Prevent Childhood Lead Poisoning

Exposure to lead can seriously harm a child’s health.

This can cause:
- Lower IQ
- Decreased ability to pay attention
- Underperformance at school

Lead can be found throughout a child’s environment.

1. Homes built before 1978 (when lead-based paint was commonly used) contain lead-based paint.
2. Lead is sometimes in soil contaminated by other sources or traditional home remedies.
3. Certain water pipes may contain lead.
4. Lead can be found in some products such as toys and jewelry.
5. Certain hobby materials contain lead.
6. Food can be contaminated when they are prepared or stored in leaded glass or pottery.

The Impact

535,000 U.S. children ages 1 to 5 years have blood lead levels high enough to damage their health.

24 million homes in the U.S. contain deteriorated lead-based paint and contaminated levels of lead-contaminated dust.

4 million homes are home to young children.

It can cost

$5,600

in medical and education costs for each seriously lead-poisoned child.

The good news: Lead poisoning is 100% preventable.

Take these steps to make your home lead-safe:

1. Talk with your child’s doctor about a simple blood lead test. If you are pregnant or nursing, talk with your doctor about exposure to sources of lead.
2. Talk with your local health department about testing paint and dust in your home for lead. If you live in a home built before 1978.
3. Renovate safely. Common renovation activities like sanding, cutting, replacing windows, and more can create hazardous lead dust. If you’re planning renovations, see contractors certified by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) at www.epa.gov/lead for information.

Visit www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead to learn more.