

RDP  
F) Child Support  
Lead Screening

PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN

STARTING A NEIGHBORHOOD

LEAD SCREENING PROGRAM

1. **TITLE SHOT- - "PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN"**
2. **TITLE SHOT- - "STARTING A NEIGHBORHOOD LEAD SCREENING PROGRAM"**
3. Childhood lead poisoning is a serious problem....
4. but, it is one that **you and your neighbors** can do something about.
5. We all take in small amounts of lead in the food we eat and the liquids we drink.
6. This is entirely natural, and there is a range of lead in our blood that is considered quite normal.
7. However, when a child takes in an unusual amount of lead--above these normal levels--there is cause for concern.
8. The higher the blood lead level, the greater the hazard to the child's health.
9. Children between the ages of six months and six years living in deteriorated houses....
10. or,apartments built before World War II, should be checked for signs of lead poisoning.
11. Lead poisoning is deadly serious.
12. It can permanently affect a child's central nervous system,....
13. cause irreversible brain damage, and in extreme cases, kill.
14. The early signs of childhood lead poisoning include: tiredness, nausea, crankiness and loss of appetite.
15. These symptoms are often mistaken for common ailments, such as the flu. As a result, lead poisoning is often overlooked--with tragic results.
16. Early detection of unacceptable levels of lead in the blood can prevent some of the more serious effects of lead poisoning.
17. Lead poisoning doesn't have to happen--not to your child, not to any child.

18. You can do something about it. You can organize a program to screen children for lead poisoning in your neighborhood.
19. What is a lead screening program?
20. Just as the window screens in your home are designed to let air in and to keep bugs out....
21. a lead screening program lets those children with no signs of lead poisoning pass through, but identifies those who may have high lead in their bodies.
22. The goal of a community lead screening program is to identify children with abnormal lead exposure BEFORE serious illness begins.
23. If a screening program saves even one child from the tragedy of permanent brain damage or physical illness, its worthwhile.
24. Protecting all the children requires:
  1. A screening program that enrolls all neighborhood children between the ages of 6 months and 6 years.
25. Any child in that age group who lives in, or frequently visits deteriorating older buildings is at high risk, ....
26. and should participate in a neighborhood screening program.
27. A lead screening program also requires:
  2. A referral system for the diagnosis and treatment of any child whose tests are positive.
28.
  3. Identification and elimination of the source of the child's exposure.
29.
  4. Suitable follow-up of children who have been identified as having a lead problem.

30. Screening for lead poisoning should be a routine part of every child's health care. The first screening should be done when the child is 6 months old, and should continue annually to age 6.
31. A screening program begins with a drop of blood from the child's finger.
32. For most children, that's all there is to it.
33. The blood sample is analyzed for erythrocyte protoporphyrin, known as EP. A high level of EP in the blood could be an early sign of lead exposure, but it does not always mean that the child is lead poisoned.
34. EP tests are quick and easy, but they are not specific for lead. The cause of a high EP reading could be something other than lead, such as iron deficiency anemia.
35. The EP test is a good first indicator. But, children with high EP levels must have a blood lead test to determine if the elevated EP level is due to lead.
36. Remember....everyone has some lead in their blood. This is entirely natural. A screening program will identify those children with unacceptable levels of lead in their blood.
37. If the blood lead test confirms the findings of the EP test, the child should immediately be referred to a clinic or physician for further diagnosis and treatment.
38. The job of the neighborhood lead screening program does not end with the identification of the lead-exposed child. Running a good program means keeping accurate records of all test results, ....
39. following up with parents to continue testing or treatment, ...
40. and most important of all, educating parents about eliminating the source of the child's exposure.

41. Over 95% of childhood lead poisoning is the result of chewing and swallowing lead based paint....
42. the kind frequently found in old, deteriorating homes and apartments.
43. Some children have pica -- a habit of putting non-food items in their mouths.
44. The combination of peeling leaded paint and pica can spell disaster for a child.
45. Children can become lead poisoned in other ways as well. Youngsters sometimes chew on woodwork that is coated with lead based paint.
46. Others are exposed by crawling on floors covered with lead-bearing dust and dirt.
47. Some few children are actually given folk remedies that contain lead salts. Pay-loo-ah, Azarcon and Greta are examples of this source of lead exposure.
48. No matter how the child becomes poisoned, the results are always tragically similar.
49. But it doesn't have to happen -- not to a single child -- not if you begin **NOW** to organize a lead screening program in your neighborhood!
50. Contact your city, county or state public health officials.
51. Tell them you want to start a lead screening program in your neighborhood.
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