

A Transformational Project Proposal

Situation:

Lead Poisoning has been recognized as one of the greatest environmental health risks facing children today. Those most at risk are children under four. Their brains are still developing and are easily damaged. They absorb 50% of the lead that they take into their bodies compared to adults who only absorb 10%. In older homes typically found in urban areas as many as 50% of the children have excessive lead in their bodies?

Pregnant woman and those of child bearing age are at greater risk of passing on the effects of lead poisoning to their unborn children. In men lead affects libido, fertility and blood pressure. Unfortunately there are few observable symptoms with lead poisoning and this contributes to it being a highly undiagnosed condition in both children and adults. It has been estimated that 90% of the prison population has had high exposure to lead. Lead poisoning is believed to cause lower IQ's and brain damage in children.

Goal of the project:

Reduce lead exposure through encapsulation and abatement in homes in our community that were built before 1978. The focus will be on lead paint and water pipes that have been identified as contributing to lead exposure to children. The focus will be on the 20% of the homes that are likely contributing to 80% of the lead problems. The good news is that the number of homes is finite as lead has been removed from paint since 1978. Focus on reducing lead poisoning in the next five years. *Be Lead Free by 2023.*

How it can be achieved

This can be achieved through a community effort of paid and volunteer workers who assist in identifying and correcting lead poisoning through encapsulation and education. If the homes and individuals with high amounts of lead are identified then targeted remedies can be applied. This would be similar to polio inoculations. At risk individuals are tested for lead levels. Once identified, then a corrective action plan would be initiated. Follow up would measure the success of the plan.

How Toledo Rotary can be involved

Toledo Rotary can do the following:

- Educate the community about lead poisoning prevention.
- Promote the lead free agenda of testing, identification, and action.
- Collaborate with health, governmental and educational institutions to promote cost effective ways of reducing lead poisoning in children.
- Partner with other area service organizations on the *Lead Free by 2023* agenda.