

3

**Mom's Clean Air Force:
Why It Needs the Voices of
African-American Mothers**

5

**Children's Environmental
Health Disparities: Black and
African American Children
and Asthma**

8

**Warning: Your Baby Contains
Toxic Chemicals**

10

**Creating a Cleaner Greener
Environment: On the
Ground In...Baltimore, MD**

12

**Between The Covers:
Literature to Awaken
Our Senses**

15

Tips For Urban Gardeners

17

What's In Season for Fall?

18

**Fall 2011 Recipe:
Orange Cranberry Muffins**



NATIONAL
BLACK CHILD
DEVELOPMENT
INSTITUTE, INC.

We share the
SAME DREAMS.



As a community, it's our job to support the dream of education for all.
State Farm encourages you to keep this dream alive.

Child Health Talk is sponsored by State Farm

LIKE A GOOD NEIGHBOR



STATE FARM IS THERE.®

Providing Insurance and Financial Services

Mom's Clean Air Force: Why It Needs the Voices of African-American Mothers

By Gina Carroll

If you knew that someone's actions threaten the lives of your children every single day, would you be upset? If you knew that someone was sacrificing the well-being of your children for their own profit, would you put your butt-kicking boots on? If your child was chronically ill because of someone's purposeful disregard, would you be ready to act? If so, the Mom Clean Air Force wants you to know that African-American children have a:

- 260% higher emergency room visit rate.
- 250% higher hospitalization rate.
- 500% higher death rate from asthma, as compared with White children.

Coal-fired power plants are major contributors to African-American diseases. The pollution that coal-fired power plants emit is a concern for the general population; but it is a critical issue for African Americans because pollution impacts our children's health in profound ways:

- Coal-fired power plants produce 386,000 tons of hazardous air pollutants per year. They emit 84 different hazardous air pollutants that cause asthma, heart disease, cancer, and worsen sickle cell anemia and high blood pressure.
- Coal-fired plants are the primary source of toxic mercury pollution in the United States. Mercury is a potent neurotoxin that can harm fetuses and the developing brains of young children. Over 400,000 newborns are affected by mercury pollution every year.
- 68% of African Americans (compared to 56% of Whites) live within 30 miles of a coal-fired power plant — the distance within which the maximum ill-effects of the emissions from smokestacks occur.

The Mom's Clean Air Force began as a group of committed and influential bloggers whose aim was to create a new movement which would encourage and enable America's mothers and fathers to take direct action to protect the health and well-being of their

families. Mom's Clean Air Force wants every parent to know that the health of future generations is in peril and to understand the urgency of protecting the Clean Air Act. Those of us who've already joined Mom's Clean Air Force are confident that once African-American moms know the facts — they will want to sign on to our passionate ranks.

We, African-American mothers are no strangers to activism. We may shy away from the title. Some mothers say they want to make a difference, but they are not revolutionaries. Some mothers are more comfortable focusing their efforts on their own personal behavior and household choices, like driving less, reducing consumption and voting. But the truth is, each of us has likely taken up a cause on behalf of our children. And much of what we do as parents, whether intentional, has rippling effects that bring about change that is long-lasting and wider-spread than we know. In the tradition of Black activist mothering, such as Ida B. Wells and the Black Women's Club Movement, which initiated an effective attack on Jim Crow laws and lynchings and other social injustices until the early 1940s; African American mothers have always sought to address the social inequities and disparities that have adversely impacted our children and our communities.

Often, in our struggle to provide for and care for our families, we can forget the value of communal endeavor — that is, that we could shift

continued on page 4



NBCDI MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Become a NBCDI Member today for as little as \$35 and help give every child a chance! NBCDI members include people who share a commitment to the positive development of children and youth, regardless of race, religion, gender, or creed. NBCDI memberships can be obtained by contacting NBCDI. Visit our website at www.nbcdi.org for more membership information and to learn about the programs of NBCDI.

Become part of the NBCDI family and help us to improve and protect the lives of our children.

As a member of the America's Charities federation, NBCDI is eligible to receive your charitable contribution from the **Combined Federal Campaign (#11574)** or state and local employee campaigns.



SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

Child Health Talk is produced by the National Black Child Development Institute (NBCDI).

A subscription to NBCDI's newsletter will comprise four issues of Child Health Talk. Send your request to: Child Health Talk, 1313 L Street, NW, Suite 110, Washington, DC 20005. Subscriptions: \$8.00 per year

The photographs used in NBCDI's publications are intended to highlight the beauty and diversity of children in a variety of settings. Unless specifically noted otherwise, the photographs come from NBCDI's library of stock photos, and the children do not represent the topic discussed in the text.

Mom's Clean Air Force *continued from page 3*

some of our parenting energies toward collective efforts that address the same challenges for everyone. Asthma is a perfect example of this. Tending to the long and short-term health of an asthmatic child takes on an importance beyond making sure their inhalers are in their backpacks to include taking action to clean up the air in our communities.

Our daily demands have necessitated that we as African-American mothers learn to recognize those drop-everything-and-act moments when they arise. When it comes to African American health and air pollution, one of those critical moments is right now. The Environmental Protection Agency recently introduced the Mercury and Air Toxics Standards. This is the first-ever national policy created to reduce mercury emissions from the power plants. Among other meaningful benefits, the rules are estimated to prevent approximately 34,000 premature deaths, 15,000 non-fatal heart attacks and hundreds of thousands of cases of respiratory diseases like asthma, chronic pulmonary obstruction and forms of bronchitis. But Politicians in Congress, encouraged by irresponsible corporations and lobbyists, are trying to diminish and delay the enforcement of the new standards, which will be finalized in November 2011. We have four months to fight to keep the rule strong. The EPA, led by Lisa P. Jackson, an African American mother of two boys, needs to hear that we African American mothers support these rules.

The truth is, African-American mothers are activists, whether we shy away from the title or not. For the sake of our children, we must own our legacy of Black activist mothering and lend our voices to the clean air fight. ■

Gina Carroll is a member of the original team of Mom's Clean Air Force bloggers. You can read more of her blogs in the Houston Chronicle.

To learn more about Mom's Clean Air Force go to their website at www.moms-clean-air-force.org to learn easy ways to get involved!

For more information on the Mercury Standards and Toxics Rules, check out the EPA web page at <http://www.epa.gov/airquality/powerplanttoxics/> and to see how many coal-fired plants are in or near your zip code you can go to the Energy Justice Network's website <http://www.energyjustice.net/map/>

¹U.S. Dept. of Health, Office of Minority Health

²*Air of Injustice* http://www.catf.us/resources/publications/files/Air_of_Injustice.pdf





Children's Environmental Health Disparities: BLACK AND AFRICAN AMERICAN CHILDREN AND ASTHMA

This fact sheet focuses on relationship between environment and asthma among Black and African American children. This fact sheet also provides important actions that can be taken to protect all children.

Pollution in the environment may harm children more than adults. This is because children's bodies are still growing. Also, they eat more, drink more, and breathe more in proportion to their body size than adults. And children's normal behavior can expose them more to pollution. This means that exposure to a given amount of pollution results in a larger quantity of the pollutant in children's bodies compared to adults.

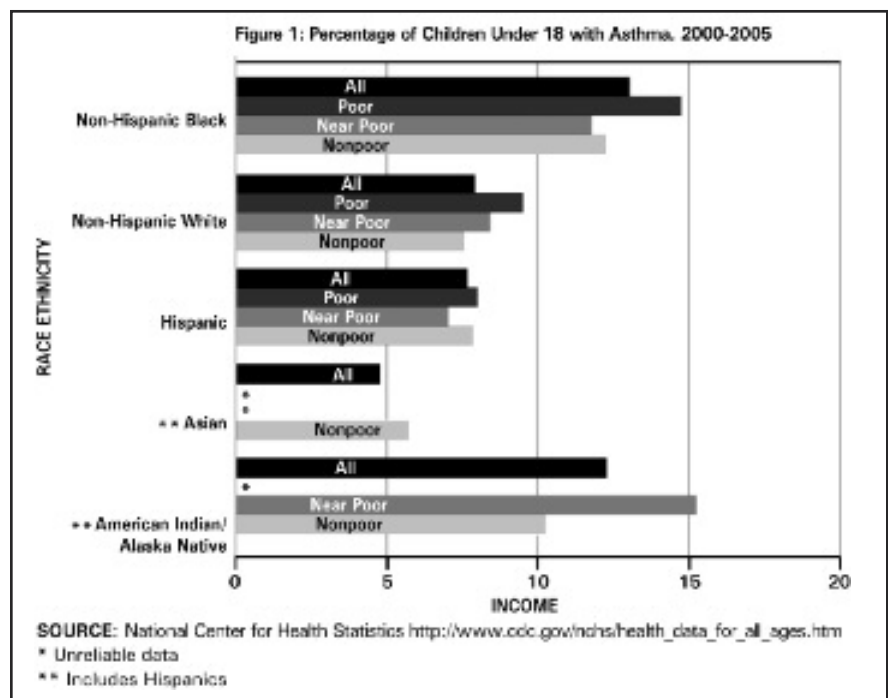
Children of racial and ethnic minorities and poor children may be exposed to more pollution. Thus, they may face the biggest health risks from pollution.⁹³ This fact sheet describes Black and African American children's environmental health risks related to asthma. It also tells you how you can take actions to protect all children.

The burdens of asthma fall more heavily on Black children. In 2001–2005, Black children, regardless of family income, reported higher rates of asthma. Thirteen percent of Black children had asthma. This compares to 8% of White, 8% of Hispanic, and 12% of American Indians and Alaskan Natives children. (See Figure 1.) Since 1980, the difference in asthma rates between Black and White children has become larger. Black children are twice as likely to be hospitalized for asthma and are four times as likely to die from asthma as White children.

What is Asthma?

Asthma is caused by the narrowing or blocking of the lung airways. People with asthma often have trouble breathing. They may experience wheezing and shortness of breath. They may feel pain or tightness in the chest and cough at night or early morning. However, children can have symptoms at anytime.

Asthma is a leading chronic disease affecting children. About 6.5 million children in the United States have asthma. It is a major reason for children going to the hospital or being absent from school.



continued on page 6

Asthma rates have increased worldwide. The US rate increased 75% from 1980 to 1994. The largest increase was among children up to 4 years old (160%). Rates among children 5 to 14 years old increased by 74%.

Increases in asthma rates among poor minorities have been even larger than the averages. They have also had larger increases in deaths from asthma.

Asthma is a complex disease with a number of causes. Some children may inherit a tendency to develop asthma. Racial and ethnic differences in the burden of asthma may be related to social and economic status, access to health care, and exposure to environmental triggers.

Asthma Triggers

Asthma cannot be cured. However, people with asthma can manage the disease by avoiding triggers, both indoors and outdoors and using medications. Triggers are objects or pollutants that cause asthma symptoms (e.g. shortness of breath, cough, wheezing and chest tightness in someone who already has developed asthma) or make them worse.

- **Indoor Triggers:** Secondhand smoke, dust mites, cockroaches, pets with fur or feathers, household pests, mold, household sprays, and nitrogen dioxide (from gas appliances) can make asthma worse and/or provoke asthma attacks.
- **Outdoor Triggers:** High levels of air pollution (ozone, nitrogen oxides, acidic aerosols, and fine particles) in the air are also associated with making asthma symptoms worse. These pollutants come from smoke, dust, and emissions from cars, factories, and power plants. Exposure to high levels of ozone may trigger asthma attacks or cause children to develop asthma. The risk is greatest when children exercise or play sports outdoors when ozone levels are high. Ozone levels are usually highest in summer. Particle pollution can be high any time of year and is higher near busy roads.

Black children have nearly two times the rates of current asthma as White children.

Figure 2: US EPA's Air Quality Index color codes.

Air Quality Index (AQI) Values	Levels of Health Concern	Colors
When the AQI is in this range:	...air quality conditions are:	...as symbolized by this color:
0 to 50	Good	Green
51 to 100	Moderate	Yellow
101 to 150	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	Orange
151 to 200	Unhealthy	Red
201 to 300	Very Unhealthy	Purple
301 to 500	Hazardous	Maroon

SOURCE: US EPA's AirNow website <http://airnow.gov/index.cfm?action=static.aqi>

What Can You Do?

If your child has asthma or you suspect he or she has asthma, visit a doctor. Ask the doctor to help you learn which triggers affect your child's asthma, and ways to help your child avoid these triggers at home, school, and play. Work with your child's doctor to develop an asthma management plan. Be sure to share a copy of the plan with your child's teacher and school nurse. For more information on indoor asthma triggers and developing an asthma management plan, visit <http://www.epa.gov/iaq/asthma/triggers.html>

Watch for the Air Quality Index during your local weather report. The index uses colors to show how much pollution is in the air. Green and yellow mean air pollution levels are low. Orange, red, or purple mean pollution is at levels that may make asthma worse. (See Figure 2.)

State agencies use TV and radio to warn the public of ozone alerts. On Ozone Action Days, people with asthma should spend less time being active outdoors. Early mornings or late evenings are better times for outdoor activities when ozone is expected to be high.

Many communities have programs and resources to help families. Find a community asthma program near you by visiting the Communities in Action for Asthma-Friendly Environments Network at <http://www.asthmacommunitynetwork.org>. If you work with a community asthma program, join the Network to have access to information, tools, and proven strategies for improving the health of people with asthma.

Get involved with groups that promote policies to improve air quality. For example, some groups work to prohibit smoking in public places. Others work with local governments to help improve air quality.

An example of a successful community organization is

Detroiters Working for Environmental Justice (DWEJ). They convinced the city to buy new vehicles for its fleet that run on “clean” fuels instead of diesel. The new vehicles improve air quality. DWEJ accomplished this through a number of activities. They presented local air quality data at city council meetings.

They held community meetings around Detroit and invited state and city officials. They helped citizens write comments to the Metropolitan Planning Organization. And they helped citizens get appointed to the Detroit Department of Transportation community board. For more information on DWEJ visit <http://www.dwej.org/> or call 313-833-DWEJ (3935).



What's Being Done?

Here are some examples of efforts by Federal governmental agencies, local and national organizations to address childhood asthma.

EPA's Asthma Initiative supports research, education, and public outreach to help people with asthma. Learn more at www.epa.gov/asthma.

EPA's Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools Program helps schools identify and prevent environmental asthma triggers. It also promotes healthy school environments. For more information visit <http://epa.gov/iaq/schools>.

EPA's Asthma Home Environment Checklist gives explains how to conduct home environmental assessments. This checklist can help identify asthma triggers in the home. For a copy of the checklist visit http://www.epa.gov/asthma/pdfs/home_environment_checklist.pdf.

The Community Asthma Education Prevention Program (CAPP) of Philadelphia provides asthma education classes to patients and their families, child care providers, and school personnel. CAPP also provides in home environmental assessments to eligible patients. For more information please email CAPP at cap@email.chop.edu or call (215) 590-5621.

Allies Against Asthma (AAA) helps community groups concerned about asthma in children. AAA also provides lists of asthma education programs across the US. For more information about asthma programs in your area visit: <http://www.asthma.umich.edu/index.html> or call 734-615-3312.

The New England Asthma Regional Council promotes healthy housing, healthy schools, and home assessments to identify and reduce asthma triggers. In addition, the Council is building an asthma tracking system across New England which links health data

with environment data. For more information visit: <http://www.asthmaregionalcouncil.org> or call 617-451-0049 x504. ■

Visit <http://yosemite.epa.gov/ochnpweb.nsf/content/homepage.htm> or call (202) 564-2188.

RESOURCES:

For more information on children's environmental health, visit the EPA's Office of Children's Health Protection and Environmental Education at <http://yosemite.epa.gov/ochnpweb.nsf/content/homepage.htm>. You can also call the office at (202) 564-2188.

America's Children and the Environment data/indicators, <http://www.epa.gov/envirohealth/children/index.htm>

Office of Minority Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov/omh/>

Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Units, www.aoec.org/PEHSU.htm or call toll free 1-888-347-2632

Environmental Management of Pediatric Asthma: Guidelines for Health Care Providers, <http://www.neefusa.org/health/asthma/asthmaguidelines.htm>

National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities, National Institutes of Health, <http://ncmhd.nih.gov/>

African American Health Care and Medical Information, <http://www.blackhealthcare.com>

African American Health Network, National Medical Association, <http://www.aahn.com>

Kaiser Family Foundation Health Disparities Report: A Weekly Look at Race, Ethnicity and Health/ http://kaisernet.org/daily_reports/rep_disparities.cfm.

DiversityData, Harvard School of Public Health website on indicators of how people of different racial/ethnic backgrounds live includes comparative data about housing, neighborhood conditions, residential integration, and education, www.DiversityData.org

Unnatural Causes, a TV documentary series and public outreach campaign on the causes of socioeconomic racial/ethnic inequities in health, <http://www.unnaturalcauses.org/>

WARNING:

Your baby contains toxic chemicals!

Hundreds of toxic chemicals, including PCBs, DDT, endocrine disrupters, and dioxins, to name just a few, are showing up in mothers' and their newborn babies' bodies. These chemicals, found in everyday household products, can get absorbed during a typical morning routine.

Consider this scenario: the pregnant mom awakens after a night of breathing in toxic fumes from a mattress containing flame retardants and melamine. She showers with synthetically scented soap, shampoo and conditioner, and uses popular brands of body lotion, moisturizer, sunscreen, cosmetics and perfume that contain hundreds of chemicals which have been linked to cancer, hormone imbalances, and other illnesses. These chemicals may be seriously compromising her health, as well as her unborn baby's.

Want a Non-Toxic Baby? Set up a Healthy Nursery

Chemicals also migrate into a baby through the nursery. New parents, with good intentions, buy new baby furniture, install new synthetic carpeting, and paint or wallpaper the room — all the while creating a toxic environment from airborne chemicals released from these products. Plus, there are toxic chemicals in the poorly-labeled bottles of kitchen and bathroom cleansers, and in bug sprays and air fresheners used throughout the home.

In addition, common infant body care products can be



problematic. A Seattle Children's Hospital Research Institute study reported that babies recently treated with baby lotion, shampoo, and powder, were more likely to have phthalates in their urine than other babies. Phthalate exposure in early childhood has been associated with altered hormones as well as increased allergies, runny nose, and eczema.

Plus, the FDA does not review personal care ingredients for their safety before they come to market. Manufacturers are free to add almost anything they want into their products, so it's important to buy safe, preferably organic products from trusted companies. The good news is that it's easy to create a safe and natural baby nursery.

Top 10 Ways to Make your Baby Nursery a Safe, Healthy Haven:

1. Choose a crib mattress made from untreated, nontoxic, natural materials like latex foam rubber, wool and cotton. Use a wool and cotton mattress topper.
2. Buy a solid wood crib or cradle/Moses basket instead of fiberboard or particleboard (which contain formaldehyde, a known carcinogen).
3. Use low or no VOC (volatile organic compound) paint for the walls, or paper-based wallpaper instead

of vinyl. Use traditional wallpaper paste instead of self-stick which contains high levels of VOCs.

4. Install wool carpet instead of synthetic. Wool is naturally flame retardant and hypoallergenic.
5. Stay away from synthetic fragrances in things like dryer sheets, air fresheners and body care products. These contain phthalates — chemicals that interfere with hormones. Use 100% essential oils instead.
6. Pick all natural, non-toxic cleaning supplies like white vinegar, hydrogen peroxide and baking soda. Kill odors with baking soda, lemon juice (or lemon essential oil) and water in a spray bottle. Avoid bleach, ammonia and other harsh chemicals to clean clothes, furniture and carpets. Read labels on conventional cleaning supplies!
7. Stay away from plastic bottles and food storage containers — they contain chemicals that leach into food and water. Choose glass or metal instead.
8. Choose wooden toys with nontoxic paints and finishes; and all-natural fibers like cotton, hemp and wool.
9. Don't put electric clocks or cell phones next to the baby's crib, or use electric heating pads or electric blankets in the crib — these have electromagnetic fields (EMFs) that can negatively affect behavior and impact health.
10. Make your home a shoeless one — take off your shoes, especially before entering any bedroom, so you don't track in pesticides and other toxic chemicals from the outside.

The 2010 President's Cancer Panel study says there's a link between environmental toxins and disease. For information on ways to change the government regulatory practice to the Precautionary Principle, check out the Center for Environmental Health's (CEH) website. To learn more about the Safe Chemical Act in Congress, check out the EWG website. For resources on where to buy safe, natural baby products, check out my website, www.supernaturalmom.com. ■

Beth Greer, Super Natural Mom®, is a syndicated radio talk show host, former president and co-owner of The Learning Annex, Certified Build It Green® healthy home makeover specialist, and holistic health educator, who eliminated a sizable tumor in her chest without drugs or surgery. She's author of the bestseller, "Super Natural Home," endorsed by Deepak Chopra, Ralph Nader, Peter Coyote, and Dr. Joe Mercola. Beth is leading a movement of awareness and responsibility about healthy home, work, and school environments. Visit her at www.supernaturalmom.com



CREATING A CLEANER GREENER ENVIRONMENT

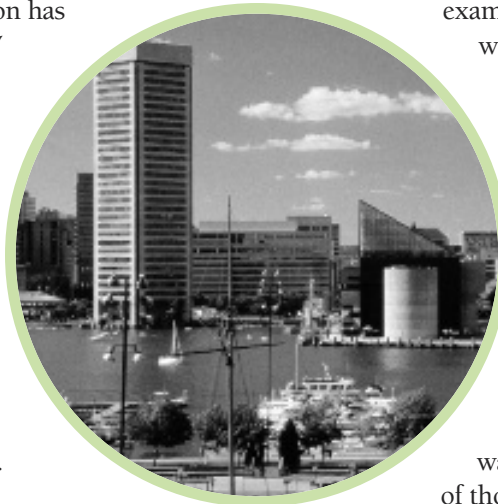
On the Ground In...Baltimore, MD

By Guy Hager

The Parks & People Foundation has been “On the Ground” for 27 years working for a greener and sustainable Baltimore City. Baltimore is 65% African American and the leadership for the green movement is increasingly driven by this population. Parks & People has not done its greening work alone as the USDA Forest Service and many local funders have provided the resources to get the movement going and to keep it moving forward.

Parks & People has developed innovative model programs for urban and community forestry and has helped city, state and federal governments to adopt policies and procedures that make it easier for community members to undertake important stewardship work. Currently, we are working on hot-button issues incorporating health, outdoor play, and sustainability indicators into our ongoing programs.

We are community organizers at heart and we have trained many city residents and students who are now community activists and are doing great things in government, non profits and community organizations in Baltimore and elsewhere. One



example is Bryant Smith, Parks & People’s watershed community forester. He started with us at age 18, left after several years with us to take a position with the United States Forestry Service and returned 10 years later to manage one of our larger projects—the restoration of a section of West Baltimore we call Watershed 263. Our belief in building community through greening is evident in this project which is working to improve both the water quality and quality of life for tens of thousands of people.

Partnerships and capacity building have always been our community focus while working on environmental improvement and youth education. We have supported over 600 community greening projects that provide funding and technical assistance for

emerging community groups to undertake greening projects in their neighborhoods. Often these initial projects result in larger greening activities throughout a neighborhood as well as encourages residents to take on additional issues of community improvement.

The Parks & People Foundation is also committed to nurturing children and supporting



communities by working together to provide enriching activities for youth. Through our sports, afterschool and summer programs we have served over 44,000 young people in Baltimore City. Our diverse programs serve residents of all ages, backgrounds and interests all with a simple common goal of creating a better Baltimore.

We are happy to report that through our work Baltimore residents are much more physically active today. Many community volunteers have taken up urban gardening and others are working toward real green business and employment opportunities. We have overcome the usual naysayers who claim that African Americans and other minority populations are not interested in preserving the environment. Politically, Baltimore is greener than it has ever been and elected officials are on the bandwagon promoting greening and sustainability. Baltimore residents who take the initiative to clean up and green their neighborhoods are measurably improving the overall condition of their communities by keeping them safer, improving property values and providing places for families to enjoy the outdoors. These improvements are influencing many residents to stay in their neighborhoods and others to return. ■



Bryant Smith, Parks & People's watershed community forester.

Guy Hager is the Senior Director of Great Parks, Clean Streams & Green Communities for the Parks & People Foundation.

To learn more about the Parks & People Foundation you can visit their website at www.parksandpeople.org or email at info@parksandpeople.org.

"On the Ground In..." is a feature in Child Health Talk that will focus on programs making a difference in improving the health of our children and families in communities across America. To nominate a program that is achieving great outcomes in your neighborhood or city, please call (202) 833-2220 or email moreinfo@nbcdi.org, subject line "On the Ground."

Literature to Awaken Our Senses

Dr. Toni S. Walters, Ph.D., *Professor Oakland University*
Dr. Vivian G. Johnson, Ph.D., *Associate Professor, Marygrove College*
Dr. Jonella A. Mongo Ph.D., *Education Consultant & Adjunct Faculty*

Poetry

By Jonella A. Mongo

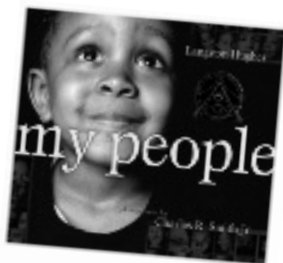
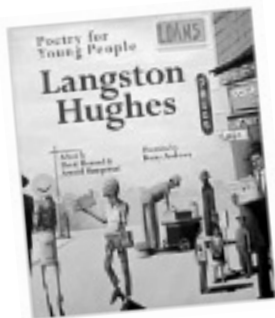
Poetry awakens our senses
Touches our soul
Spins words around and around
Poetry makes us laugh
And it makes us cry
It speaks to us in ways we desire
It goes deep down inside
Poetry is me
Poetry is you
Poetry is us!
Let's read a poem today!
Share a poem with a child
Read a poem with a friend
Give a loved one a poem
Post a poem for all to see
Poetry is me
Poetry is you
Poetry is us!
Let's read a poem today!



Like previous Between the Covers columns, this issue highlights the vast array of poetry books written and/or illustrated by *African Americans. These selections provide magical experiences for young readers from the collections of Maya Angelo's and Langston Hughes *Poetry for Young People* to Nikki Giovanni's *Hip Hop Speaks to Children: A celebration of poetry with a beat*. Of course, the sonnet *A Wreath for Emmett Till* by Marilyn Nelson is both a poem of sadness and optimism. All of the books listed provide young and older readers an opportunity to experience reading, rhythm and rhymes from diverse perspectives. So we invite parents, teachers, caregivers and others who spend time with children to read and/or recite poetry regularly. Let's awaken our senses; let's read a poem today!

Ages 4-8

Roessel, David and *Arnold Rampersand, illustrator
 *Benny Andrew, (2006), **Poetry for Young People: Langston Hughes**, Sterling Publishing Co., Inc. This collection of poems by well-known poet Langston Hughes is part of the Poetry for Young People series. It contains a variety of old favorites wonderfully illustrated by the renowned artist Benny Andrew. Ages 5-9 (This book is most easily located from the Sterling website: <http://www.sterlingpub.com/book/=915015>)



*Hughes, Langston, photographs by *Charles Smith, (2009), **My People**, Simon & Schuster Children's. Smith's sepia photographs vividly capture the words of this much-loved poem. Ages 4-8

*Stephoe, Javaka, (2001), **In Daddy's Arms I am Tall: African Americans Celebrating Fathers**, Lee and Low Books. A wonderful collection of 13 poems written by various poets to celebrate fathers from all walks of life. These poems underscore the beautiful bond between parent and child. The collage artwork of Steptoe captures the essence of each poem. Ages 4-8



*Giovanni, Nikki, illustrators Alicia Vergel de Dios, Damian Ward & Kristen Balouch, Jeremy Tugeau, & Michele Noiset. **Hip Hop Speaks to Children: A celebration of Poetry with a Beat (A Poetry Speaks Experience)**, (2008), From Langston Hughes to the early hip hop group the Sugar

Hill Gang and Tupac, this exploration of the relationship between poetry and rap is brilliantly placed on a musical time line. The accompanying CD includes brief introductions, often through the author's voice, provides background knowledge about each poem. Age 4-8

*Adedjouma, Davida, illustrator
 *R. Gregory Christie, (1996), **The Palm of My Heart: Poetry by African American Children**.

Lee & Low. This collection of poems interprets life through the eyes and poetic voices of young African American urban children. Christie's acrylic and pencil illustrations extend the poetic messages that are excellent models for engaging youngsters in the writing process. Ages 4-8



*Rochelle, Belinda, (2000), **Words with Wings: A Treasury of African American Poetry and Art**, Amistad. The works of 20 legendary artists such as Elizabeth Catlett and Ossawa Tanner are paired with the poems of famous poets such as Alice Walker and Robert Hayden with all showing strength, courage and determination. Ages 6-10

Ages 9-12

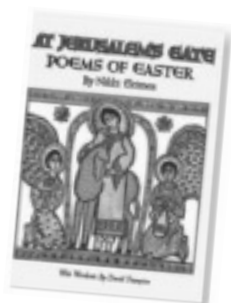
Wilson, Edwin Graves, editor, illustrator, *Jerome Lagarrique. (2007) **Poetry for Young People: Maya Angelou**, Sterling. This collection features 25 of Maya Angelou's most notable poems. It is a great introduction to poetry for independent readers and all listeners. Ages 8-12



Muse, Daphne, illustrator
 *Charlotte Riley Webb, (2005), **The Entrance Place of Wonders: Poems of the Harlem Renaissance**. Abrams Books for Younger Readers. This rhythmic celebration of the Harlem Renaissance is a great introduction to this historic period. Poetic voices in the words of great writers convey the spirit of the people. Ages 9-12

continued on page 14

*Grimes, Nikki, illustrated with woodcuts by David Frampton (2005), **At Jerusalem's Gate: Poems of Easter**. Eerdmans. Grimes' free verse poems tell the story of the events leading up to the crucifixion. The well-placed woodcuts reflect the emotional aspect of each scene. Ages 10 and up



*Grimes, Nikki, illustrator Angelo, (1998), **A Dime a Dozen**. Dial Books. In this collection of twenty poems, Nikki Grimes revisits her experiences growing up in New York City. Short verse, free flowing poems describe the childhood pains and joys that helped to shape her, while the black and white drawings enhance these glimpses into the poet's life. Young Adult



*Nikki Grimes, illustrator Angelo. **Stepping out with Grandma Mac**, (2001), This is a poetic exploration into the relationship between a teenager and grandmother. Twenty poems, supported by vivid pencil drawings, invite the reader to listen as poetic language traverse the generation gap. Ages 9-12

*Smith, Charles R., (2003), **Hoop Queens: Poem**, Candlewick Press. WNBA players are celebrated through poetry with grace and style in motion. Ages 8 and up



*Smith, Charles R., (2004), **Hoop Kings**, Candlewick Press. Legendary basketball players are presented as poetry in motion. Ages 8 and up



*Dungy, Camille T. (2009), **Black Nature-Four Centuries of African American Nature Poetry**. This extensive collection of poems presents a multitude of understandings about nature within urban and rural perspectives. The poetry collectively resonates the historical and contemporary cultural lenses of African American

poets and poetry dating back to the 1700s. This volume is a keepsake to be repeatedly studied and enjoyed by readers and listeners. Young Adult and up

*Nelson, Marilyn, illustrator Philippe Lardy (2005), **A Wreath for Emmett Till**, Houghton Mifflin. A heroic crown of sonnets, eloquently not only tells Emmett Till's story, but also connects the years he was denied to any and all who have lived through the years since his tragic death. Young Adult



Young Adult



*Myers, Walter Dean, (2010), **Here in Harlem: Poems in Many Voices**. Holiday House. Harlem is the home of his youth and Walter Dean Myers' poetic voice is a historical tour guide. Sepia photographs of people, places and events are an enjoyable journey for all. Young Adult

THE BTC TEAM:

Dr. Toni S. Walters – Professor at Oakland University in Rochester, Michigan
 Dr. Vivian G. Johnson – Associate Professor at Marygrove College in Detroit, Michigan
 Dr. Jonella A. Mongo – Education Consultant & Adjunct Faculty Member at Oakland University.

A NOTE TO AUTHORS AND PUBLISHERS

We encourage authors and publishers to send advance review copies and newly released books for children to: Dr. Vivian Johnson, Marygrove College, Detroit, Michigan 48221
 The *Between the Covers* team will review them for consideration in future columns.

TIPS FOR Urban Gardeners

By Amy Souza

Around the world — especially in developing nations — urban agriculture is a matter of survival. Farms and gardens within and just outside of major cities provide vegetables, milk, and livestock for the population. In small home gardens or vacant lots, many poorer city dwellers grow their own food, thus enhancing their own food security.

In this country, fruit and vegetables are abundant, but much of it grows far from where we live. USDA research shows that the average distance a vegetable travels from the fields to the dinner table is 1,500 miles. Not only does produce lose much of its flavor before it gets to you, it also loses many nutrients.

When you live in an urban area, or even the suburbs, it's easy to forget where food comes from. Most Americans now live in cities, and as we become more disconnected from the land and the people who grow our food, we lose a sense of foods' value. With its poor soil and dirty air, the city might seem like the last place to plant anything. But with a few tricks, city dwellers can grow a bountiful harvest.

Raise Your Beds

Because space is at a premium, using intensive growing methods like raised beds or succession planting makes sense. You can also take advantage of vertical growing techniques for both vegetables and flowers.



Keep the Weeds Down

Mulching and keeping weeds at bay helps conserve water, a definite plus during this drought year.

Try a Community Garden

Community gardens exist in many urban areas, providing bits of green space amid the concrete and allowing city dwellers to reap the benefits of their labor.

continued on page 16

For a small fee, you can rent a plot for the season, and can grow whatever vegetables and annual flowers you'd like. Community gardens usually provide everything you need: garden tools, water, even expert advice! Many gardens also participate in community programs, such as Plant a Row for the Hungry.

Amend Your Soil

City soil is often compacted and may contain pollutants from car exhaust and industrial waste. It's a good idea to have soil tested before planting anything and to add organic matter, like compost, to your garden plot. You may also need to add sand for drainage. Most community gardens already have fertile soil from past growing seasons, as



well as experts on hand to help you figure out what soil amendments are best for your plot.

Support Your Local Urban Farmer

Within city limits, many small farmers raise niche crops, those that don't require acres and acres of land. Look for these products — like honey or wheat grass — at your corner store or farmer's market. Encourage stores in town to carry products grown and produced by locals.

Plant a Pot of Flowers

If you don't want to undertake an entire garden, plant some flowers! Every yard, porch, or stoop can benefit from a pot of pansies or petunias. Or, brighten a shady area with coleus or impatiens. Self-watering planters, soil amendments, and water-absorbing polymers can help keep your flowers healthy through heat and drought conditions.

For More Information

For information about urban agriculture in North America and around the world, visit City Farmer, a comprehensive web site maintained by Canada's Office of Urban Agriculture.

For more information about urban gardening, or other articles like this one, visit <http://www.gardeners.com>. ■









What's In Season for FALL?

By Alexis Blight

Below are some of the fruits and vegetables that are in season this fall. Support local farmers by purchasing your produce at a farmer's market or local grocery store. Be sure to bring your kids along to help pick out the groceries. Add some variety to your usual serving of fruits and vegetables by challenging your family to try something new this fall!

Happy healthy eating! ■



Apples		Granny Smiths and Red Delicious are favorites, but try some of the more unusual apple varieties as well, like Gala and Honey Crisp.
Celery		Be sure to rinse your celery stalks thoroughly before eating. Celery is a quick and easy after school snack but also a great addition to soups and salads.
Chiles		Dried chiles are available year round at grocery stores, but hot, fresh chiles are best in the fall. There are numerous varieties ranging from mild to extremely hot, so you are sure to find something you enjoy.
Cranberries		Cranberries are a very nutritious fruit best known for their debut at Thanksgiving in cranberry sauce. However, there are endless other uses for cranberries – see our Orange and Cranberry Muffin recipe on page 18.
Figs		Figs are fragile and ripen quickly so eat them within one to two days of purchasing. Try adding them to yogurt for a sweet, healthy snack.
Grapes		There are many varieties of grapes to choose from – Black Monukka, Cardinal and Ribier, just to name a few. Grapes make for a simple, on-the-go snack.
Green Beans		Green beans are available year-round, but are at their best from mid-summer into fall. They tend to be served steamed and buttered but can also be baked into a green bean casserole.
Mushrooms		Cultivated mushrooms are less expensive and more readily available than wild mushrooms. You can steam them or try making cream of mushroom soup.
Pomegranates		Pomegranates are in season for about two months in the fall. Cut open these bright red fruits and enjoy the fresh seeds.
Pumpkins		They aren't just for carving at Halloween. Try making pumpkin bread or soup. If you do decide to carve a pumpkin, try roasting the left over seeds for a yummy snack.

Source: about.com

FALL 2011 RECIPE

Orange Cranberry Muffins

By Alexis Blight

These fruit-filled muffins make a great breakfast food or after school snack. Take your kids with you to the local grocery store to pick out the ingredients. Once home, make sure to include the entire family in the preparation. Then enjoy this simple, healthy snack!

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Total Time: 40 minutes

Makes: 12 servings

Serving Size: 1 muffin

Ingredients:

Cooking spray

1 navel orange, cut into eighths

½ cup orange juice

1 large egg

¼ cup vegetable oil

1 ½ cups all-purpose flour

¾ cup sugar

1 teaspoon baking powder

1 teaspoon baking soda

1 teaspoon kosher salt

½ cup dried cranberries, chopped



Instructions:

- Preheat the oven to 375°F.
- Coat a standard-size 12-cup muffin tin with cooking spray.
- Put the orange wedges, orange juice, egg, and oil into a blender and blend until smooth.
- In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, and salt; whisk to incorporate.
- Make a well in the center of the dry ingredients; pour the orange mixture into it and stir to make a thick batter. Stir in the cranberries.
- Divide the mixture among the muffin tins, filling the tins about ¾ full, and bake until the muffins are golden and push back when gently pressed, 20 to 25 minutes.
- Let cool on a rack and enjoy warm or toasted.

Nutrition Facts (per serving):

Calories 175, Carbs 31g, Fiber 1g, Protein 2g, Total Fat 5g, Saturated Fat 0g

Taken from: <http://www.parenting.com/article/orange-cranberry-muffins>. Originally published in Allison Fishman's *You Can Trust a Skinny Cook*.

Send your favorite Summer recipe to moreinfo@nbcddi.org and we'll publish one winner in the next issue of Child Health Talk!

*every child needs
a voice*



**SPEAK
UP**

How to become a **MEMBER**

- Contact the National Office toll free at (800) 556-2234 or at (202) 833-2220.
- Apply online by visiting NBCDI at www.nbcdi.org

*Let's continue to work together to
improve and advance the quality of life
for Black children and their families
through advocacy and education.*



**NATIONAL
BLACK CHILD
DEVELOPMENT
INSTITUTE, INC.**

1313 L Street, NW • Suite 110 • Washington, DC 20005



National Black Child Development Institute

NBCDI is nurturing the natural curiosity, excitement and genius in children



Designate #11574 on your CFC Pledge Card

*NBCDI is a member of
Children's First –
America's Charities*

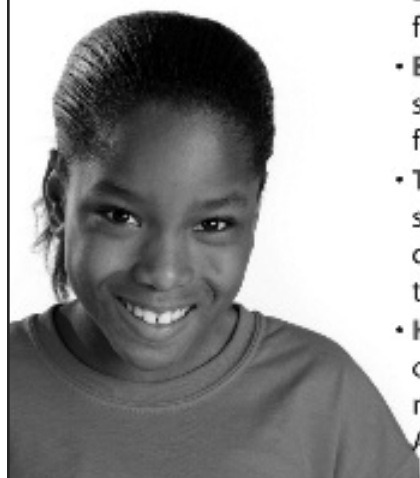
- **Love to Read** encourages parents, as their child's first teacher, to instill the love of reading at birth.
- **Entering the College Zone** provides middle school students with the tools they will need for college...NOW.
- **The Parent Empowerment Program** strengthens parents' knowledge of child development while raising their confidence in themselves and their parenting skills.
- **Healthy Practices Project** is an education campaign designed to encourage healthy nutrition practices specifically among African American families with young children.



**NATIONAL
BLACK CHILD
DEVELOPMENT
INSTITUTE, INC.**

1313 L Street, Suite 110
Washington, DC 20005

www.nbcdi.org
202.833.2220
800.556.2234



Committed to improve and enhance the quality of life for Black children and their families.

National Black Child Development Institute

1313 L Street, NW, Suite 110

Washington, D.C. 20005

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Washington, D.C.
Permit No. 6281



Child Health Talk is sponsored by State Farm Insurance Companies
State Farm Insurance Companies • Home Offices: Bloomington, Illinois

The National Black Child
Development Institute, Inc.

41ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2011

*Essential for the
Journey of
Our Children:*



Keep the Cultural Fire Burning

SAVE THE DATE!

October 8–11, 2011

Renaissance Nashville Hotel
and Convention Center

Nashville, Tennessee



NATIONAL
BLACK CHILD
DEVELOPMENT
INSTITUTE, INC.