

WELCOMING REMARKS

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For those of you who are from outside the Chicago area and don't know who I am, I am Dr. Christian, and am a Pediatrician at Rush Medical College and Presbyterian-St. Luke's Hospital. My only claim to fame is that I was around at the time the American Academy of Pediatrics set up the Accident Prevention Committee and a sub-group on accidental poisoning in 1953. At that time, those of us who were involved in committee activities recognized lead poisoning as being a major problem in children, and wanted to do something about it, but no one would listen.

At the present time, we have everyone talking about it, and we are beginning to at least recruit people who are willing to listen. Our greatest concern is that lead poisoning is a preventable disease, and in spite of this, we have not been really making any great accomplishments. In the past ten years, there probably has been more research done in the area of lead poisoning than at any other time. Those of you who have been interested in lead poisoning realize that this is a disease that was described very well in Roman times, and although people have begun trying to do something about it, thus far we have been unable to control our environment to the point that we are able to eradicate this scourge of childhood.