



Michigan Alliance for Lead Safe Homes

The Michigan Alliance for Lead Safe Homes (or MIALSH) is a group of 200 physicians, nurses, housing professionals, environmental advocates, and, most crucially, people who have been impacted by lead poisoning. **Our goal is to make lead poisoning a thing of the past.**

MIALSH educates lawmakers about lead poisoning: how it is still a threat to Michiganders across the state, how it is entirely preventable, and what they can do through legislation to prevent it. The members of MIALSH also work together to best share lead poisoning prevention resources with one another.

Lead Education Day

For 15 years, MIALSH has gathered at the Michigan Capitol each spring to talk to lawmakers about lead poisoning, its prevalence, how it happens and how we can help end it. Through our hundreds of meetings, our elected leaders have learned how strong pollution rules, remediation funding, workforce training and testing for all can help make what was once a metal found in 90% of United States residents part of history here in the Great Lakes State.





The 101: Lead poisoning

Background

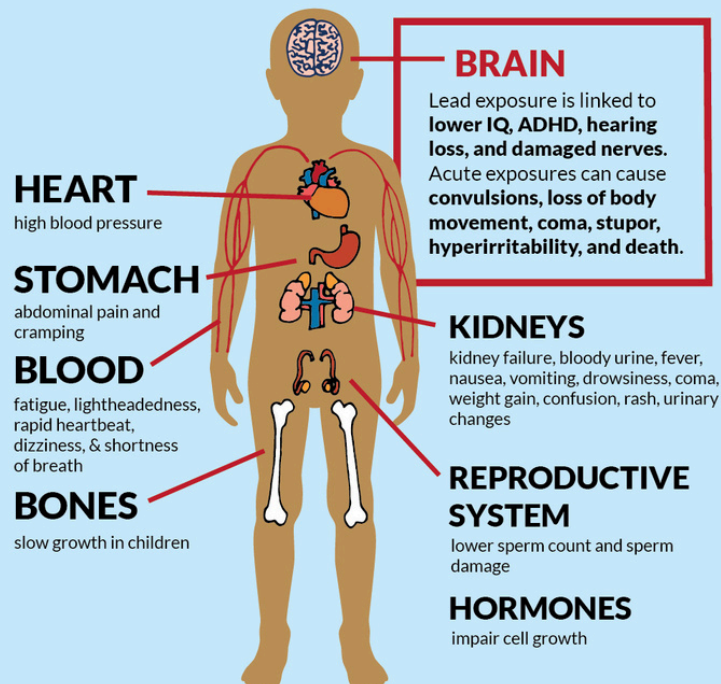
Lead is a toxic, naturally occurring metal. For decades, it was used in everyday products and subsequently poisoned millions of children across the world.

Now, lead is largely banned. But Michigan is a state of old buildings. Legacy lead pollution remains. While lead poisoning is most commonly associated with water pipes (like those that caused the Flint Water Crisis) most of the 4,000 Michigan children diagnosed with lead poisoning each year come in contact with the metal through paint, dust and even the air pollution of nearby industry.

How Lead Effects Children's Health

Lead Exposure can affect nearly every part of the human body. There is NO safe level of lead in the bloodstream as determined by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

ecocenter.org



FIND LEAD LEVELS IN YOUR AREA



- Select "Health" as your category.
- Select "Lead Exposure - Children" as your content area.
- Select "Annual Blood Lead Levels" as your indicator.
- Select "5. Percent of Children Tested with an Elevated Blood Lead Level" as your measure.
- Click or tap "Run Query."

Progress made, progress ahead

Children six years old or younger are especially vulnerable to lead poisoning, and the problems it creates can continue into adulthood. It's a reason why the World Health Organization lists lead as a top 10 chemical of major public health concern. There is no safe level of lead, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Fortunately, Michigan has made great strides in ending lead poisoning, especially since the Flint Water Crisis. Healthcare workers, housing professionals, environmental advocates and, most importantly, people affected by poisoning have ways to build the momentum this Lead Education Day.

Michigan has provided millions of dollars in funding to help remediate the two-thirds of homes built before lead was banned. We can build the movement by bringing a federal workforce training program under state oversight. More contractors can better remove lead threats.

As of April, rules and requirements to test all children for lead poisoning as part of their routine appointment schedule were finalized. As more children are tested, more will also be diagnosed with lead poisoning. More funding from the Michigan Department of Health & Human Services will help healthcare workers handle the influx.



Connect with our expert

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The 101: Preventative funding

Background

Over 4,000 children in Michigan are diagnosed with lead poisoning each year. The treatment process can be intensive, and so can the removal of the lead exposure source, making early prevention key.

Up until now, only children on Medicaid have been tested. Thanks to bipartisan laws, Michigan will soon begin testing all children, which signs suggest will lead to higher lead poisoning numbers. Families of all incomes live in older homes prone to lead exposure.

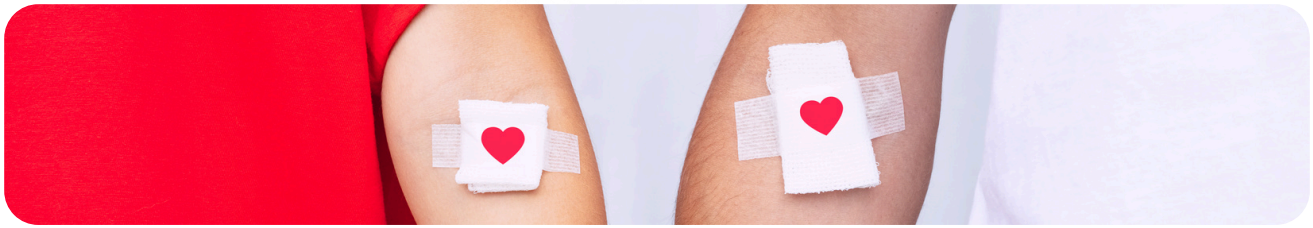
Universal lead testing

In 2023, lawmakers passed universal testing with bipartisan. Soon, all children will receive two lead tests as part of their routine doctor's appointments, one at 12 months old and another at 24. These early tests will prevent the poisoning's worst effects from unfolding.

This was the flagship focus of the Michigan Alliance for Lead Safe Homes and our 200 healthcare workers, housing professionals, advocates and lead-impacted people. The solution to pollution is two-fold: find and treat those sickened by it and eliminate the contaminants at their source.

Universal lead testing allows Michigan to better do both. When more children are tested, more children will be treated. And with more identifiable cases of lead poisoning comes a better map of lead-contaminated sources and a better plan to get rid of them.

LEAD POISONING



Services to match the need

With more lead testing comes more children diagnosed with lead poisoning. With more lead-poisoned children comes more treatment needed. we need expanded infrastructure, programming and supplies.

We estimate an additional \$10 million for the Michigan Department of Health & Human Services (MDHHS) can create the expanded infrastructure, programming and supplies needed to keep thousands of Michigan children successfully treated for lead poisoning each year.

Local health departments are chronically underfunded and under-resourced. MDHHS is prepared to take on the initial rollout of lead testing for all Michigan children. The additional funding will support local health departments' nurse case management services. It allows them to contact families, coordinate home visits, conduct lead inspections, assist with applications for services, refer children to programs like Early On, and guide families through the lead abatement processes.



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The 101: Renovate, repair, paint

Background

Michigan's homes are old. About 70% were built at least 50 years ago. That means these places could have drafty windows, gasping furnaces, leaky roofs... and lead paint. Lead was banned in many products back in 1978 but many homes built before that time have yet to be remediated. That puts many kids at risk of ingesting paint chips or inhaling lead-infused dust, the number one cause of lead poisoning in Michigan.

Renovation, repair and painting program

We call it the RRP. It's a federal rule that requires building contractors to be certified to work on old housing without spreading lead around or by removing it outright. Through its programming, workers receive proper training to reduce exposing themselves, families and neighbors to lead as they fix up homes.

The RRP rule is meant to be a way to make sure Michigan's many old homes aren't poisoning kids with lead. Unfortunately, multiple states are grouped into one regional RRP program. This more distanced approach makes its safety requirements difficult to implement and enforce well. Consequently, renovations, repairs and paint jobs on some of Michigan's many old homes are being done in ways that expose workers and families to lead.



The solution

A bill package will soon be introduced to bring the federal RRP program under state oversight. **Why the move?**

It would expand the program. Many contractors aren't certified to work on lead-laden homes safely. It's not their fault—they slip through our federal RRP rule's cracks. A state program would fix that by upping enforcement.

It gives Michigan more control. We know our communities best. We know our lead poisoning problems and solutions and workforce best. We can adjust the RRP rule to our needs.

It's simple. An RRP certification the RRP takes one day and lasts five year.

It's protects funds. RRP dollars are better protected under a state-run program.

It keeps kids safe. With new laws making lead tests universal, it's expected the number of children diagnosed with lead poisoning will rise. A state RRP rule—one that's expanded, funded and simple—would allow us to respond with more efficiency and impact.

The lead bill package will also...

Set Michigan's elevated blood lead level threshold at 3.5 micrograms per deciliter, unlocking better treatment options for more lead-poisoned kids.

Provide children with an elevated blood lead level with an **automatic referral to Early On services** caseworker services. This will more easily and more immediately start a great treatment process.

Establish strict **limits on the amount of lead in dinnerware.**

Require baby food manufacturers to **test for multiple toxic, heavy metals** and share the results on their websites and labels.



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