

Health Risks

- Lead exposure **reduces IQ by damaging brain cells** in children during their early years (*LA Times* 5/28/08)
- Lead exposure **increases children's distractibility, impulsiveness and restlessness** and leaves them with a **shortened attention span** – all factors considered **precursors of aggressive or violent behavior** (*LA Times* 5/28/08)
- The **higher the blood lead level** at any time in childhood, the greater the **likelihood of arrests** (*LA Times* 5/28/08)
- Lead can kill. In February 2006, a child in Minnesota died after ingesting a piece of toy jewelry. (Illinois Dept. of Public Health)
- There is **no safe level of lead for children** (Environmental Health Perspectives Report)
- **Brain damage from lead cannot be reversed**, but blood lead levels can be lowered to prevent further damage and early intervention can help to reduce long term effects (Keeping Your Kids Safe From Lead Jewelry).

Basic Facts

- Lead is **cheap** and found in many household products (EPA Fact Sheet)
- Children **under the age of 4** and **pregnant women** are the most at risk (EPA Fact Sheet)
- Low levels of exposure can cause joint and muscle pain, high blood pressure and infertility, higher levels (or lead poisoning) can cause **memory loss, nerve problems** and at very high levels, fits (EPA Fact Sheet)
- Lead can cause headache, irritability, **reduced memory**, disturbed sleep, and **mood and personality changes** (New Jersey Hazardous Substance FAQ)
- Lead may cause **kidney and brain damage** and damage to blood cells causing anemia (New Jersey Hazardous Substance FAQ)
- Long-term effects can occur from repeated exposures to a chemical at levels not high enough to make you immediately sick (New Jersey Hazardous Substance FAQ)
- Lead may be a teratogen, a substance which causes **birth defects** by damaging the fetus. (New Jersey Hazardous Substance FAQ)
- Lead dust on surfaces, especially in eating areas, must be controlled by HEPA vacuuming, wet clean-up, or other effective methods (New Jersey Hazardous Substance FAQ)
- The **only way to diagnose lead poisoning is by having a blood test**. A doctor or nurse takes blood from a child's finger or arm. The health care provider sends the blood sample to a laboratory to find out how much lead it contains. A level of 10 micrograms per deciliter (mcg/dL) or greater is considered unsafe. (Illinois Dept. of Public Health)
- Special drugs, called chelators, may be used to treat children with very high blood lead levels. These medications are given in the hospital either through intravenous or intramuscular injections or by mouth. The medicine attaches to the lead and pulls it out of the body in the urine (Illinois Dept. of Public Health).
- Children six and under are particularly vulnerable to lead contamination. Two-year olds tend to have the highest levels of contamination because of their instinct to put objects in their mouth (Keeping Your Kids Safe From Lead Jewelry)
- The best treatment is to **remove the source of lead from the child**. Parents **should discard or avoid consumer products that contain lead** (Keeping Your Kids Safe From Lead Jewelry).

Where & What?

- Wal-Mart is China's **number one importer**. In the past year more than 20 products made in China and sold at Wal-Mart were so dangerous they had to be **pulled from Wal-Mart's shelves**. (Food and Product Responsibility Act)
- Harry Potter bookends sold at elementary school funding programs
- Pirates of the Caribbean sleeping bags sold at Disney Stores nationwide
- Nintendo character themed lapel pins
- Curious George plush dolls
- Sesame Street, Dora the Explorer, and other children's toys
- Casper Halloween Figurines
- Ring Toss Games (by Educational Insights)
- Target recently recalled 350,000 gardening toys because of excess levels of lead
- On Aug. 2, Mattel recalled about 1.5 million Chinese-made Fisher-Price toys — including characters such as Dora the Explorer, Big Bird and Elmo — that contain lead paint (MSNBC.com 8/14/07).

Products to Test

1. Post-It Notes
2. Vinyl Lunch Boxes
3. Vinyl Bibs
4. Teething Rings
5. Limited Too "Sparkle by Too" – Lip gloss, body spray and bath sets
6. Kid's Jewelry
7. Rubber Pacifiers
8. Plastic Baby Bottles & Sippy Cups
9. Big Red Wagons
10. Thomas the Tank Engine toys
11. Dora the Explorer toys
12. Multi-colored sidewalk chalk
13. Gardening toys
14. Fisher Price Toys
15. Vinyl Backpacks
16. Elmer's Glue Stick Caps
17. Curious George dolls
18. Vending Machine toys
19. Mattel toys (specifically Barbie dolls & accessories)
20. Colored writing slates
21. School supplies
22. Sketch Books with colored spirals
23. Discount toys
24. Fisher Price (various characters)