



STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH

LANSING

JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

JANET OLSZEWSKI
DIRECTOR

April 2009

Dear Colleague:

I would like to take this opportunity to report on our progress in addressing childhood lead poisoning in Michigan over the past two years. Lead poisoning remains the number one environmental health hazard for children, with Michigan ranking among the top six states for childhood lead poisoning.

Lead testing for children younger than six years has increased from 18.0% to 20.1% from 2006 to 2008. We must continue to strive for higher numbers of children tested. Furthermore, our goal is that children will be tested when they are less than 2 years of age, when they are at the greatest risk for lead poisoning. Of the 30 children receiving chelation therapy (administration of medication, chelating agents, to remove heavy metals from the body) in 2008, 11 of them were between the ages of one and two years, reinforcing the need for early and repeat testing of very young children.

The Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention and Control Commission has determined that testing of high-risk children remains one of their top priorities. While testing of children for elevated blood lead levels continues to increase much work remains to assure that high-risk children receive appropriate testing. We are asking for your assistance in order to realize this goal.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS –

- Measure blood lead concentrations in all children residing in one of the 14 target communities identified by the state health department, and all other children deemed to be at risk (see enclosed Statewide Screening/Testing Plan).
- Measure blood lead concentrations in all children covered by the Medicaid program at age one and two years and at least once between the ages of 3-6 years if not previously tested (see enclosed Statewide Screening/Testing Plan). This is a federal requirement.
- Provide anticipatory guidance about prevention of lead poisoning to parents of all infants and toddlers. Parents should also be aware that children aged six months to three years of age have normal mouthing behaviors, and that homes, workplaces and/or hobbies should be assessed for potential lead hazards.
- Inquire about lead hazard in housing and child care settings where children spend significant periods of time. If hazards are found, assistance should be sought from health departments or housing experts to address the lead hazards safely. Parents should not attempt to clear lead hazards themselves. Additional information regarding identification of lead hazards and abatement is available at www.michigan.gov/leadsafe.



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- Recognize that children aged one and two years are most vulnerable as this is the period when mouthing behaviors are most common and when they are playing on the floor where lead dust collects.
- Recognize children in special risk groups and measure blood lead concentrations in these children. Special risk groups include immigrants, migrants, foreign-born adoptees, refugees and foster-care children.
- Keep current with the work of the national Advisory Committee on Childhood Lead Poisoning and Prevention and any other relevant committees. Provide medical management for children with acute and chronic lead poisoning based on these advisory committee guidelines.
- Provide families with information about grants for housing remediation available through the Michigan Department of Community Health and may communities across the state including: city of Lansing, city of Muskegon, city of Grand Rapids, cities of Hamtramck and Highland Park (contact Wayne County Department of Public Health), city of Jackson and city of Detroit.

Please be aware that the documents related to the work of the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention and Control Commission can be accessed at www.michigan.gov/leadsafe.

We look forward to working with you to increase testing and eliminating childhood lead poisoning in our state. Together we can accomplish our goals.

Sincerely,

Alethia Carr
Chair
Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention and Control Commission

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