

Healthy Children and Safe Homes by 2040

Year in Review
August 2023-August 2024

Goals

- Increase lead screening rates for children in our community.
- Train and expand the workforce for lead safe renovations and abatement.
- Provide primary lead poisoning prevention strategies in Columbus.

Introduction

Since the Call to Action kick-off event in Aug. 2023, Columbus Public Health has advanced its lead equity work with community partners. We are fortunate to have city, state and federal funding for this project. As we scale up the project, we may opt to do fundraising. We are pleased to provide this Year in Review which highlights our efforts since you joined us at the event. You are an important partner and we thank you for working with us to ensure that all children are lead free by 2040.

The Need

- Every year in Columbus, an average of 140 children have elevated lead levels.
- Lead exposure affects the health, safety and wellbeing of children by damaging their brain and nervous system, causing speech and hearing problems, and increasing antisocial behavior that leads to violence and incarceration.
- Children are usually poisoned right in their own homes built before 1978.

Progress

- Piloted lead screenings, testing 209 children from Jan.-Aug. 2024 with 6% having elevated lead levels, which is twice the rate seen in the general population.
- Received the National Champion of Local Governmental Public Health Award from the National Association of County and City Health Officials for exemplary work addressing racism as a public health crisis, including Healthy Children and Safe Homes by 2040.
- Collaborated with the American Academy of Pediatrics, Nationwide Children's Hospital and CareSource to train health care providers.
- Provided free lead analyzers to pediatric and family practice offices with CareSource.
- Secured \$75,000 from the Ohio Department of Health for focus groups through 2025 to assess barriers to lead screenings.
- Obtained five new handheld X-ray fluorescence lead detection devices to test consumer products in homes and at community events.
- The Columbus Department of Development funded lead-safe renovation and abatement certification trainings for 37 workers in 2023.
- Columbus City Council passed the Lead Service Line Replacement Ordinance for the Department of Public Utilities, allowing property access and funding service line replacement from the water supply main line to the water meter.
- The Department of Public Utilities improved line inventory with only 22% of service line materials unknown in the distribution system compared to 62% in Aug. 2023.

Next Steps

- Expand testing for children under age 6.
- Create a citywide website for lead poisoning prevention, allowing for collaborative communications and outreach.
- Complete a Lead Service Line Replacement Pilot Program.
- Continue to offer subsidized trainings and certifications for local contractors for lead-safe renovations and abatement classes to prevent lead poisonings.



\$14 MILLION
investment
from the City of
Columbus.



209 KIDS
screened for
lead and 6% had
elevated levels.



37 WORKERS
certified for lead-
safe renovation
and abatement.



**5 NEW HAND-
HELD DEVICES**
to test consumer
products.



THE CITY OF
COLUMBUS
ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR

COLUMBUS
PUBLIC HEALTH