

National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week is October 23-29, 2016

Nearly half a million children living in the United States have elevated blood lead levels that may cause significant damage to their health, estimates the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The estimate is based on children with a blood lead level of 5 micrograms per deciliter or higher using data from national surveys conducted in 2007-2008 and 2009-2010. Major sources of lead exposure to U.S. children include lead-based paint and lead-contaminated dust in deteriorating buildings. Children can also be exposed to lead from additional sources including contaminated drinking water, take-home exposures from a workplace, and lead in soil.

Despite the continued presence of lead in the environment, lead poisoning is entirely preventable.

To increase awareness of childhood lead poisoning prevention, the St. Lawrence County Public Health Department along with CDC, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, is participating in National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week (NLPPW) October 23-29.

This year's NLPPW theme, "Lead-Free Kids for a Healthy Future," underscores the importance of testing your home, testing your child, learning about drinking water, and learning how to prevent lead poisoning's serious health effects.

Although lead-based paint was banned for use in housing in 1978, all homes build before are likely to contain some lead-based paint. In St. Lawrence County, 71.0% of the housing stock was built before 1978.

Your child's blood should be tested for lead at ages 1 and then again at age 2. Many factors affect a child's potential exposure to lead and even children that test within acceptable limits at age 1 need to be re-tested at age 2. There is no safe blood level of lead.

Parents can reduce a child's exposure to lead in many ways. Here are some simple things you can do to help protect your family:

1. Get Your Home Tested. Before you buy an older home, ask for a lead inspection.
2. Get Your Child Tested. Even if your young children seem healthy, ask your doctor to test them for lead.
3. Learn About Drinking Water. Water pipes in some older homes may contain lead solder where lead may leach out into the water. Learn more about lead in drinking water [here](#).
4. Understand the Facts! Your local health department can provide you with helpful information about preventing childhood lead poisoning. Contact them at 315-386-2325 or <http://www.co.st-lawrence.ny.us/Departments/PublicHealth/LeadScreeningProgram>

For more information, contact the St. Lawrence County Public Health Department Lead Poisoning Prevention Program or call 1-800-424-LEAD.