City to Test Children for Lead Poison

The city will begin an intensive campaign tomorrow to test North Philadelphia children for possible lead poisoning, acting Health Commissioner Dr. Lewis D. Polk announced yesterday.

The first testing area, which has reported a high incidence of young children suffering from poisoning due to eating paint chips with a high lead content, will be the neighborhood bounded by Germantown ave. and 11th st., and Lehigh ave. and Dauphin st.

Dr. Polk estimated it will take two months to test the approximately 2,100 children under six who live in the area. Eventually a team of 13 community health workers under the direction of the Model Cities childhood lead poisoning control project expect to test 20,000 children.

Testers will take a drop of blood from the finger of each child. The blood will be analyzed for possible high lead levels at the city's Public Health Laboratory, 500 S. Broad st.

Children whose blood indicates possible lead poisoning, which can cause mental retardation, permanent brain damage and in some cases, death, will be referred to district health centers or cooperative hospital clinics for treatment.

The testing drive, to be coupled with a general education program about the dangers and sources of lead poisoning, is being financed by a $600,000 federal Model Cities grant and $300,000 in city funds.

Pennwalt Firm Agrees to Curb Drug Exports

Bulletin Washington Bureau

Washington — Pennwalt Corp. of Philadelphia has agreed to stop selling bulk amphetamine products used in the manufacture of pep pills abroad rather than fight a U. S. Department of Justice order requiring the firm to show cause why its export license shouldn't be revoked.

JAN 28 1972

Pennwalt has denied any knowledge of illegal sales by its Mexican subsidiary, Strasenbergh Prescription Products. It said it was reviewing its export operation to make certain none of its pep pills were falling into illicit channels.

According to the Justice Department, amphetamines manufactured by Strasenbergh were exported to Mexico and then smuggled back into the United States in tablet form for sale in the black drug market.

Pennwalt itself was not accused of illicit sales. The government said Pennwalt's export business amounted to $8 million a year.

A 10-month probe by the U. S. Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs had resulted in 80 arrests and seizure of 1.5 million pep pills, worth about $1.5 million on the black market.

Lead Paint Poison Testing Opens With a Child's Yell

By FLETCHER J. CLARKE
Of The Bulletin Staff

The Model Cities area's new lead-paint program for poisoning in children got under way with a yell this morning.

A 4-year-old girl who lives at 2109 N. Reese st. sat quietly in her mother's lap watching community health worker Josephine Smalls play with a sharp-looking object.

But when that object went into his finger and produced a bright red pudde, Carlos' reaction was vocal.

Then he waited, stunned, while Miss Smalls drew the blood into a syringe for evaluation and shipment to the city's Public Health Laboratories, 500 S. Broad st.

Carlos was the first of some 2,100 children aged one to six, who will be tested for lead paint poisoning in the next two months.

Thirteen community health workers will be making door-to-door visits in an area bounded by Germantown ave., 11th st., Lehigh ave. and Dauphin st.

The program was made possible by a federal grant of $600,000 to Model Cities and $300,000 the city part of the $200,000 the city has budgeted for a city-wide program.

In any case where the blood shows a high percentage of lead, the child will be referred to the district health center for further testing and treatment.

Lead paint poisoning is found most often in children six years old and younger who eat pieces of peeled paint and chew on them.

If the lead concentrations are high the child can suffer brain damage or mental retardation. In extreme cases, it can be fatal.

FED 1 - 1972

The Evening Bulletin B 31 Tuesday, February 1, 1972

City Takes Blood Tests In Lead-Paint Poisoning

By FLETCHER J. CLARKE
Of The Bulletin Staff

A Health Department official said yesterday that 633 known cases of lead-paint poisoning were found in children living in the Model Cities area in 1970.

Edwin Arrington, field coordinator for the department, said there were about 1,225 in the entire city.

This means, he said, that slightly over half the reported cases were in the Model Cities area, bounded generally by Front, 33d, Spring Garden and Cumberland sts.

To combat the problem, the first large-scale testing program for lead paint poisoning was started yesterday in a Model Cities section.

13 Workers Visit Homes

Thirteen community health workers from the Department of Public Health began visiting homes and taking blood samples from children in an area bounded by Germantown ave., 4th st., Lehigh ave., and Dauphin st.

Arrington said this area was being tested first because of the population density and the high number of cases reported where children had dangerous amounts of lead in their blood.

An estimated 2,100 youngsters live in the area. Arrington said 40 micrograms in each 100 millimeters of blood could be harmful.

Possible Effects

Lead paint poisoning, if not diagnosed and treated in time, can result in mental retardation, permanent brain damage or death. Children between ages one and 6 are most often affected.

The poisoning results from eating paint chips from window sills, walls or repainted cribs, furniture and toys.

The program was made possible by a federal grant of $600,000 to Model Cities and part of the $200,000 the city budgeted for a city-wide program.

In cases where blood shows a high percentage of lead, the child will be referred to the district health center nearest his home for further testing and treatment.

Explains Program

Mrs. Mollie Broadnax was one of the health workers visiting homes and passing out literature yesterday on 9th st. below Lehigh ave.

As each resident answered the door, she explained the testing program and asked permission to take a blood sample.

Manuel Adames, 4, of 2645 N. 9th st., was one of the children from whom blood was taken.

While his mother, Mrs. Vencra Adames, watched closely, Mrs. Broadnax pricked the boy's finger with a needle and drew the blood into a syringe. Manuel's eyes flashed briefly, then he smiled.

Home Repainted

Mrs. Adames said her home was repainted last year and an abatement crew that is also part of the program tested her walls to find whether lead based paint prohibited by law — had been used.

The crew uses a portable lead analyzing machine and also will test area day care centers, churches, schools and hospitals.