

## City to Tell Parents of Harm To Children From Lead Paint

The city will soon launch an educational program to acquaint parents with the danger of lead paint.

Dr. Alex Witkow, director of the preventive medicine division of the Health Department, said the campaign is the result of a rash of lead poisoning cases among youngsters.

There have been 22 cases so far this year, the same number as for the entire year of 1955, Dr. Witkow said. Two of this year's cases have been fatal compared with five last year.

Attributed to Cills

In the past, he said, lead poisoning among children was normally attributable to chewing on the bars of cribs.

Since cribs nowadays are coated with nonlead paint, it was assumed that the current cases occurred after parents had repainted the cribs, Dr. Witkow said.

Dr. Sylvan M. Fish, acting chief of the communicable disease section, who directed the investigation of the 22 cases, reported that none resulted from cribs.

Instead, Dr. Fish said, the children had become ill by chewing on window sills, flaking off wall paint or nibbling on painted sticks outside.

One case was attributed to chewing on lead soldiers and one on eating putty, which is a combination of white lead and oil, he said.

To Co-ordinate Drive

Dr. Vincent Bove, a public health physician, has been appointed to co-ordinate the city's efforts in tracking down cases of the illness and directing educational efforts.

Dr. Bove said the hazard is increased by the large number of homeowners who do their own repainting.

He said the Philadelphia paint manufacturers are supplying information on various types of paints in co-operating with the proposed educational program.

He pointed out that many cases of lead poisoning are not severe enough for hospitalization and are not diagnosed as such. The symptoms are pallor, anemia, and general weakness, he said.

## Lead Poisoning Hits 41 Children

Forty-one cases of lead poisoning in children have been reported to the Department of Public Health in the last 18 months, Dr. James P. Dixon, Health Commissioner, disclosed yesterday.

He said 78 percent of the cases fell within the age range of 18 to 36 months and that in 90 percent of the cases there was evidence of chewing or gnawing on painted surfaces.

In most cases, Dixon said, the survey showed children were not receiving adequate parental supervision.

one per cent lead. He also noted that undercoats of paint in older homes are likely to have a high lead content.

Dr. Janowsky said the symptoms of lead poisoning are stomach pains, vomiting, weakness, and at times convulsions. He urged parents to obtain immediate treatment for the child if the symptoms appear.

Dr. Janowsky said that lead poisoning is always serious because it can cause damage to the brain in non-fatal cases. He warned parents that any paint used in the home should be lead-free, or contain less than

**Killed 12 Here**  
**Lead Poison**  
**Victims This Year**  
**Here All Under Age 7**

The Health Department today reported that 12 children under seven years of age died of lead poisoning.

Dr. Carl C. Janowsky, chief of the department's Epidemiology Division, said that two of the youngsters died in the month of August.

A total of 44 cases have been reported to the department since the start of the year, 12 of them, including the two deaths, in October.

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## City Warns of Danger Of Lead Poisoning in Home

"Is Your Child Being Slowly Poisoned?"

This is the dramatic title of a new booklet being circulated by the Philadelphia Health Department in an attempt to curb a rising incidence of lead poisoning among children.

Dr. John J. Hanlon, director of the department's public services, said there have been 25 cases of lead poisoning already this year, with one death.

Last Year's Comparison

At the same time last year, 15 cases and one death had been recorded here, Dr. Hanlon said.

An investigation of these cases, he said, shows that most occurred among young children, generally from 20 to 30 months, who had chewed on surfaces covered with paint containing lead.

"While interior paints are virtually lead free," Dr. Hanlon said, "many older homes still have surfaces covered with paint containing lead."

Sounds Warning

He said youngsters in the teething stage can be poisoned by chewing on old woodwork and warned parents to keep their children supplied with safe objects to chew on during this period.

The listed symptoms of lead poisoning are stomach pains and frequent vomiting, spasms, headache, muscular weakness or constant fatigue.

## Child With Lead Poisoning Has Brain Operation

AUG 6 1956 F\*

Roseann Ortiz, 21 months, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Narciso Ortiz, was reported in good condition today at Children's Hospital here after a brain operation for lead poisoning.

The operation was to relieve pressure on the brain caused by lead depositing there after circulating through the blood stream. Another operation will be necessary to replace bone flaps removed from each side of the skull in the first operation.

Roseann, who lives at 529 Williams st., Camden, is the fourth victim of lead poisoning at Children's Hospital this summer.

Lead poisoning is fatal if not

detected in time. Symptoms become more pronounced in children in the summer because of increased exposure to sunlight (Vitamin D) and higher incidence of colds.

Both Vitamin D and the acidity caused by infections set off chemical reactions which dislodge the lead from the bones where it first settles. The lead is then absorbed by the blood stream and carried to such organs as the brain.

Lead poison symptoms include fever, nausea or lethargy. Children most frequently get lead poisoning by chewing on substances such as wood or plaster which have been painted with outdoor paint containing lead.

## Lead Poisoning Rises Sharply

AUG 17 1956 F\*

An increase in lead poisoning fatalities brought an urgent warning from the City Health Department today.

Dr. John J. Hanlon, director of public health services, said there have been ten deaths and 28 cases reported this year.

There were seven fatalities last year and 61 cases.

He noted that most cases were among young children who are inclined to chew on painted surfaces or toys made of lead.

Children living in older homes are most likely to contract lead poisoning, he said. Lead was a common ingredient in paints

used many years ago and still is used in some exterior paints, he explained.

"Many of the non-fatal victims have sustained permanent brain damage which may result in mental retardation," he said.

Symptoms of lead poisoning include stomach disturbances with frequent vomiting, persistent headaches, muscular weakness or constant tiredness or irritability.