise funds for Energy Outreach Colorado. The Denver based company will donate \$1 from every 2.5-pound bag of its Kona Blend coffee sold in Sam's Club outlets and 50 cents from every 1-pound bag of Rocky Mountain Thunder coffee sold in Wal-Mart Superstores. The campaign will run from Nov. 1 through Jan. 31, 2007.

This is the third year that the family-owned company has run this promotion to generate funds for Energy Outreach Colorado.

Reports and Studies

- The Campaign for Home Energy Assistance has released its latest edition of its LIHEAP Data Book. The book contains an overview of the federal energy assistance program and a state-by-state analysis of the program and the people it serves.

Copies of the book are available through the Campaign at www.liheap.org