Nursing and environmental justice: Re-envisioning engagement and action for 21st century practice

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Disclosures

- Nothing to disclose
Objectives

❖ Identify roles for nursing in environmental justice
  ❖ EJ nurse research

❖ Advocacy for environmental justice in the 21st century
  ❖ Define Environmental Justice,
  ❖ Define voice,
  ❖ Summarize the advocacy strategies
Environmental Justice

- Everyone has the right to live, work, go to school, worship in a safe and healthy environment, (Bullard 1994), or

- ...the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. (EPA)
Nursing work and EJ

- Occupational Health

- Sustainability in hospital waste ([https://noharm-uscanada.org/content/us-canada/nurses-welcome-kit](https://noharm-uscanada.org/content/us-canada/nurses-welcome-kit))

- Home visiting?
Climate Change
“The ability to tell one’s own story in a way that clarifies oppression,”

“Ability to speak with the right to be heard”

Nursing research and EJ

- Pubmed: 17 articles (8 in 2016-2017)
- Web of science: 5 articles


Nursing and Environmental health

- IOM 1995 (Nursing Health and the Environment)
- Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments 2008
- Leffers et al 2016 Nursing and environmental health

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Climate Change

- Heat
- Water
- Insect
- Respiratory
- Mental Health
- Food security
- Natural Disasters

Figure 2: [www.epa.gov/climatestudents/basics/concepts.html](http://www.epa.gov/climatestudents/basics/concepts.html)
Upstream action

❖ Health determinants (environmental-spacial, economic, cultural-ideologic, opportunity-potential

❖ Actions:
  ❖ Paradigms/beliefs
  ❖ Priorities/goals
  ❖ Transparency
  ❖ Resource allocation
  ❖ Metrics
  ❖ Operations
  ❖ Subsystem elements

Environmental Justice

- All people are entitled to fair treatment and meaningful involvement and equitable treatment in regard to the regulation, implementation, and enforcement of environmental protections (EPA)

- all Americans have a basic right to live, work, play, go to school and worship in a clean and healthy environment (Bullard, 1993)
Asthma and EJ:

- Ambient pollution
  - Idling
  - 30% efficient pleated filters
  - Toxic cleaners
  - Fragrance free environments
  - Pets/no pets
This picture depicts any ordinary day, on my way to school, this is often the road most travelled. In this photo I wanna show the ignorance of those who decide to take it on themselves to know what’s best for others. Just like people seem to think they know everything about cars, and how they don’t think twice how the fumes affect the air we breathe, some claim they know the effects of asthma and how it presents itself onto people and their lives. The road depicts how I like my asthma to be: smooth… but when it gets rough, I don’t want it to escalate to something that can’t be controlled.
Citizen Science Details

❖ Recruited 10 middle school aged students who live in Pierce County

❖ Trained recruits how to collect indoor air samples

❖ Collected series of air samples during burn ban events (Dec-Jan)

❖ Interpreted results with students

❖ Public presentation of results and students’ photos
Data Collection

- Occurred during winter holiday season (late November – December). Sampling machines placed in youth homes. Youth instructed to turn on sampling equipment simultaneously when a burn ban was called.
Levoglucosan
As you can see from this picture on a sun-setting evening in Puyallup, it looks nice, it looks calming, but if we keep polluting the air here in Puyallup or anywhere it won’t be a nice sun setting evening anymore and burning wood is a big cause affecting what a dark, gloomy, depressed Puyallup could look like if we don’t change how we treat the air and there is no reset button, no going back to what we have done to the air or earth but we can at least help the situation and slow down the timer that was set for us and by us if we take action and make it apparent to the public about this scary problem.