



# Childhood Lead Poisoning

## Reduce the Risks for Children in Early Care Environments



### HELP PROTECT CHILDREN



CDC photo Credit -Cade Martin

## Lead is all around!

### Common sources of lead exposure to children:

- ◇ Buildings (including homes) built before 1978 are the most common source of lead exposure in Iowa from:
  - ◇ Peeling lead-base paint and lead in dust in soil
  - ◇ Renovations/repairs and remodeling of buildings built before 1978
- ◇ Old toys and imported jewelry
- ◇ Take home lead (if parent is exposed to lead at a job or hobby) See back for jobs/hobbies examples
- ◇ Candies from other countries/home remedies
- ◇ Water (lead pipes)
- ◇ Chewing or eating non food items like paint chips, dirt, window frames, jewelry, keys, or other metal or painted objects
- ◇ Pottery, Health Remedies and Spices (especially turmeric, chili, paprika and cumin) that are imported from outside of US or purchased from international specialty stores
- ◇ Some Traditional folk medicine

### Understanding Lead Poisoning

- ◆ Lead exposure at even lower levels has been shown to cause harm as children are highly sensitive to lead. It is important to test young children for lead poisoning.
- ◆ Children with very high lead levels can suffer from irreversible health impacts and in rare cases even death.
- ◆ Young children under age 4 are most at risk for lead poisoning due to development milestones such as hand to mouth activity and their bodies absorb lead more quickly than adults.
- ◆ Lead Poisoning symptoms may include:
  - ◆ Being easily excited
  - ◆ Problems paying attention
  - ◆ Having stomach aches/headaches
  - ◆ Being more tired than usual
- ◆ Buildings built before 1978 probably contain lead based paints. It is important to check to see if your child care building has lead based paint.



Photo credit: IDPH Lead Program



**Lead testing** is the only way to know if a child is lead poisoned. Most lead poisoned children do not look ill. A simple finger prick to collect the blood sample can be done by a health care provider.



Blood Lead testing is **required** in Iowa before starting kindergarten.

# To Do Checklist

Help To Decrease Children's Exposure to Lead

- ⇒ **\_\_\_ Look for any chipping or peeling paint in your child care building and outside of your building.**
  - *If found, contact your local Child Care Nurse Consultant (CCNC) for information.*
  - *Keep children away from chipping and peeling paint inside and outside of the child care building, especially around windows.*
- ⇒ **\_\_\_ Test your child care building for lead.** *Buildings built prior to 1978 should be tested for lead by a certified lead inspector or by purchasing a lead test kit from a home improvement store.*
- ⇒ **\_\_\_ Check to see if your water pipes contain lead.** *Old plumbing may include lead.*
- ⇒ **\_\_\_ Wash children's hands after playing and before eating.** *In addition, review best practices on additional times to wash hands.*
- ⇒ **\_\_\_ Review your menu to make sure it includes foods high in calcium, iron and vitamin C.** *If children are exposed to lead, good nutrition may reduce the amount of lead absorbed by their bodies.*
- ⇒ **\_\_\_ Sign up for recalls at Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC).** *CPSC has a list of recalls of products that contain lead (as well as other recalls). Recalls occur frequently. Remove any recalled toys and other recalled items from your child care environment.*
  - *Information on recalls available at <https://www.idph.iowa.gov/hcci/recalls>*
- ⇒ **\_\_\_ Obtain resources on child care lead poisoning to share with families in your newsletter, bulletin board or mailings.**
  - *Contact your local Child Care Nurse Consultant for help connecting families to resources for lead prevention programs, local testing options and brochures.*

## Did you know?

*Here are some examples of jobs and hobbies that may be exposed to lead:*

- \* Manufacturing (auto or industrial equipment part or battery)
- \* Metal repair or recycling (scrap metal, electronics, vehicle radiators)
- \* Firearms (target practice, indoor/outdoor shooting ranges, ammunition (making, casting or reloading))
- \* Fishing (making lead sinkers)
- \* Antique Furniture (refinishing)
- \* Pottery making or glazing
- \* Metal Welding

## For further information contact:

IDPH lead program call 800-972-2026

Visit the website at:

<https://idph.iowa.gov/Environmental-Health-Services/Childhood-Lead-Poisoning-Prevention>

Healthy Child Care Iowa call 800-369-2229

Visit the website to find your local CCNC at:

<https://www.idph.iowa.gov/hcci/consultants>

References:

<https://idph.iowa.gov/Environmental-Health-Services/Childhood-Lead-Poisoning-Prevention>

[https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2014-05/documents/what\\_you\\_need\\_to\\_know\\_about\\_lead\\_poisoning.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2014-05/documents/what_you_need_to_know_about_lead_poisoning.pdf)

<https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/faqs/lead-faqs.htm>