

New York State Children's Environmental Health Centers

Annual Report: 2022-2023



Released: March 2024

Healthy environments

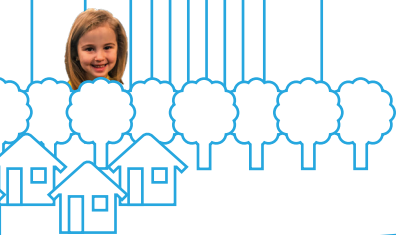
mean clean air, soil, and water for children.

Asthma

An Ulster County child's asthma was getting worse, with mold and pest problems in the home environment. The child was seen by the **Hudson Valley Children's Environmental Health Center**. They worked with the Ulster County Health and Buildings Departments to assess the housing issues, and Network social workers helped the family work with the agencies and their property owner. The child's symptoms abated when they were relocated.

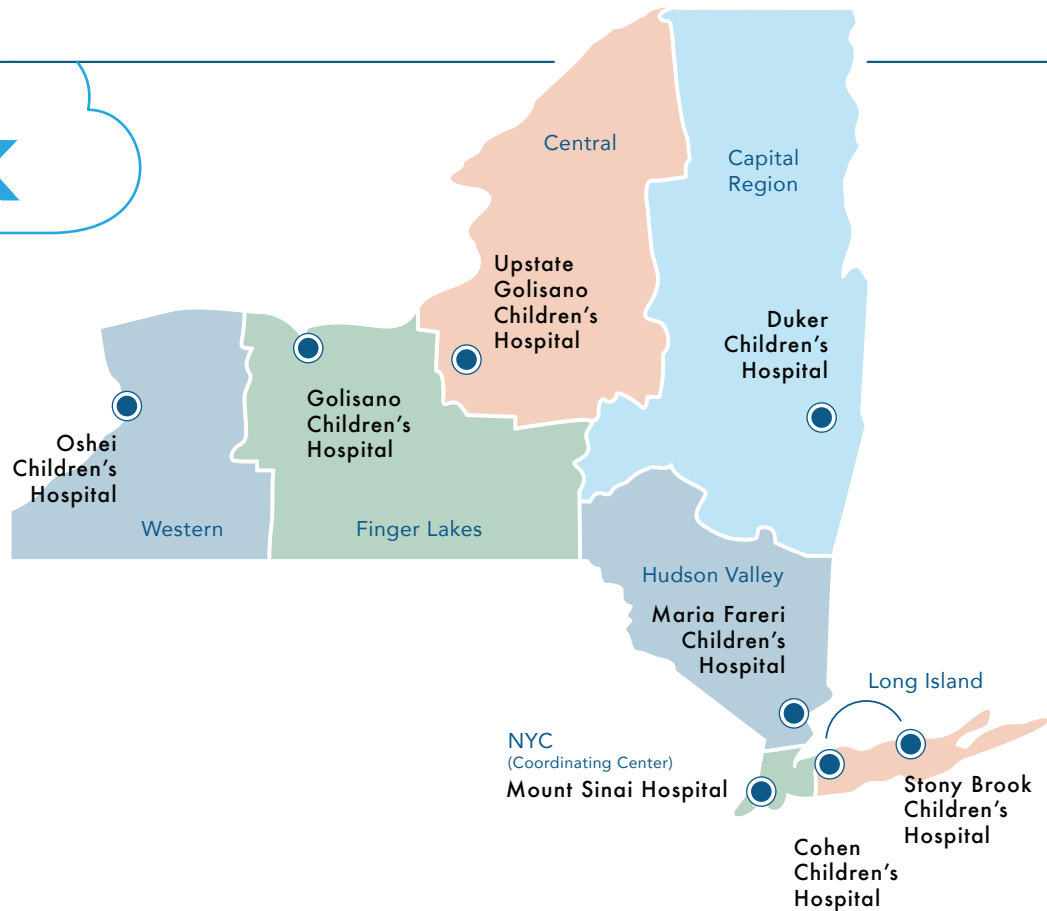
Lead

A family contacted the **Finger Lakes Children's Environmental Health Center** concerned about the development of their 3 year-old child who was not yet talking, had hand-to-mouth behaviors, and lived in a 100 year old farmhouse. Testing the child and the home showed high lead levels. The Center coordinated with the Genesee and Monroe County Health Departments to conduct a home inspection and referred the family to autism resources. The family relocated to a lead safe home and the child's lead levels have declined.



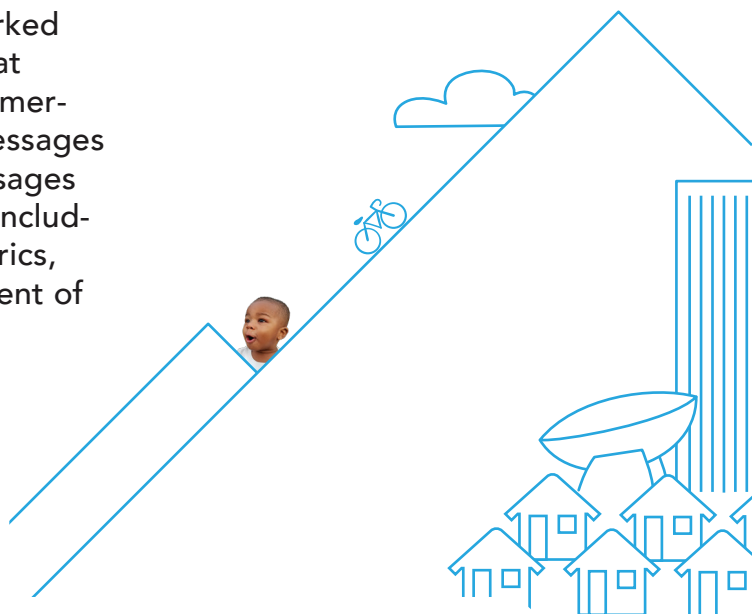
NYSCHECK

provides support to families and clinicians across rural, suburban and urban New York State.



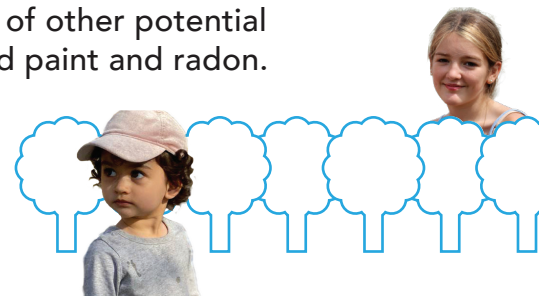
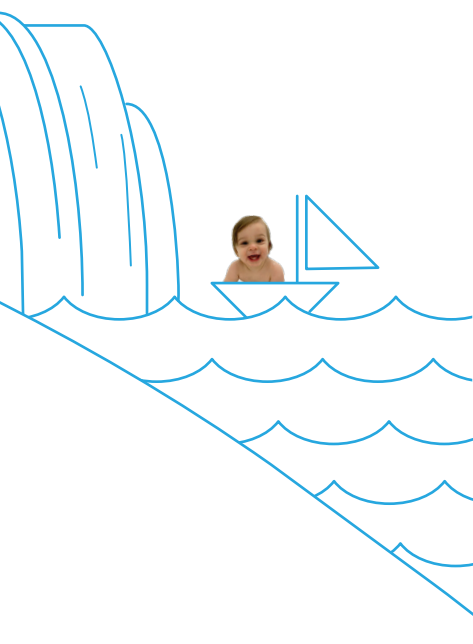
Wildfire Smoke

Hudson Valley, Long Island, and New York City worked together to quickly respond to the wildfire smoke that blanketed NY in June 2023 creating a public health emergency. Within 24 hours, NYSCHECK disseminated messages to over 1,000,000 patients across the state. The messages were shared by local, regional and national partners including the New York State American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Lung Association, and the US Department of Health and Human Services.



Arsenic

A family living in an upstate rental property reported high arsenic levels in their well water, used to make their baby's formula. With guidance from the **NYSCHECK Team**, the family switched to bottled water, added water filters to eliminate the problem, and was made aware of other potential environmental exposures like lead-based paint and radon.



Environmental Health Screening

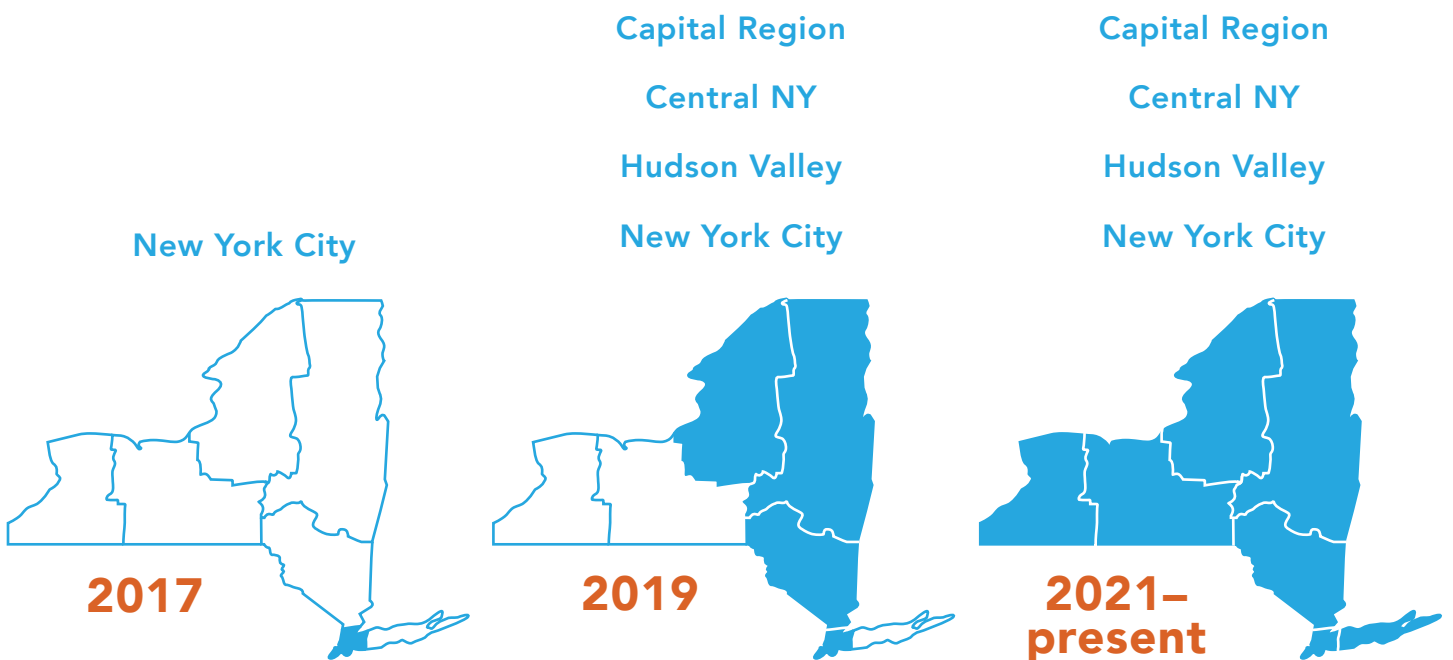
From 2017-2023, environmental health screening and consult services expanded from one center in NYC to all seven centers; in tandem, new partnerships were cultivated with community based organizations offering services to reduce those environmental problems, especially in the home environment.

Specialized clinical tools were developed to support environmental intervention services, and environmental health training programs were launched reaching health care professionals and trainees, including the NYSHECK Environmental Health Scholars Program and the NYSHECK Summer Academy.

NYSHECK is building long lasting environmental health programs with institutional and community roots.



Environmental health screening now occurs at all seven network centers!



94,686

Services Provided to Families

Patients Screened for Environmental Health Concerns

58,977

Healthcare Professionals Attended Educational Events

8,115

Students Participated in EH Educational Sessions

738

Wow!



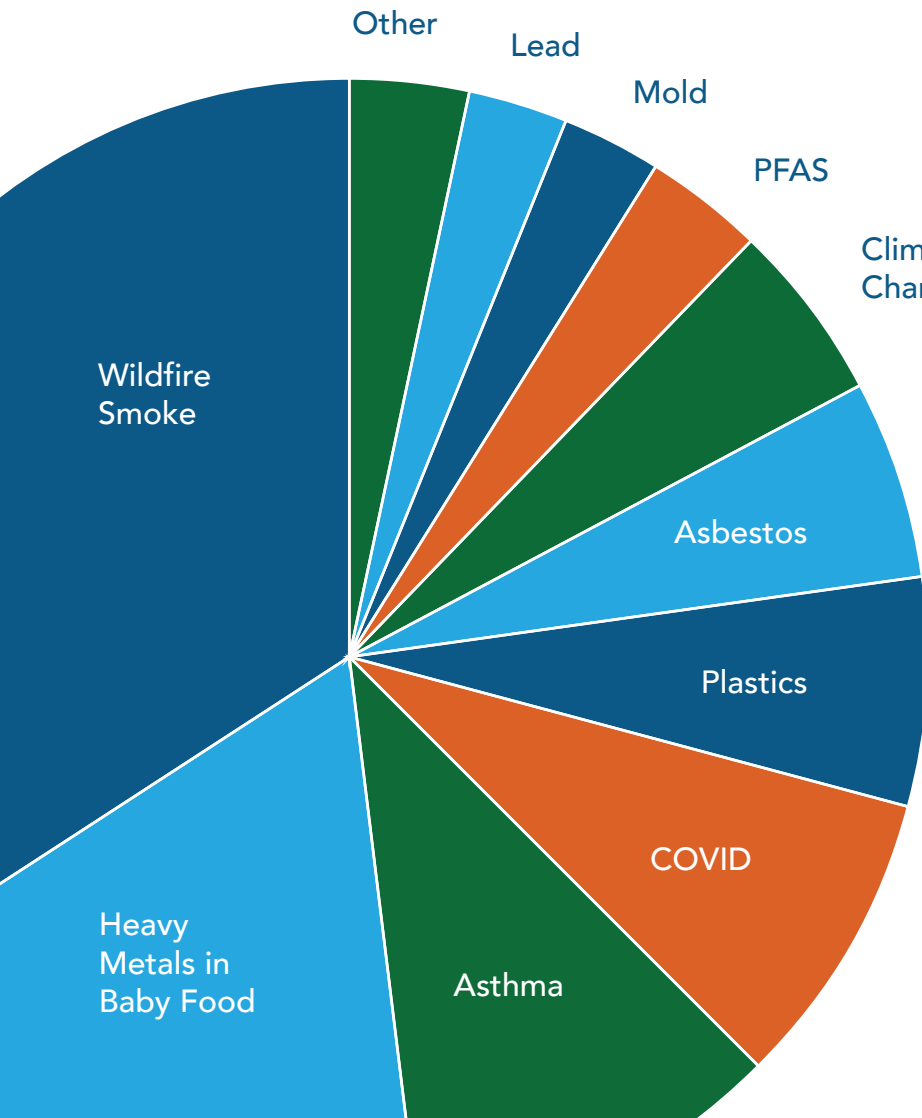
	Family Services	Healthcare Professionals Educated	Student Trainees
2018	18,196	4,750	100
2023	94,686	8,115	738

5-Year Growth

5x
more family services

2x
Almost twice as many healthcare professionals educated

7x
more trainees



Our NYSCHECK.ORG website is a living library of common environmental topics that's growing as our Network responds to emerging concerns among families in New York State!

Most commonly viewed topics on NYSCHECK.org

Building the New York State Environmental Health Workforce

Class of 2023

NYSCHECK's Environmental Health (EH) Scholars Training Program builds environmental health capacity across New York State by training future leaders. Scholars work on NYSCHECK-related projects, mentored by NYSCHECK experts.



Additional state funding in 2023 enabled NYSCHECK to more than double our team from 5 in 2018 to 12 in 2023.



"Being an EH Scholar allowed me to make system's level changes that can truly have an impact on the health of the families I serve. It has given me hope."

Rebekah Prasad, Nurse Practitioner
Finger Lakes CEHC

"I am grateful for the outstanding learning opportunities, hands-on mentorship, and the chance to join an extraordinary community of multidisciplinary professionals united in their commitment to enhance the well-being of children, patients, and the planet as a whole."

Laurie Thibodeau, Emergency Medicine Physician
Capital Region CEHC

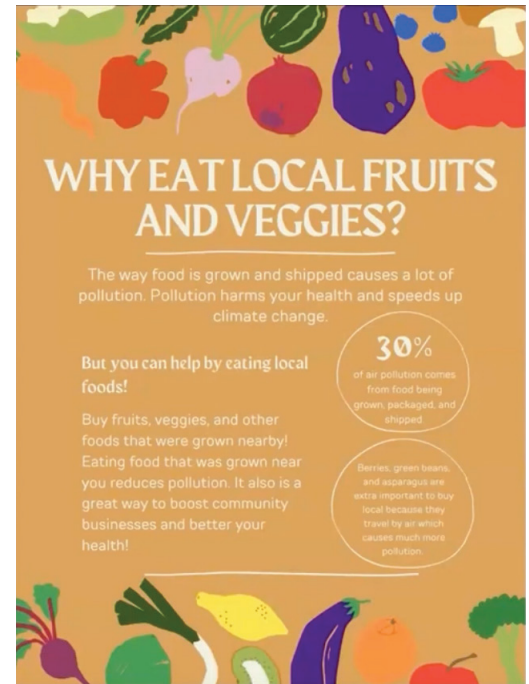
Class of 2018



Educating Future Leaders Through the NYSCHECK Summer Academy

NYSCHECK Summer Academy (NSA) is an 8-week virtual, cross-center and statewide collaboration. It was launched in 2020 to provide training in environmental health and advocacy for high school, college, graduate and medical students. The annual program is directed by faculty from four NYSCHECK sites (Finger Lakes, Hudson Valley, New York City and Long Island) as well as partners from Huntington Breast Cancer Action Coalition (HBCAC).

NSA supports our future leaders through a curriculum of environmental health basics and emerging topics, culminating in mentored group projects. This year's theme was Environmental Justice Champions: Working Together to Address the Climate Crisis, reaching 41 students from across the state.



Reducing climate change via reducing emissions from food transportation

Creating elementary environmental health curricula

AIR DETECTIVES
SOLVING POLLUTION PUZZLES

Professor Pollutant is on the loose! Can you help us catch him?

WHAT IS ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH?
Environmental health means taking care of the Earth and everything that lives on it, including plants, animals, and people. It's about making sure our air, water, and land are clean and safe to enjoy.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?
A healthy environment lets us breathe fresh air, drink clean water, and play in safe places. Protecting the environment keeps us and our neighborhoods healthy and happy.

By: Alyssa Kamara, Juliette Thibodeau & Dr. Sandra Jee
NYSCHECK Summer Academy

AIR DETECTIVE PLEDGE

As Air Detectives, we promise to protect our planet and keep our air clean! We know that clean air is essential for a healthy environment and a happy life.

By signing, I promise to:

- Be an Air Detective:** I will keep my eyes open for air pollution sources around me, like smoky cars and factories, and report them to grown-ups.
- Choose Clean Transportation:** I will walk, bike, or use public transportation whenever possible to reduce air pollution from cars.
- Reuse, Reduce, & Recycle:** I will recycle paper, plastic, and cans, and use fewer things that create waste to keep our air and planet clean.
- Spread the Word:** I will share what I learn about air pollution and its impact with my friends and family to inspire them to protect the air too.
- Plant a Seed of Change:** I will never underestimate my power to make a difference, no matter how small my actions may seem.

By signing this pledge, I promise to be a dedicated Air Detective, protecting our environment and working towards a cleaner, healthier planet for everyone!

Sign your name here: _____

"Immersed in a virtual 'ecology of care', I tackle environmental injustices through social media posts, op-eds, and sharing my worldview with both NYSCHECK veterans and new students."



Aliyyah Hamid
High School Student, Long Island

Environmental Health Medical Education and Training

Integrating environmental health education into medical school and residency curricula prepares future clinicians to address complex environmental issues like climate change, water contamination and lead poisoning. In 2023, two NYCHECK Environmental Health Scholars Drs. Thibodeau (Capital Region CEHC) and Padgett (WNY CEHC) worked to integrate climate and health into their institution’s medical curriculum. New York Medical College in Westchester approved the first Environmental Health concentration of any medical school in NY State.

“I learned about the challenges of minimizing harmful environmental exposures in low income schools. Medical students typically do not get enough exposure to ‘healthcare systems’ problems like these.”



Kathy Harwood, MD Student
New York Medical College, Westchester

Clinical Tools

A key part of our training are Prescriptions (Rx) for Prevention which support clinicians to SCREEN about environmental health (EH) concerns, COUNSEL on key actions, and REFER to connect families to EH resources. In 2023, we brought the total number of Rx topics to over 40. Annually, Rx views online are over 2000 and rising. The most downloaded topics are about creating healthy homes.

Rxs are available at: nyscheck.org/rx/

Partnerships

A Wealth of Resources

Building local capacity to address environmental health problems is critical to prevention. NYSCHECK cultivates relationships with local community-based organizations, academic and healthcare institutions, and government agencies to build this capacity.

Community Organizations

-  AIR nyc
-  BuffaloGoGreen
-  Cafeteria Culture
-  Champion Academy
-  Climate Solutions Accelerator of the Genesee-Finger Lakes Region
-  Coalition to Prevent Lead Poisoning
-  Docs for Tots
-  Girl Scouts Heart of the Hudson
-  Grassroots Gardens WNY
-  Green & Healthy Homes Initiative
-  Legal Services of Central NY
-  New York Edge
-  NYLPI
Justice Through Community Power
-  Nullary Care
-  Onondaga Earth Corps
-  Planned Parenthood of Greater New York
-  Reach Out & Read Greater New York
-  The RED Bookshelf
This is my book, these are my books, I am a reader!
-  Starflower Experiences
-  WE ACT
FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE
-  Westchester Community Opportunity Program

- AIRnyc
- Buffalo Go Green
- Cafeteria Culture
- Champion Academy
- Climate Solutions Accelerator of the Genesee-Finger Lakes Region
- Coalition to Prevent Lead Poisoning
- Docs for Tots
- Girl Scouts Heart of the Hudson
- Grassroots Gardens WNY
- Green & Healthy Homes Initiative
- Legal Services of Central NY
- New York Edge
- New York Lawyers for the Public Interest
- Nullary Care
- Onondaga Earth Corps
- Planned Parenthood of the Hudson Valley
- Reach Out and Read
- The RED Bookshelf
- Starflower Experiences
- WE ACT for Environmental Justice
- Westchester Community Opportunity Program

"The in-home environmental health services we provide are critical for families getting needed support—our NYSCHECK partnership ensures the services stay connected to the clinical care the children receive."

Ray López
Chief Program Officer
Little Sisters of the Assumption
Family Health Service



"We strengthen the NYSCHECK network through our community connections as well as middle and high school affiliations, long-standing youth programs, and leadership within the NYSCHECK Summer Academy program—helping shift the paradigm to "prevention is the cure"!"

Karen Miller & Melanie Gabrell
Huntington Breast Cancer
Action Coalition/
Prevention is the Cure



"Advancing healthy environments for children requires us all to work together. NYSCHECK is a highly valued partner helping New York State lead the way when it comes to championing healthy children, homes and communities!"

Bobbi Wilding
Executive Director
Clean and Healthy



Academic, Healthcare
and Agency Partners



Breastfeeding Resiliency, Engagement,
and Empowerment (BFREE) Coalition

Capital District Physicians' Health Plan



Dows Lane Elementary School; Irvington Free
Union School District



Erie Niagara Area Health Education Center

Healthy Baby
Network

Healthy Baby Network



Hudson Valley Asthma Coalition



Kaleida Health

Kaleida Health



Long Island University Post

Montefiore

Montefiore Medical Center



MotherToBaby UR Medicine



Oishei Healthy Kids



University of Rochester
Breastfeeding & Human Lactation Study Center
Environmental Health Sciences Center's
Community Engagement Core



Upstate NY Poison Center



Visiting Nursing Services, Westchester



National Institute of Environmental Health
Sciences Community Engagement Core



NYS Department of Health



NYS Healthy Neighborhoods Program



Onondaga County Health Department



Region 2 Pediatric Environmental Health
Specialty Unit

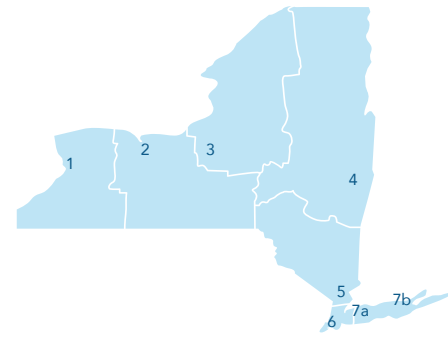


Western Suffolk BOCES

Together!



The New York State Children’s Environmental Health Centers (NYSCHECK) is a network of seven children’s hospitals working to prevent, diagnose, and treat environmentally related conditions for families in all 62 counties across New York State. Funded through the New York State Department of Health, NYSCHECK is the first state-based model for pediatric environmental health services in the country.



Our centers are strategically located across the state:
Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, Albany, Westchester, New York City and Long Island.

The Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York City serves as the coordinating center.

Funding is provided through the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH).

1
Western NY
CEHC

2
Finger Lakes
CEHC

3
Central NY
CEHC

4
Capital Region
CEHC

5
Hudson Valley
CEHC

6
New York City
CEHC

7a
Long Island
CEHC (Nassau)

7b
Long Island
CEHC (Suffolk)

