Internet Reviews


Environmental Health News (EHN), founded in 2002, is an online publisher and aggregator of news stories on topics related to health and the environment. The site is published by Environmental Health Sciences (a project of the nonprofit Virginia Organizing), which is dedicated to bringing science into public discussion and informing policy on environmental health issues.

In the interest of journalistic integrity, EHN is independent and nonpartisan, and is funded by readers and independent foundations. EHN staff journalists, as well as guest writers, author news stories published on the site. Articles discuss current events, policy, and newsworthy recently published research.

Readers may access news stories through browsing, searching, or by exploring geographically through a global mapping feature on the site homepage. Site content is organized in scrollable newsfeeds with recent stories first, including a general homepage feed and popular topic pages. The home-page features exclusively EHN-hosted content, while the topic pages and search results also include stories selected and curated from many other news sources, ranging from popular to niche publications (e.g., Washington Post, Wired, Texarkana Gazette, Hakai Magazine, etc.).

Topic feeds—including environmental justice, toxics, climate, water, food, and more—are accessible through the site header as well as the righthand sidebar on the homepage. EHN articles are assigned hyperlinked tags, which can be used to search for related content. News stories are archived and searchable back to the site's founding date in 2002. EHN also offers a range of daily or weekly email newsletters, where readers can receive regular updates for ongoing interests.

Overall, EHN’s particular strength is as a single access point to read, search for, and keep up to date on environmental and health news. Because the content is straightforward and suitable for general readers, EHN is recommended for all audiences, including undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, and other researchers in an academic context, as well as the public. The site may be recommended to students doing topic exploration and development for a course project, and it has strong potential as a starting point from which to search for a wide range of news articles to support coursework, research, and personal interests in the topic areas of focus. Relevant disciplines may include environmental science, public health, political science, public policy, sociology, economics, sustainability, journalism, biology, and chemistry, among others.—Amy Jankowski, University of New Mexico, ajankowski@unm.edu


Founded in 1909 and headquartered in Alexandria, Virginia, Mental Health America (MHA) is a nonprofit organization “dedicated to addressing the needs of those living with mental illness and to promoting the overall mental health of all Americans.” The three pillars upon which MHA rests are outreach, advocacy, and peer support, with subject matter geared towards community members affected by mental illness. Website content is broad and includes toolkits, mental illness screeners, MHA news, research, statistics (from The State of Mental Health in America, an annual report based upon national survey data), overviews of various mental illnesses and topics, campaigns impacting policy from
the national to regional level, and resources for peer support.

The MHA website is engaging with an appealing blend of visuals and text. Visitors will find information in a range of formats, including videos, blogs, webinars, and infographics. The site is intuitively navigated via primary and secondary headers, as well as a sitemap. Most pages have a side navigation bar to explore subtopics. Search options are limited, however, to a search icon on the primary header to conduct a keyword search across the site and search boxes for research and webinar content. There is no advanced search capability.

MHA is current, with content being regularly updated. Information is consistently cited, which adds to MHA's credibility. A notable downfall of the site is that content is almost entirely in English, with the exception of two mental illness screeners in Spanish and a multilingual brochure about insurance. Given the organization's stated mission to promote mental health for “all Americans,” the limitation to English for its content is incongruent with that message.

While MHA is not specifically targeted to an academic audience, librarians in higher education may find it useful to their work. Of particular note are the toolkits for outreach (namely Mental Health Month), mental health literacy resources, quick stats and snapshots of mental illnesses, and links to recent publications on a range of mental health topics. However, MHA is not likely to be a particularly valuable tool for those working with students beyond the early undergraduate level whose research needs will far exceed the offerings of this site. —Dawn Behrend, Lenoir-Rhyne University, dawn.behrend@lr.edu

Parliament.uk. Access: https://www.parliament.uk/

Although it is designed to serve a domestic audience, the Parliament.uk website does a fantastic job of clearly explaining the basic ins and outs of the U.K. government to those who live “across the pond.” It also gives access to some unique resources that political science and history classes will appreciate.

A header across the top showcases links to pages dealing with various subjects: “Parliamentary business,” “MPs, Lords & offices,” “About Parliament,” and so forth. Clicking on a link creates blue tabs that offer more detailed information. The navigation on the site is quite intuitive, and multiple links spread throughout the site will allow users to access specific pages quickly and easily.

By clicking on “About Parliament” and then the “How Parliament works” link, users will find an easy-to-follow overview of U.K. governmental institutions. This section outlines how laws are made, and how the daily business of Parliament proceeds. It also offers information on general elections and voting. Terms with no analogue in the U.S. legislative system are quickly defined and allow users to understand how various legislative procedures and concepts fit together.

The “MPs, Lords & offices” page provides biographies of legislators in the House of Commons and the House of Lords. It lists the government—MPs chosen from the ruling parties who make up the cabinet—and their counterparts in the Official Opposition, whose shadow cabinet scrutinizes the government's policy.

“Parliamentary business” includes news of current procedures, debates, and committees. Social media feeds are available to collect breaking legislative information and links are available to videos of live and archived proceedings. Users can follow a bill’s progress through a link on the “Bills before Parliament” page.

“Hansard Online” is a particularly useful resource available through Parliament.uk. This database contains the text of parliamentary debates from the early 1800s through the present. Users can filter results by time period, and search results are clearly visualized through a timeline. History students will find primary resource material here dealing with subjects ranging from the Napoleonic Wars to Brexit.

Parliament.uk gives a primer on the U.K.’s government and contains many useful resources to pass along to faculty or to include in instruction sessions.—Reiley Noe, Hanover College, noe@hanover.edu