

# THE INTERSECTION OF HEALTH AND HOUSING TO PREVENT LEAD-EXPOSURE

Leslie Balch  
lbalch@qvhd.org



**QVHD**

Quinnipiac Valley Health District

***HEALTH INVOLVES ALL  
COMPONENTS OF LIFE:  
ECONOMIC, RECREATIONAL,  
ENVIRONMENTAL, CULTURAL AND  
SPIRITUAL***



“Stop asking for a seat at the table...we belong at the head of the table” K. DeSalvo, APHA Closing Session 2015



# Lower Level of Concern

- Policies, laws and enforcement
  - 1990s Unleaded gasoline
  - 1978 Lead out of paint
  - Remediation and abatement laws
    - Safe practices
  - Universal lead screening
- No safe blood lead level in children has been identified
- Blood lead concentrations are inversely associated with children's IQ scores
- Associated declines in IQ are greater at lower concentrations than at higher concentrations.

# Blood Lead in Children

- Effects many systems-even at low levels
  - Results in behavioral problems and intellectual impairment
  - Associated with measurable detrimental effects on cognitive, behavioral, and social-emotional developmental outcomes
  - Effects of lead toxicity are believed to be irreversible
- Contributes to social disparities
  - Health, educational achievement and future quality of life
  - Impacts Behavior, earning potential

**Is preventable**

# Risk at Home

- **Approximately 70 percent of lead poisoning cases are attributed to lead-based paint hazards in the home**
- Ingestion through normal hand-to-mouth activity
  - Delayed maintenance
  - Deteriorated paint and the lead dust it creates.
    - Interior and in soil
  - Repair activities
    - Without proper safeguards to control and post-work cleaning
    - Presence during repairs/renovations



# Children at Highest Risk

- In poorly maintained older homes
- In homes with lead-painted surfaces disrupted without proper safeguards to control, contain, and clean up of lead dust
- In substandard housing
- From low-income communities and communities of color

# Studies Have Shown

- Blood lead screening and cleaning alone without removal of lead hazard not effective in decreasing blood lead levels.
  - Screening
    - Law
    - Necessary for surveillance
  - Education
    - Surviving in poverty may trump continuing efforts
    - Even with retention of information, not significant impact on blood leads



## Traditional Approach

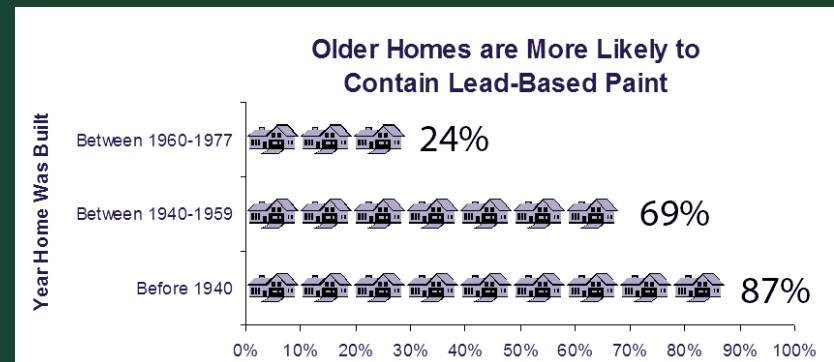
- Focus on individual behavior
  - Tenants, owners, managers, real estate agents
  - Assuming received, understand, and will use information
- Elevated blood lead is the indicator for hazards
  - After the fact assessment, education, protective measures, and enforcement.

## Trending

- Toward a housing based approach to prevent exposure
  - Stop using kids to detect lead hazards
  - Making exposure hard
    - Improve, preserve and provide affordable housing
    - Better coordination of activities
    - Maximize available resources

# Prevent Exposure

- Identify pre-1978 dwellings
  - Delayed maintenance
  - Deteriorated paint
  - Lead dust
    - Interior and in soil
  - Improper repair activities
- Maintain unit to prevent health hazards from arising
- Fix problems before and during occupancy in a timely manner



**BEYOND ENFORCEMENT**



**SAVES TIME AND MONEY**

# EPA and HUD

- **EPA's and HUD's Real Estate Notification and Disclosure Rule mandates that property owners reveal information about lead-based paint and hazards to prospective buyers and renters.**
- **EPA's Lead-Based Paint Activities Certification and Accreditation Program oversees the development of capacity to perform lead-based paint inspections, risk assessments, and abatement.**
- **HUD's Lead Safe Housing Rule governs how lead safety must be addressed in all federally assisted housing.**
- **EPA's Standards on Lead Dust define what is a dangerous level of lead in paint, bare soil, and interior dust.**
- **EPA's Renovation, Repair and Painting Rule requires contractors and workers who work in older homes and child-occupied facilities to take simple, low-cost precautions to avoid creating and spreading lead debris and dust.**

# HEALTH

## Lead Poisoning Prevention and Treatment

### **CHAPTER 368a – Department of Public Health—Public Health and Well-Being.**

**Sec. 19a-110. (Formerly Sec. 19-65e). Report of lead poisoning.**

**Sec. 19a-110a. Regional lead poisoning treatment centers**

**Sec. 19a-111. (Formerly Sec. 19-65f). Investigation. Preventive measures. Relocation of families. Reports. Regulations**

**Sec. 19a-111a-k. Lead poisoning prevention program**

**Sec. 19a-111b. Educational and publicity program. Early diagnosis program. Program for detection of sources of lead poisoning**

**Sec. 19a-111c. Abatement of lead in dwellings. List of encapsulant products. Regulations**

**Sec. 19a-111e. Federal funds for lead poisoning prevention programs.**

**Sec. 19a-111f. Environmentally safe housing for children and families program**

**Sec. 19a-111g. Pediatric screening and risk assessment for lead poisoning. Duties of primary care provider. Exemption.**

**Sec. 19a-111h. Review of lead poisoning data. Regulations.**

**Sec. 19a-111i. Report re lead poisoning prevention efforts**

**Sec. 19a-111j. Financial assistance to local health departments for lead poisoning prevention efforts. Regulations**

**Sec. 19a-111 k. Applicability of OSHA standards to abatement and remediation of lead hazards**

### **CHAPTER 830 – Rights and Responsibilities of Landlord and Tenant.**

**Sec. 47a-4a. Effect of failure to comply with section 47a-7.**

**Sec. 47a-7. Landlord's responsibilities**

**Sec. 47a-11. Tenant's responsibilities**

### **CHAPTER 833a – Public Enforcement of Health and Safety Standards in Tenement and Boarding Houses, and in Rented Dwellings.**

**Sec. 47a-50. Definitions**

**Sec. 47a-51. (Formerly Sec. 19-343). Sanitary regulations.....23**

**Sec. 47a-52. (Formerly Sec. 19-88). Abatement of conditions in rented dwelling other than tenement house constituting danger to life or health**

**Sec. 47a-53. (Formerly Sec. 19-344). Order of enforcement agency.**

**Sec. 47a-54. (Formerly Sec. 19-345). Communicable diseases; unfit for habitation; order to vacate**

**Sec. 47a-54f. Paint**

**Sec. 47a-55. (Formerly Sec. 19-347). Enforcement. Penalties**

# Protecting and Preserving

- Focus on housing
- Safer housing market to protect our residents.
  - Education
    - More than just a flyer/disclosure
  - Lead hazard control
    - Remediation of existing hazards
  - Maintenance to prevent hazards from arising
  - Monitoring
    - Early attention to change in condition
    - Compliance



# ROI (Return on Investment)

- Lead poisoning prevention strong return for every dollar invested
- Prior to exposure
  - Cost implications
    - Avoid delays associated with relocation or phased project
    - Abatement vs. remediation
  - Avoid complaints, lawsuits and fines
  - Opportunity
    - Vacant unit
    - After inspection, before occupancy

# To Do List

- ✓ Identify and remove sources of exposure to lead
  - Before exposure
- ✓ Educate about lead hazards in housing and responsibilities.
  - Property owners, tenants, real estate professionals, and building contractors
  - Before exposure
- ✓ Assure that homeowners, contractors, and others comply with applicable requirements.
  - Increase the amount of safe and effective abatement performed.
    - Policy and regulation
      - Inspection
      - RRP
- ✓ Assure tenants are informed and understand
  - Before occupancy
    - Inspection
  - Implications of lead, importance of screening, cleaning and reporting changes in condition.



# Communicate

- Reduce or eliminate exposure-risk factors before elevated blood lead detected
  - Assess
    - Who, what, where and when
  - Plan
  - Implement
  - Evaluate
    - Revise

# Consider

- Agencies involved
  - Authority
  - Regulations
  - Policies and procedures
    - Inspection
    - Relocation
    - Information/data
    - Referrals
- Lead safe maintenance and monitoring resources
  - Importance to community health and equity
  - Regulations and consequences
  - Info and training options
    - Owners, contractors, community members
- Develop and evaluate collaborative policy
  - Based on maximizing available resources/knowledge/data
  - What more is needed

# Collaborate not Duplicate

- Players
  - Property owner
  - Real estate
  - Housing
  - Health
  - Provider
  - Occupant/Community
- Identify resources/assets
  - Interagency referrals
- Established communications
  - Delivering communications and educational outreach

# Collaborating with Subsidized Housing

- Working with same families, but don't know it
- Health becomes involved after exposure
- Pre-occupancy policy development
  - Without increasing workload
  - Outcome not output based
  - Actions that can make a difference

# Attempts to Collaborate

- Successes and failures
  - We're talking!
  - Lists
  - Policy development
  - Referrals acceptable
  - Purpose of information
    - → → → → →
- Maximizing resources
  - Cross reference involvements
  - Reduce duplication
  - Know enforcement authorities
  - Share findings and areas of expertise
    - Once know can optimize
- Marry data with programs
  - Pre 1978 units with children
  - Conditions found
  - Safe practices used
  - Referred for enforcement
  - Inspected for complaints
  - Safe housing available

# Integration of Activities

- Identify properties/areas/communities of concern
  - Property/landlord history
- Lead hazard evaluation
- Lead hazard controls
- Strengthen regulatory infrastructure
  - Lead safe work practices
    - Painters, renovators, code inspectors, realtors, property owners and managers
      - Cleaning/clearance verification
- Inspection and complaint response
- Policy development
  - Develop resources
  - Communication

**“A healthy home is sited, designed, built, maintained, and renovated in ways that support the health of its residents.” U.S. Surgeon General, 2009**

**Let's Make it Easier to be Healthy!**

**Thank you!**