



CLEAN AIR DAY JOINT WEBINAR: FLYERS LAUNCH

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CC&HRP RESEARCH: THEMATIC AREAS

- Air pollution
- Climate change
- **Health** focus: incl. **maternal health**



Image from Pixabay



CLEAN AIR DAY

- Theme for 2025: Racing for air. **Every breath matters**

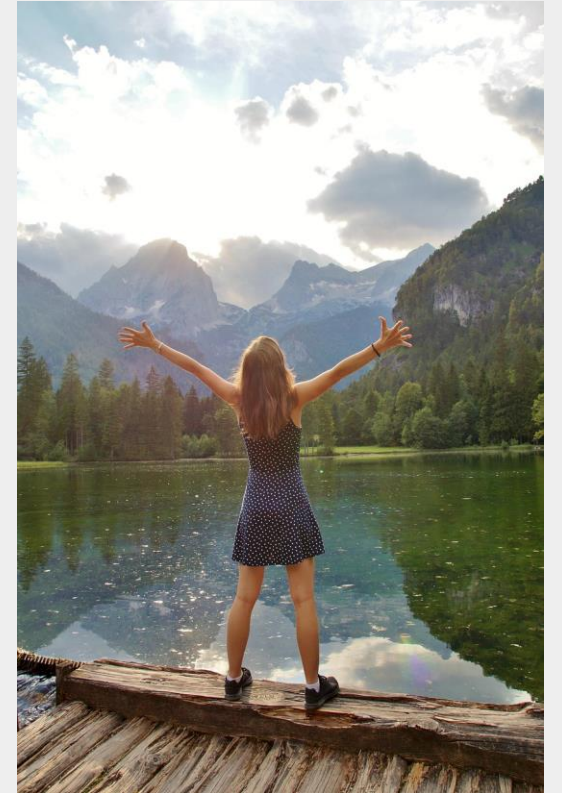


Image by ivabalk from Pixabay

CREATING AWARENESS

- Designed flyers
 - Effects of air pollution, especially on mothers and infants
 - Limiting air pollution exposure near busy roads



AIR POLLUTION, MOTHERS & INFANTS



Protect Your Baby From Harmful Air Pollution
Important health message for pregnant women and mothers of young children in South Africa

"My grandson was affected the most by the air pollution. He was not able to play with his friends from a very young age and he was always short of breath. He just couldn't run and play or even play with a ball. He had to rush him to Witswatersrand Hospital one day."

Why You Should Be Concerned?
Air pollution is a public health risk – especially for pregnant women and young children. Breathing polluted air during pregnancy can increase the risk of low birth weight, preterm birth, developmental delays, and in severe cases even miscarriage or stillbirth. When exposed to polluted air, the unborn baby is exposed to harmful chemicals and other pollutants. When the pregnant woman is exposed to polluted air, she is also exposed to the same pollutants. When the pregnant woman is exposed to polluted air, she is also exposed to the same pollutants.

What You Can Do to Protect Yourself and Your Baby:
Simple steps you can take:
Avoidance:
• Use short cooking hobs (like LPG, electricity, or solar water heaters).
• Avoid candles or incense burners or other sources of indoor air pollution.
• Use the best air purifier available.
• Avoid burning wood or coal.
• Avoid smoking during pregnancy and breastfeeding.
When you are outside:
• Avoid walking along busy roads with lots of traffic, especially during rush hour.
• Wear a face mask or scarf if exposed to dust or smoke.
• Use a face mask or scarf to help protect others from smoke or dust.
For your health and your baby's health:
• Avoid all your outdoor activities.
• Report breathing problems or coughs to your doctor or health worker.
• Ask your doctor about asthma symptoms and whether that can help protect your baby's health.

What to do if your child has asthma and you live in a polluted area?
1. **Medical Management**
• Work with your doctor to develop an asthma action plan. This includes daily medication that should be taken every day, and rescue medication for emergencies. Use your rescue inhaler only when needed.
• Get a nebulizer. It's a device that turns medicine into a mist that your child can breathe in.
2. **Minimize Indoor Air Pollution**
• Use air purifiers to help remove the particles indoors.
• Clean windows often or use air filters to help reduce smoke or other pollutants.
• Avoid using candles, incense burners, or other sources of indoor air pollution.
• Control allergens: Wash bedding weekly in hot water, reduce dust, mold, and pet dander.
3. **Monitor and Respond to Outdoor Air Quality**
• Check the air quality index (AQI) on the internet or on a mobile app.
• If the AQI is high, avoid outdoor activities.
• If the AQI is high, avoid walking along busy roads.
4. **Advocate and Plan Long Term**
• Tell your doctor about the pollution in your area and how it affects your child's health.
• Contact your local government to report the pollution problem.
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Let's work together for clean air and healthy babies!
• Share this information with other mothers and babies.
• Speak up about local air pollution with your local government.
• Ask for support from your local government.

More Information
• Speak to your doctor or community health worker.
• Contact the Department of Health or Environmental Affairs.
• Visit the Department of Health or Environmental Affairs website for more information.

BREATHE SAFELY NEAR BUSY ROADS



Create QR codes at
littleappz.co/qrcodes

BREATHE SAFELY NEAR BUSY ROADS

Protect Your Family from Air Pollution

Why you should be concerned:

Living close to busy roads puts your health at risk.

Air pollution from vehicles and dust can harm everyone but especially:

- Babies and young children
- Pregnant women
- Elderly people
- Anyone with asthma, TB, heart or lung problems

Where is the road pollution coming from?

- Exhaust fumes from taxis, buses, and trucks
- Car exhaust fumes during traffic jams
- Dust from unpaved or damaged roads
- Burning of tyres, plastic, or waste near roadsides

You may not see it — but harmful particles and gases can stay in the air for hours.

FACT Breathing dirty air every day can lead to coughing, chest pain, asthma attacks, high blood pressure, or even strokes.

How You Can Protect Yourself and Your Family

At Home:

- Keep windows and doors closed during peak traffic hours or when there is visible smoke/dust.
- Avoid outdoor activities during rush hour if you don't have to go out.
- Wet the ground outside your home to reduce dust, especially in dry areas.
- Plant trees or shrubs near your yard to help block dust (if space allows).
- Avoid burning rubbish or tyres near your home.

Outside:

- Avoid walking or walking close to busy roads, especially with children or while pregnant.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a cloth mask or scarf if dust or smoke is visible.
- Walk on less busy side streets when possible.
- Encourage children to play away from the road.

Health Tips:

- Go to the clinic if you or your child has a persistent cough, chest pain, or struggles to breathe.
- Make sure children get all their vaccinations — they protect against lung infections.
- Use prescribed medications regularly and appropriately.
- Pregnant? Attend all antenatal visits and talk to a nurse about how air pollution affects your baby.
- Avoid areas where there is heavy smoke as much as possible.

Let's Take Action Together:

- Report illegal burning or dumping to your local ward councillor or municipality.
- Work with your community health worker to raise awareness about clean air.
- Join or support local campaigns for cleaner roads and safer transport.
- Talk to taxi drivers about turning off engines while parked at ranks or stops.
- Educate your children about road safety.
- Familiarise yourself with the Air Quality Index (AQI).
- Check the SAQAIS website (<http://saqa.is.environment.gov.za>) and the mobile application called SAQAIS to get real time information on the state of air quality.

Clean Air - Healthy Lungs

Protect your family,
protect your future.

health
Department
Health
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

saMRC
South African Medical Research Council

INFORMATION SHARING

- **Protect Your Baby From Harmful Air Pollution**
- **Breathe Safely Near Busy Roads**





The South African Medical Research Council
recognizes the catastrophic and persisting consequences of colonialism and
apartheid, including land dispossession and the intentional imposition of
educational and health inequities.

Acknowledging the SAMRC's historical role and silence during apartheid,
we commit our capacities and resources to the continued promotion of justice and
dignity in health research in South Africa.



transformation
WORKING TOGETHER FOR EXCELLENCE