CHILDREN’S ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Improving Kids’ Environment

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Improving Kids' Environment is a non-profit, advocacy coalition that works for tangible and significant improvements to children's health through reductions in environmental threats like air pollution and lead hazards to children.
IKE'S STRATEGIES

- Identify environmental health threats to children;
- Ensure that parents and others who help children have effective access to accurate information about these threats and the means to prevent them;
- Support the activities of those organizations striving to remove, reduce, and communicate these threats; and
- Promote practical means to remove or reduce recognized, serious threats that are not being addressed effectively.
IKE’S PHILOSOPHY AND APPROACH TO ADVOCACY

- Push for good information to be widely available to the public, especially parents
- Work with, and support, coalitions
- Build consensus
- Be a moderate, but credible and persistent, voice for needed change
- Advocate based on facts
IKE’s PRIORITIES

- Healthy Homes
- Healthy Schools
- Healthy Communities
PRIORITIES ➔ PROGRAMS

- Lead paint and lead poisoning
- Radon
- Pesticides
- Mercury
- Air pollution
- Sewer overflows
IKE and Global Warming

- The ultimate children's health issue
  - Expected adverse health effects
  - Long-term sustainability

- How is IKE involved?
  - Working climate change issues into day to day work (newsletters, annual conference)
  - Support policies, legislation that promotes energy efficiency, reduced reliance on vehicles
  - Green Sanctuary Program
Green Sanctuary Movement

- Many faith communities are finding an imperative for practicing environmental stewardship, based in:
  - Faith
  - Doctrine
  - Moral responsibility
- Environmental stewardship must involve changes by individuals. Faith communities are natural places to foster change.
- Congregations need help—there are opportunities to collaborate
Green Sanctuary in Indianapolis

- It began with one congregation pursuing Green Sanctuary “accreditation” from its denomination
- November 2006 Workshop for local congregations
- December 2007 Workshop
- 30 congregations now actively engaged
- Concept expanded—Green Neighborhoods
Some Examples

- Survey of physical plant
  - Energy use, water use, chemical use, waste generation
- Green Art Show
- Green-themed worship services
- Congregational survey
- Recycle cans and cardboard from annual fish fry
- Environmental film series (open to the community)
- Green tips in church bulletin
- Develop environmental policy for church operations
- Field trips
- Tree planting
- Wildlife Sanctuary Certification for grounds
- Provide recycling location for church, church members and the community
- “90 in 90” - St. Luke’s United Methodist
- Household journey: Earth Points
- Count the bicycles (or hybrid cars) in the parking lot
- Green Sanctuary workshops
St. Luke’s United Methodist Church
UII Green Sanctuary Workshop

UII Green Art Show
UII Tracking Water Usage
Through Green Sanctuary, individuals can get engaged in a very personal and practical way. But their faith community is a natural place for people to think about the bigger picture. Changing behavior is hard; it’s easier in community.
THANK YOU!

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