

Childhood Lead Poisoning

Lead poisoning is epidemic in the ghettos of our cities. In its devastating path are children with mental retardation, blindness, chronic kidney diseases, and other sequelae.

The root of this tragedy is the deteriorating and dilapidated houses of our cities, particularly those occupied by the poor. It is a tragedy that should not exist and it is completely preventable.

The American Public Health Association believes that, pending the availability of healthful housing, local and state health departments and other appropriate agencies, with adequate funding from Federal and other sources, should institute the following:

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See letter to Benigno M. Alonzo

1. Mandatory testing of all ghetto housing for the presence of greater than one percent lead paint.
2. Where lead is detected, the paint should be removed or the walls covered with suitable material.
3. Appropriate mass urine testing for excessive lead content of all ghetto children between the ages of one and five years.
4. Prompt treatment and comprehensive follow-up of all detected cases.