



Lead-Free Kids for a Healthy Future

Lead Poisoning Prevention Week 2015 | Tools and Resources for Community Awareness

Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention (CLPP) Week for 2015 is October 25—31. From engaging the education community, creating a social media campaign to planning a community project, hosting a training event or reaching out to the public via local media, you can make a difference by participating in a meaningful way.

Our goal for 2015 is *Lead-Free Kids for a Healthy Future*. Our key messages are:

- **Test Your Kids for Lead!**
- **Look Out for Chipping Paint in Your Home!**
- **Learn the Facts About Lead!**

These three simple steps can help keep our kids safe from exposure to lead-based paint and other lead hazards.

In this toolkit are a number of ideas that you can implement at the community level to raise awareness around lead poisoning. Invite others to work with you in developing your awareness strategy.

For questions:
Reghan Walsh, reghan.walsh@wi.gov, 608-261-9432, Wisconsin Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (WCLPPP) or Kristi Tennie, kristi.tennie@wi.gov, 608-266-9379, Asbestos and Lead Certification Program.

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THE PROBLEM WITH LEAD IN WISCONSIN

There is no safe level of lead

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has long said there is no safe level of lead in the body. Lead from old paint hurts kids. It poisons children and reduces their future potential. Lead impacts the normal development of a child's brain, resulting in intelligence quotient (IQ) loss, learning problems, developmental delays and lifelong mental and physical health issues.

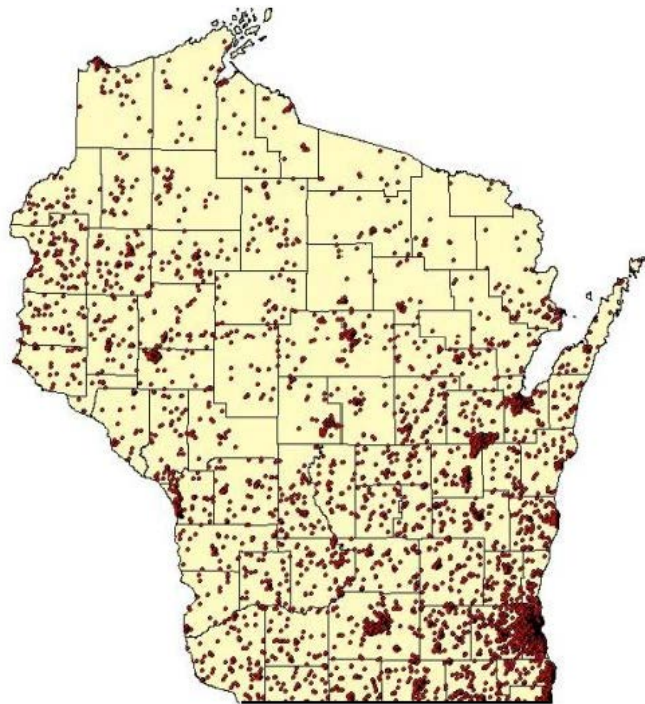
Many Wisconsin children are exposed to lead

Often people say that lead is no longer a problem, but this problem still exists. Of children tested from 2012 through 2014 in Wisconsin, nearly 15,000 were found to have too much lead in their body. Some children are exposed to lead but never get a blood lead test. There could be many more lead-exposed children in Wisconsin.

Lead poisoning in Wisconsin is a statewide problem

Lead poisoned children have been found in every county in Wisconsin. Each red dot on this state map represents a location associated with a lead-poisoned child. These children may be struggling in school or suffering from physical and mental health issues due to lead poisoning.

CLPP Week provides the perfect opportunity to raise awareness of the seriousness of this problem and what each of us can do to prevent it.



Instances of Childhood Lead Poisoning in Wisconsin



ENGAGE THE EDUCATION COMMUNITY

Since lead impacts brain development, intelligence and ability to learn, educators have a critical interest in helping to prevent lead poisoning. In light of lead's impact on learning it should be considered not just a public health or environmental health issue, but an educational issue with direct consequences for policy outcomes.

Reach out to:

- Principals and school boards
- School nurses, social workers, and psychologists
- Teaching and teaching assistants
- Parent Teachers Associations

What educators can do:

- Learn more about the connection between lead and learning and what educators can use as resources to support students (WCLPPP Handbook Chapter 10: [Developmental Assessment and Intervention for a Child with Lead Exposure](#)).
- Access the Wisconsin Blood Lead Registry on the Wisconsin Immunization Registry to get students' blood lead histories. Contact Pam Campbell, WCLPPP database manager, 608-267-3901 or pamela.campbell@wi.gov.
- Advocate for neurodevelopmental testing of students who have a history of elevated blood lead levels during critical transition points. CDC recommends, in a new report called [Educational Interventions for Children Affected by Lead](#), that children exposed to lead early on be given a neuropsychological assessment in: 1st grade (when learning to read), 4th grade (when reading to learn about new subjects), and 6th or 7th grades (when learning to accomplish a complex project).
- Follow advice from the Executive Summary of the Economic Policy Institute in a recent report and [link to community services and sponsor community lead clean-up](#). See an example of a community event, **Community project in action**, on page 6.
- Refer families to the [housing funding program](#) in your area to address lead hazards and other health and safety issues, like broken windows, leaking roofs, old furnaces, etc., in their home.

Share the information in an email, via newsletters or FAX-blast—however teachers and others in your jurisdiction receive this type of information.



CREATE A LOCAL SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

Engage people in a local campaign to promote awareness for lead poisoning prevention. As in the [Lead-Safe PSA video](#), have kids and adults hold up a sign that starts with the hashtag, #LeadFreeKids. For the action item, chose a tagline and add a reliable source for more information. Include your website, the [Lead Safe Wisconsin](#) website, the [CDC](#), [Environmental Protection Agency](#) (EPA) or [Housing and Urban Development](#) (HUD) websites. Or include the National Lead Information Center telephone hotline (1-800-424-LEAD).

Here's what you do to participate:

- ① **Write** “#LeadFreeKids” on a sheet of paper. On the next line, add a tagline (next column) or create your own. Last line, add a phone number or website where people can get more information.
- ② **Snap** a picture of yourself holding the sign.
- ③ **Post** it on your Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram with the hashtag, “#LeadFreeKids.”
- ④ **Tag** your friends in your post and encourage them to join the campaign.

Resources:

[The Health Communicator's Social Media Toolkit](#)

[Other social media ideas](#) by federal agencies

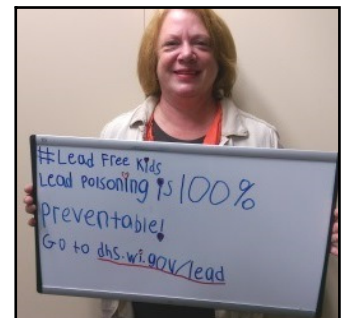
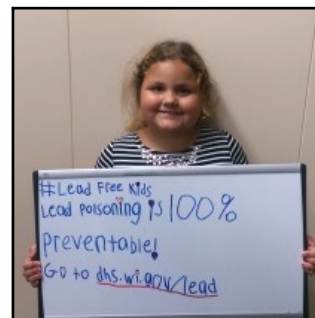
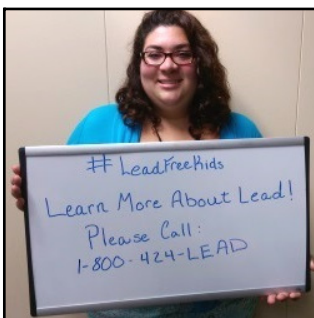
Taglines for signs:

For Adults:

- “Test Your Kids for Lead!”
- “Look for Chipping Paint in Your Home!”
- “Learn More About Lead!”
- “Ask your doctor to test your kids for lead!”

For Kids:

- “I’ve been tested for lead. Have you?”
- “Talk to my doctor about lead.”
- “Lead Poisoning is 100% Preventable!”





ORGANIZE A COMMUNITY PROJECT

Bringing neighbors together to increase lead awareness, improve properties and feel a sense of pride is what a great community project is all about.

When planning a community project, include these steps:

- Identify the street or area where houses need paint repairs.
- Secure permission from property owners and tenants.
- Recruit certified contractors to conduct the lead-safe repairs.
- Invite local policymakers and media to the event.
- Promote the neighborhood event through a variety of methods.

Additional considerations:

- Close the street off to local traffic for pedestrian safety
- Engage the neighbors in the planning phase to generate a community feel to the event
- Get local businesses involved by seeking out donations of supplies, materials, door prizes and refreshments
- Have contractors bring their business cards and yard signs to promote their business
- Add some form of educational entertainment, e.g., [easy-to-use tools for kids and parents](#)

Community Project in Action

Staff at the Social Development Commission (SDC) in the city of Milwaukee recently held a successful neighborhood event in which they selected a city street where several houses had porches with peeling paint. Local certified lead contractors volunteered to fix the hazards and demonstrated lead-safe work practices to neighbors and landlords. SDC provided education to families about blood lead testing and ways to prevent lead poisoning—even Peppi, the Lead-Free Clown, showed up to educate the kids about lead!

“Pulling together as a community, we can get this work done and, in the meantime, protect our children,” said Ramona Jensen, lead liaison/community health worker for SDC.

For more information on how to plan a similar community project, contact Ramona Jensen, rjensen@cr-sdc.org, or 414-344-9010, ext. 1706, or Ofelia Mondragon, omondragon@cr-sdc.org, 414-344-9010, ext. 1704.





HOST A HOME VISITOR OR CHILD CARE PROVIDER TRAINING

Home visitors in Wisconsin spend time with families in their homes on a weekly basis. Many children also spend significant amounts of time in a child care provider's home. You can educate home visitors and child care providers about lead poisoning and how to prevent it. They can then pass that information on to the families they work with.

Basic concepts to emphasize in training include:

- The importance of families getting their children tested for lead
- The need to look around the home or child care property for chipping and peeling paint—an extra set of eyes to *look out for lead*
- How enrolling properties in local housing programs (click on house) to address potential lead hazards and other health and safety hazards such as mold or smoke alarms improves health and housing



Funding available in every county to fix household health and safety hazards

The Wisconsin Home Visitor Program in the Department of Children and Families supports home visitors providing lead education to families.

Tools and resources to educate about lead poisoning prevention:

The EPA and National Head Start Association jointly developed [easy-to-use tools for home visitors and parents](#). In addition to materials in English, there are a number of materials in Spanish and other languages. These include:

- [Talking Points](#)—familiarize home visitors with childhood lead poisoning prevention information
- [Home Checklist](#)—a simple tool the home visitor and family can use together
- [Songs, activities with puppets](#) and [healthy snacks discussion](#) for the kids

Tools and incentives for child care providers:

- Consider offering continuing education credits for the annual renewal of their license.
- Provide this [pamphlet intended for child care providers](#) with your training invitation.
- Share information about funding for fixing hazards (click on the house above) in the child care property.



REACH THE PUBLIC VIA LOCAL MEDIA

Choose from sample templates of press releases and newsletter articles below. You can submit these to local newspapers, school communiques, health department newsletters and so on. Add county– or community-specific information to make the severity of the problem tangible to members of the community. Include the following elements to generate a strong story.

Share local data:

- Use data on the scope of the problem in your jurisdiction. For example, include the percent old housing and/or the number of kids exposed to lead over a given period of time.
- Employ phrases and data descriptions that are easy to comprehend or visualize. For example, if you had 300 kids tested and 30 of them have a level of 5 mcg/dL or more, describe it as “1 in 10 children tested were found to be elevated.”

Share local stories:

- Add a quote from the health officer, housing agent or a local certified contractor.
- Personal stories add the human drama. Ask a parent you’ve worked with to share their story or include a story where renovation to the home proactively prevented lead exposure.

Share local resources:

- CLPP Week activities you plan to offer
- Health department phone number, Facebook page or website information
- [Funding that is available](#) in your county to fix chipping and peeling lead paint and other health and safety hazards
- Links to lists of area [lead abatement companies](#), [lead-safe renovation companies](#), [lead risk assessors](#)

Provide ‘how-to’ prevention tips:

- Brief “action” bullet points work best, e.g., “Look for chipping and peeling paint around your home.”
- Select from the examples on CDC’s webpage on [what families can do to prevent lead poisoning](#).

Sample templates of news articles and press releases:

- [News article with less than 250 words](#) | [News article with more than 250 words](#)
- [Press release with rehab funding information](#) | [Press release with contractor information](#)



This educational resource has been approved by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Division of Public Health, P-00554 (07/2015).