

Friday, June 11: Healthy Housing, Healthy Families

Healthy Housing/Healthy Families

Thank you to our Session Sponsor:



capitahealth

isles.org/forum



Healthy Housing/Healthy Families Housing as a Vaccine

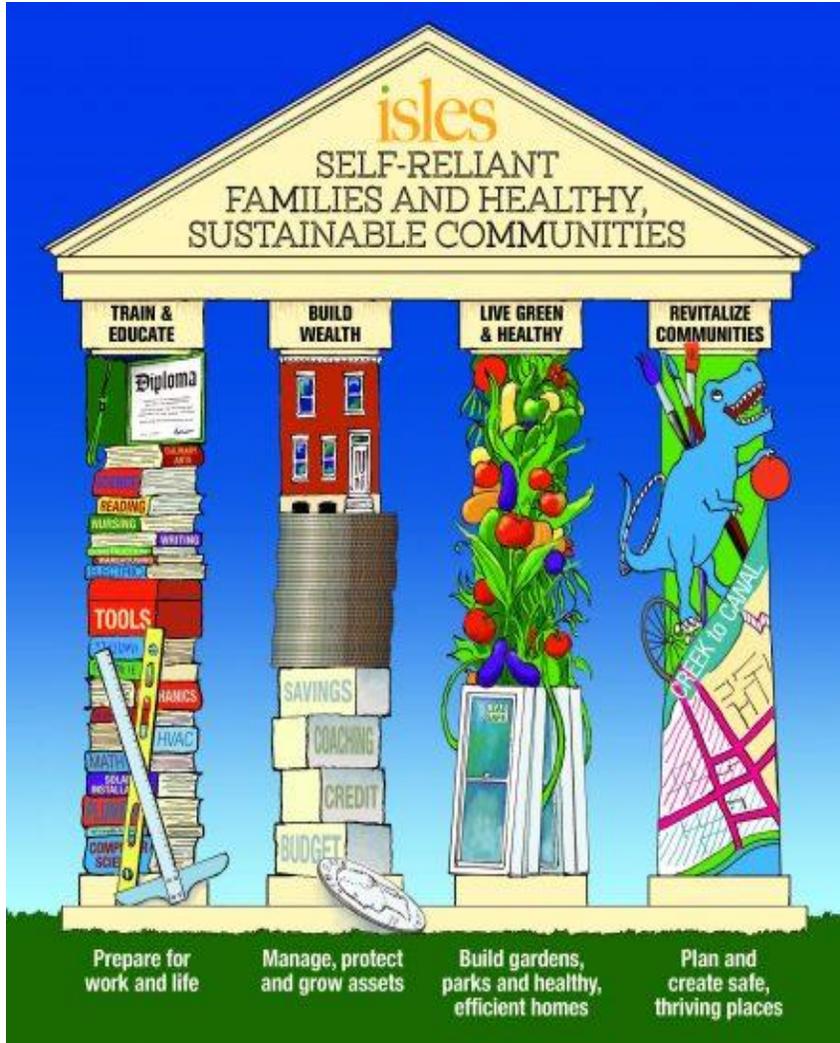
Isles 40th Anniversary Forum

**Elyse Pivnick, Senior Director of Environmental
Health**

June 11, 2021



Isles Mission



Founded in 1981, Isles is a community development and environmental organization based in the Trenton, New Jersey region with a mission to foster self-reliant families and healthy, sustainable communities.

Isles:

- **revitalizes communities** by working alongside local residents to plan their neighborhoods' future and to develop energy efficient, affordable and healthy homes, parks, gardens, shared facilities, and more
- **trains and educates** adults and youth through an alternative high school, green job training center and family support services
- **builds wealth** through innovative financial services and loans that help restore credit and increase savings
- **promotes healthy living** by tackling environmental hazards, fostering energy efficiency, improving open space, and expanding access to locally grown food

NYT Quote of the Day

“If you were going to put something in a population to keep them down for generations to come, it would be lead.”

(NYT January 30, 2016)

Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha, of Flint MI, who has studied lead poisoning and the effects of lead exposure, for which there is no cure.



isles
Self-Reliant Communities

Lead, Race and Inequality

Lead toxicity ...is a pathway through which racial inequality literally gets into the body.

Dr. Robert Sampson, Harvard Researcher. 2016
https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/alixwinter/files/sampson_winter_2016.pdf

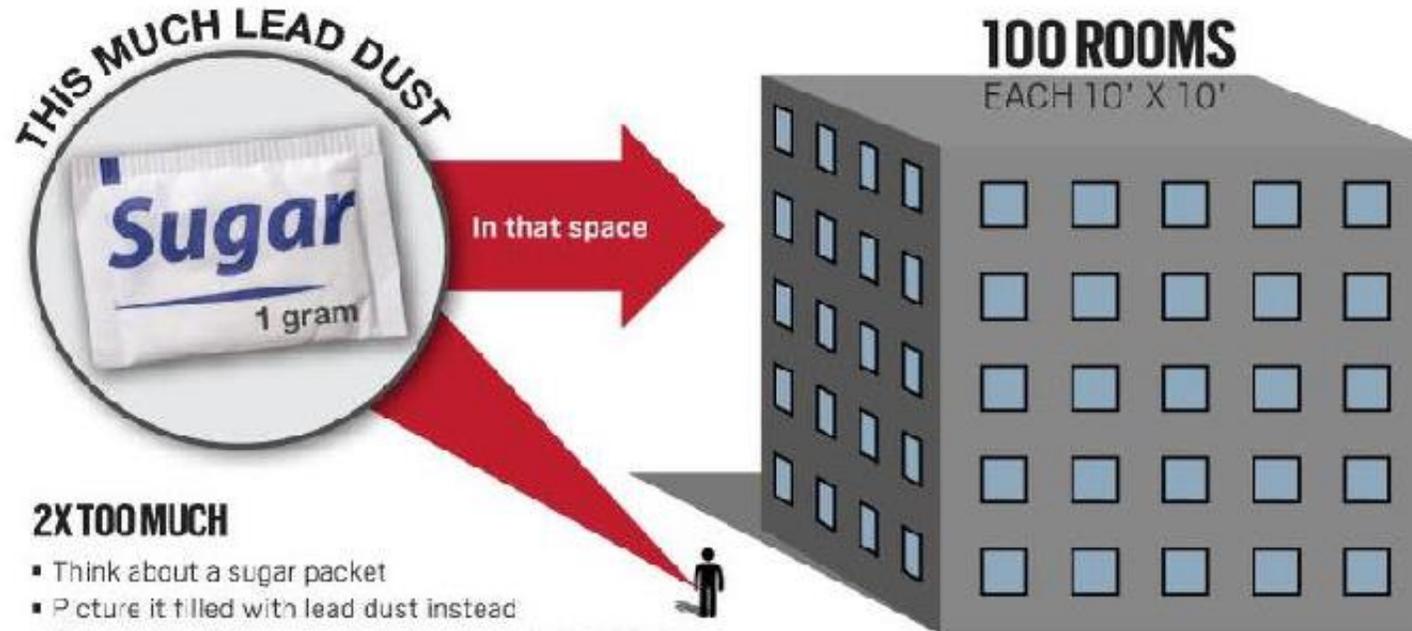


isles
Self-Reliant Communities

How Much Lead Dust?

HOW MUCH LEAD IS DANGEROUS?

Even low levels of lead exposure can damage the nervous system, and high levels of exposure can lead to coma or death. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention say there is no safe blood lead level in children. Paint containing lead can deteriorate or chip, leaving traces of lead dust at dangerous levels.



2X TOO MUCH

- Think about a sugar packet
- Picture it filled with lead dust instead
- Spread that little packet equally through 100 10x10 rooms
- That amount of lead dust in each room would still be two times higher than the federal hazard level.

Lead Exposure is Cumulative

It typically comes from these main sources



Lead Poisoning & School Performance

- Compromised long-term memory---for example, a student can't recall multiplication tables from one day to next
- Reduced auditory processing makes it difficult, for example, to hear the difference between "s" and "f" impeding the ability to read
- Inability to control behavior
- Inability to learn no matter how hard a child tries
- Disruption in classrooms by children frustrated by their failure to learn make it difficult for *other* children to learn.
- Lower test scores for individuals and entire school districts that have a disproportionate number of children with lead poisoning
- Disproportionate number of low-income males incarcerated, unemployed and aimless

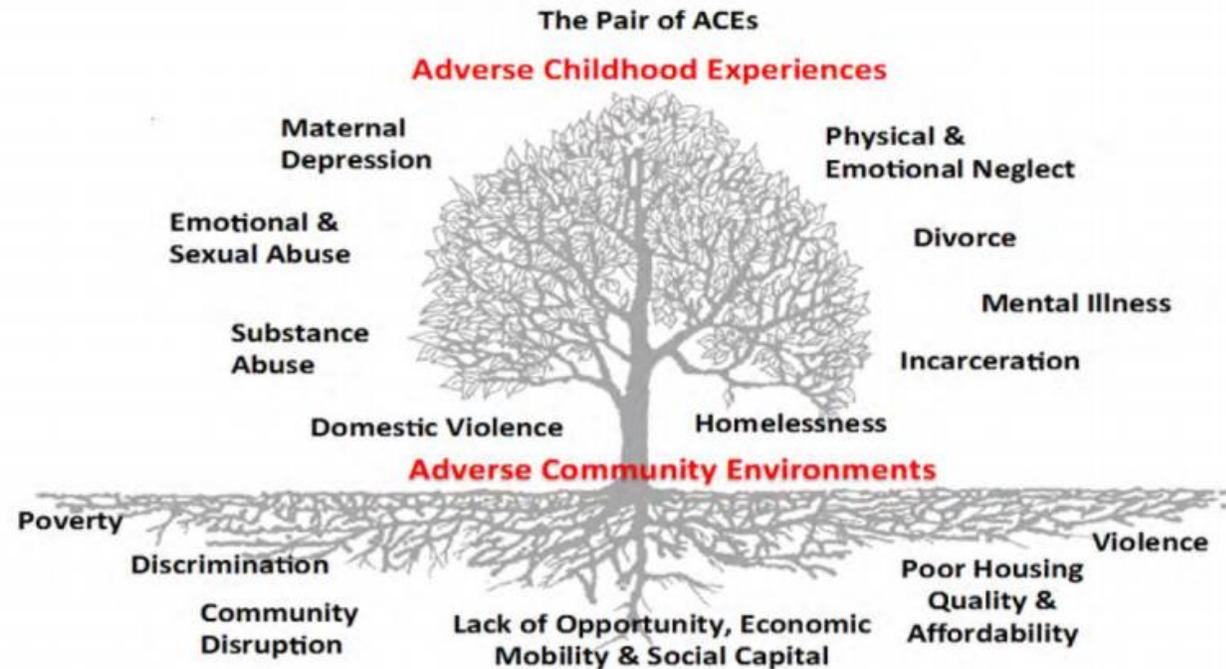


Important to Know

- About 80% of NJ housing was built before 1978—the year lead was removed from new house paint
- In 2019, about 4,000 children in New Jersey had lead level of 5 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ or greater for the first time
- About 225,000 young kids in New Jersey have been poisoned by lead since 2000.
- Elevated BLL: Nationally, 36% of inner-city black children vs 4% for suburban white children
- Forgotten in child development and education reform- **My Brothers Keeper**



Adverse Childhood Experiences Adverse Community Environments Social Determinants of Health



Ellis, W., Dietz, W. (2017) A New Framework for Addressing Adverse Childhood and Community Experiences: The Building Community Resilience (BCR) Model. *Academic Pediatrics*. 17 (2017) pp. S86-S93. DOI information: 10.1016/j.acap.2016.12.011

Traditional Vaccines

Traditional Vaccines stimulate the immune system to:

- **FIGHT** against multiple infections: chicken pox, measles, mumps, etc.
- Long lasting effects,
- Benefit both the individual and broader society by preventing the spread of disease.



Housing as a Vaccine

- **FIGHT** against lead, asthma, depression, “heat or eat” food insecurity and more
- Long lasting effects,
- Benefit both the individual and broader society by preventing the spread of disease.
- Children’s health is affected on the “continuum between homelessness and stable housing

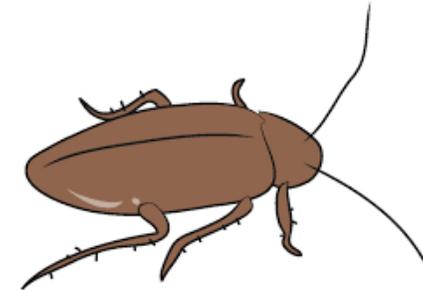
:

- Children’s Health Watch



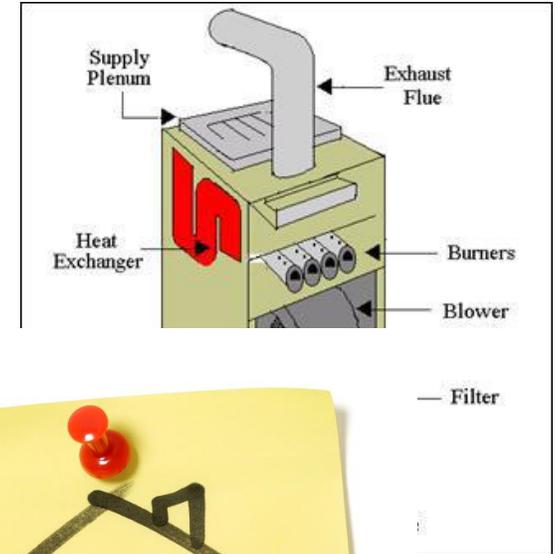
Environmental Examples

- Lead can stunt brain development
- Living in homes with cockroaches, mold and dampness increases the risk of a stay in the hospital for children with asthma.
- Living in poor and unsafe neighborhoods increases rates of mental health problems, such as depression and post-traumatic stress disorder.



Energy and Affordability

- “Heat or eat” situations, in which residents must choose between heating their home or affording food, tie energy costs to poor health
- Being behind on rent is strongly associated with negative health outcomes due to the related high risk of food insecurity. Food insecurity puts children at risk for developmental delays and mothers at risk for depression.
- Children living in subsidized housing are healthier





Culture of Lead Poisoning Prevention

- **Lead poisoning prevention in all programs** that work with children.
- **Establish Lead Safe Advisory Committees** including multiple stakeholders: Housing, Health, local and state elected officials and agencies, community members, pediatricians, Community Health Workers, Early Intervention, Educators, real estate, environmental groups, funders
- **Long-term collaboration:** City of Rochester



Home Assessments + Lead-safe Improvements + Energy Efficiency

- Isles has been making homes lead-safe in Trenton region since 2005.
- With blended funds, we combine lead-safe, healthy homes and energy efficiency improvements as one package.
- Technical Assistance



Advocacy

- NJ Senate Bill 1147/Assembly 1372-Lead Safe Certificate
- Inspection and correction of lead hazards in all rental units built before 1978
- Brings building with 1 and 2 units into inspection system



Download from
Dreamstime.com
This watermarked comp. image is for previewing purposes only.

ID 115231171
© Paul Brady | Dreamstime.com

Created Training Center

- 2009: Created Center for Energy and Environmental Training Center (CEET)
- Green jobs career paths
- National Center for Healthy Housing/ Healthy Housing Solutions
- Building Performance Institute (BPI)
- Funded by New Jersey Departments: Health; Community Affairs; Labor + private funders.



Involve Community Health Workers (CHWs)

- In 2017, 7,041 families were visited by CHWs
- Require they complete lead and healthy housing **training** at the NJ Healthy Homes Training Center @Isles (partially NJ funded)
- Require they complete lead and healthy housing **assessments** in client homes
- With client permission, **refer lead problems** to DCA funded lead-safe repair agency or to local inspector for further action
- EFFICIENT USE OF GOVERNMENT RESOURCES



More Effective Section 8 Housing Inspections

- Children who live Section 8 housing, may become lead poisoned when housing inspectors overlook lead hazards.
- Approximately 65,000 children under 5 are part of New Jersey's Section 8 program.
- Require that DCA inspectors perform a lead-risk assessment for unit to enter program---a more stringent standard than required by HUD. A visual inspection for lead is not enough.
- Inspectors will need new training
- Section 8 homes should be re-inspected every year for lead. Landlords will pay an inspection fee



A Problem Well-defined is Half Solved: Improve Lead Data Reporting

- New Jersey Department of Health collects and analyzes all NJ childhood lead screening tests and reports the results annually in an Annual Lead Surveillance Report.
- Make report more user friendly by including data maps and reporting more information.
- More vigorously share report findings with New Jersey policy makers and residents.
- More information for the public

CHILDHOOD LEAD EXPOSURE IN NEW JERSEY

ANNUAL REPORT

STATE FISCAL YEAR 2019
(July 1, 2018– June 30, 2019)

Use Medicaid Funds for Lead Services

- State of NJ Medicaid office should apply to use Medicaid funds for :
- Lead abatement in homes with children that have high blood lead levels
- Assess homes of newborns



Auto-enrollment in Early Intervention Services

- A child with lead levels of \geq 5ug/dL should be automatically eligible for Early Intervention services, if family welcomes assistance
- Train and support primary care providers, community health workers and others to refer children with elevated blood lead levels to EI services so they can benefit from proactive interventions.



Increase Childhood Lead Screening

- Require proof of a child's lead screening at time of school entry.
- Record information on New Jersey immunization form.
- That which gets counted gets done!



Cross- train Inspectors

- Housing code inspectors need to know how to collect paint and dust samples to assess a unit for lead hazards.
- Environmental Health inspectors need to know how to conduct a full healthy homes assessment—asthma triggers, injury causing conditions
- Government needs to encourage healthy homes assessments when in a house for any reason
- Train all professionals who work with vulnerable families in their homes.



Lead Workforce Development

- Too few lead contractors and lead hazard risk assessors to meet the current need and expected future demand
- Subsidize fees for EPA RRP training and certification for new contractors
- Incentivize EPA Renovation, Repair and Painting certified “Renovators” to provide lead-safe remediation.
- Provide business assistance to new contractors to ensure that they can meet the demands of a growing business---managing insurance, taxes, accounting, employees, bidding
- Line of credit for contractors performing lead safe remediation because government pays too slowly for small businesses.



Partnerships/Collaborations

Too Many to List!

Thank you.

Contact us

Isles, Inc.

Elyse Pivnick: epivnick@isles.org

Find Us Online



www.isles.org



@islesinc



facebook.com/islesinc

isles
Self-Reliant Communities