



# Lead Poisoning Prevention Media Outreach Kit



Dear Lead Poisoning Prevention Professional:

This Media Outreach Kit, created by EPA and supported by CDC and HUD, is designed with your needs in mind. Please use this kit, along with your own educational materials, as you develop relationships with media representatives in your service area.

Feel free to personalize the enclosed documents. The more local the focus the more likely your local newspaper or radio station will use your press release or cover your event.

While the document templates in this kit are solely focused on Lead Poisoning Prevention Week, we plan on providing templates to you in the future with a broader range of topics.

Good luck with each of these efforts!

## Contents

<b>1</b>	What the Media Do .....	1
<b>2</b>	What the Media Look For .....	2
<b>3</b>	Working With the Media .....	3
<b>4</b>	Media Do's and Don'ts .....	6
<b>5</b>	Basic Media Campaign Strategy and Sample Schedule .....	8
<b>6</b>	Outreach Tool Chart .....	10
<b>7</b>	EPA/CDC/HUD Fact Sheets .....	15
<b>8</b>	Sample Press Materials .....	22
<b>9</b>	File Listing & For More Information .....	26
<b>10</b>	Checklist .....	insert

Inside Back Pocket - CD with templates

## What the Media Do

Working with the press is an important part of what you do in your outreach activities. Because reporters play a significant role in spreading your message to thousands of people, you must understand what they need:



- Reporting Information
  - **New** - Has a new initiative begun?
  - **Changes** - Was a regulation released that affects how your program operates?
- Reporting Event
  - **Before** - Attract attendees to event
  - **During** - Broadcast of event; interviews done “on the spot”
  - **After** - Coverage, success of event
- Researching Stories
  - **Investigative** - Is your program accomplishing its stated goals? If not, why?
  - **Supportive** - Is your program meeting or exceeding its goals?

The key to making your story or event newsworthy is to relate its importance to what is happening in your community. Have lead poisoning rates gone up in your town? What is the percentage of children screened in the target age group? What has your agency done to improve efforts? These are the types of questions that you will likely get from a reporter. Make sure you have the answers, or know where to get them!

## 2 What the Media Look For

The most important element of media relations is to recognize that the media are only interested in newsworthy information. Information that is perceived as being too promotional in nature will be of less interest than information that shows how someone or something other than the organization has benefited from your actions. It is good to keep in mind that most suburban newspapers prefer a national story with a local angle. When pitching an event or story idea to the media it should have at least one of the following:



- **Local angle** - What does it mean to your town?
- **Human interest** - Was a family affected by lead? What was done to correct the problem?
- **“New” story** - Issue that has not been addressed previously
- **Future effects and/or conflicts** - If actions were not taken, what could happen?

Putting together a “press kit” is also helpful. This should include:

- Press release or public service announcement (PSA), depending on the media you are approaching. Always include appropriate contact information.
- Backgrounder, Fact Sheet, Brochure, and Calendar - This is basic information that can be used by the reporter in developing the story.

## 3 Working With the Media

Begin by doing your homework. Identify media outlets and specific reporters that are most likely to cover your area of interest. Before pitching the media or agreeing to an interview, get the following information:

- Reporter’s contact information
- Deadline
- Preference for follow up information (phone, fax, or email)
- General story angle and who else they are talking to

**Get to know the reporters.** Develop a relationship with the reporters and establish yourself as a source of information about lead problems in the community. Do not just contact them once a year for an annual event. Let the reporters know that they can rely on you as a consistent source of accurate information about your program and lead issues. Give them a call when a new piece of legislation hits the street, or when something happens in your program that will affect your community. This way, when your issue is raised again and the reporter is looking for in-depth information, you will be the first person on the contact list. Being known as an expert on a specific issue is a great way to publicize what your agency does.



**Contacting the press.** Cold calling might seem difficult, but reporters and editors are often looking to fill the pages of their newspaper or the air in their broadcast. They need you just as much as you need them. The trickier part is getting them to understand the importance of your issue or event. Try stopping by their office to deliver the press release or PSA. It is harder to turn someone down in person than it is over the phone.

**Be considerate of deadlines.** Familiarize yourself with the various media deadlines of reporters and editors. Most if not all publications have editorial calendars that can be used as a tool to see what the focus will be in each issue. Be sure you are not contacting them during their “crunch time.” Pitch calls are best made mid-morning (9:30 to noon). If you sense a reporter is rushed or impatient, ask them if they are on a deadline and offer to call back or send information.

**Do not get frustrated.** Pitch calls can be frustrating when reporters do not bite. But remember that every phone call keeps your issue and organization on their radar screen, and is an important step in building an on-going professional relationship with reporters.

**Send introductory and follow-up information.** Prepare a news release that will cut through the clutter. A sample release is included in this kit. The release should be brief, easy to grasp at a glance, yet as comprehensive as possible. If possible, give the release a local angle or a human-interest appeal. A news release should be sent at least a week in advance, if possible. Since publication schedules vary, it is best to contact each publication to determine timing. Depending on your relationship with the reporter or editor the news release should be sent via fax/electronically or delivered in person.

**Clarity.** Be “on message” with what you want to say. Come to an interview or event prepared with facts sheets and notes, so that you can confidently, and competently, answer questions about your issue.

**Facts in hand.** Have up-to-date information available at your fingertips—in the office or at an event. This will keep you well armed if you end up in an unscheduled interview.

**Speak up.** Assume that everything you say in an interview will be recorded and reported. **Nothing** is ever off the record!

**Close the deal.** Ask the reporter if he/she is interested in coming to the event. Most will not commit over the phone but they will consider it. Also remember to follow-up by sending a reminder to the reporter a week before the event.

**Location and look.** Try to give your event the appropriate image. If you are inviting the press to a screening, have health professionals dress the part—lab coats, etc. When going door-to-door, have all your staff wear similar colored shirts or jackets, with a logo that represents your campaign.

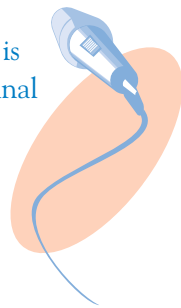
**Seasonal stories.** Every medium delivers stories around holidays, events of historical significance, or anniversaries. Try to work your agency’s efforts into several of these throughout the year.

**Thank you notes.** On top of sending your participants and volunteers notes of appreciation, be sure to send one to the reporters who covered your event. That personal touch is often remembered down the road.

# 4 Media “Do’s and Don’ts”

## “Do’s”:

- Do your homework. Be prepared for the worst and toughest questions with two or three positive points you want to get across. Always remember you are selling your agency or program.
- Speak in short sentences using plain language. Professional jargon might be appropriate in an office meeting, but it does not translate well on the evening news.
- Smile! Act like you enjoy what you are doing, and look alert and interested.
- Say, “I don’t know” if you do not know the answer, but make sure you can find it.
- Stop talking when you have made your point. Let the television or radio reporter fill “dead air.”
- Take the opportunity if a reporter asks if there is anything you would like to add. This is your final chance to summarize your points.
- Practice your interviewing skills in front of a co-worker or video camera.



## “Don’ts”:

- Don’t say “No comment.” It means “guilty” to people who hear it.
- Don’t swear, lose your temper, lie, hesitate, or say “uh”.
- Don’t comment on what others have said. You are hearing it second hand, so do not verify something that may not be true.
- Don’t answer a “yes” or “no” question with one word. Expand and elaborate to clarify the question.

### The most important rule:

*Never say anything you don’t want to see in print or on the evening news.*

# 5 Basic Media Campaign Strategy and Sample Schedule

Every good campaign needs a plan. This framework gives you the chance to consider your problem, your approach to it, and your desired outcomes.

## Campaign Strategy

1. Backgrounding the Problem
  - Come up with a distinct reason to attract media attention.
  - Select objectives that will encourage them to and cover your event.
2. Developing the Approach
  - Identify target audiences.
  - Divide into manageable groups.
  - Select media based on audience - Review the “Outreach Tool Charts” for suggestions.
3. Activating the Plan
  - Operating Tactics - How is the plan going to be implemented?
  - Specific Activities - What is going to happen that week?
  - Responsible Personnel - Assign based on staff strengths, specialties, and interests.
  - Establish Deadlines.
4. Evaluating the Campaign
  - Pre and Post Surveys - did the campaign change attitudes or encourage actions?
  - Event Attendance and Program Participation.
  - Media Success - Anticipated coverage vs. actual coverage - Was it accurate?
  - Surveys, Staff Reports and Other Feedback.

## 5. Additional Considerations

- Have a backup plan for alternate media coverage  
Examples: editorial calendars, speaking engagements, conference schedules, and background material.

## Media Schedule

- 6 to 8 Weeks Prior to Campaign
  - Appoint coordinators
  - Create press kit
  - Begin approaching partners and select locations
  - Establish press contacts and visit them
- 3 Weeks Prior...
  - Distribute press kits and location information
- 1 Week Prior...
  - Contact reporter or editor to ensure a press kit was received
  - Fax/e-mail information, if necessary
- 2-3 Days Prior...
  - Send out media advisory

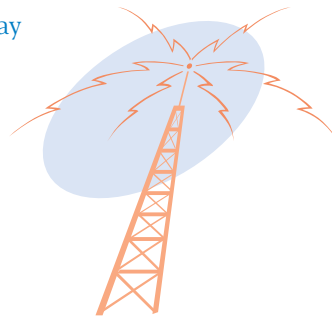


# 6 Outreach Tool Chart

The following outreach tools are identified by five different categories: Awareness, Exposure, Action, Educational, and Recognition.

- **Awareness** - highly visible; provides a broad audience an introduction to a particular topic or issue, utilizing repetition to raise awareness.
- **Exposure** - provides a wide range of audiences with basic information concerning a particular topic or issue.
- **Action** - motivates the audience towards the next step, such as seeking out more information. Often leads to more in-depth information.
- **Educational** - provides a limited audience with in-depth information concerning a particular topic or issue.
- **Recognition** - recognizes specific members of a group for outstanding performance or dedication.

Although many methods are repeated for each category, the message you take within each focus is often very different. For example, EPA's *Runs Better Unleaded* campaign was used on posters as an **awareness** tool, but you may want to develop an **action** poster that advertises a screening in a local health center.



Tool	Benefits	Challenges	Outreach Focus
<b>Articles, program-authored</b> placed in newspapers, magazines, association newsletters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- offer detailed information</li> <li>- wide reach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- cannot control placement</li> <li>- message susceptible to editing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Educational</li> <li>- Recognition</li> </ul>
<b>Articles, third party-authored</b> placed in newspapers, magazines, association newsletters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- offer detailed information</li> <li>- wide reach</li> <li>- offer third-party validation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- cannot control placement</li> <li>- message susceptible to editing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Educational</li> <li>- Recognition</li> </ul>
<b>Awards</b> given to program leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- program recognition</li> <li>- demonstrates success</li> <li>- adds value to facilities and program</li> <li>- compelling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- maximum visibility impact gained only through long-term commitment (e.g., annual event vs. one time only)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recognition</li> </ul>
<b>Bill Stuffers</b> index card of easy-to-read, pertinent information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- inexpensive to produce</li> <li>- control of message</li> <li>- accessible to wide audience</li> <li>- easy to distribute</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- need reliable, targeted lists and/or distribution allies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Action</li> <li>- Educational</li> <li>- Exposure</li> </ul>
<b>Billboards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- reaches many target audiences</li> <li>- highly visible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- expensive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Action</li> <li>- Awareness</li> <li>- Exposure</li> </ul>
<b>Bus Wraps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- highly visible</li> <li>- reaches broad audience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- expensive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Awareness</li> <li>- Exposure</li> </ul>
<b>Calendar</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- marks milestones (i.e. check lead levels)</li> <li>- offers monthly "tips"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- limited "pass around" appeal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Action</li> <li>- Educational</li> </ul>
<b>Certificates</b> given to program participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- program recognition</li> <li>- demonstrates success</li> <li>- adds value to facilities and program</li> <li>- compelling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- significant promotional commitment and follow-up needed to establish value</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recognition</li> </ul>
<b>Coloring/Activity Books</b> distributed at schools, libraries, child care centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- educates both children and parents</li> <li>- frames message well; offers context</li> <li>- inexpensive to produce</li> <li>- easy to distribute</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Educational</li> </ul>



Tool	Benefits	Challenges	Outreach Focus
<b>Contests (kids)</b> (drawing, essays)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- educate both children and parents</li> <li>- frame message well; offer context</li> <li>- inexpensive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- require committed partner for implementation</li> <li>- require additional resources to promote winners, maximize visibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Awareness</li> <li>- Educational</li> </ul>
<b>Fact Sheets</b> 1-2 pages of easy-to-read, pertinent information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- inexpensive to produce</li> <li>- comprehensive</li> <li>- control of message</li> <li>- accessible to wide audience</li> <li>- easy to distribute</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Action</li> <li>- Educational</li> </ul>
<b>General Brochures</b> 1-2 pages of easy-to-read, pertinent information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- inexpensive to produce</li> <li>- comprehensive</li> <li>- control of message</li> <li>- accessible to wide audience</li> <li>- easy to distribute</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Action</li> <li>- Educational</li> </ul>
<b>Hang Tags</b> index card of easy-to-read, pertinent information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- inexpensive to produce</li> <li>- control of message</li> <li>- accessible to wide audience</li> <li>- easy to distribute</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Action</li> <li>- Educational</li> <li>- Exposure</li> </ul>
<b>Implementation Tool Kits</b> provided to building owners/ operators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- offer detailed information</li> <li>- provides forum for discussion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- expensive to produce</li> <li>- development is time-consuming</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Educational</li> </ul>
<b>Information Booth</b> trade shows, community events, Earth Day celebration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- eye-catching</li> <li>- offers comprehensive information</li> <li>- provides forum for discussion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- expensive to staff and ship</li> <li>- effectiveness measures needed to prove value</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Action</li> <li>- Educational</li> </ul>
<b>Label</b> to be affixed to qualifying facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- program recognition</li> <li>- demonstrates success</li> <li>- adds value to facilities and program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- significant resources required to set standards, establish label meaning and promote its value</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Awareness</li> <li>- Exposure</li> </ul>
<b>Logo</b> to appear on all program material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- program recognition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- needs supplemental information to have value</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Awareness</li> <li>- Exposure</li> </ul>

Tool	Benefits	Challenges	Outreach Focus
<b>Mascot</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- eye-catching</li> <li>- educates both children and parents</li> <li>- frames message well; offers context</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- limited appeal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Educational</li> <li>- Exposure</li> </ul>
<b>Multi-media Presentations</b> shown in schools, libraries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- offer detailed information</li> <li>- compelling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- expensive to produce</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Educational</li> </ul>
<b>Newsletter</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- offers detailed information</li> <li>- provides next steps/solutions</li> <li>- offers expert advice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- may not be timely</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Action</li> <li>- Educational</li> </ul>
<b>Novelty Items</b> (i.e. paint brushes, sidewalk chalk kit, bumper stickers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- educates both children and parents</li> <li>- frames message well; offers context</li> <li>- easy to distribute</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- minimally educational</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Action</li> </ul>
<b>Posters</b> placed in schools, transit kiosks, post offices, welfare offices, housing authorities, child care facilities, libraries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- eye-catching</li> <li>- inexpensive to produce</li> <li>- raise public awareness</li> <li>- reach broad audience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- difficult to target specific audience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Action</li> <li>- Awareness</li> <li>- Exposure</li> </ul>
<b>Public Service Announcements</b> television	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- free advertising</li> <li>- wide reach</li> <li>- control of message</li> <li>- highly effective</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- cannot control placement</li> <li>- securing placement is time-consuming</li> <li>- varied production cost</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Action</li> <li>- Awareness</li> <li>- Exposure</li> <li>- Recognition</li> </ul>
<b>Public Service Announcements</b> radio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- free advertising</li> <li>- wide reach</li> <li>- control of message</li> <li>- highly effective</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- cannot control placement</li> <li>- securing placement is time-consuming</li> <li>- varied production cost</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Action</li> <li>- Awareness</li> <li>- Exposure</li> <li>- Recognition</li> </ul>
<b>Public Service Announcements</b> print	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- free advertising</li> <li>- wide reach</li> <li>- control of message</li> <li>- highly effective</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- cannot control placement</li> <li>- securing placement is time-consuming</li> <li>- varied production cost</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Action</li> <li>- Awareness</li> <li>- Exposure</li> <li>- Recognition</li> </ul>
<b>Slide Shows</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- offer detailed information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- outdated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Educational</li> </ul>

Tool	Benefits	Challenges	Outreach Focus
<b>Targeted Brochures</b> 8-12 pages of easy-to-read, pertinent information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- inexpensive to produce</li> <li>- comprehensive</li> <li>- control of message</li> <li>- accessible to wide audience</li> <li>- easy to distribute</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- need reliable, targeted lists and/or distribution allies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Action</li> <li>- Educational</li> </ul>
<b>Toll-free Information Line</b> available to the public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- offers detailed information</li> <li>- provides forum for discussion</li> <li>- measures effectiveness of other outreach tools</li> <li>- expert advice</li> <li>- builds database, better target program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- expensive to staff and maintain</li> <li>- resource requirement to staff and publicize</li> <li>- long-term commitment needed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Action</li> <li>- Educational</li> </ul>
<b>Training Workshop</b> provided to building owners/operators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- offers detailed information</li> <li>- forum for discussion</li> <li>- enfranchises participants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- may not appeal to target audiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Educational</li> </ul>
<b>Video</b> shown in schools, libraries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- offer detailed information</li> <li>- compelling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- expensive to produce</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Educational</li> </ul>
<b>Web site</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- offers detailed information</li> <li>- provides forum for discussion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- may not be accessible to target audiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Educational</li> </ul>

# 7 Federal Agency Fact Sheets



## Message Points for Lead Poisoning Prevention— Environmental/Regulatory Focus

Lead Poisoning research suggests that the primary sources of lead exposure for most children are:

- Deteriorating lead-based paint,
- Lead contaminated dust, and
- Lead contaminated residential soil.

Through the following efforts, EPA continues to play a major role in addressing residential lead hazards:

### **Hazard Standards for Lead in Paint, Dust, and Soil**

These new national standards are more protective than previous EPA guidance and will, for the first time, provide home owners, school and playground administrators, childcare providers and others with standards to protect children from hazards posed by lead, including children in federally-owned housing.

### **Disclosure Rule**

Requires disclosure of known lead-based paint and/or lead-based paint hazards by persons selling or leasing housing constructed before the phase out of residential lead-based paint use in 1978.

### **Pre-Renovation Lead Information Rule**

If conducted improperly, renovations in housing with lead-based paint can create serious health hazards to workers and occupants by releasing large amounts of lead dust and debris. EPA has developed requirements for renovators to distribute a lead hazard information pamphlet to housing owners and occupants before conducting renovations in pre-1978 housing.

### Training & Certification Program for Lead-Based Paint Activities

Ensures that individuals conducting lead-based paint abatement, risk assessment, or inspection are properly trained and certified, that training programs are accredited, and that these activities are conducted according to reliable, effective and safe work practice standards.

### EPA Research and Applied Science

These efforts are helping to:

- Determine the linkage between children's blood lead levels and environmental lead levels.
- Assess the extent of lead and lead hazards in the United States.
- Evaluate ways to reduce children's lead exposure.
- Foster the development of better ways to identify and control lead hazards so as to eliminate childhood lead poisoning.
- Support federal policies through sound science and analysis.

To learn more, or to obtain documents, contact the National Lead Information Center at 1-800-424-LEAD (424-5323), or visit EPA's Web site at [www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead).



### Message Points for Lead Poisoning Prevention—Health Focus

#### Childhood Lead Poisoning

##### What is the Problem?

- Approximately 890,000 U.S. children aged 1-5 years have blood lead levels greater than the CDC recommended level of 10 micrograms of lead per deciliter of blood. Lead poisoning can affect virtually every body system. Because lead poisoning often occurs with no distinctive symptoms, it frequently goes unrecognized. Lead poisoning can cause learning disabilities, behavioral problems, and, at very high levels, seizures, coma, and even death.
- The most significant sources of lead exposure for U.S. children are deteriorated lead-based paint and lead-contaminated dust. Lead-based paints were banned for use in housing in 1978. However, approximately 24 million housing units in the United States have deteriorated leaded paint and elevated levels of lead-contaminated house dust; more than 4 million of these dwellings are homes to one or more young children. Other sources of lead poisoning are related to hobbies (e.g., making stained-glass windows), work (e.g., recycling or making automobile batteries), or home health remedies (e.g., arzacon and greta which are used for upset stomach or indigestion; pay-loo-ah used for rash or fever).

##### Who is at Risk?

- Children from all social and economic strata can be affected, although children living at or below the poverty line who live in older housing are at greatest risk. Children of some racial and ethnic groups living in older housing are disproportionately affected by lead. For example, 22% of black children and 13%

of Mexican-American children living in housing built before 1946 have elevated blood lead levels compared with 6% of white children living in comparable types of housing.

### Can Lead Poisoning be Prevented?

- Lead poisoning is entirely preventable. The key is stopping children from coming into contact with lead and treating children who have been poisoned by lead.
  - Lead hazards in a child's environment must be removed.
  - Public and health care professionals need to be educated about lead poisoning and how to prevent it.
  - Children who are at risk of lead poisoning need to be tested, and, if necessary, treated.

### Issues Negatively Impacting Prevention Efforts

- Some health care providers do not perceive lead poisoning to be a problem in their community and therefore do not routinely screen their pediatric population or test at-risk children, even when a parent requests that a child be tested.
- A lack of knowledge about lead poisoning and its causes often delays parents from having their children tested or from taking appropriate safety measures.

### What the Public/Parents Can Do to Reduce Blood Lead Levels

- Ask a doctor to test your child if you are concerned about your child being exposed to lead.
- Talk to your state or local health department about testing paint and dust from your home for lead if you live in a house or apartment built before 1978, especially if young children live with or visit you.
- Damp-mop floors, damp-wipe surfaces, and frequently wash a child's hands, pacifiers, and toys to minimize exposure to lead.
- Avoid using home remedies (e.g., arzacon, greta, pay-loo-ah) and cosmetics (e.g., kohl, alkohol) that contain lead.

- Take basic steps to decrease your exposure to lead if you remodel buildings built before 1978 (e.g., showering and changing clothes after finishing the task) or if your work or hobbies involve working with lead-based products.

### CDC's Role in Preventing Lead Poisoning

- CDC provides technical and financial assistance to state and local childhood lead poisoning prevention programs. These programs ensure that screening, lead-hazard reduction, new legislation, and other prevention mechanisms occur throughout the country.
- CDC has established a national system to identify children with elevated blood lead levels.
- CDC provides guidance for the proper care of children after they are identified with elevated blood lead levels.
- CDC provides national guidance and policy for the prevention of childhood lead poisoning. In November 1997, CDC issued new screening recommendations: *Screening Young Children for Lead Poisoning: Guidance for State and Local Public Health Officials*. This guidance calls for public health leadership at the state and local levels to identify their high-risk populations and to ensure screening and follow-up services. CDC will continue to work with state and local areas to improve capacity and provide guidance.

### For More Information

Access the CDC Web site <http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/lead.htm>

Call the National Lead Information Center at 1-800-424-LEAD (5323).

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) protects people's health and safety by preventing and controlling diseases and injuries; enhances health decisions by providing credible information on critical health issues; and promotes healthy living through strong partnerships with local, national, and international organizations.



### Message Points for Lead Poisoning Prevention—Housing Focus

#### HUD Wants Every Child to Have a Lead-Safe Home!

**FACT: Most homes built before 1978 have some lead paint.** Homes built before 1960 have the most lead paint. Lead can be present on any painted surface, but it is most often found on windows, trim, doors, railings, columns, porches and outside walls. Surfaces that have been repainted may have layers of lead paint underneath. A lead inspection can tell you where lead paint is located in your home.

**FACT: Scraping, sanding or otherwise disturbing old lead-based paint can release large amounts of toxic lead dust.** Learn to work safely with lead paint and make sure any contractor you hire follows lead-safe guidelines.

**FACT: Most children are poisoned by invisible dust that is released when paint is peeling, damaged or disturbed.** The dust settles on floors and other surfaces. From there it can easily get onto children's hands or toys and into their mouths. Children can also be poisoned by playing in bare soil which can contain lead from paint that has peeled from outside walls, past use of leaded gasoline and other outside sources.

**FACT: Children under age six are most at risk for lead poisoning.** When a pregnant woman is exposed to lead, it can harm her fetus. In addition, lead poisoning is found at higher rates in African-American children living in older housing than Caucasian children.

**FACT: The only conclusive way to determine if your child is suffering from the effects of lead poisoning is with a blood lead test.** The test is simple, quick and available in a doctor's office or clinic. Most health plans cover lead tests. Young children who are

enrolled in Medicaid and other state health programs can get free lead tests.

Here are some simple steps you can take to keep children and homes safe from lead paint hazards.

- **Keep Paint in Good Shape:** Check often for peeling paint. Make sure any problems are fixed promptly.
- **Work Safely With Lead Paint:** Watch out for lead dust when you repair, repaint or renovate. Insist on lead-safe work practices when you hire a contractor.
- **Keep Your Home Free of Lead Dust:** Clean floors and window sills often with soap and water. Make children wash their hands regularly to prevent lead from entering their bodies.
- **Watch Where Your Children Play:** Don't let children play in bare soil. Look for areas with grass or other coverings.
- **Test Your Child for Lead:** Ask your doctor or health department if your child should be tested for lead.

*For HUD's fact sheet, [Lead Paint Can Poison: Protect Your Family When you Repaint or Remodel](#), or for other information about making your home lead-safe call 1-800-424-LEAD.*

*For a free brochure on other home safety issues, call HUD's Healthy Homes hotline at 1-800-HUDS-FHA or visit HUD's Web site at [www.hud.gov](http://www.hud.gov). **HUD is on your side.***

# 8 Sample Press Materials

## Press Release

[AGENCY NAME]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: [DATE]  
CONTACT: [NAME, PHONE]

**TREAT YOURSELF TO LEAD-SAFE LIVING: HARVEST THE REWARDS!**

*3<sup>rd</sup> National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week Highlights Importance of Testing Children and Homes for Lead*

[YOUR TOWN] - Free lead tests for children, health fairs for parents, and workshops for property owners are just some of the events being held in [YOUR TOWN] to celebrate National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week, October 21 to 28, 2001.

Many children are lead poisoned from exposure to lead hazards. Disturbing lead painted surfaces creates these lead hazards, found mostly in homes built before 1978. This dust settles on toys, windowsills, and floors and can be swallowed by young children.

Children who are lead poisoned often suffer from learning disabilities, brain and central nervous system damage, and other physical effects. Death from lead poisoning is rare. Protect your child and ask your doctor for a lead test. **[QUOTE FROM LOCAL HEALTH OFFICIAL].**

If you own your home, you can contact the National Lead Information Center at (800) 424-LEAD for information on how to find professionals to test for lead. If you are a tenant, talk with your landlord about having your residence tested.

**[STATEMENT, INFORMATION, OR QUOTE ABOUT LOCAL EVENT]**

Childhood lead poisoning remains a major environmental health problem in the United States, and it is entirely preventable. Do your part by treating your family to lead-safe living and get your child and home tested for lead. You can harvest the rewards by providing your child with a healthy environment in which to live, learn and grow!

For more information on [EVENT OR ACTIVITY], call [CONTACT NAME & NUMBER]. For general information about lead poisoning, contact the National Lead Information Center at (800) 424-LEAD (424-5323), or visit EPA's Web site at [www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead).

###

## Media Advisory

[AGENCY NAME]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - [DATE]  
CONTACT: [NAME, NUMBER]

**MEDIA ADVISORY**

**[YOUR AGENCY] ANNOUNCES LEAD POISONING PREVENTION WEEK EVENT**

**THEME: TREAT YOURSELF TO LEAD-SAFE LIVING: HARVEST THE REWARDS!**

*3<sup>rd</sup> National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week Highlights Importance of Testing Children and Homes for Lead*

October 19, 2001

With lead poisoning rates still high in many U.S. cities, [your agency] joins with representatives of city and community agencies to highlight the importance of testing children, and their homes, for lead. The theme of this year's celebration, *Treat Yourself to Lead-Safe Living: Harvest the Rewards!*, helps parents and property owners to take actions that will protect their children and tenants from lead hazards.

WHEN: [DATE & TIME]

WHAT: [TYPE OF EVENT (PRESS CONFERENCE, FAIR, ETC.)]

WHERE: [SPECIFIC LOCATION & ADDRESS]

WHO: [LIST NAMES & ORGANIZATIONS PARTICIPATING]

- Childhood lead poisoning remains a major environmental health problem in the United States, and it is entirely preventable.
- The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate nearly 900,000 children have elevated levels of lead in their blood (10 micrograms or more of lead per deciliter of blood).
- The major source of lead poisoning cases is lead paint hazards in homes. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recently finalized regulations aimed at identifying those hazards.
- Working with lead paint is dangerous for the unprotected worker and residents. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development provides funding for lead-hazard control grants and loans throughout the country, in which trained professionals perform the work.

Speakers will be available after the event for interviews.

###

### 30- & 60-second Public Service Announcements

[AGENCY NAME]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - [DATE]  
 CONTACT: [NAME, NUMBER]  
 PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT— 30 SECONDS

**TREAT YOURSELF TO LEAD-SAFE LIVING: HARVEST THE REWARDS!**

*3<sup>rd</sup> National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week Highlights Importance of Testing Children and Homes for Lead*

“Free lead tests for children, health fairs for parents, and workshops for property owners are just some of the events being held in [YOUR TOWN] to celebrate National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week, October 21st to the 28th.

“The theme of this year’s celebration, *Treat Yourself to Lead-Safe Living: Harvest the Rewards!*, helps parents and property owners take positive steps that will protect children and tenants from lead hazards.

Contact [NAME & NUMBER] for more information.”

###

[AGENCY NAME]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - [DATE]  
 CONTACT: [NAME, NUMBER]  
 PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT— 60 SECONDS

**TREAT YOURSELF TO LEAD-SAFE LIVING: HARVEST THE REWARDS!**

*3<sup>rd</sup> National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week Highlights Importance of Testing Children and Homes for Lead*

“Free lead tests for children, health fairs for parents, and workshops for property owners are just some of the events being held in [YOUR TOWN] to celebrate National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week, October 21st to the 28th.

“The theme of this year’s celebration, *Treat Yourself to Lead-Safe Living: Harvest the Rewards!*, helps parents and property owners take positive steps that will protect children and tenants from lead hazards.

“The bad news: Childhood lead poisoning remains a major environmental health problem in the United States, and it is entirely preventable. Nearly 900-thousand children across the country have elevated blood lead levels. The good news: lead poisoning is entirely preventable. To learn more about local events, lead poisoning and what YOU can do, contact [YOUR AGENCY OR NLIC] at [YOUR PHONE OR 800-424-LEAD] today! That’s [YOUR PHONE OR 800-424-LEAD].”

###

### Media Contacts

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Media Outlet: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Media Outlet: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Media Outlet: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Media Outlet: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Media Outlet: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Contact: \_\_\_\_\_



# 9 File Listing & For More Information

## Files on Attached CD:

1. Press Release
2. Media Advisory
3. 30-second Public Service Announcement
4. 60-second Public Service Announcement
5. EPA Fact Sheet
6. CDC Fact Sheet
7. HUD Fact Sheet
8. Runs Better Unleaded Poster
9. Doctor's Office Poster
10. Checklist

## For More Information:

To obtain hard copies of the electronic documents, contact the National Lead Information Center at (800) 424-LEAD (424-5323).

## To Reach the Federal Agency Web Sites:

EPA - [www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead)

CDC - [www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead](http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead)

HUD - [www.hud.gov/offices/lead](http://www.hud.gov/offices/lead)

[www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead)  
(800) 424-LEAD (424-5323)

