



NEWS RELEASE

Public Health

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October 21, 2019

County announces childhood lead poisoning awareness campaign



The San Bernardino County Department of Public Health (DPH) will commemorate Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Week, Oct. 20-26. The theme this year is "Dust and dirt with lead can hurt. Keep kids away from lead where they play." The week-long campaign will educate families and community members about ways to prevent lead poisoning and the importance of testing children for lead.

To educate and encourage families to get their children tested for lead, DPH will run public service announcements on local city channels, display lead awareness posters in local OmniTrans buses, partner with cities to promote lead awareness and participate in outreach events to reach community-based organizations, medical providers and schools.

Lead poisoning can seriously affect a child’s brain and nervous system and can cause learning and behavioral problems. A blood lead test is the only way to identify and confirm lead poisoning in children.

“The purpose of this campaign is to remind parents that lead poisoning can be detrimental to young children’s health and development,” said Dr. Maxwell Ohikhuare, San Bernardino County Health Officer. “It is important for parents to ask their child’s doctor about lead testing.”

In California, children can be exposed to lead by ingesting lead-contaminated dust, paint chips from deteriorating lead-based paint and lead-contaminated soil. Other sources of lead poisoning include lead dust brought home on parents’ work clothes, certain imported ceramic pottery, painted objects traditional home remedies and imported spices, candies and other food products. Additionally, activities that involve lead products such as soldering, making stained glass and handling bullets or fishing sinkers can put children at risk for lead exposure.

To schedule a free home lead inspection, please call (909) 383-3052. If lead-based paint hazards are identified during the inspection, the inspector will review abatement options and provide available resources for lead hazard control services.

All parents and caregivers of young children are invited to visit www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/clppb for more information and ways to protect their children from this silent and serious environmental disease.