

New Approaches to Childhood Lead Poisoning

Over 20 years, Legal Council for Health Justice's (LCHJ) staff has developed an extensive childhood lead poisoning prevention track record, spearheading successful legislative and policy efforts and partnering with multiple stakeholders to develop strategies to help eliminate lead poisoning.

Highlights of our involvement include: Illinois Lead Safe Housing Advisory Council, CLEAR-WIN, Torrens Fund, Governor's Lead Safe Housing Task Force, Lead Safe Chicago Strategic Plan, child product safety amendments to the Lead Poisoning Prevention Act, CHA Plan for Transformation, *City of Chicago v. American Cyanamid Co.*, and most recently, a pilot and research study to establish and evaluate expanding access to Early Intervention (EI) services among lead-exposed children. In addition, LCHJ co-lead the development and submission of comments to IDPH current proposed lead rules. Due to our expertise and track record, LCHJ was invited to help represent Illinois on the national Maternal and Child Environmental Health (MCEH) COIIN initiative to increase identification of and response to elevated blood lead levels in pregnant women and newborn follow up.

Current Legal Council Lead Work highlights:

Lead Poisoning Prevention and EI Pilot | Illinois Early Intervention Interagency Coordinating Council (EI and Lead Workgroup) | Early Intervention Service Guidelines | Lead Poisoning Prevention and EI Research Study with Erikson Institute | MCEH COIIN (Collaborative Improvement & Innovation Network) | White paper on leveraging WIC office participation and WIC funding for Lead Testing | Governor's Cabinet on Children and Youth Lead Workgroups | Pediatrician/Family Medicine, OBGYN, and local health department practice surveys | National, Statewide, and local trainings for medical teams, EI providers, case managers, public health professionals.

Key Partners:

Chicago, Cook County, and Rockford Departments of Public Health | Erikson Institute | Illinois Department of Public Health | Civitas ChildLaw Center, Loyola University | Ounce of Prevention | Comer and Lurie Children's Hospital | Illinois Reach Out and Read | Urban Labs | DHS EI Bureau and EI Council | Early Intervention Training Program | Child and Family Connection Offices

Current Lead Funders

Illinois Children's Healthcare Foundation
Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities
Anonymous Funder

Select Publications

Pediatric Annals
Huffington Post
Crain's Chicago Business
Georgetown Center for Children and Families: *Say Ahhh Blog*
South Side Weekly
Chicago Tribune
Chicago Sun-Times

Legal Council Future Lead Work:

- Establish EI automatic eligibility for lead-exposed children with a BLL of 5 µg/dL and above
- Advocate for environmental investigation at 5-9 µg/dL and increased nurse home visits - **Achieved January 2019.**
- Advocate for WIC blood lead level testing and Improved Medicaid reimbursement for IDPH and local health dept. activities
- Support adequate financing of lead identification and abatement including litigation strategies
- Develop & conduct cross-sector trainings to increase early childhood/home visitors lead poisoning prevention knowledge and outreach
- Promote adoption and use of EI and Lead Service Guidelines across provider communities
- Communications campaign to educate and engage Local Interagency Councils and AOK Networks across the state
- Continued outreach and engagement of medical providers, home visitors (MIECHV, Head Start, public health, etc.) and early childhood providers to promote lead testing and minimize child lead exposure
- Analyze available assessment and referral services as part of IDEA Part B/ESSA and develop strategies to enable school districts to identify and best serve children 3 and older who have been lead exposed