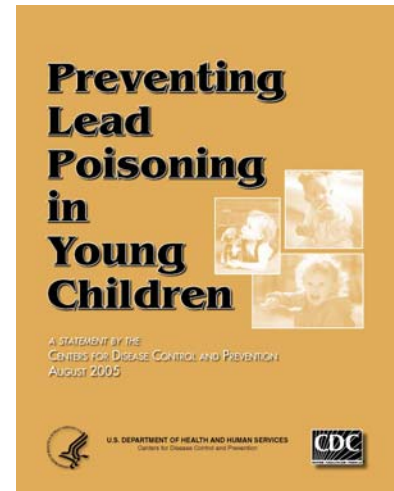


Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

What Is the Public Health Issue?

- Childhood lead poisoning remains a major preventable environmental public health problem in the United States. According to recent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) data, an estimated 310,000 U.S. children aged 1 to 5 years have blood lead levels greater than 10 micrograms per deciliter ($\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$), a level at which harmful health effects are known to occur.
- Lead poisoning can affect nearly every system in the body and cause learning disabilities and behavioral problems. At very high levels, lead poisoning can cause seizures, coma, and death. Lead poisoning often occurs with no obvious symptoms and may go undetected without a blood lead test.
- Children from all social and economic levels can be affected by lead poisoning. However, children whose families are poor; live in old, poorly maintained housing; and are African-American or Hispanic are at highest risk.
- Preventing lead exposure (among children reaching 2 years of age) was estimated to increase economic productivity, on average, \$213 billion in 2000 dollars.



What Has CDC Accomplished?

In 1990, CDC established the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, which provides leadership to state and local health departments in developing comprehensive programs to combat childhood lead poisoning. Additionally, CDC has:

- Funded 58 childhood lead poisoning prevention programs to develop, implement, and evaluate lead poisoning prevention activities;
- Provided technical assistance to support the development of state and local lead screening plans;
- Fostered agreements between state and local health departments and state Medicaid agencies to link surveillance and Medicaid data;
- Provided training to public health professionals through CDC's Lead Poisoning Prevention Training Center;
- Supported the formation of collaborative relationships between CDC's funded partners and other lead poisoning prevention organizations and agencies (e.g., community-based, nonprofit, and housing groups);
- Developed the Childhood Blood Lead Surveillance System through which 40 programs currently report data to CDC;

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Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, Continued

- Expanded public health laboratory capacity in states to analyze blood and environmental samples and to ensure quality, timely, and accurate analysis of results; and
- Published targeted screening and case management guidelines that provide health departments and health care providers with standards to identify and manage children with elevated blood lead levels.

In fiscal year 2006, CDC awarded \$28.2 million to 40 state and local health departments to continue their comprehensive childhood lead poisoning prevention efforts to achieve the Healthy People 2010 goal of eliminating childhood lead poisoning as a public health problem.

What Are the Next Steps?

CDC is committed to the Healthy People 2010 goal. CDC continues to assist state and local childhood lead poisoning prevention programs, to provide a scientific basis for policy decisions, and to ensure that health issues are addressed in decisions about housing and the environment.

For additional Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention information, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/lead.htm>.

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