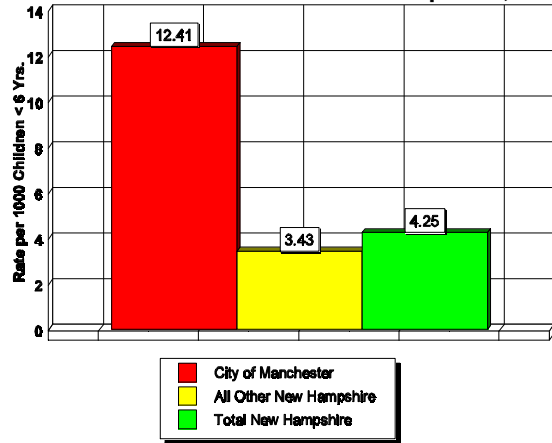




# City of Manchester Department of Health LEAD POISONING REPORT CARD

## Elevated Blood Lead Levels Greater than 10ug/dL for Every 1,000 Children Under 6 Years of Age Manchester and All Other New Hampshire, 2000



**HEALTHY MANCHESTER 2010 OBJECTIVE:** *Decrease elevated blood lead levels (>=10 ug/dl) among all Manchester children to zero.*

Lead poisoning remains a significant, and entirely preventable, public health problem in Manchester. In fiscal year 2000 in Manchester, 125 children were identified with elevated lead levels greater than 10 ug/dL, the level of concern designated by the Center for Disease Control(CDC).<sup>1</sup> In March of 2000, a Manchester child died from lead poisoning, with a level of 391 ug/dL. This was the first reported death of a child from lead poisoning since 1990. When compared to the rest of the state, Manchester experiences four times as many cases of lead poisoning for every child under the age of 6 years, and 27% of the state's total number of cases of lead poisoning.<sup>2</sup> The high number of cases in Manchester is largely due to the abundance of old housing stock in the city. Lead-based products were used to build homes prior to 1950, and lead-based paint was used in homes prior to 1978. Forty-six percent of the housing units in Manchester were built prior to 1950, and in our six center-city tracts, 80% of housing units were built before 1940.<sup>3</sup> As a result of the old housing stock, the CDC designated Manchester a universal screening site, which means that all children need to be lead screened at one and two years of age. Yet, our screening rates were only 42% among 2 year olds, and 68% among one-year olds in 2002.<sup>1</sup>

Any elevated lead level greater than zero can affect IQ, school performance, behavior, and physical health. Among school-aged children, lead poisoning can lead to learning disabilities and hyperactivity, for example. Young children and pregnant women are very vulnerable to lead poisoning due to the developing brain and nervous system. Elevated lead levels can also cause anemia, or low iron levels in the blood, kidney damage, seizures, coma, and death.

### City of Manchester Lead Screening Rates Among One and Two Year Olds: 1998-2002<sup>1</sup>

Year	% of One Year Old Children Screened	% of Two Year Old Children Screened
1998	72.4%	26.0%
1999	61.6%	28.0%
2000	63.2%	32.4%
2001	71.4%	37.4%
2002	68.2%	41.9%

**WHO PAYS?** The long-term benefits of removing lead-based paint from a home (also called abating) far outweigh the short-term financial costs. According to a study by the Harvard School of Public Health, lead abatement results in a total cost savings of \$45,000 per building over ten years.<sup>4</sup> The savings resulted from medical and special education costs, as well as increased productivity among children protected from lead poisoning.



### WHAT WORKS? RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE COMMUNITY:

- Increase Lead-safe Housing.** Ways to increase lead-safe housing units in Manchester include window replacement programs, timely environmental investigations, code enforcement, tax incentives and low/no interest loans for property owners.<sup>5</sup>
- Increase Lead Testing.** Increase the number of certified inspectors and contractors in our community. Provide educational programs targeting contractors, property owners, and realtors.<sup>5</sup>
- Increase Lead Screening of Children.** Ensure children are linked to medical providers, and identify high-risk children through door-to-door initiatives and WIC Clinics, for example. Educate providers in our community, and ensure they are following best practices.<sup>6,7</sup>
- Prevent Lead Poisoning.** Increase awareness about lead poisoning among parents and providers through a community-wide educational campaign. Educate parents and health care providers. Encourage businesses and community-based organizations to join community action planning groups, and play a role in prevention.<sup>8</sup>

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE INDIVIDUAL:

- Have Your Child Screened.** All children who reside in Manchester, Goffstown, Chester, or Deerfield should be screened for lead poisoning at one year and two years of age. Children who reside in Hooksett, Derry, Londonderry, Candia, Auburn, Raymond, or Bedford should be screened only if they are at high risk, due to older housing for example.<sup>5</sup>
- Talk with Your Doctor.** The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that doctors talk with parents/guardians about lead poisoning, in an effort to prevent exposures.<sup>5</sup>
- Test for Lead in Your Home.** Paint, dust, soil, and water are common sources of lead exposure in homes. Federal law requires landlords, property owners, and contractors to disclose information about lead-based paint in any home built before 1978. Before buying or renting, remodeling, or repairing a home built before 1978, test for lead. Testing should be done by a Certified Inspector or Risk Assessor; call 617-918-1524 or 1-888-LEADlist.<sup>6</sup>
- Prevent Lead Exposure.** Eliminating lead is the only true treatment for lead poisoning. Swallowing lead dust on toys and hands is the most common way children are lead poisoned. Wash your child's hands and face before eating, napping and bedtime, and after they play outside. Also, wash toys once a week with soap and running water. Wet mop windowsills, baseboards and floors once a week with warm water and a general purpose cleaner to eliminate lead dust. Make sure your child eats plenty of iron and calcium; these nutrients help prevent lead absorption. Be aware of hobbies such as glazing pottery, and soldering glass or metals, are linked with lead exposure.<sup>6</sup>



### FOR MORE INFORMATION ON HOW TO REDUCE LEAD POISONING IN THE MANCHESTER COMMUNITY, PLEASE CONTACT:

- ✓ Greater Manchester Partners Against Lead Poisoning: Manchester Health Department (603) 624-6466
- ✓ NH Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (603) 271-4507