

Protect Kids. Create Jobs.

Invest in Preventing Childhood Lead Poisoning



Lead is a toxin. There is no safe level of lead in the blood.

Child lead poisoning can cause lifelong, irreversible brain and nervous system damage which can lead to learning and behavioral challenges, lower IQ, lower academic achievement, increased hyperactivity, emotional problems and future delinquent behavior. Thousands of Ohio children have already been poisoned and many more continue to be exposed to lead.

3 in 100
Ohio children

have tested with elevated blood lead levels (EBLLs).

3,533 children
had EBLLs in 2019
representing 2.1% of all children tested in 2019.

Counties with the highest rates of children with EBLLs are

Crawford | **6.9%**

Harrison | **6.29%**

Cuyahoga | **5.79%**

Morgan | **4.87%**

Clark | **4.78%**



Despite the danger of lead, it can be hard to address because it is invisible and the damage to a child can be delayed. Funding generally kicks in once a child is already lead poisoned- a reactive and ineffective response to lead poisoning.

The **#1 source of child lead poisoning** is lead dust from old lead paint in houses built before 1978: 95% of the EBLL cases.

Investing in a Primary Prevention Path Forward

To achieve a lead-free future for our children, Ohio needs to invest in primary prevention solutions for childhood lead poisoning, beginning with healthy housing. These prevention efforts save lives, increase jobs, and ultimately save taxpayer dollars.

1 | Preserve the Lead Abatement Fund (\$7.15 million/FY) to advance primary prevention of lead poisoning through lead safe work practices during renovation and repair and incentives for targeted lead abatement through local partnerships and innovation. [ODH 440527]

2 | Preserve the Lead Safe Home Fund (\$1 million/FY) to sustain public-private investment in removing lead hazards from Cleveland properties. [ODH 440530]

3 | Expand SCHIP Lead Program for High-Risk Children (\$10 million/FY) to remove lead hazards in homes built before 1978 with children under 6 years of age or pregnant women. Increase current \$5 million to \$10 million/year. [ODM 651525]

4 | Preserve the H2Ohio funding to OEPA for Clean Water (\$46 million/FY) to replace lead service lines and support water affordability measures. [OEPA 715695]

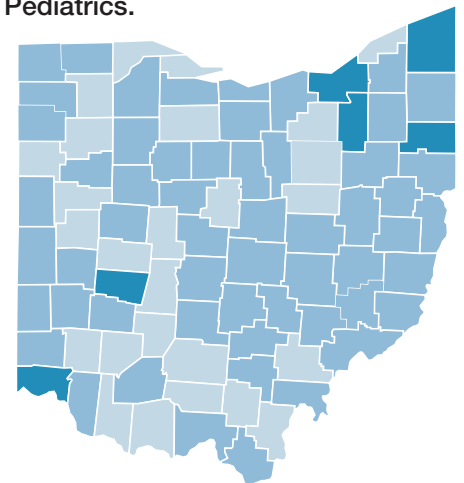
5 | Preserve the Early Intervention funding for Lead Poisoned Children for supportive, home-based services for children under 3 years who tested for elevated blood lead levels, using a small portion of the \$22.3 million/FY for EI. [ODD 322421]

For every dollar spent controlling lead hazards, at least \$17 would be returned (and as much as \$221) in health benefits, increased IQ, higher lifetime earnings, tax revenues, lower special education costs and reduced criminal activity.

Efforts to Tackle Child Lead Poisoning Making Progress

The Governor & Ohio General Assembly recognize the critical importance of primary prevention of child lead poisoning, deemed the “optimal strategy” by the CDC and American Academy of Pediatrics.

- State Child Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) lead hazard control program removed lead in homes in 61 counties.
- Middle Income Lead Program & Ohio Lead Tax Credit made funds available to families to remove lead from their homes.
- Ohio Department of Health (ODH) partnerships with other state agencies successfully supported:
 - lead worker training and covering the cost of certification and licenses to recruit workers into the lead workforce,
 - creation of a lead demolition protocol to reduce release of lead dust during demolition, and,
 - implementation of the expanded automatic eligibility of early intervention for children with EBLLs, making support services available to families across the state.
- ODH managed GRF funding to foster innovation in local lead prevention efforts, including the Lead Safe Home Fund in Cleveland and Toledo’s Historic South project.



SCHIP Abatements by County

- 10 or more properties
- less than 10 properties
- 0 properties

BUT the Urgent Problem of Child Lead Poisoning Persists in Ohio



- Ohio still does not have a comprehensive strategy for targeting the most common source of lead: **pre-1978 homes make up 2/3 of Ohio’s housing stock** with up to **425,235 homes with children under 6 years** living in them.
- The **SCHIP program is over-extended** and current funding only allows up to 150 homes to be abated a year.
- **Ohio does not require lead hazard remediation prior to children or pregnant women residing in a pre-1978 home.** Instead, Ohio relies mostly on increasing public awareness and lead testing to identify and abate lead hazards *after* a child has been lead poisoned, resulting in thousands of lead poisoned children and more being exposed to lead every day.
- The Lead Safe Rental Registry was intended to allow people to locate lead safe homes but so far is ineffective with **few pre-1978 units included in the Registry.**
- The Renovation, Repair and Painting (RRP) rule remains federally controlled for Ohio and has been ineffective in ensuring lead safe work practices are used in pre-1978 homes. Without ODH authority for RRP, **children continue to be inadvertently exposed to lead during home renovations.**

INVEST IN PREVENTING CHILDHOOD LEAD POISONING TO PROTECT KIDS & CREATE JOBS



The Ohio Lead-Free Kids Coalition is a collection of organizations and individuals who share a deep and urgent concern about the potentially life-long harm caused by lead poisoning and the future well-being of our state. We work collaboratively toward a meaningful public commitment and investment to ensure all Ohio children are safe from lead in their homes and communities.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT THE
Ohio Lead-Free Kids Coalition at: ohleadfreekids.org