

CHILDHOOD LEAD POISONING PREVENTION PROGRAM

Strategies to Address Declining Blood Lead Screening Rates During COVID-19

Health Care Provider Outreach

The Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Branch (CLPPB) is working with health care providers to improve blood lead screening rates. Actions include:

- ▶ Webinars by public health medical officers about childhood lead poisoning prevention, screening, and management to hospitals, health centers, residency programs, and provider offices
- ▶ Mailing screening requirements and management guidelines
- ▶ Developing materials to promote blood lead testing, including promoting catch-up testing once COVID-19 restrictions are less stringent

Lead-Safe During COVID-19 Web Page

CLPPB created a [web page](#)¹ with information about how to stay lead-safe while spending more time at home during the COVID-19 pandemic and the important role of blood lead testing. Resources are provided for parents, schools, child care providers, and children, and include curricula, videos, coloring books, and a lead safety checklist.

Outreach Toolkit for Local Programs

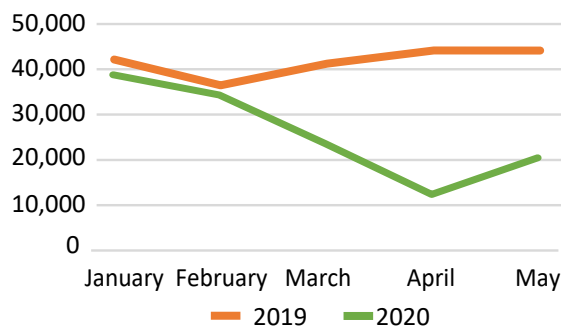
CLPPB developed a COVID-19-specific outreach toolkit to assist local programs' outreach and education efforts at a time when in-person activities have been cancelled. The toolkit includes:

- ▶ Two new educational flyers about potential sources of lead in and around the home and tips for lead-safe home renovation
- ▶ Social media messages
- ▶ Customizable health care provider and patient letter templates encouraging the continued scheduling of well-child visits during COVID-19
- ▶ Additional resources for planning and implementing outreach activities during COVID-19

Collaboration with Immunization Branch

Both CLPPB and the Immunization Branch have documented decreasing rates of children receiving vital health services during the COVID-19 pandemic and are collaborating on outreach to health care providers and key stakeholders. The goal of this partnership is to encourage parents and families to resume their well-child visits and receive scheduled interventions such as blood lead tests and vaccinations. By working together, each program can improve their respective indicators while also reducing message fatigue and increasing reach.

Number of Children Under 6 Years Old Tested per Month in 2019 and 2020²



Background

CLPPB has documented a marked decrease in blood lead screening rates following the state of emergency declaration and shelter in place orders issued in March 2020 in response to COVID-19. CLPPB has implemented strategies to improve blood lead screening rates throughout California.

Next Steps

CLPPB will continue to:

- ▶ Expand upon health care provider outreach
- ▶ Adapt outreach strategies for remote participation
- ▶ Provide additional support to local programs with reduced capacity due to COVID-19

Contact Us

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¹ Resources for Staying Lead-Safe During COVID-19: visit www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CCDC/DEOD/CLPPB/Pages/COVIDResources.aspx

² Data from RASSCLE surveillance database including both unprocessed and processed blood lead levels; analysis completed on 7/29/2020. Date the sample was drawn determined the month the child was tested. Each child is counted only once during a month. For blood lead tests without a unique patient identifier, first name, last name, date of birth, and ZIP code were used to deduplicate children.