

## Healthy Homes Grantees in Region 2, New York/New Jersey

**Name of Grantee:** Erie County Department of Health

**Name of Project:** Erie County Health Department Healthy Homes Initiative

**Amount Awarded:** \$ 918,752

**Year of Grant:** 2000

**Contact Info:**

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**Project Partners:** Erie County Department of Social Services and the University of Buffalo Office of Research and Development in the Department of Family Medicine. Contributing, Buffalo Municipal Housing Court, Cortese Brothers Construction Co., Inc., Erie County Department of Environment and Planning, Erie County Public Health Laboratory, Buffalo Prenatal-Perinatal Network, the Western New York Chapter American Lung Association and Channing L. Bete Publications

**Summary of Project Activities:**

The Erie County Health Department Healthy Homes Initiative (ECHD HHI) will build upon existing health department, housing, and community resources to pro-actively prevent low-income children from being exposed to home-based environmental health and safety hazards. The project's primary target population will be low-income families with children that have been identified by the Department of Social Services Housing Assistance and Young Parent Programs. HHI activities will be implemented in privately owned one, two or three dwelling unit structures in the inner core of the City of Buffalo (zip codes 14201, 14202, 14204, 14206, 14207, 14208, 14211, 14212, 14213 and 14215).

The ECHD HHI intervention is centered around two components: 1) a 'triage' assessment of a potential dwelling unit prior to occupancy by participating families that will ensure that children do not move into a home that represents an imminent health hazard and 2) a comprehensive home visit after families move into an approved unit that represents an unparalleled educational opportunity for these young parents as well as an opportunity to address the old and deteriorating housing stock in the targeted area. The ECHD HHI will direct its low-cost intervention toward the following health and safety risks: *Unintentional Injury*, specifically those associated with falls, burns, electric shock and poisoning; *Respiratory Problems*, specifically asthma exacerbation and allergies; *Lead Poisoning*, specifically associated with lead in house dust; *Carbon Monoxide Poisoning and Radon Exposure*. In addition to education for participating families and property owners regarding these risks, the low-cost interventions utilized by the ECHD HHI will include: cockroach and rodent extermination, code enforcement, provision of smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, switch plate covers, and safety items such as fire extinguishers, window guards, night lights, cabinet locks, shock stops and more.

The Health Department's Division of Environmental Health (DEH) will have primary responsibility for executing the project's work plan. The DEH, which includes the Healthy Neighborhoods Program and the Asthma Initiative Pilot Project, will also draw upon the resources of the department's Health Education Unit and the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program in carrying out the objectives of the grant. An array of local partners will contribute significantly to this project. The primary collaborators will be the Erie County Department of Social Services and the University of Buffalo Office of Research and Development in the Department of Family Medicine. Contributing collaborators will be Buffalo Municipal Housing Court, Cortese Brothers Construction Co., Inc., Erie County Department of Environment and Planning, Erie County Public Health Laboratory, Buffalo Prenatal-Perinatal Network, the Western New York Chapter American Lung Association and Channing L. Bete Publications. The community partnerships forged by the initiative will ensure that a consistent and coordinated message regarding the importance of safe, healthy homes to the well being of children will be at the forefront of the public health agenda for Western New York.

**Product Outcomes/Outputs:**

The deliverables over the three year grant cycle will be: 1) *Assessment of 600 Vacant Dwelling Units*, 2) *Provision of Low Cost Interventions*, 3) *Development of a Comprehensive Education Curriculum*, 4) *In-home Education for 500 Families*, 5) *Community Forum*, 6) *Development of a Referral Network*, 7) *Creation of a Registry of Risk Reduced Dwelling Units*, and 8) *Project Evaluation*. The effects of the home assessment and educational intervention on participating families' knowledge of home health and safety hazards will be evaluated. A "quality of life survey" with pre & post testing will be utilized.