



KALAMAZOO COUNTY GOVERNMENT

In the Pursuit of Extraordinary Governance...

**NEWS RELEASE FOR
IMMEDIATE RELEASE**
October 20, 2021

Matt Johnson and Lyndi Warner
Public Information Officers
pio@kalcouny.com

National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week

KALAMAZOO, MI— The Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services Department’s Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (CLPPP) plans to kick-off National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week, October 24-30, 2021, by holding lead screening clinics on October 21 from 1 to 4 p.m. and October 22 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at 311 E. Alcott Street. This clinic is specifically for children affected by the recall issued by the U.S. Food & Drug Administration early this year for certain lead test kits; however, children not specifically impacted by the lead kit recall are also eligible for the lead screening clinics being held.

“Children affected by this recall should have received information from their healthcare provider,” said Sofia Darling, public health CLPPP nurse with Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services Department. “If a parent, guardian or caretaker is concerned about their child’s lead levels or has general questions, then I strongly encourage that they reach out to us to get information about available resources.”

Testing for lead poisoning in children is important because even relatively low levels of lead exposure can impair a child’s cognitive development. Children with blood lead levels can experience delayed growth and development, damage to the brain and nervous system, learning and behavior problems, and a host of other health-related issues. There is no safe blood lead level in children.

Lead can be found inside and outside the home, including in the water that travels through lead pipes or in the soil around the house. However, the most common source of exposure for children is lead-based paint, which was used in many homes built before 1978. A significant number of homes in the City of Kalamazoo in zip codes 49001 and 49007 were built prior to 1978. Adults and children can get lead into their bodies by breathing in lead dust (especially during activities such as renovations, repairs, or painting) or by swallowing lead dust that settles in food, food preparation surfaces, floors, windowsills, eating paint chips, soil that contains lead, or other places.

The Covid-19 pandemic has affected the number of children being tested in Kalamazoo County. Between 2019 and 2020, the percent of children under the age of six tested for lead decreased from 16% to 14%. During COVID-19, children who spent more time at home are more likely to have prolonged lead exposure.

HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

311 E. Alcott St. | Kalamazoo, MI 49001

Phone: 269.373.5200 | www.kalcouny.com/hcs

Medicaid requires all children to be tested at 12 and 24 months of age. Children between 3 and 6 years of age who were not previously tested must be tested at least once. Other populations of children that should be tested for lead include foreign adoptees, refugees, migrants, immigrants, and foster children.

The dangerous impacts of lead can be reduced with increased testing, education, and a focus on prevention. For more information about Kalamazoo County's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (CLPPP), visit www.kalcounty.com/hcs or call 269-373-5080.

More information about the recalled lead kits can be found on the FDA's website:

<https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/medical-device-recalls/magellan-diagnostics-recalls-leadcare-ii-leadcare-plus-and-leadcare-ultra-blood-lead-tests-due-risk>.

###

Kalamazoo County Government
Health & Community Services Department

 [Like Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services](#)  Follow us [@KzooHealth](#)