

# KNOW KNOCK

Every child and family has unique aspects of their situation, experience, and diagnosis. This page is intended to provide a general overview, but is not attempting to represent every situation or child you encounter. Every family deserves your expertise to assess and adapt your prior knowledge. This resource is best viewed electronically.

## DEFINITION

"Childhood lead poisoning is caused by too much exposure to lead dust, lead paint, lead contaminated soil and drinking water, and other sources. Lead poisoning can hurt a child's brain and nervous system and affect growth, development, school performance, and success in later life." (1)

## PREVALENCE

In Wisconsin, 6.3% of children under age 6 tested positive for lead in 2023 or 4,725 children, about 1 in 16 kids (2)

Low socioeconomic status is a risk factor for elevated lead levels (3)

## CONSIDERATIONS THAT MAY IMPACT SERVICES

- Level of exposure
- Age of exposure
- If source of lead has been identified and resolved
- Iron deficiency is associated with a four- to five-fold increase in the baseline risk of lead toxicity(6)
- Damage to the brain and nervous system are irreversible(7)

## LANGUAGE TO USE/AVOID

Use: "We know that lead exposure can have such an impact on your child's development that a history of high levels automatically qualifies them for our program."

vs

"We would like to screen your child to see if the lead levels have impacted their development."

## NATIONAL/STATE ORGS

[Lead-Safe Wisconsin](#)

by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services

## TOP RESOURCES

[About Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention](#)- CDC

[Childhood Lead Poisoning](#)- National Center for Healthy Housing

[Protecting Children and Pregnant Persons from Lead Exposure](#) - Page 7 in particular

[Recommended Action Based on Confirmed Blood Lead Level](#)- American Academy of Family Physicians

## DIFFERENCES THAT MAY BE PRESENT

"Significantly negatively correlated with the developmental quotients of...":

- adaptive behavior
- gross motor performance
- fine motor performance
- language development
- individual social behavior

Also exhibited:

- abnormal behaviors such as social withdrawal, depression, and atypical body movements, aggressions and destruction
- Sleep disruption"(4)

"Long-term:

- "sevenfold increase in failure to graduate from high school
- lower class standing
- greater absenteeism
- reading disability (two grades lower scores)
- deficits in vocabulary
- fine motor skill delay
- impaired reaction time
- impaired hand—eye coordination"(5)

## SUPPLEMENTARY TESTS THAT COULD BE USED OR SEEN IN MEDICAL RECORDS

Blood lead reference value: The CDC now uses a reference value of  $\geq 3.5$   $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ ; however, no safe blood lead level in children has been identified.(8)



HIGH LEAD LEVELS

