

Dear CCDC Families,

As early childhood educators, it is our responsibility to not only make sure that your children are educated, but also kept safe from all harm. This includes environmental hazards, such as lead.



What is lead? Lead is a naturally occurring bluish-gray metal found in small amounts in the earth's crust. It has no special taste or smell. Lead can be found in all parts of our environment. Most of it came from human activities like mining, manufacturing, and the burning of fossil fuels. Because of health concerns, lead from gasoline, paints and ceramic products, caulking, and pipe solder has been dramatically reduced in recent years.

How might I be exposed to lead?

Breathing workplace air (lead smelting, refining, and manufacturing industries), eating lead-based paint chips, drinking water that comes from lead pipes or lead soldered fittings, ingesting soil contaminated with lead,

breathing tobacco smoke, eating contaminated food grown on soil containing lead, or food covered with lead-containing dust, breathing fumes or ingesting lead from hobbies that use lead (leaded-glass, ceramics).

How can lead affect my health?

Lead can affect almost every organ and system in your body. The most sensitive is the central nervous system, particularly in children. Lead also damages kidneys and the immune system. Exposure to lead is more dangerous for young and unborn children. Unborn children can be exposed to lead through their mothers. Harmful effects include premature births, smaller babies, decreased mental ability in the infant, learning difficulties, and reduced growth in young children. These effects are more common after exposure to high levels of lead. In adults, lead may decrease reaction time, cause weakness in fingers, wrists, or ankles, and possibly affect the memory. Lead may cause anemia, a disorder of the blood. It can cause abortion and damage the male reproductive system. The connection between these effects and exposure to low levels of lead is uncertain.

In 1978, lead-based paint was banned in the United States. To further prevent lead exposure, a law was passed in 1992 which required all sellers or landlords to include information concerning any lead-based materials in a house they are selling or renting which was built before 1978.

Although our building was built well after 1978, as a member of the Five Star Environmental Recognition Program, our facility has fully implemented the following policy:

To reduce the exposure of children and staff to lead, Cummins Child Development Center will:

- Not accept donated toys or furniture unless they are tested for lead and determined to be lead-free.
- Track recalls. Any recalled item will be properly removed from the facility within five business days of recall notification.

We strongly encourage everyone, especially if your house was built before 1978, to get your child (and yourself) tested for lead. All children should have lead screening at around one year of age, and again at two years of age. This screening is done on a small amount of your child's blood test. You should request lead screenings from your pediatrician, or by contacting the local health department.

Public Health Clinic
1971 State St.
Columbus, IN 47201
(812) 379-1555

Thank you,
CCDC Management