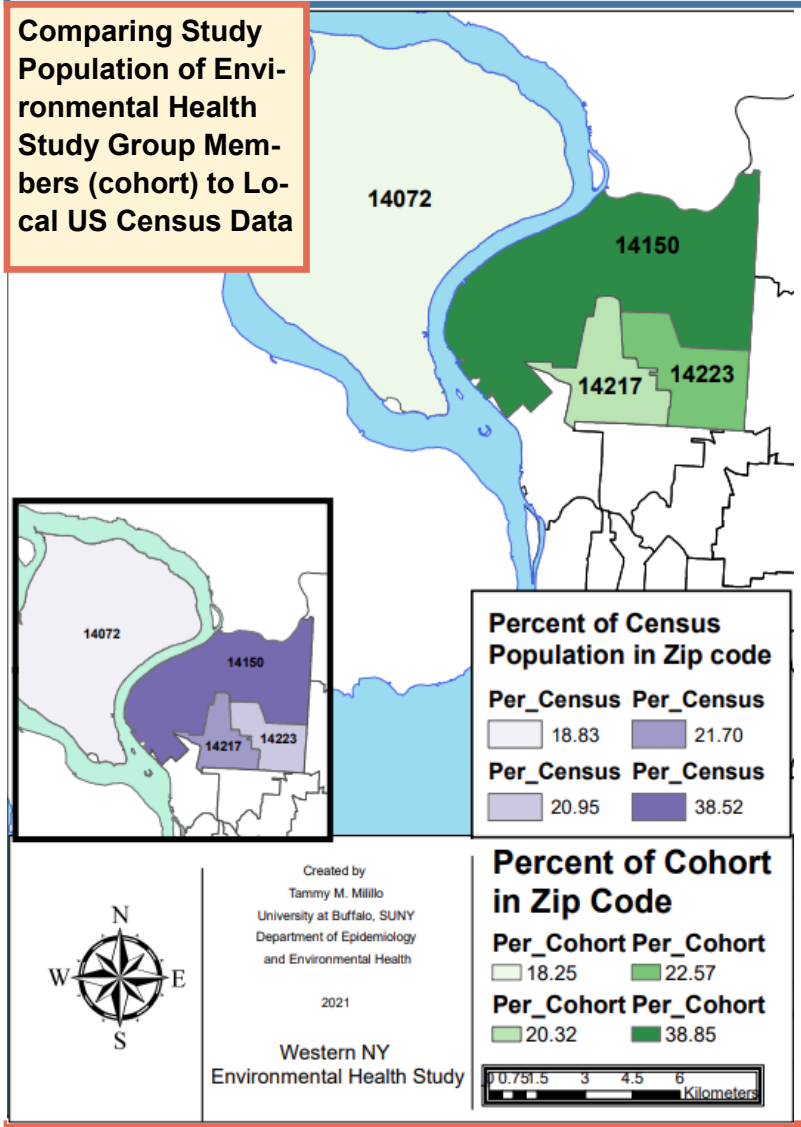
The Study now has a Facebook page!

We post new information every week that includes educational material, updates about EHS Study community presentations, and workshops related to environmental health. Follow us at https://www.facebook.com/groups/ubehstudy or scan the QR code on the right!

Comparing Study Population of Environmental Health Study Group Members (cohort) to Local US Census Data



The maps show that the proportion of cohort members current (large map) and the proportion of the source population (insert) by zip code of residence. For instance, 38.85% of cohort members reside in zip code 14150, and similarly, 38.52% of the entire source population resides in 14150. Overall, the geographic distribution of cohort members is similar to the geographic distribution of the source population

EHS Updates

Biospecimen Collection

So far, 1,332 participants completed their 1st sample collection and 400 completed their 2nd collection. Dr. Jim Olson's lab continues to analyze the urine samples for presence of benzene and PAH (polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon) breakdown products. By measuring these breakdown products we can get an idea of current exposure to these air pollutants. These exposures can come from everyday sources like traffic exhaust, gas stations, tobacco smoke, and industrial sources. As the study goes on, we will be able to combine what we know about current exposures with past exposure history. This can help inform community-specific ways to reduce exposure and improve health in the long-term.

Children's Study

The Children's Study, led by Dr. Lina Mu, is continuing to receive on-line and paper surveys. The study aims to understand the health impacts from exposure to common pollutants both before and after birth. As of December 9th, 502 individual children from 388 families are enrolled. If you are interested in having your child participate, please contact the study team at the phone or email address below!

Follow-up Survey

Thank you for your continued support. Over 7,900 participants completed the first follow-up survey! If you haven't yet completed the follow-up, please take a few minutes to fill it out and put it in the mail! These surveys help us understand how community health changes over time and can give insight about the impact of pollution on community health.

IMPORTANT! Payment for those completing a follow-up will come by mail and be in the form of a US Bank pre-paid debit card. **Do not destroy it!** If you threw it out or destroyed it, please call us!

Community Outreach

We've been busy this spring and summer!
We've held nine workshops starting with an Earth Day workshop on Safer Lawn and Garden Care to help community members get their gardens and lawns growing with minimal/no use of pesticides. We also held a virtual Spring Workshop series that included information on how nutrition and the environment are connected. Our virtual Summer Workshop series was held in collaboration with the Audubon Library in Amherst and we met some great folks at our outdoor Green Cleaning workshop at Tonawanda Towers in the City of Tonawanda. Summer workshops ended with a Green Cleaning workshop at the North Tonawanda Library. We were able to interact with 75 people in our workshops with a lot of good questions and enthusiasm from everyone.

Join us around the fireplace!
If you're curious about the Environmental Health Study and progress with the health study surveys, then stop for a coffee and chat with Tammy! Dr. Tammy Milillo, a research scientist on our team, meets with the community every other Tuesday at Panera Bread on Sheridan from 6-8 pm (1747 Sheridan Dr, Tonawanda). So, grab your coffee or cocoa and look for us around the fireplace!

Want to know more about the Environmental Health Study?
Our community outreach team can come to your organization or group and have conversations about the study. We've already had a great conversation with Grand Island Rotarians and plan to meet with the Kenmore and Grand Island Lions Clubs. Contact us if you're interested in having someone come to your group!

Out and About! Despite the rainy summer, you could find us at several community events this summer including Art on the Riverwalk at beautiful Niawanda Park in July, the Grand Island Library's Booksale/end of summer party in August and the City of Tonawanda's Porchfest. We also met some great folks at the Town of Tonawanda's Senior Center Trade Show on October 15.

Fall Focus

As days get shorter and colder in Fall, we spend more time indoors and our exposure to sunlight decreases. Because our skin produces vitamin D when exposed to sunlight, we especially need to make sure we get enough vitamin D during colder months.

Vitamin D is an important part of healthy nutrition. We can get small amounts from some foods like egg yolks, tuna, and salmon. Vitamin D helps our intestines absorb calcium and phosphorus and is important for strong, healthy bones. It also lowers our risk of osteoporosis and keeps our muscles, nerves, and immune system healthy. It's important to eat foods fortified with vitamin D such as milk, cereals, and some brands of orange juice. Talk to your doctor to see if vitamin D supplements are advisable for you.

Having a strong immune system is crucial because Fall is the start of the flu and cold season. Erie County is also in a high transmission zone for COVID-19 according to the CDC.

TIPS **to reduce your risk of COVID-19, colds, and the flu:**

- Avoid close contact (within 6 feet) with anyone outside your household, especially if you have a higher risk of serious illness.
- Indoors: Wear a face mask in indoor public spaces; avoid crowded indoor spaces.
- Get vaccinated.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching your face.

Both flu and COVID-19 vaccines are important for your health!

Even though some symptoms are similar to the flu, COVID-19 is a coronavirus, not an influenza virus.

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