

3. Collaboration with WHO and other UN initiatives

3.1 The WHO Healthy Environments for Children initiative (HEC)

The Centre supports the World Health Organization's Healthy Environments for Children Alliance and the national Healthy Environments for Children Initiative. During the past year work has continued on the preparation of a national State of Children's Environmental Health Report. Associated with the State of Children's Environmental Health Report has been a qualitative study to determine the perceptions of children regarding the state of their environment, and the links with health. The working title for this study is 'Children's Voices'.

Cost:
R7 000 (MRC)

3.2 Children's Voices

'Children's Voices' is a qualitative study involving grade seven and grade nine pupils from 13 schools of differing socio-economic backgrounds in Johannesburg. The study is being coordinated by Anthony Joffe under the umbrella of the Registrars' Environmental Health Placement Programme.

The aim of the study is to assess children's perceptions of the environment and health. Focus groups discussions were the main mechanism for data collection. A photographic component was also included, in which children photographed aspects of their school and home environment that they liked and disliked.

To date the study has been completed at eleven schools, and fieldwork will be undertaken at a further two schools early in 2006. Transcription of the recorded group discussions is well underway, and about half of the photographs have been printed.

On completion of the data analysis, a report will be prepared, as well as a paper for publication in a scientific, peer-reviewed journal. The main findings will also be presented to the participating schools.

Study Cost:
R20 000.00 (MRC) + personnel time contributions from MRC and Wits School of Public Health

