

# LEAD SCREENING

Innovative Strategies to Increase Screening for Children



**NATIONAL  
NURSE-LED CARE  
CONSORTIUM**  
a PHMC affiliate

## Why is screening children for lead poisoning so important?

Protecting children from exposure to lead is crucial to their lifelong health. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) states that no safe blood lead level in children has been identified, and that public health actions should be initiated when blood lead levels reach 5 micrograms per deciliter (CDC, 2017). The serious effects of lead exposure cannot be corrected. Even low levels of lead in blood have been shown to affect IQ, ability to pay attention, and academic achievement.

## How can health centers get involved?

Health centers should utilize community-based strategies and leverage local partnerships and resources to integrate lead screening into their health care delivery. By improving outreach and linkage to care, health centers can play a vital role in curbing the rise of lead poisoning in children. Access the following resources to integrate this work into your health center:

- National Lead Summit
- Keys to a Healthy Home
- Healthy Home Environments and Lead Poisoning Prevention

## Potential Community Partners

- Community Health Centers
- School-based Health Centers
- Public Housing Agencies (PHAs)
- Public housing community centers
- Tenant councils & neighborhood captains
- Nurse-Family Partnerships
- State & local health departments
- Home visiting programs
- Community development groups
- Educational institutions
- Art programs
- Places of worship

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## Lead Screening Innovative Strategies

The National Nurse-Led Care Consortium (NNCC) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit based in Philadelphia, PA. NNCC advances nurse-led health care through policy, consultation, and programs to reduce health disparities and meet people's primary care and wellness needs. For over 20 years, NNCC has led community-based programs for lead poisoning prevention and other environmental health risks, and is a winner of the EPA National Children's Environmental Health Award.

## Success Stories

### Lead and Healthy Homes Program (2013-16)

Our collaboration with local health centers initiated referrals for in-home education services for over 1,400 families in southeastern Pennsylvania and connected children to primary care providers for lead screening.

### Lead Safe Babies (2000-11)

This partnership with the Philadelphia Department of Public Health and local universities integrated a diverse staff of home visitors, including community health workers, public health nurses, and nursing students, to provide lead education and testing in over 10,000 homes in and outside of Philadelphia.

### Healthy Homes for Child Care (2005-08)

An interdisciplinary team of medical professionals, child care providers, and Philadelphia Licenses and Inspections staff collaborated to reach over 3,000 children in Philadelphia through lead education and testing in home-based child care settings.

### Lead Awareness: North Philly Style (1996-99)

Resident leaders of public housing developments in Philadelphia led a community-driven initiative to increase lead education and testing by engaging youth in after-school programs and reaching adults through neighborhood block parties.

## Which federal agencies fund lead poisoning initiatives?

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA): Lead Paint Program
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD): Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes (OLHCHH)
- U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

To learn more about screening children for lead poisoning and strategies for integrating lead screening into health care delivery, please contact Deepa Mankikar at [dmankikar@ncc.us](mailto:dmankikar@ncc.us).