

Investing in the Health Of Our Community

Lead Poisoning Prevention

August 2007



greater rochester
Health
foundation

The mission of the Greater Rochester Health Foundation is to improve the health status of all residents of the Greater Rochester community including people whose unique healthcare needs have not been met because of race, ethnicity or income. GRHF will be good stewards of this valued community asset and will engage diverse populations and organizations in the fulfillment of our mission.

Lead poisoning in children is a significant health issue in Monroe County, and GRHF has made a three-year financial commitment to help make Monroe County Lead Safe by 2010.

How Will the Greater Rochester Health Foundation Help?

The Greater Rochester Health Foundation will invest \$2 million over the next three years in strategies that will effectively identify and reduce the threat of lead poisoning to children. GRHF funds will be focused on a Rochester neighborhood with older housing, where the risk to children is greatest.

Lead Poisoning Threatens the Health of Our Children

Lead poisoning in children can damage their central nervous systems, affecting cognitive and behavioral development and thwarting their physical growth and ability to learn. Lead poisoning is irreversible, there is no cure, but it is preventable if we find and correct lead hazards before a child is exposed.



The Greater Rochester Health Foundation would like to acknowledge the extensive reference materials developed by The Coalition to Prevent Lead Poisoning. These have been used as the basis for the Foundation's investment strategy to eliminate lead poisoning.

People who would like more information on lead poisoning, or who would like to volunteer to eliminate this threat to children, are invited to contact the Coalition to Prevent Lead Poisoning at leadsafeby2010.org or 585 256-2267.



How Does Lead Poisoning Occur?

Lead-based paint is found in homes built before 1978. As old paint deteriorates, lead in paint dust can poison children—permanently. Children, especially under age six, can ingest lead when they eat paint chips but most commonly they are poisoned when they crawl or play on lead-dusted floors and then place their hands or toys in their mouths. Even a small amount of lead dust can create a significant health risk to a young child.



The Vision: Monroe County - Lead Safe by 2010

Over the past decade, grassroots organizations, the healthcare community, private funders, and government agencies joined forces to raise awareness of childhood lead poisoning and committed to abolish the problem.

Their vision is clear:

Make Monroe County lead safe by 2010.

The Community's Progress in Preventing Lead Poisoning

Since 2001, the Coalition to Prevent Lead Poisoning (CPLP) has championed far-reaching efforts to fight childhood lead poisoning. The community has already achieved a great deal:

- “Let’s Make Lead History” campaign and the community Lead Summit in 2004 have increased the knowledge of parents and people who work with children about the dangers of lead poisoning.
- Community organizations, the University of Rochester, and local funders such as the Rochester Area Community Foundation and United Way, have provided leadership and financial support for a number of innovative projects:
 - Trained local residents to be certified lead abatement workers
 - “Get the Lead Out” program was launched to find lead hazards in homes before children are poisoned
 - “Healthy Home” was created as a community model and information center
- Local government has responded to the call-to-action as well. If children are found to have lead in their blood, their homes are inspected for lead hazards. Both the City of Rochester and the County of Monroe have obtained federal grants to help families make repairs to their homes that reduce the threat of lead paint.
- The Rochester City Council set a nation-wide example in December 2005 when they passed historic lead paint legislation to effectively and systematically reduce lead poisoning in the city.

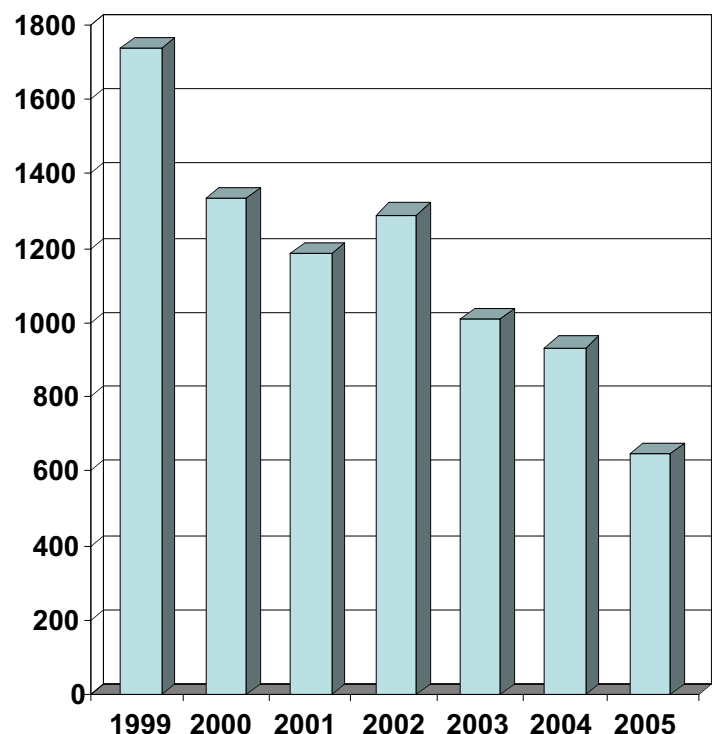


Significant Improvement Has Resulted from this Concerted Community Effort

The results of these efforts have been significant. The number of Rochester-area children poisoned by lead dropped nearly 55 percent between 2002 and 2005. Cases further declined in 2006, when 571 children were found to be lead poisoned*. But until all children are safe from the threat of lead poisoning, the community's work is not done.

* Blood Lead Screening Data 1994-2006. Available at <http://www.monroecounty.gov/File/Health/Lead/Blood%20lead%20screening%201994%20through%2020062.pdf>

Monroe County Children with BLL > 10 ug/dl



Lead Safe Monroe County . A Plan to Eliminate Childhood Lead Poisoning by 2010. Coalition to Prevent Lead Poisoning, 2007.

The Greater Rochester Health Foundation Will Fund Three Initiatives

One-stop Lead Resource Center

A one-stop lead resource center will help property owners identify and eliminate lead hazards in their homes. With \$110,000 each year, GRHF will provide funding for a community agency to develop and operate the one-stop center.

At the center, people can learn more about lead poisoning and find clear and accurate information to help them solve lead problems in their home. In one visit or call, parents, homeowners, or landlords can be directed to needed resources. This will decrease the time and effort necessary to find help, increasing the likelihood that lead problems will be fixed.

Reducing Lead Hazards

Over \$500,000 annually will be used to increase the number of homes made lead safe in the City of Rochester. Like the funds currently available through the Monroe County Department of Public Health and the City of Rochester, GRHF funds will reduce lead hazards in homes by helping property owners pay for window or door replacements and other home repairs that will reduce the dangers of deteriorated lead paint.

Staff from the one-stop lead resource center will guide families with step-by-step instructions on how to secure a risk assessment of their home and complete an application for a grant. The job of resource center staff will not be considered done until the home is made lead safe.

Community Education

Community education programming will receive \$50,000 in funding to educate parents, property owners and the public about:

- The harm caused by lead poisoning in children
- The conditions that create poisoning risks
- Cost-effective prevention methods

Through a competitive grant proposal process, GRHF will fund these initiatives for three years in support of the county's vision of making Monroe County Lead Safe by 2010. The Greater Rochester Health Foundation shares the view of the Coalition to Prevent Lead Poisoning;

"...we believe that over time we will erase the stain of childhood lead poisoning in Rochester's history..."

(Coalition to Prevent Lead Poisoning. (2007). Lead safe Monroe County: A plan to eliminate childhood lead poisoning in Monroe County sby 2010. Rochester, NY: Coalition to Prevent Lead Poisoning.)

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