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Lead Poisoning Prevention Week seeks healthy future for children

During National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week, Oct. 20-26, the Kane County Healthy Places Coalition and the Kane County Health Department is raising awareness of the dangers of lead poisoning.

According to the [2010 Illinois Lead Program and Healthy Homes Annual Surveillance Report](#), Kane County has the fourth highest county rate of childhood lead poisoning in the state. Nearly 1,500 children in Kane are known to have elevated blood lead levels. The Kane County 2012-2016 Community Health Improvement Plan lists childhood lead poisoning as one of the six major threats to the residents of Kane County's health and well-being.

Major sources of lead exposure include lead-based paint and lead-contaminated dust in deteriorating buildings. Children can also be exposed to lead from additional sources including contaminated drinking water, take-home exposures from a workplace, and lead in soil. To emphasize the importance of prevention, the Kane County Board voted at its meeting October 15 to proclaim this week as Lead Poisoning Prevention Week in Kane County.

Despite the continued presence of lead in the environment, lead poisoning is entirely preventable. This year's NLPPW theme, "Lead-Free Kids for a Healthy Future," underscores the importance of testing your home, testing your child, and learning how to prevent lead poisoning's serious health effects. Parents can reduce a child's exposure to lead in many ways. Here are some simple things you can do 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! The Kane County Health Department can provide you with helpful information about preventing childhood lead poisoning. Learn more by visiting our website at <http://www.kanehealth.com/lead.htm>.

MORE

The Kane County Healthy Places Coalition, a voluntary group of community advocates, has developed lead prevention materials for local paint stores to distribute, advising customers about safe ways to remove paint in homes built before 1978 when lead was no longer allowed as a component of paint. In addition residents of Kane County will be offer lead prevention bookmarks by many local agencies and organizations such as libraries, doctor offices, and social service agencies. To print out your own bookmarks, visit www.kanehealth.com and look up “lead” on A-Z services. Information about the Healthy Places Coalition can be found under “H” in the A-Z services.

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