

The National Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Week is October 25 – 31, 2009.

Let TN LEAP help you provide a lead safe home for your family!

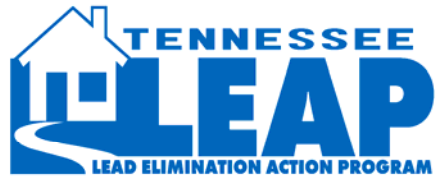
Countless children are being unnecessarily poisoned in their homes. Not by medications or household cleaning supplies, but by the lead-based paint commonly found in the pre-1978 houses where they live or visit. The harmful effects of childhood lead poisoning are permanent and can include lowered I.Q., learning disabilities, violent and/or aggressive behavior, growth delays, speech delays, and it has been linked to Attention Deficit Disorder.

Lead-based paint hazards are especially dangerous because they can be virtually invisible. They can be found in peeling paint on walls and windows. And they can be found in the undetectable lead dust created by deteriorating lead-based paint and in the dirt where children often play. It takes a very small amount of lead dust to cause permanent damage to a child's brain and nervous system, especially those under the age of 6. Currently, action must be taken if a child's blood lead level is 10 µg/dl or higher and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) estimates that 250,000 United States children under 6 have lead levels higher than this.

But there is hope. The Tennessee Lead Elimination Action Program (TN LEAP) at Middle Tennessee State University has HUD grant funding to help families provide a lead safe home for their children. Services provided by TN LEAP can include cleaning up lead-based paint hazards, painting, replacing doors and windows, and removing contaminated soil. Contact TN LEAP at (865) 244-4350 or toll free at (866) 686-5327 to ask for assistance.

Most home improvements made on homes built before 1978 pose a great threat to children under the age 6 and should only be done by professionals who are properly trained and certified. In fact, beginning in April 2010, any contractor who does any work that disturbs lead-based paint in a home, child care facility, or school built before 1978 must be certified in practices to prevent lead contamination. For a list of state certified lead-based paint abatement contractors in your area, contact the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation at (888) 771-LEAD. If your home needs repair but you are unable to hire a contractor, contact TN LEAP for possible assistance.

Childhood lead poisoning is absolutely preventable. If a child under the age of 6 lives at or frequently visits a home built before 1978, they are at risk and steps should be taken to prevent any permanent damage. The first step is knowledge. The second is action. Call TN LEAP today at (865) 244-4350 or toll free at (866) 686-5327 and ask how we can help you provide a lead safe home for your family.



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