



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** January 29, 2010

**TO:** Child Medical Care Providers

**FROM:** J. Robert Galvin, M.D., M.P.H., M.B.A. *J. Robert Galvin MD, MPH, MBA*  
Commissioner

**RE:** Prevention of Childhood Lead Poisoning through Medical Care

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The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that every year approximately 250,000 U.S. children aged 1-5 years have blood lead levels (BLLs) equal to or greater than 10 micrograms of lead per deciliter ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ ) of blood. The CDC recommends that public health actions be initiated when a blood lead level is at or above 10  $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ .

Lead poisoning can affect any child, regardless of nationality, race, geographic location or economic status, and it is completely preventable. Any amount of lead exposure can be harmful. Studies have shown that children with BLLs between 5 through 9  $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$  are even a concern, especially since continuing exposure can add up to a significant dose over time. Even low levels of lead can harm a child's nervous system and can be associated with reduced IQ, behavioral problems, and learning disabilities.

In 2007, the CDC released, *Interpreting and Managing Blood Lead Levels <10  $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$  in Children and Reducing Childhood Exposures to Lead\**, which encouraged clinicians to do more to identify and proactively address children's BLLs. Also, the CDC recommended creating partnerships between health-care providers, families, and public health department/districts. The complete article can be found at: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5608a1.htm>.

Exposure to lead, even at a low level, is a serious health concern for children, and our children in Connecticut are at risk. In 2008, there were approximately 1,054 children in Connecticut with elevated blood lead levels at or above 10  $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ ; 735 of those children were lead poisoned that year. Connecticut 2008 data also reveal that there were approximately 7,993 (10%) of children with BLLs between 5 through 9  $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ . Furthermore, 63.5% of the housing stock in CT was built prior to 1970. Lead paint was banned from use in residential housing in 1978.

The Connecticut Department of Public Health Lead Poisoning Prevention and Control Program (LPPCP) has developed a free educational in-service training for medical care providers and their staff. Topics that are reviewed include information about lead hazards, lead poisoning, related health effects of exposure to lead, the CDC and LPPCP protocols and guidelines, and statutory and regulatory revisions made in 2007.



Phone: (860) 509-7299, Fax: (860) 509-7295  
Telephone Device for the Deaf (860) 509-7191  
410 Capitol Avenue - MS # 51LED  
P.O. Box 340308 Hartford, CT 06134  
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Additionally, the LPPCP web page ([www.ct.gov/dph/lead](http://www.ct.gov/dph/lead)) has reference and educational material that is available for your use. Information about mandatory universal screening (Connecticut General Statute Section 19a-110), lead poisoning prevention, lead safe work practices, consumer product recall information (since 1970), and other lead-related issues can be found at our web site.

If you have any questions or are interested in an educational in-service training as a medical provider, please contact Linda Bailey, Nurse Consultant, of the CT DPH Lead Poisoning Prevention and Control Program at 860/509-7299 or via e-mail at [linda.bailey@ct.gov](mailto:linda.bailey@ct.gov). Thank you for your efforts to eliminate childhood lead poisoning in CT.

JRG/kg