

# FIGHT LEAD EFFECTS WITH LEARNING & PLAY



Positive early childhood experiences can help limit the effects of lead on kids and improve their behaviors and readiness for school. Preschool and supportive homes are important because early education, having fun and spending time with caring adults help kids succeed! Three ways you can help your child:

1. Talk with your child's doctor about potential lead exposure and have blood lead levels checked.
2. Enroll your child in an early childhood program such as Head Start or Great Start Readiness.
3. Read with your child every day!



## LEAD FACTS

Lead isn't good for anyone's health and is especially bad for small children and pregnant women. Keep your family lead-safe by avoiding contact with it. If you are concerned about contaminated water, check with local authorities for safe water recommendations. Use of an NSF-certified filter for drinking and cooking may be required; bottled water is recommended for pregnant women and children under age 6, including the mixing of baby formula. If using a filter, make sure to change the filter cartridge by the date printed on the package. Remember you and your children can also be exposed to lead from old paint, dust, dirt, pottery, make-up, toys and some home remedies. If you have any concerns about lead or your child's development, talk with your doctor.

## LEAD-FIGHTING ACTIVITIES

### READING

Read out loud to your child every day! If 30 minutes of daily reading begins at birth, kids go to kindergarten with more than 900 hours of "brain food" to feed their school success! Build a love for reading by:

- Visiting your local library and helping your child choose new and fun books.
- Finding books on topics they enjoy.
- Showing your child all the ways we use words and language in our lives.
- Reading books, magazines or newspapers at home in front of your child.
- Singing, listening to music, and teaching chants and rhymes.

### BUILDING SOCIAL SKILLS

Learning is social! When kids are friendly and can listen and follow directions, they're more likely to do well in school, even when there are challenges. Help develop these important skills by:

- Giving your child time to play with other kids.

- Teaching your child how to express feelings when he or she doesn't like something or has a problem.
- Helping your child solve problems and calm down when angry.
- Working with your child on listening and following directions.

### LEARNING EXCITEMENT

Children who are excited about school tend to do better! There are many ways to build your child's curiosity and love of learning, including:

- Asking questions like "why does that work?" or "what could happen next?" to expand his or her interest in the world.
- Engaging your child in science and math activities.
- Letting your child choose his or her own play and learning.
- Noticing when your child tries hard, regardless of the result.

## LEAD RESOURCES

- Genesee County Health Department Lead Program: [www.gchd.us/](http://www.gchd.us/); phone: 810-257-3833
- Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ): [www.michigan.gov/flintwater](http://www.michigan.gov/flintwater)
- Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program: [www.michigan.gov/lead/](http://www.michigan.gov/lead/); phone: 517-335-8885
- MSU Extension Fight Lead Exposure website: [www.msue.msu.edu/lead](http://www.msue.msu.edu/lead)
- U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): [www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/](http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/)
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA): [www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead)

## WHERE TO GET HELP

### Early Childhood Resources in Genesee County

- **Flint Community Schools (FCS)** – FCS provides quality early childhood education programs and comprehensive services to support children and their families. These include the Early Head Start and Head Start Great Start Readiness/Pre-K programs. To learn about enrolling 4-year-olds in the Great Start Readiness Program, call 810-767-6113. To learn about enrolling 3- and 4-year-olds in Head Start, call 810-591-5437. To learn about early education development delay programs, call 810-767-6113.
- **Genesee County Community Action Resource Department (GCCARD) Head Start** – Head Start is a federally-funded early childhood program for 3- and 4-year-olds. GCCARD's Head Start programs use play-based curriculum to help prepare kids for school. For information call 810-235-5613. (Note: Also provides free water filters.) Call 810-789-3746 or 810-232-2185.
- **Genesee Intermediate School District (GISD) Special Education Programs** – GISD early childhood programs and services support all Genesee County schools by providing special education programs and services to children from birth through age 7. The GISD Early-On program provides screening for potential developmental delays and early childhood special education classrooms. Call 810-591-4883 for details.

### Early Childhood Resources

These organizations provide information, activities and resources to support early childhood development.

- **MSU Extension** ([http://msue.anr.msu.edu/topic/info/early\\_childhood\\_development](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/topic/info/early_childhood_development)) – Offers resources like Family Book Sheets that support literacy development.
- **eXtension Child Care** ([http://articles.extension.org/child\\_care](http://articles.extension.org/child_care)) – Access free hands-on activities and

searchable lists of fingerplays, songs and rhymes.

- **eXtension Parenting** (<http://articles.extension.org/parenting>) – Support for parents of children of all ages. Sign up for a free parenting newsletter with helpful tips, suggestions and ideas.
- **PBS Parents** (<http://www.pbs.org/parents/>) – Useful parenting tips, activities and resources for children.

### Activities for Kids in Flint

- **Flint Children's Museum** (<http://thefcm.org/>) – Hands-on exhibits and learning for children ages 2 to 10.
- **Sloan Museum** (<http://sloanlongway.org/Sloan-Museum>) – Explore local history, autos and hands-on science.
- **Longway Planetarium** (<http://sloanlongway.org/longway-planetarium>) – Explore the sky and stars!
- **Crossroads Village and Huckleberry Railroad** (<http://www.geneseecountyparks.org/CRVDefault.asp>) – Explore a 1900s village and ride an authentic railroad.
- **Genesee County Parks** (<http://www.geneseecountyparks.org/>) – Check out options for outdoor fun in Genesee County.

### Additional Genesee County Resources

#### 211

- Connects Genesee County residents to community resources including

food, transportation, education, health care, and sources of water filters and replacement cartridges.

- Locally funded by United Way Genesee Count
- Phone: 211; web: [www.211.org/](http://www.211.org/)

#### Flint Water Department

- Offers free water testing.
- Phone: 810-787-6537

#### Genesee County Health Department

- Offers information on lead, water and filter pick up sites, lead screening, hearing and vision screening, and immunizations.
- Phone: 810-257-3612

#### Michigan State University Extension

- Offers free early childhood and nutrition education classes, soil testing for lead and much more.
- Phone: 810-244-8500

#### WIC (Women, Infants & Children)

The WIC program supplies extra food for low-income pregnant or breastfeeding mothers, infants and children up to age 5 who are at nutritional risk. To apply for WIC, call 800-262-4784 (toll-free) or 810-237-4537.

#### WIC-Project Fresh

If you receive WIC benefits, you can receive Project Fresh coupons to buy locally grown fruits and veggies! This program runs from June 1 through Oct. 31 each year. Contact Genesee County WIC at 810-237-4537 or MSU Extension at 810-244-8500 for details.

### Sources

*Linking Social Development and Behavior to School Readiness.* The Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning. (2010). Retrieved from <http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/resources/infTodd/mod4/4.3.pdf>

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*Learn About Lead* [overview and fact sheets]. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. (2015). Retrieved from <http://www.epa.gov/lead/learn-about-lead>

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