



NEWS RELEASE

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

RSA Tower 201 Monroe Street, Suite 914 Montgomery, AL 36104
Phone 334-206-5300 Fax 334-206-5520

www.adph.org

Alabama parents are advised to have their homes and children tested for lead as state observes National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week, Oct. 23-29

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Jacqueline Harris
(334) 206-2966
1-800-545-1098

Nearly a quarter of a million children living in the United States have blood lead levels high enough to cause significant damage to their health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates, based on data from a 2003–2004 national survey. Major sources of lead exposure among U.S. children are lead-based paint and lead-contaminated dust found in deteriorating buildings.

Despite the continued presence of lead in the environment, lead poisoning is entirely preventable. “If high blood lead levels are not detected early, children with such high levels of lead in their bodies can suffer from damage to the brain and nervous system,” Dr. Tom Miller, deputy director for medical affairs, Alabama Department of Public Health, said. “They can also develop behavior and learning problems (such as hyperactivity), slowed growth, hearing problems, and aggressive patterns of behavior.”

Parents can reduce a child’s exposure to lead in many ways. Here are some simple steps to help protect your family:

- Get your home tested. Before you buy an older home, ask for a lead inspection.
- Get your child tested. Even if your young children seem healthy, ask your doctor to test them for lead.
- Get the facts! Local health departments can provide helpful information about preventing childhood lead poisoning.

To increase awareness of the need to prevent childhood lead poisoning, the Alabama Department of Public Health, Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, along with CDC, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, is participating in National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week, Oct. 23–29.

This year’s theme, “Lead-Free Kids for a Healthy Future,” underscores the importance of testing your home, testing your child, and learning how to prevent the serious health effects of lead

poisoning. In observance of the week, Gov. Robert Bentley signed a state proclamation in Montgomery on Oct. 18. Mayor William A. Bell is also proclaiming the week in the city of Birmingham on Oct. 25.

According to Jacqueline Harris, program director, all children should be tested for lead poisoning at 12 and 24 months of age as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

For more information, call Ms. Harris at (334) 206-2966 or toll free at 1-800-545-1098.

-30-

10/24/11