

Action Plan to Prevent Childhood Lead Poisoning in Delaware County by 2027

Executive Summary

Delaware County has the fifth highest number of children poisoned by lead of all PA counties, with an average of 250 children harmed each year. Lead was finally banned in residential paint in 1978, yet 81% of Delaware County houses and apartments were built before then.

Children First has facilitated the Delaware County Lead Poisoning Prevention Coalition for the last five years comprised of a cross-section of public and private entities that are very familiar with lead poisoning, public health, and housing.

Children First and the Coalition developed this five-year Action Plan with Delaware County Health Department input to harness the new capacity of the Department to prevent and manage childhood lead poisoning, and to establish a pathway for all county stakeholders to work together.

Action Plan Goals and Objectives:

Goal #1: Remove lead paint hazards out of homes

Objectives:

- + Enact policies to identify and remove lead paint hazards in homes.
- + Enact programs to identify and remove lead paint hazards in homes before children are exposed so they never become poisoned.
- + Establish and adhere to transparency standards that produce regular analysis and publication of accessible, timely, and actionable data on blood lead testing, test results, and housing stock features to guide, focus, and assess the impact of prevention and intervention initiatives.

Goal #2: Ensure all children are tested for lead and improve their health outcomes

Objectives:

- + Increase the number of children tested for lead twice, at ages one and two, targeting children who are most at risk.
- + Deliver comprehensive and collaborative case management services to parents/caregivers to treat both the child and the home that test positive for lead.

Goal #3: Communicate effectively with county stakeholders about lead poisoning prevention, treatment, and resources

Objectives:

- + Increase knowledge of parents/caregivers of young children and child-serving professionals about lead poisoning.
- + Increase knowledge of child-serving professionals and parents/caregivers about lead poisoning resources.

Goal #4: Secure sustainable funding for lead prevention, intervention, and remediation activities

Objective:

- + Advocate and apply for a full menu of potential resources including federal, state, county and private sources.

This Action Plan was made possible by a grant from The Foundation for Delaware County.

Introduction

Yes, childhood lead paint poisoning is still a significant public health problem in Delaware County where 81% of homes likely have lead-based paint on windows or walls¹ and is the county that ranks fifth among the 67 Pennsylvania counties for the highest number of children who test positive for lead.²

The good news is that lead poisoning is entirely preventable. This Action Plan will get the county much closer to reducing the harm lead paint hazards inflict.

Children First has facilitated the Delaware County Lead Poisoning Prevention Coalition (The Coalition) for the last five years comprised of a cross-section of public and private entities that are very familiar with lead poisoning, public health, and housing.

The creation of the Delaware County Health Department (Health Department) and its increased capacity can boost ongoing efforts by the Coalition and the Delaware County Office of Housing and Community Development to prevent and manage childhood lead poisoning.

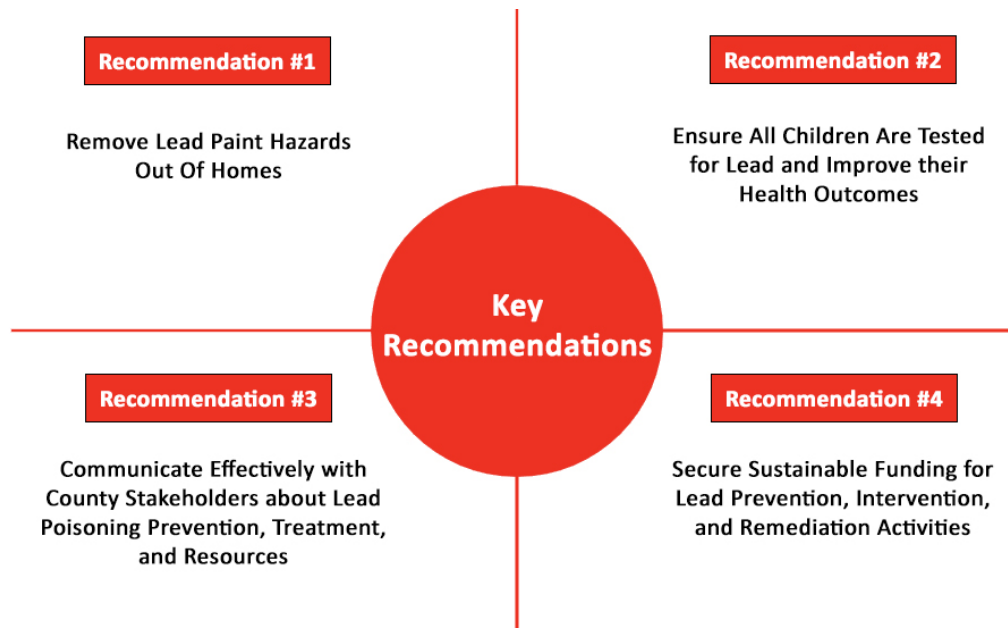
Children First and the Coalition developed this five-year Action Plan with Health Department participation to harness the new capacity of the Department to prevent and manage childhood lead poisoning, and to establish a pathway for all county stakeholders to work together. (See the Appendix for more information about the Coalition and the Health Department.)

This Action Plan is designed to continue expanding the conversation and efforts in the county to protect children from the harm of toxic lead by supporting and growing the capacity and authority of the Health Department, and fostering deeper collaboration among county and municipal governments, and private and public organizations.

Although Coalition work began in 2018, the Health Department has participated in the Coalition since its official formation in April 2022. The Health Department and the Coalition have already embarked separately and jointly on some of the strategies in this Action Plan.

In this five-year Action Plan, we recommend actions to be initiated in the next one to two years (Phase 1) and actions for years three to five (Phase 2). Some of the strategies in this document are aspirational, yet they are based on successful practices in other parts of the state, so further exploration and research will be necessary to enable their adoption in Delaware County.





Childhood Lead Paint Poisoning is Still a Significant Problem in Delaware County

Delaware County has the fifth highest number of children poisoned of all PA counties, with an average of 250 children harmed each year.³ This is enough children to fill 12 pre-school classrooms – and the number is expected to nearly double in 2022 because the definition of lead poisoning changed. (The Pennsylvania Department of Health adopted the new federal Centers for Disease Control (CDC) blood lead reference value of 3.5 mcg/dL, down from 5mcg/dL.)⁴

These are the children we know about. Far too many young children in Delaware County are never tested for lead. Children under age six are most at risk for poisoning. In 2020, out of a total population of 40,473 children under six, only 7,716 Delaware County children (or 19%) were tested for lead, with 250 testing positive.⁵ If all children were tested, possibly as many as 1,300 children would have been diagnosed with lead poisoning. This number is equivalent to the total number of students enrolled at Springfield High School.

What's more, Black and Hispanic children are disproportionately poisoned because they are more likely to live in older properties with deteriorated lead-based paint. Six times more children who are Black and Hispanic are poisoned than children who are White.⁶

Most children are exposed to and harmed by lead from deteriorated lead-based paint in their older homes – particularly from smaller particles of lead paint that contaminate household dust in windowsills



and on floors and toys. Babies and toddlers ingest this dust when they put their hands and fingers in their mouths after touching these contaminated areas or toys. Children can also be exposed to lead in soil contaminated by leaded gasoline or nearby industries, drinking water from lead-based pipes, traditional medicines and cosmetics, lead-glazed pottery, toys, and jewelry.⁷

Lead was finally banned in residential paint in 1978, yet 81% of Delaware County houses and apartments were built before then. Rental properties are the main source of poisoning across the nation, and 75% of rental units in Delaware County were built before 1980.⁸

Lead poisoning can rob children of their intellect, causing brain damage, behavioral and learning problems, and speech and physical movement delays – problems that follow babies and toddlers into school and through young adulthood that can lead to doing poorly in school, increasing their risk of dropping out before graduation.⁹ Having lead poisoning as a child also increases the risk for involvement with the criminal justice system as a young adult.¹⁰ These terrible outcomes are entirely preventable by taking proactive action to eliminate a child's exposure to lead.

Five Year Action Plan: 2023 - 2027

Important Notes about the Action Plan

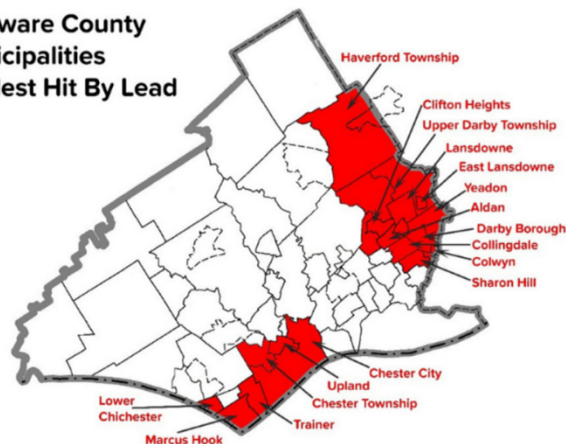
Because most children in the county, state, and country are exposed to lead from deteriorated lead-based paint in their homes or apartments, this Action Plan focuses on removing children's exposure to lead-based paint.

The recommended timeline for initiating the activities described in the Action Plan is broken into two phases. Phase 1 is the two-year period from January 2023 to December 2024, and Phase 2 is the three-year period from January 2025 to December 2027.

To achieve maximum impact, this Action Plan prioritizes action in the areas in the county at highest risk for injuring children – or what are referred to as “hotspot municipalities.”

A “hotspot” designation is based on the number of children living in the municipality who are known to be lead-poisoned, the amount of housing built before 1978, and the number of families with low incomes living in the municipality. There are currently 17 lead hotspots in Delaware County.

**Delaware County
Municipalities
Hardest Hit By Lead**



The municipalities in the map were identified as hot spots because either a high percentage of children living in those municipalities were poisoned over a recent 10-year period or the municipalities have a combination of a high percentage of rental units that were built before 1978 and a high percentage of residents with low incomes.

Guiding Principles of the Action Plan

This Action Plan is guided by several key principles adopted from the “21st Century Public Health 3.0 Model,” the national model the Health Department used to establish its operations.¹² Public Health 3.0 focuses on the social determinants of health – conditions in the social, physical, and economic environment in which people are born, live, work, and age – in order to achieve health equity. The model also centers public health leaders in health departments as Chief Health Strategists in their communities working with all relevant health and non-health partners to drive initiatives. Consequently, this model provides a useful framework to support the Health Department in becoming a transformational partner in lead poisoning prevention in the county.

The guiding key principles underlying this Action Plan are:

- + ***Achieve health equity by remedying the disproportionate impact of lead poisoning on children who are Black, Hispanic, from immigrant families, and/or from families with low incomes.***
- + ***Address the “upstream” or root causes of lead paint poisoning, including housing, through policy and systems-level change.***
- + ***Foster authentic and strong collaboration with governmental and public and private entities – including non-traditional partners – with diverse, relevant expertise.***
- + ***Increase transparency and regularly publish accessible, timely, and actionable data to guide, focus and assess the impact of prevention and intervention initiatives.***

“Protecting children from exposure to lead is important to lifelong good health. No safe blood level in children has been identified. Even low levels of lead in blood have been shown to affect IQ, ability to pay attention, academic achievement. And effects of lead exposure cannot be corrected.”

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention¹¹

Goal #1: Remove Lead Paint Hazards Out of Homes

More than 80% of homes in Delaware County were built before lead paint was banned for residential use. The majority of children are exposed to lead by deteriorated lead-based paint in their homes and apartments.

Identifying and removing/remediating these lead paint hazards and making more homes lead safe is the single best solution to preventing Delaware County children from being exposed to lead. Policy and systems-level action are necessary to address and correct these upstream or root causes of poisoning.



Objective 1.1: Enact policies to identify and remove lead paint hazards in homes

Actions:

1.1.1 The Coalition urges lead hotspot Municipal Managers and Code Enforcement Officers to use their existing municipal ordinances and enforcement powers to achieve lead-safe rental properties and to enact new, preemptive ordinances requiring lead testing in rental properties and homes up for sale. (Phase 1)

All current lead hotspot municipalities in Delaware County have municipal ordinances that prohibit chipping and peeling paint in rental units built before 1978, but this prohibition is often not enforced as part of the inspection process.



Municipalities that require rental inspections prior to issuance of a rental license or occupancy permit can go one step farther and amend their codes to require all landlords with pre-1978 units to get the units tested for lead hazards and submit a lead-safe certificate prior to the municipality issuing a license or permit. Lead certification ordinances have been adopted in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Lancaster City, Columbia Borough, and the Borough of Millvale. Norristown passed a similar ordinance, but it also requires pre-1978 residential properties up for sale to be tested, a step Delaware County municipalities can take as well.

1.1.2 The Coalition educates landlords, landlord associations, nonprofit housing providers, and county housing officials on lead poisoning risk factors, the need for regular visual inspections (at a minimum) for chipping and peeling paint, the need to remediate hazards when found, and the availability of federally funded Lead Hazard Remediation Programs for landlords who rent to income-eligible tenants. (Phase 1)

For the following actions, county and municipal leaders conduct a legal assessment of local powers and regulations to determine if the actions are possible.

1.1.3 County officials create a countywide system to ensure 100% inspections of rental homes of children who test positive for lead and inspections of rental properties built before 1978 where tenants self-report deteriorated, chipping and peeling paint, and issue housing violations. (Phase 2)

The Montgomery County Office of Public Health and the Philadelphia Department of Public Health conduct environmental lead investigations for every young child who tests positive for lead. The Medicaid health plans in the county also pay for environmental lead investigations for children who test positive for lead.

1.1.4 County officials expand the scope of the authority of the Health Department to institute a standard, countywide, lead-safe, and lead-free housing registry to help tenants identify rental properties built before 1978 that have been deemed lead-safe. (Phase 2)

Properties the County inspects and deems lead-safe would be published in a public housing registry so prospective tenants can determine the status of a unit before signing a lease.



1.1.5 County officials amend existing County policy to allow tenants to withhold rent if their landlords fail to fix a lead-related housing code violation. (Phase 2)

Tenants need affirmative steps against landlords for not complying with fixing a lead hazard housing violation. Permitting tenants to withhold rent and not permitting landlords to evict tenants are two examples of critical tenant protections.

1.1.6 The Health Department enacts a county policy to notify property owners adjacent to a property identified as having exposed a child to lead hazards and offer the adjacent property owners voluntary lead testing. (Phase 2)

Problems with deteriorating lead-based paint often exist in multiple houses on a block with old homes. Testing older, pre-1978 homes adjacent to a property with identified lead paint hazards can help identify new lead hazards and initiate hazard remediation to help prevent young household members from being poisoned.

Objective 1.2: Enact programs to identify and remove lead paint hazards in homes before children are exposed so they never become poisoned.

Actions:

1.2.1 The Health Department and the Delaware County Office of Housing and Community Development explore the creation of a program to test the rental homes of people who are pregnant for lead hazards and remediate them before the baby is born. (Phase 2)

Similar to the successful 'Lead Safe Babies' program implemented by the Philadelphia Department of Public Health,¹³ prenatal home visitors in Delaware County can be trained to conduct lead dust wipe tests in the homes of pregnant people. Positive tests could be confirmed by a follow-up test conducted by county health or housing department inspectors, and houses with confirmed lead hazards could be remediated so the newborn child would not be harmed by lead.

1.2.2 Local birthing hospitals distribute information to all parents of newborns about lead poisoning and how to prevent it, and to train nurses and social workers to inquire if the family's home has been tested and provide them with information about how to do so. (Phase 2)

Objective 1.3: Establish and adhere to transparency standards that produce regular analysis and publication of accessible, timely, and actionable data on blood lead testing, test results, and housing stock features to guide, focus, and assess the impact of prevention and intervention initiatives.

Actions:

1.3.1 Health Department publishes an annual lead poisoning surveillance report inclusive of countywide and municipal-level data on the number of children tested for lead, test results, child demographic information (age, race, ethnicity, income), and housing stock features (age, rental, owner-occupied) inclusive of tools such as maps to visually represent the data. (Phase 1)

The Health Department has direct access to real-time and historical blood lead screening data reported to the Pennsylvania Department of Health for children in Delaware County. The data helps identify changes in hotspot municipalities over time, for example, and disproportionate impact on groups of children that will significantly guide good public health planning to get closer to achieving health equity and accurate use of resources in the county. The data also serves as an essential tool to implement the Coalition's strategic policy goals.

Goal #2: Ensure all children are tested for lead and improve their health outcomes

With only 19% of children tested in the county but 81% of homes likely to contain lead-based paint, more children must be tested to identify more children harmed and to expeditiously connect them to essential services to try and mitigate any physical and behavioral harm caused to the child, and to remove lead paint hazards in the home.

Objective 2.1: Increase the number of children tested for lead twice at ages one and two, targeting children who are most at risk.



Actions:

2.1.1 Primary care and home visiting providers who participate in Medicaid and CHIP health plans identify strategies to increase the number of children they screen for lead. (Phase 1)

In Pennsylvania, children with Medicaid and CHIP are required to be tested twice, at ages one and two. In 2020, less than 58% of children with Medicaid in the county due for one lead test received it, and only 35% of children with Medicaid due to have two tests by 2020 received two tests.¹⁴

Partnering with providers to problem-solve provider barriers (e.g., how to conduct blood testing on site without an on-site lab) and patient barriers (e.g., the importance of prioritizing a test at an off-site lab) can increase children's chances of obtaining a lead test.

2.1.2 Community partners, including the Coalition in coordination with the Health Department, conduct free community blood lead screening events at least annually. (Phase 2)

Community lead testing is particularly important to reach families who may have difficulty getting to an off-site lab and/or for uninsured families who do not live near a health clinic that provides free or reduced-cost testing. Working with community stakeholders, including Medicaid insurance providers, to organize free screening events can increase the number of children tested. The Health Department is also actively pursuing the purchase of mobile 'point of care' lead testing machines that analyze blood samples on the spot to provide immediate results for possible use at county WIC clinics and community events.


2.1.3 County Council advocates for the statewide policy that calls for every young Pennsylvania child to be tested for lead. (Phase 1)

Only 19% of children in Delaware County are tested for lead each year, yet most homes and apartments contain lead-based paint. The Pennsylvania state legislature is likely to pass a new state law to have all young children tested for lead. Testing more children will promote prompt treatment and allow for more robust data collection to better identify where and which kids are being harmed and allow for targeted public health planning.


Objective 2.2: Deliver comprehensive and collaborative case management services to parents/caregivers to treat both the child and the home that test positive for lead.

Actions:

2.2.1 When the Health Department, primary care offices, and health insurance plans connect families with resources to remove lead hazards in their homes, they follow up with the family to see if the lead hazards were removed. (Phase 1)



The Delaware County Office of Housing and Community Development (OHCD) and the Community Action Agency of Delaware County receive federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funds for lead remediation programs. Homeowners and landlords with tenants who have small to moderate incomes are eligible. For example, a family of four with an income up to \$75,600 a year qualifies. OHCD also operates several home improvement and weatherization programs that remove some lead hazards if found.¹⁵



The most critical treatment for a child who is poisoned is to remove their exposure to lead. The Health Department shares contact information of children poisoned with entities in the county that have federal funding to remove lead hazards from children's homes for free. The Department also informs families about these and other lead remediation services so hazards can be expeditiously removed from homes.

2.2.2 The Health Department, primary care providers, and insurance plans connect all children who test positive to Early Intervention. (Phase 1)

Pennsylvania's free Early Intervention program provides cognitive and behavioral services for children from birth to age five. These services include speech and language therapy, physical or occupational therapy, nutrition services, and hearing or vision support. Lead poisoning is one of six priority health conditions for an Early Intervention referral, and children who do not exhibit developmental delays upon first assessment will automatically be placed in the Early Intervention tracking program where they will be monitored on a regular basis to catch future delays if they occur.

Health Department case managers refer and encourage parents of children who test positive to Early Intervention. State data show that only a small percentage of children who test positive for lead are receiving Early Intervention services.¹⁶ (No data is available for Delaware County). Consequently, the County needs to enact an automatic referral policy between the Health Department and Early Intervention through a data sharing agreement, permitting Early Intervention to contact parents and offer their services.



2.2.3 The Health Department, primary care providers, and health insurance plans connect all children who test positive to Head Start or an evidence-based home visiting program. (Phase 1)

Children with lead poisoning benefit from regular learning and social activities. Head Start and home visiting programs provide children with limited incomes with a variety of free services including learning and development services.

2.2.4 The Health Department, primary care providers, and health insurance plans connect all children who test positive to WIC. (Phase 1)

Proper nutrition is critical in helping children who test positive to absorb less lead. WIC provides assistance to parents with low incomes to obtain nutritious food and other related services.

2.2.5 Medicaid health plans serving the county collectively fund a staff member at the Health Department to coordinate case management between families, primary care offices, the Health Department, and the Medicaid plans. (Phase 2)

A disproportionate number of children who have Medicaid health insurance test positive for lead. The Pennsylvania Medicaid health plans and the Health Department have staff who provide case management services to families whose children test positive for lead. A dedicated staff member at the Health Department coordinating case management services between families and the Medicaid health plans will streamline access to and reduce duplication of services.

Goal #3: Communicate effectively with county stakeholders about lead poisoning prevention, treatment, and resources

Clear and consistent communication is necessary to inform Delaware County



residents that lead paint poisoning is still a significant public health problem.

Objective 3.1: Increase knowledge of parents/caregivers of young children and child-serving professionals about lead poisoning.

Action:

3.1.1 The Health Department and community partners design and implement a culturally relevant communications plan to educate Delaware County parents/caregivers and child-serving professionals about the dangers of lead poisoning, steps

to prevent children from being poisoned, the importance of lead screening, and how to access intervention services for children who test positive. (Phase 1)

A communications plan will engage diverse populations living in the county, based on residents' race, ethnicity, and language spoken. The plan needs to include a variety of mediums such as brief videos and written materials (posters, flyers, fact sheets, and infographics) that can be distributed electronically or in hard copy and that are widely promoted via texts, social media, radio, and television.

Objective 3.2: Increase knowledge of child-serving professionals and parents/caregivers about lead poisoning resources.

The following organizations shall receive training from the Delaware County and/or state-wide lead coalition: Health Department case managers, primary care providers, Medicaid case managers, municipal inspectors, OB/GYNs, doulas, home visitors, child care providers, lactation consultants, WIC and Early Intervention staff, and parents/caregivers.

Action:

3.2.1 Coalitions train organizations on risk factors, health and housing strategies, and resources to prevent and treat lead poisoning, including the PA Lead-Free Promise Project Resource Guides, to provide case management services. (Phase 1)

The Coalition provides training on lead poisoning for community-based organizations. Several Coalition members also participate in the statewide PA Lead-Free Promise Project whose members have developed a 10-step *Resource Guide for Care Management of a Child with Elevated Blood Lead Levels*¹⁷ for medical professionals and a six-step *Parent Toolkit*¹⁸ that provides similar county-specific resources for parents. Both resources include the housing, health care, nutrition, and Early Intervention and Head Start case management resources mentioned in Goal #3 above. The PA Lead-Free Promise Project members provide trainings on these guides.

Goal #4: Secure sustainable funding for lead prevention, intervention, and remediation activities

Executing the strategies to achieve the goals in this Action Plan will require resources. The Coalition and local and county government can work together to develop a diverse and sustainable fundraising plan to invest in the county's youngest residents.

Objective 4.1: Advocate and apply for a full menu of potential resources.

Actions:

4.1.1. The Coalition and county government partners secure federal funding. (Phase 1)

Identify and support future HUD Lead Remediation applicants to apply for and secure \$1.5 million annually.

4.1.2 The Coalition and county government partners secure state funding. (Phase 2)



Increase Coalition member participation in the PA Lead-Free Promise Project to engage in legislative and administrative advocacy to secure \$1 million annually in state funds for lead poisoning prevention in Delaware County, prioritizing lead remediation in particular via state strategies such as the Children's Health Insurance Program Health Services Initiative and a Section 1115 Medicaid Demonstration Waiver.

4.1.3 The Coalition and county government partners secure private funding. (Phase 1)

Annually seek \$1 million in private funding from foundations, corporations, health plans, and county health systems. Penn Medicine Lancaster General Health, for example, invested \$50 million to create the Lead-Free Families program, a 10-year community health improvement initiative aimed at eliminating childhood lead poisoning in Lancaster County focused on remediating at least 2,800 Lancaster County homes.¹⁹ Lead-Free Families also tests children and pregnant women for lead, provides community education and outreach, and engages in public policy advocacy.

4.1.4 The Coalition and county partners create a permanent lead testing and remediation fund for families with low-and-moderate income . (Phase 2)

Children are most often poisoned by lead paint in their homes, but the cost of lead remediation, \$10,000 on average, makes it out of reach for many families with low to moderate incomes.²⁰ The Delaware County Council can create a separate and permanent lead remediation fund for low- to moderate-income families that is not dependent on HUD funding. In the short-term, this fund can be established with \$1 million provided to Delaware County by the American Rescue Plan Act and maintained permanently through ongoing County appropriations.

Delaware County Can Be A Leader On Lead Poisoning Prevention

Childhood lead poisoning is a significant problem in Delaware County, and it is entirely preventable.

The Delaware County Council, the new Delaware County Health Department, and the Delaware County Lead Poisoning Prevention Coalition are in an exciting and pivotal position to harness their collective capacities to implement this Action Plan and protect the county's youngest residents from the needless, negative impacts of toxic lead. Collaboration is the key to actualizing this Action Plan, so that in the near future, no child in Delaware County is ever harmed by lead.





Appendix

A. The Delaware County Health Department

The Pennsylvania Department of Public Health approved the Delaware County Health Department as an Act 315 county health department in April 2022. Prior to the Department's establishment, Delaware County was the largest county by population in Pennsylvania and the United States without a county health department. Delaware County Council initiated a strategic plan to create the Health Department in January 2020, and the COVID pandemic accelerated its formation.

County health departments provide essential public health services such as controlling communicable diseases, providing maternal and child health programs, responding to public health emergencies, providing health education, preventing and managing environmental health issues, and connecting county residents with high-quality health care. Counties in Pennsylvania without Act 315 City or County health departments rely on the state Department of Health as the public health authority, as well as other public and private organizations, to meet the public health needs of residents.

The new Delaware County Health Department built its operating plan using the "21st Century Public Health 3.0 Model" based on a renewed and broadened perspective of public health that focuses on the social determinants of health – conditions in the social, physical, and economic environment in which people are born, live, work, and age – in order to achieve health equity. The Public Health 3.0 Model focuses on thoughtful and efficient collaboration across the health and non-health sectors and provides a fitting framework to support the Health Department in becoming a transformational partner in lead poisoning prevention in the county.

B. Key Partners Collaborating on Lead Paint Poisoning Prevention and Response



C. The Delaware County Lead Poisoning Prevention Coalition

With support from The Foundation for Delaware County, Children First established the Delaware County Lead Poisoning Prevention Coalition in 2018 to test more homes and remove lead paint, test more children for lead, and connect children who test positive to health and housing resources. The Coalition is comprised of a cross-section of government, nonprofit, and business entities including healthcare providers, Medicaid and CHIP insurance plans, social service providers, municipal leaders, local code enforcement staff, environmental groups, housing advocates, and lead testing companies.

The Delaware County Lead Poisoning Prevention Coalition members listed below assisted in reviewing and commenting on this Action Plan. Their valuable expertise greatly improved the quality of this Action Plan.

- + Ilena Berrios, Program Manager, Maternity Care Coalition
- + Jordan Casey, Director, Housing Opportunities Program for Equity (HOPE) at The Foundation for Delaware County
- + Steven A. Fischer, Executive Director, Chester Housing Authority
- + Stephanie Hilburn, Manager of Community Engagement, Health Partner Plans
- + Nasia Hill, Lead Specialist, Delaware County Office of Housing and Community Development
- + Katie Kenyon, Community Engagement Director, The Foundation for Delaware County
- + Melissa Lyon, Director, Delaware County Health Department
- + Amy Martin, Director, Nurse Family Partnership at The Foundation for Delaware County
- + Lora Werner, Deputy Director, Delaware County Health Department

D. Summary Chart of Action Plan Goals, Objectives, and Actions

Action Plan to Prevent Childhood Lead Poisoning in Delaware County by 2027	
Goal #1: Remove Lead Paint Hazards Out of Homes	
Phase 1 Actions: 2023 - 2024	Phase 2 Actions: 2025 - 2027
Coalition urges lead ‘hotspot’ Municipal Managers and Code Enforcement Officers to use their existing municipal ordinances and enforcement powers to achieve lead-safe rental properties and to enact new, preemptive ordinances requiring lead testing in rental properties and homes up for sale.	County officials create a countywide system to ensure 100% inspections of rental homes of children who test positive for lead and inspections of rental properties built before 1978 where tenants self-report deteriorated, chipping and peeling paint, and issue housing violations.
Coalition educates landlords, landlord associations, nonprofit housing providers, and county housing officials on lead poisoning risk factors, the need for regular visual inspections (at a minimum) for chipping and peeling paint, the need to remediate hazards when found, and the availability of federally funded Lead Hazard Remediation Programs for landlords who rent to income-eligible tenants.	County officials expand the scope of the authority of the Health Department to institute a standard, countywide, lead-safe and lead-free housing registry to help tenants identify rental properties built before 1978 that have been deemed lead-safe.
Health Department publishes an annual lead poisoning surveillance report inclusive of countywide and municipal-level data on the number of children tested for lead, test results, child demographic information (age, race, ethnicity, income), and housing stock features (age, rental, owner-occupied) inclusive of tools such as maps to visually represent the data.	County officials amend existing county policy to specifically create legal redress for tenants to protect them if their landlord does not fix a lead-related housing code violation by denying a landlord the right to collect rent or evict tenants during any period of non-compliance.
	Health Department enacts a county policy to notify property owners adjacent to a property identified as having exposed a child to lead hazards and offer the adjacent property owners voluntary lead testing.
	Health Department and the Delaware County Office of Housing and Community Development explore the creation of a program to test the rental homes of people who are pregnant for lead hazards and remediate them before the baby is born.
	Local birthing hospitals distribute information to all parents of newborns about lead poisoning and how to prevent it, and to train nurses and social workers to inquire if the family’s home has been tested and provide them with information about how to do so.

Action Plan to Prevent Childhood Lead Poisoning in Delaware County by 2027	
Goal #2: Ensure All Children are Tested for Lead and Improve Their Health Outcomes	
Phase 1 Actions: 2023 - 2024	Phase 2 Actions: 2025 - 2027
Primary care and home visiting providers who participate in Medicaid and CHIP health plans identify strategies to increase the number of children they screen for lead.	Community partners, including the Coalition in coordination with the Health Department, conduct free community blood lead screening events at least annually.
County Council advocates for the statewide policy that calls for every young Pennsylvania child to be tested for lead.	Medicaid health plans serving the county collectively fund a staff member at the Health Department to coordinate case management between families, the Health Department, and the Medicaid plans.
When the Health Department, primary care offices, and health insurance plans connect families with resources to remove lead hazards in their homes, they follow up with the family to see if the lead hazards were removed.	
Health Department, primary care providers, and insurance plans connect all children who test positive to Early Intervention.	
Health Department, primary care providers, and health insurance plans connect all children who test positive to Head Start or an evidence-based home visiting program.	
Health Department and primary care providers connect all children who test positive to WIC.	

Goal #3: Communicate Effectively with County Stakeholders about Lead Poisoning Prevention, Treatment and Resources	
Phase 1 Actions: 2023 - 2024	Phase 2 Actions: 2025 - 2027
Health Department and community partners design and implement a culturally relevant communications plan to educate Delaware County parents/caregivers and child-serving professionals about the dangers of lead poisoning, steps to prevent children from being poisoned, the importance of lead screening, and how to access intervention services for children who test positive.	
Delaware County and statewide coalitions train community organizations on risk factors, health and housing strategies, and resources to prevent and treat lead poisoning – including on use of the PA Lead-Free Promise Project "Resource Guides" to provide case management services.	

Goal #4: Secure Sustainable Funding for Lead Prevention, Intervention and Remediation Activities	
Phase 1 Actions: 2023 - 2024	Phase 2 Actions: 2025 - 2027
The Coalition and county government partners help secure \$1.5 million annually in federal funding mainly by identifying and supporting future HUD Lead Remediation applicants.	The Coalition and county government partners secure \$1 million annually in state funding from the legislature and by partnering with state departments to repurpose CHIP and Medicaid funds.
The Coalition and county government partners secure \$1 million annually in private funding from foundations, corporations, health plans, and county health systems.	The Coalition and county partners create a permanent lead testing and remediation fund for families with low and moderate incomes.

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Endnotes

1. US Census 2021 American Community Survey.
2. Pennsylvania Department of Public Health, (2022). 2020 Childhood Lead Surveillance Annual Report. <https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/Documents/Environmental%20Health/2020%20Childhood%20Lead%20Surveillance%20Annual%20Report.pdf>
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Children First, formerly known as Public Citizens for Children and Youth (PCCY), serves as the leading child advocacy organization working to improve the lives and life chances of children in Southeastern Pennsylvania.

Children First undertakes specific and focused projects in areas affecting the healthy growth and development of children, including child care, public education, child health, juvenile justice, and child welfare.

Through thoughtful and informed advocacy, community education, targeted service projects, and budget analysis, Children First watches out and speaks out for children and families.

Children First serves the families of Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia counties as well as children across the commonwealth. We are a committed advocate and an independent watchdog for the well-being of all our children.

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Children First
990 Spring Garden Street
Suite 200
Philadelphia, PA 19123
215-563-5848