

<http://www.gethealthyharlem.org/articles/harlem-word-ray-lopez-learn-how-to-make-your-home-a-safer-place-and-lower-your-chances-developin>

Harlem Word: Ray Lopez -- Learn how to make your home a safer place and lower your chances of developing asthma

We interviewed Ray Lopez, the director of Little Sisters Family Asthma Program.

The Little Sisters of the Assumption (LSA) is a non-profit that has been helping people through home health agencies and family services for 50 years. Through the Family Asthma Program, LSA has been helping East Harlem families whose children have asthma make their homes clean and pest-free for over a decade.

Q: What is Integrated Pest Management?

A: Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a way to deal with pests in your home. It is not an alternative method for pest control - it is the most effective method for pest control. Traditional methods practiced by professional exterminators (for roaches- base board spraying or just placing baits/gels, and for mice- traps and poisons) without physical controls (such as vacuuming or sealing) are not enough to reduce and eliminate infestations. Rather than using chemicals, we use the IPM idea to figure out what draws pests to your home and finds ways to eliminate those things. For example, with mice, we try to figure out where they are entering the home, and then block the opening.



HEPA Filter

Q: How does your program work?

A: If an asthmatic household's environment is not in great condition, we refer families to an IPM cleaning service called Healthy Nest. It provides a free, one-time intensive household cleaning. We then provide a follow-up service for families to help them keep their households clean. We supply the family with supplies, such as bait stations or spackle, to help them with clean up, to help keep pests out of homes. We also have a HEPA filter vacuum families can borrow to help keep their households clean.

Q: Who does your program serve?

A: Our clients are mostly children with asthma, but the program is open to people of all ages. We serve the residents living in zip codes 10029 and 10035.



Cleaning Supplies

Q: What is unique about your program?

A: Rather than try to eliminate pests with chemical sprays, which cannot prevent all of the pests in the world, our approach looks to eliminate pests from homes by stopping the reasons they enter and remain. The program helps everyone in the family have a healthier living space.

Harlem Word is a series of interviews with community health experts written by HHPC and reviewed by our Health Advisory Board.

GetHealthyHarlem.org is the result of years of collaboration between Columbia University's Mailman School's Harlem Health Promotion Center (HHPC), community members and leaders. It is a health information website where Harlem residents, families, businesses and organizations can find local information about getting and staying healthy. It's also a place for sharing information and connecting with community members.

In short, this website is designed in Harlem, for Harlem, by Harlem.

Please note: The information provided on GetHealthyHarlem.org is designed to support, not replace, the relationship between you and your physician or medical care provider.

Contact Information:

Editor: Carly Hutchinson, MA, MPhil

215 W. 125th Street, First Floor
New York, NY 10027

website: www.healthyharlem.org

email: GetHealthyHarlem@gmail.com

p: (646) 284.9777

f: (646) 284.9729

HHPC, one of the 33 Prevention Research Centers funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, is under the administration of the Department of Sociomedical Sciences, Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health.

Learn more about us [here](#).

This website was supported by Cooperative Agreement Number U48-DP-00030 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Last modified: January 7, 2009