



DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND SUPPORT SERVICES
CITY OF CHICAGO

Elevated Lead - Staff Guidelines

Definition: Lead poisoning is a concern to all families living in housing built before 1978, which is where many of our enrolled families live. Lead poisoning can lead to developmental delays, brain damage, stunted growth, hyperactivity and behavior problems, and impaired hearing. In extreme cases, lead poisoning can lead to death. Lead is found in peeling paint, dust, dirt, and tap water.

Screening: Head Start requires annual lead tests for our children beginning at 6 to 9 months of age. The threshold for negative effects of lead has not been established. The CDC has adopted new screening and follow up schedules in an attempt to prevent the acquisition of lead in the blood. It is recommended by the CDC that the following guideline be followed for screening and follow up of Blood Lead Levels

<u>Venous Blood Lead Level (BLL) mcg/dl</u>	<u>Early Follow Up (2-4 tests after initial screening)</u>	<u>Later Follow Up testing after BLL is declining</u>
<u>≥ 5 - < 10</u>	3 months	6 to 9 months
10 – 19	1 to 3 months	3 to 6 months
20 – 24	1 to 3 months	1 to 3 months
25 – 44	2 weeks to 1 month	1 month
<u>≥ 45</u>	As soon as possible	As soon as possible

If the child's level is 20.0 or above, please:

- _ Send the child (and other household children under the age of 6) to the health care provider for an evaluation and possible treatment (see attached letter) *as soon as possible*.
- _ The family's housing should be tested for lead hazards. The City Department of Public Health is required to test all homes where levels are 20.0 and above. Landlords are then responsible for addressing lead hazards. Work with the family to contact the City at 312-746-7829.

_ Counsel family on housekeeping issues. All surfaces such as floors and windowsills should be washed weekly. Also, family members should remove shoes when entering the house. The tap water should be flushed for 3 minutes every morning; thereafter, tap water should run for 30 seconds before using. Family members should wash hands often and especially before mealtimes and bedtimes.

- _ Counsel n good nutri. Regular meals with foods high in protein, iron, and calcium (foods spinach, low-



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chips, and desserts) should be avoided.

Resources: Additionally, you may want to do a parent and staff workshop on lead. Your local medical clinic or children's hospital are resources. For classroom materials, the Children's Television Workshop has a highly recommended Sesame Street Lead Away curriculum – contact (317)579-0400. The National Lead Information Center at (202)833-1071 can provide additional assistance.

With your assistance, permanent damage to the child's health can be prevented and reversed.

Thank you.
Medical/Dental/Nutrition/Mental Health Committee
Head Start, City of Chicago

Reference: Preventing and Screening for Childhood Lead Poisoning: Guidelines for Illinois Physicians and Health Care Providers Illinois Department of Public Health, July 2008. Low Levels of Lead Harms Children: A renewed Call for Primary Prevention; The Advisory Committee on Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention – CDC Jan 2012