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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative

2008 Volume VII: Urban Environmental Quality and Human Health: Conceiving a Sustainable Future

Relating Air Quality and Prevalence of Asthma in Children

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This unit is meant for a middle school science classroom, but could be adapted for upper elementary grades. The primary purpose of the unit is to look at the air quality in our county and relate it to human health, particularly respiratory health. There will be a focus on lung function, particularly how oxygen and carbon dioxide are exchanged in the alveoli. There will be a focus on asthma and how students can look at daily air quality data to help them make decisions about whether or not to spend time outdoors on a certain day, particularly if they plan to exercise. This unit is also meant to make students aware of environmental issues and how all individuals can have an impact on what goes into our air. Students need to be the catalyst for change in their own homes and neighborhoods. They will be looking at the habits of their own families and try to make changes that will reduce the amount of pollution going into our air.

(Developed for General Science, grade 7; recommended for General Science and Earth Science, Middle School grades)

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