

Kids Run Better Unleaded

Who: Children of all ages

Why: Lead exposure is a serious health hazard. Children under 6 years of age are at greater risk because they are growing so rapidly and they tend to put their hands and other objects in their mouths

Time: 20 minutes

Objectives: By the end of this session, participants will:

- Be able to identify primary sources and dangers of lead exposure.
- Be able to list ways to protect their child from lead exposure
- Know who to contact to have their child screened for lead poisoning

Lesson

Overview:

1. Introduction
2. Concept: Lead Poisoning is a Serious Health Hazard
3. Concept: Lead Can Come from Different Sources
4. Concept: You Can Protect Your Child from Lead Poisoning
5. Closing

Materials: 'Keep Your Child Safe from Lead' Brochure
'Iron for Strong Blood' Brochure
Flip chart and marker

Introduction

- Arrange chairs in a semi-circle before participants enter classroom
- Welcome Participants
- Give overview of class session
- Introduction using an icebreaker

Example: "Good morning everyone. Welcome to the "Children Run Better Unleaded" class. Today we will be talking about the dangers of lead exposure to our child, who is at risk of lead exposure and sources of lead in our environment. We also want to discuss the importance of lead screening and preventing lead poisoning. Let's introduce ourselves. We can go around the circle and say our name as well as your child's name and if he/she has ever been tested for lead. I will start, my name is _____."

Concept: Lead Poisoning is a Serious Health Hazard

- **Essential (open- ended) Question:**
 - What have you heard about lead poisoning?

- **Affirm answers from participants (i.e. “I appreciate that answer”, “that is very true”, “thank you for that comment, etc.)**
- **Write answers on flip chart**



FACTS ABOUT LEAD POISONING:

- It is the most common type of environmental poisoning in children.
- Infants and children exposed to lead may have lower IQ's and learning disabilities.
- Lead can affect every system of the body particularly the brain and nervous system causing permanent damage
- Many times there are NO SIGNS or often signs are mistaken for other childhood illnesses

Concept: Lead Can Come from Different Sources

- **Essential Questions:**

- What are sources of lead?
- After discussing the health hazard that lead poisoning poses to children, ask parents where do they think their children could come in contact with lead?



FACTS ABOUT SOURCES OF LEAD:

- Lead based paint chips (banned in the US in 1978) residual paint found on older buildings is a frequent source of lead exposure
- Soil
- Tap water can be contaminated by lead pipes
- Certain candies imported from Mexico have been found to be contaminated with lead.
- Visit or live in a house built before 1950 (daycare, babysitter, relative, or a preschool)
- You may have heard about the recent recall of certain toys from China that have been found to contain lead, familiarize yourself with these toys and dispose of them if in your household. Young children often put their hands and other objects such as toys in their mouths making them more susceptible to lead exposure

Concept: You Can Protect Your Child from Lead Poisoning

- **Essential Question:**

- What ideas do you have regarding ways of protecting your child from lead poisoning?
- **Affirm answers**



FACTS ABOUT PREVENTION OF LEAD POISONING:

- The number one way to protect your child is to have them tested. Ask your doctor for a simple blood test.
- Wash your child's hands and toys often especially before eating and bed-time.
- Do not use or eat imported items that are suspected of containing lead, such as cosmetics, medicines, candies, etc.
- Feed Your Child Regular, Nutritious Meals and Snacks
 - Less lead is absorbed when a child eats regularly; more lead is absorbed on an empty stomach.
 - Include iron rich foods every day to decrease lead absorption. *(Have class list high iron sources, provide iron handout)*
 - Ensure your child has adequate calcium intake – both the absorption and retention of lead decreases as calcium intake increases. *(Have class list high calcium sources)*
 - Store foods in plastic or glass containers, not opened metal cans

Closing

- **Summarize:** Review the main health problems caused by lead poisoning, the main sources of lead in the United State, and the main preventive actions for lead poisoning. Also, encourage parents to test their children for lead poisoning.
- **Thank them for their participation in today's session.**