

**November 25,  
2013**



## What is LIFE?

LIFE is a unique statewide dialogue that brings together organizations and individuals committed to addressing the challenges and opportunities facing low-income New Yorkers as they seek safe, affordable and reliable energy.

Sponsored by the New York State Public Service Commission and underwritten by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA).

LIFE encourages an interactive exchange of information and collaboration among the programs and resources that assist low-income energy consumers.

## Children's HealthWatch Launches New Blog

The research organization Children's HealthWatch has announced the launch of a new blog to their website: <http://www.childrenshealthwatch.org>

Children's HealthWatch works to improve child health by bringing evidence and analysis from the front lines of pediatric care to policy makers and the public while monitoring the impact of economic conditions and public policies on the health and well-being of very young children. In the blog's inaugural post, Children's HealthWatch Founder and Principal Investigator, Dr. Deborah A. Frank, reminds us of the real-world consequences for the growth of children's bodies and brains when changes are made to programs that help families make ends meet:

[http://www.childrenshealthwatch.org/2013/10/frank\\_snap/](http://www.childrenshealthwatch.org/2013/10/frank_snap/)

Their policy action brief titled "Energy Insecurity is a Major Threat to Child Health" can be accessed online: [http://www.childrenshealthwatch.org/wp-content/uploads/EnergyInsecurity\\_brief\\_February2010.pdf](http://www.childrenshealthwatch.org/wp-content/uploads/EnergyInsecurity_brief_February2010.pdf)

Other Children's HealthWatch publications related to energy can be found on the website:

[http://www.childrenshealthwatch.org/?post\\_type=publication&publication\\_keyword=energy](http://www.childrenshealthwatch.org/?post_type=publication&publication_keyword=energy)

Scholars from Children's HealthWatch have recently published an article in the peer-reviewed international medical journal *The Lancet*, showing that research has consistently demonstrated that children can thrive when programs such as SNAP, utility assistance, and housing subsidies provide vital aid to families struggling to meet basic needs. [http://www.childrenshealthwatch.org/wp-content/uploads/DF\\_Lancet\\_Oct2013.pdf](http://www.childrenshealthwatch.org/wp-content/uploads/DF_Lancet_Oct2013.pdf)

Children's HealthWatch research has found that maintaining consistent utility services for families is critical for children's health and safety. Energy insecurity is associated with poor health, increased hospitalizations and risk of developmental delay in very young children. Energy assistance can be effective in protecting children's health. Children's HealthWatch encourages policy makers to:

- Fund the federal Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) at the maximum authorized level in order to meet the needs of more eligible families.
- Support consumer shut-off protections that protect vulnerable populations—the disabled, the elderly, the sick, and young children—from extreme weather conditions and high energy prices.
- Expand home weatherization programs for low-income families.
- Carefully consider impacts of legislation dealing with greenhouse gas emissions and global climate disruption to ensure energy price increases do not fall disproportionately on low-income families.
- Ensure that energy insecurity data is collected in the same uniform, annual manner currently used to track food insecurity to understand the magnitude of the problem at a national level.

View the full newsletter on LIFE's website here: <http://www.lifenys.org/newsletter/archive/>