



Castleknock School participate in EU Human Biomonitoring Project

Castleknock Educate Together NS is one the first Irish primary schools to participate in a HSE EU-funded pilot study on Human Biomonitoring. The study is part of a larger project involving a number of EU countries.

Biomonitoring is the measurement of toxins and pollutants in a living person's system. The purpose of the pilot study, DEMOCOPHES, is to determine the levels of key environmental pollutants in the Irish population and across Europe.

The project will collect hair and urine samples and data from 120 mother-child pairs in each participating country. The HSE is working with the Department of Education and a number of primary schools half in Dublin and half in Leitrim to facilitate this.

The gathered information will help build a picture of the levels of environmental pollutants in people, and to develop a way in which human biomonitoring studies can in the future, be used for the benefit of EU-wide populations.

Members of the HSE Dublin North East's Environmental Health team visited Castleknock Educate Together NS to commence the study on 29/09/11

Include quote from EHO: " From a HSE environmental health perspective it's exciting to be part of this European project and we look forward to working with the local community to help build a picture of the levels of environmental pollutants within Ireland and Europe"

Participation in the study is voluntary, free and strictly confidential. It's also entirely safe.

Detailed information about DEMOCOPHES is available on the HSE website at www.hse.ie/go/democophes.



PRESS RELEASE – COUNTY LEITRIM

Leitrim Primary Schools to Participate in European-wide Biomonitoring Study

St. Manchans N.S. Mohill, Leitrim N.S., Leitrim Village, St. Patricks N.S., Drumshanbo and St. Clare's Primary School, Manorhamilton have all been selected to take part in a European Study. The pilot study on Human Biomonitoring, **DEMOCOPHES**, involves 21 other European countries. Co. Leitrim and Dublin are the Irish locations chosen for this project based on population density.

Anne Kellegher, Senior Environmental Health Officer, HSE West, has been tasked with leading the study in the Leitrim region. She recently visited the schools to speak to the staff and children about the study.

Biomonitoring is the measurement of toxins and pollutants in a living person's system. The purpose of the pilot study, DEMOCOPHES, is to determine the levels of key environmental pollutants in the Irish population and across Europe. The project will measure the amount of Cadmium, mercury, phthalates (plastics) and nicotine in mothers and children. The main sources of these chemicals are environmental tobacco smoke, diet and occupational exposure.

The pilot study involves collecting hair and urine samples for analysis and collating data from 120 mother-child pairs in each participating country. The information gathered will help build a picture of the levels of environmental pollutants in people, and will assist in developing a standardised way of performing human biomonitoring studies across Europe in the future.

Commenting on the pilot study, Anne Kellegher said: "From a HSE environmental health perspective it's exciting to be part of this European project and we look forward to working with the local community to help build a picture of the levels of environmental pollutants within Ireland and Europe. The response from both the schools and the parents has been resounding and a huge number of parents have signed up to participate in the project. It reflects the interest that parents have in health issues concerning their children and themselves".

Information packs have been distributed to the parents of the children attending the Leitrim Schools and sampling is already underway.

Participation in DEMOCOPHES pilot study is voluntary, free and strictly confidential.

More detailed information about DEMOCOPHES is available on the HSE website www.hse.ie/go/democophes.