



# The Black Women's Environmental Wellness Project

Morgan Barnes, MPH

April Reid, MPA

The Center for Black Women's Wellness

Environmental Justice Conference 2023



# Who is CBWW?

## OUR MISSION:

*To improve the health and well being of Black women and their families, and the economic health of communities*

- With a 35-year history, CBWW was born out of recognition of the **dual oppression of race and gender in healthcare.**
- CBWW's goal is to provide **medically under-served, low-income** adults residing in Metropolitan Atlanta with **easy access to quality and no cost/affordable healthcare.**
- CBWW serves over 2000 women and their families in Metro Atlanta.





# Programs

## ■ **Wellness**

- Women's Wellness Clinic
- Chronic Disease Prevention and Management
- Community Lifestyle Education
- Behavioral Health Services
- Breast and Cervical Cancer Program
- Environmental Wellness Program
- Vaccine Hesitancy Program

## ■ **Atlanta Healthy Start Initiative**

- Case Management program serving pregnant women and infants
- Fatherhood Initiative
- Pre-Natal and Postnatal Education

## ■ **Maternal Health Equity**

- Maternal and child health advocacy programming

## ■ **Women's Economic Self-Sufficiency Program**

- micro-enterprise development initiative to increase the opportunity for individuals to become self-employed by starting and operating a micro-business.



# BLACK WOMEN'S ENVIRONMENTAL WELLNESS PROJECT

Meet the Team



**Jemea Dorsey**  
CEO



**April Reid**  
Wellness Program  
Manager



**Marcia Worrell**  
Wellness Program  
Specialist



**Catrina Williams**  
Atlanta Healthy Start  
Coordinator



**Morgan Barnes**  
Wellness Program  
Coordinator



**Gillian Smith**  
Wellness Program  
Associate



**Thao Lam**  
BWEWP Consultant



**Abby Mutic**  
SE PEHSU



**Kimberley Broomfield-  
Massey**  
Evaluation Consultant



**Nathan Mutic**  
SE PEHSU



**Janina Daniels**  
Atlanta Healthy Start  
Program Manager





## The Black Women's Environmental Wellness Project (BWEWP)

- The Black Women's Environmental Wellness project is designed to **empower Black mothers to protect the health of their children** through enhanced **environmental health literacy**.
- **Multi-level approach** to increasing environmental health literacy and decreasing environmental exposures among Black children and their families.
- In 2018, CBWW received **funding and support from Emory University Children's Environmental Health Research Center (CEHC)** to pilot an environmental health literacy project to combat the many environmental exposures that disproportionately affect African American children in low-income communities.



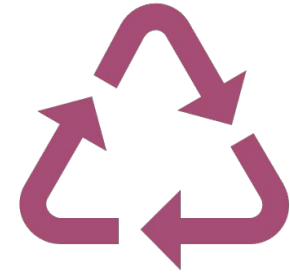
# Why BWEWP?



Numerous studies have documented the environmental justice issues facing low income and minority communities as well as the resulting negative health outcomes of children living in those communities



These issues include disproportionate exposure to lead, air pollution, phthalates, poor housing, and pesticides.

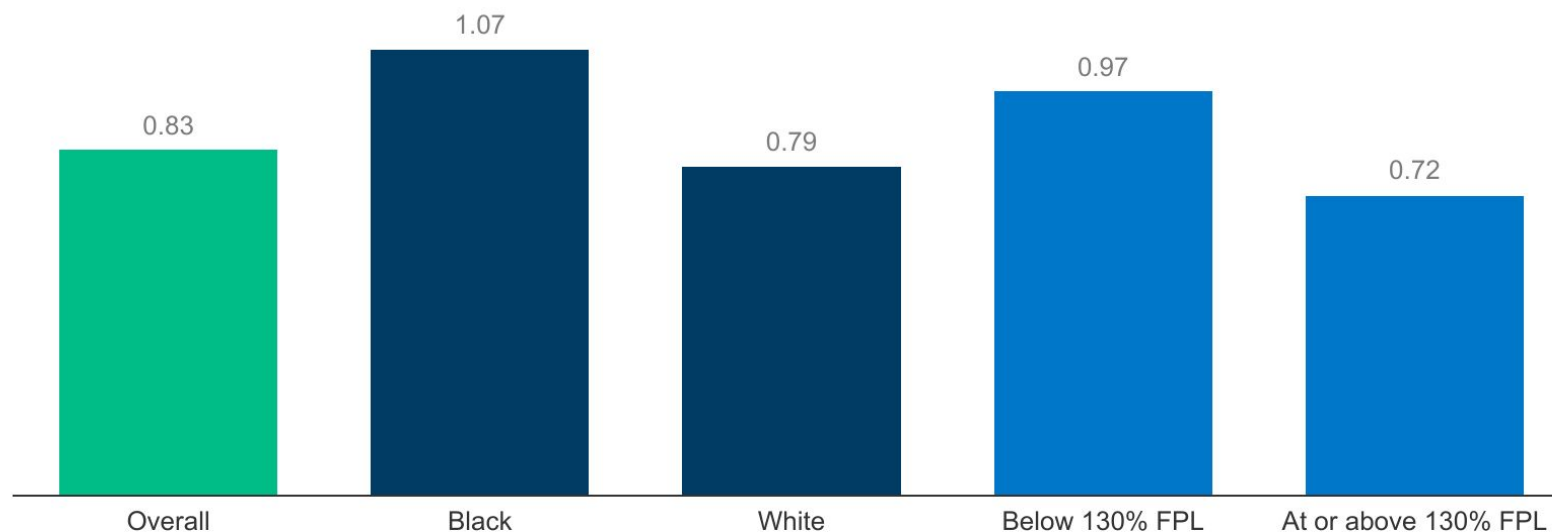


The environmental injustices present in Georgia span from air pollution, food access and quality, water quality issues, hazardous waste sites, polluting plants, and more.



## Black and Lower Income Children are at Increased Risk for Lead Exposure

Mean Blood Lead Levels in Children Ages 1 to 5, 2011-2016



NOTE: Data from the 2011-2016 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES). Data were only reported for non-Hispanic White, non-Hispanic Black, and Mexican American. The mean blood lead level for Mexican American children was 0.78 over the period. FPL refers to federal poverty level.

SOURCE: Ruckart PZ, Jones RL, Courtney JG, et al. Update of the Blood Lead Reference Value — United States, 2021. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2021;70:1509–1512.

KFF

## What Story Does the Data Tell?

- Stressors related to structural racism impact the health of our communities.
- Low-income **minority children are more likely to be exposed to lead and other environmental exposures** that impact health and brain development.



# Project Goals and Objectives

- the infusion of **environmental health literacy** information into **existing CBWW programming** to increase Black women's capacity to protect the health of their children;
- the execution of an **environmental health social media campaign** to provide culturally appealing environmental health messaging to Black women through social media platforms;
- the administration of a **train the trainer module**
- Integration of **Environmental Justice** and **Environmental Racism in Outreach Programming**







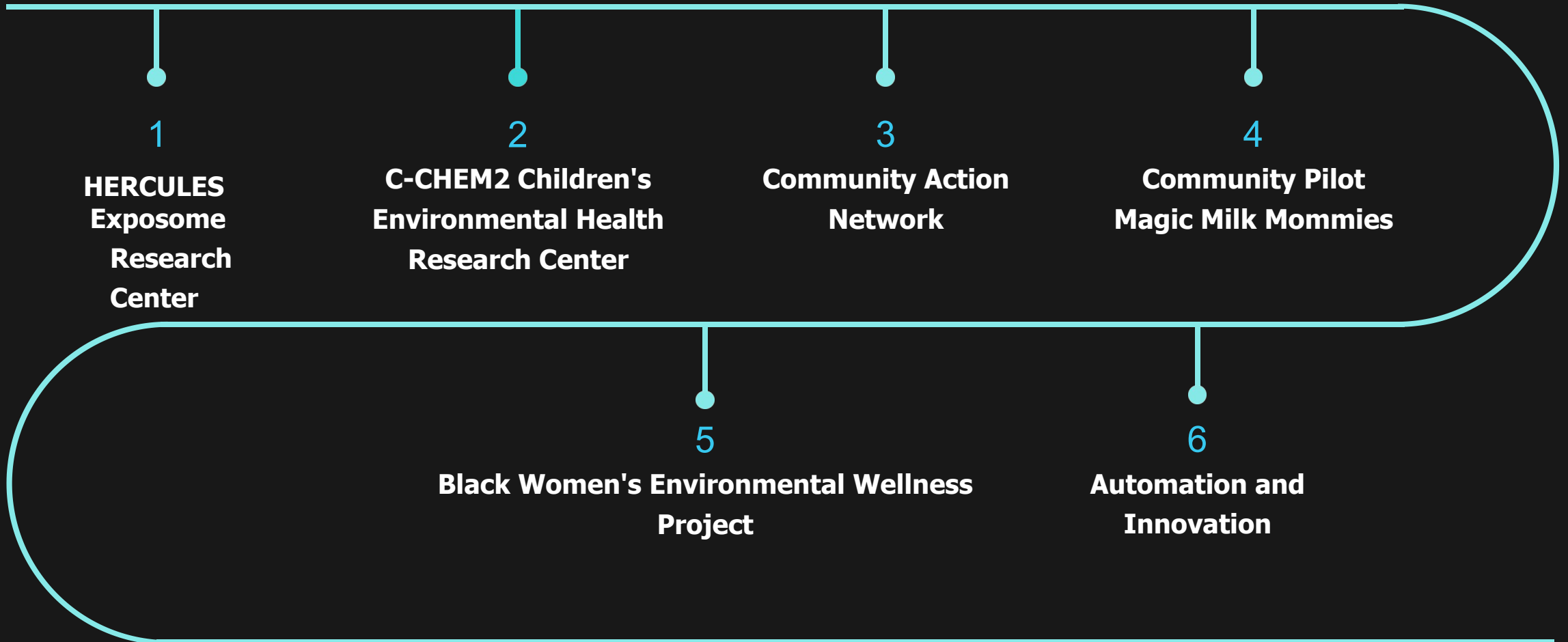
## Breaking the Silos: Identifying Key Stakeholders

- **Collaboration** between federal agencies, community-based organizations (CBO's) and educational institutions were **vital to the implementation of the program.**
  - Emory University School of Nursing (CHARTER)
  - Region 4 PEHSU (Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit)
  - CBWW

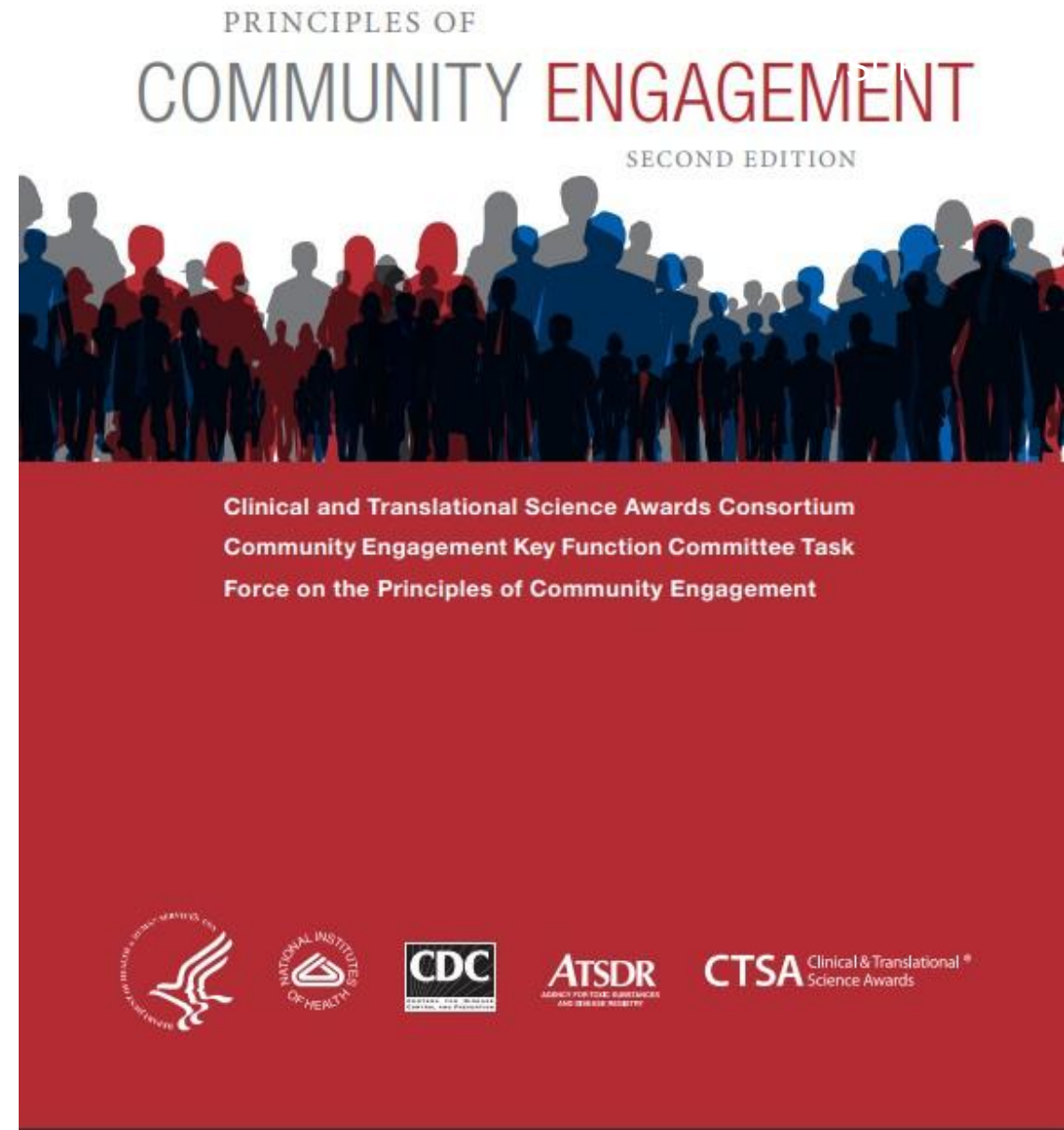


# Timeline of Community-Academic Partnership

Connecting the dots to today and leveraging PEHSU partnerships



1. Be clear about the **purposes or goals**
2. Become knowledgeable about **the community's culture**,  
Learn about the **community's perceptions**.
3. Go to the community, **establish relationships, build trust**.
4. **Partnering** with the community is necessary to **create change and improve health**.
5. **Recognize and respect the diversity** of the community.
6. Community engagement can only be **sustained by identifying and mobilizing community strengths** and by **developing** the community's **capacity and resources to make decisions and take action**.
7. Organizations that wish to engage a community as well as individuals seeking to effect change must **be prepared to release control of actions or interventions** to the community and **be flexible to meet its changing needs**.
8. Community collaboration requires **long-term**



# FOCUS GROUP SURVEY

## RESULTS

### A Quick Breakdown

- Food and Safety Cleaning
- Products
- Hair and Beauty Products Air
- Pollution

## THE ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH

The Center for Black Women's Wellness and Emory's Children Center are working together to better understand how the environment affects you and your family.

Please select the **top three topics** that are the most important for you and your family's health.

Also, place an "X" on the topic you are least worried about.

	<b>Dust:</b> The parking lot for chemicals	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>Lead:</b> How to detect it in the home to keep your family safe	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>Pest &amp; Rodent Control:</b> Safer ways to be bug free	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>Hair, Skin and Beauty Products:</b> Stay beautiful without the harsh chemicals	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>Food Safety and Storage:</b> Best ways to pick, clean and store foods	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>Mold:</b> How to prevent and rid your space of mold	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>Cleaning Products:</b> Keeping your home spic and span without harsh chemicals	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>Tap vs. Bottled Water:</b> Is my water safe to drink?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>Neighborhood Exposures:</b> What we can and cannot control	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>Air Pollution:</b> How to improve the air we breathe	<input type="checkbox"/>



Learn more at:  
[knowbetterlivebetter.org](http://knowbetterlivebetter.org)





## PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS

### Action Plan

- Personal care products should be kept out of reach of your children.
- Avoid products that have synthetic fragrances. Some of these chemicals can negatively impact one's endocrine (hormones) system.
- Choose regular soap over antibacterial soap.
- For children, apply broad-spectrum sunscreen of at least SPF 15 and wear protective clothing.
- Avoid chemical hair straighteners. Some of the chemicals in these products are corrosive, and can cause irritation and burning.
- When selecting diapers, avoid those with perfume, as these can cause irritation. Minimize chemical use by cleansing with water or unscented wipes.



#### Did you know?

Personal care products can contain many toxic chemicals, including phthalates and lead.



For more information →



## RESOURCES

Research about your personal care products by looking them up at the Cosmetic Ingredient Review (<https://cir-safety.org/>) or the Environmental Working Group (<https://www.ewg.org/skindeep/>).

If you would like to speak about your concerns about personal care products with a healthcare professional, please call (toll free): 1.877.337.3478 to speak with a member of the Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit at Emory University.

For more information regarding environmental health risk factors, please visit [pehsu.net](http://pehsu.net).



Funding Provided by  
CDC/ATSDR  
5N01MT3000296-02-00  
NIHHS P30-4502355



# Prescriptions to Prevention (RxP)

- **Health Screener**
  - Questionnaire that **identifies the needs and concerns** of patients and community members
  - Prescription is given **based on** patient concerns and **self-identified exposures**.
- RxPs are displayed on **monitors in the clinic**



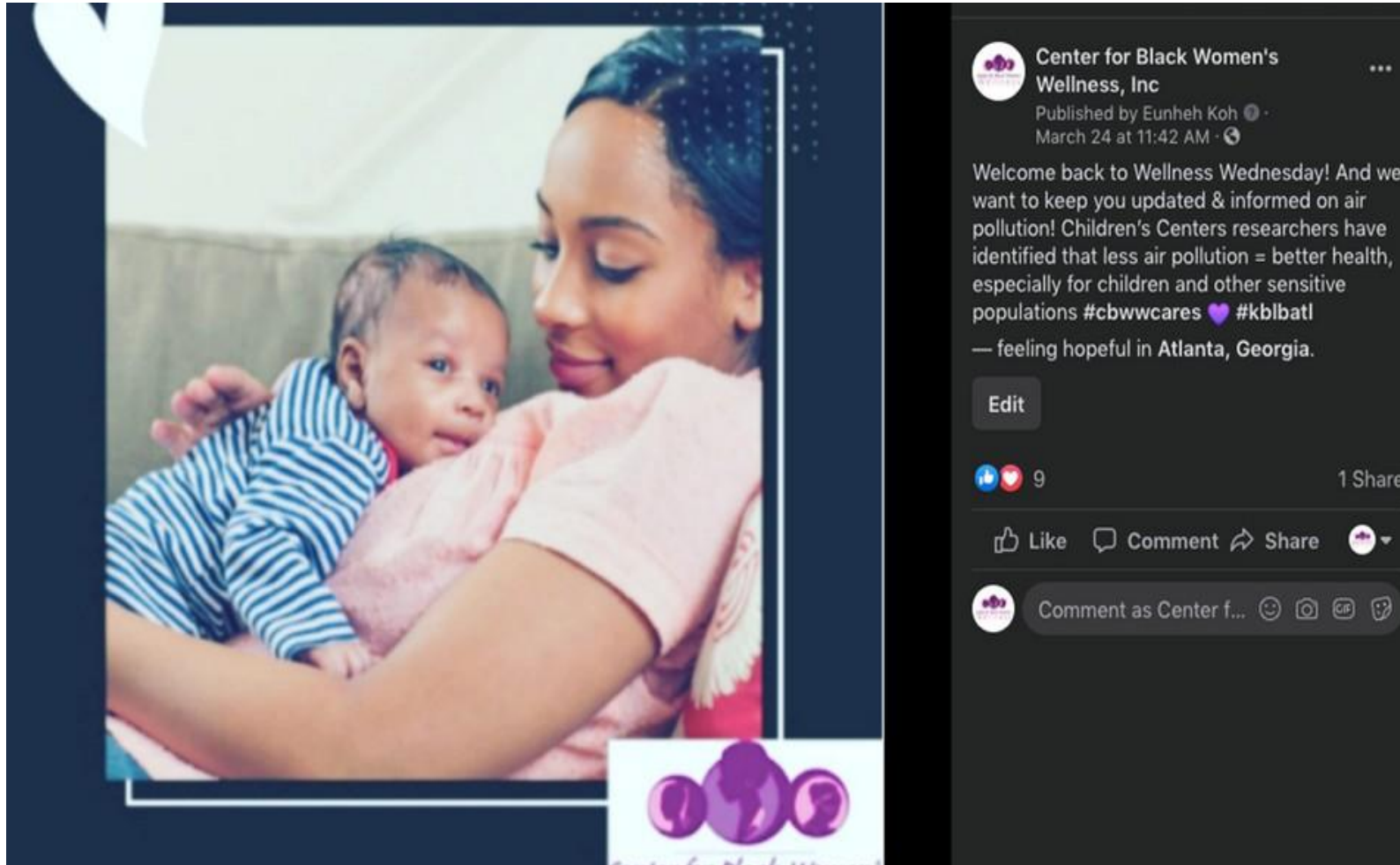


# Integrating EH Health Literacy into Programs

- Staff Trainings
- Home Visitation Program
- Magic Milk Mommies (M3)
- Empowerment to Education (E2E)
- Wellness Clinic Operations
- Community Outreach and Events
- Health Education



# Social Media Campaigns



- Children's Environmental Health social media campaigns disseminate **culturally relevant and easily digestible information** that address:
  - Clean eating
  - Mold in the home
  - Lead exposure
  - Developmental impacts
  - Asthma and allergy prevention and management
  - Reducing risk of exposure to toxic chemicals



**EH**  
**Train-the-Trainer**  
**Workshops**

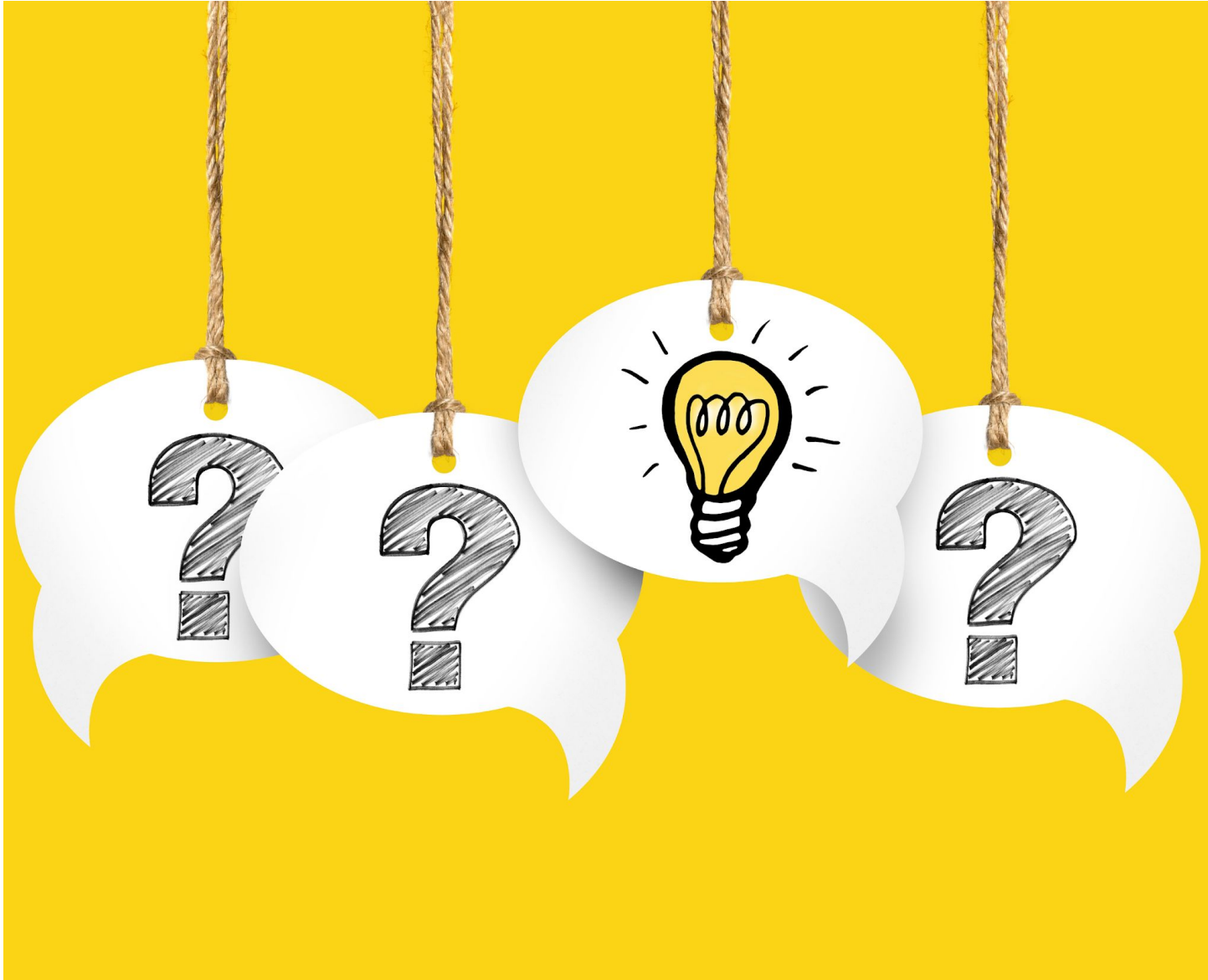
- The Train-the-Trainer model is another method to **reduce silos** and **encourage partners, key stakeholders and community-based organizations** to incorporate environmental **health literacy** in their programming.





# Environmental Wellness in the Community





# Thank You!

- Morgan Barnes, MPH
  - [mbarnes@cbww.org](mailto:mbarnes@cbww.org)
  - Wellness Program Coordinator
- April Reid, MPA
  - [areid@cbww.org](mailto:areid@cbww.org)
  - Wellness Program Manager

