

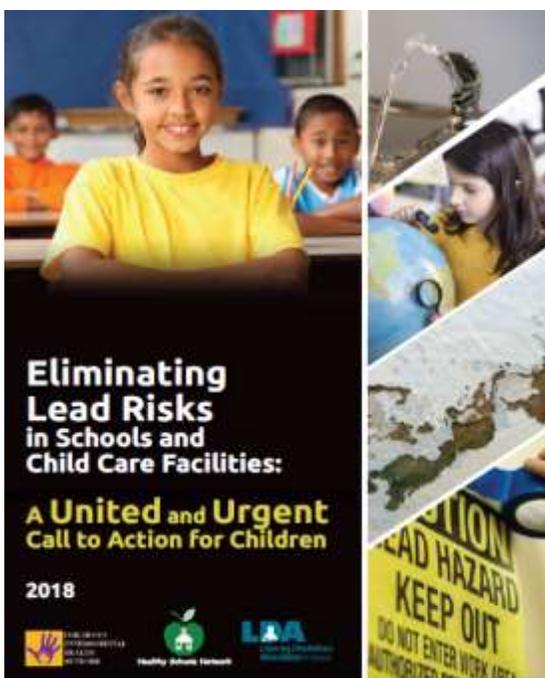


For Immediate Release: April 4, 2018, 8 AM Eastern

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No Lead for Kids in Schools or Child Care Facilities **National report cites untapped opportunity to reduce toxic risks to children**

(April 4) National experts in education, child care and children's health today issued a joint call to get the lead out of schools and child care facilities. More than 66 million children in the U.S. are enrolled in schools and child care programs, where they may be exposed to lead in old paint, water pipes and fixtures, soil, air, and products on a daily basis.



The report, [Eliminating Lead Risks in Schools and Child Care Facilities](#), is the first to set strategic priorities for reducing lead exposure in learning environments. Cleaning up these large-group settings offers great potential to prevent lead risks for significant numbers of children. The report is the result of a workshop convened by the Children's Environmental Health Network, Healthy Schools Network and the Learning Disabilities Association of America, and is being released during National Public Health Week and the day after National Healthy Schools Day.

"Exposures to lead during childhood can create unnecessary and preventable challenges for children and their families," noted **Nsedu Obot Witherspoon, Executive Director, Children's Environmental Health Network**. "It is vital that we collectively work to eliminate such threats by directly focusing on areas that have otherwise gone unnoticed, including child care facilities and schools."

Scientific, medical and government authorities agree there is no safe level of lead for children. "Even low levels of lead are linked to learning disabilities, attention problems and IQ deficits," said **Maureen Swanson, Healthy Children Project Director, Learning Disabilities Association of America**. "Getting lead out of schools and child care facilities is doable and will protect children across the country where they spend hours each day learning, playing and growing."

Added **Claire Barnett, Executive Director, Healthy Schools Network**, "Let's find lead before, not after, it finds our children and results in new costs to local schools. We need federal agencies and Congress, and others, to adopt and support new approaches to eliminating lead in the K-12 and child care sectors. As a nation, we won't get to *No Lead for Kids* without addressing lead in the places where 66 million vulnerable children learn and play."

The report's findings and recommendations emerged from a national workshop hosted by the three groups in late 2017. The report underscores the need for new multi-stakeholder collaborations and approaches to ensure the country's schools and child care facilities are lead-free, and outlines key strategies to achieve this public health goal.

Workshop participants included representatives of several federal agencies, the American Federation of Teachers, National Association of School Nurses, the School Superintendents Association, American Academy of Pediatrics, National Association of Family Child Care, National Association for the Education of Young Children, Child Care Aware of America, American Public Health Association, National Medical Association, and Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals, along with organizations working to address lead in paint, water, building materials and products. Dr. Bruce Lanphear, an expert on lead and children's health at Simon Fraser University, and health economist Dr. Corwin Rhyan, Altarum Institute, gave keynote presentations making the health, societal and economic cases for aggressive action to eliminate lead across settings where children spend their time.

[Eliminating Lead Risks in Schools and Child Care Facilities](#) was supported by the Health Impact Project of The Pew Charitable Trusts and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

CEHN is a national non-profit working to protect the developing child from environmental health hazards and to promote a healthier environment. www.cehn.org Twitter @CEHN Facebook @CEHNet

LDA is a national non-profit working to create opportunities for success for all individuals affected by learning disabilities and to reduce the incidence of learning disabilities in future generations. www.ldaamerica.org Twitter @LDAofAmerica Facebook: @LDAAmerica

Healthy Schools Network is a national not for profit advocate for children's environmental health at school and for healthier school facilities. www.HealthySchools.org Twitter: @HealthySchoolsN, Facebook: @HealthySchoolsN

Additional supporting statements on the report:

"Every child deserves to grow, learn, and thrive in a healthy home, school, and community. While threats of lead exposure are ever present—in our air, water, and beyond—there are ways we can mitigate these risks. Whether it's spreading awareness, pushing for better policy, or committing to use lead-free products, there is always something we can do. This report is a great resource to help show us the way, so we can each do our part."

—**John Musso, CAE, RSBA, Executive Director, Association of School Business Officials-International**

"Too many of our most vulnerable children, particularly low income children of color, are exposed to lead where they live and play. This strategy, which focuses on making home and community environments—like child care centers and family child care homes—safer for young children is a step towards true prevention of developmental delays, learning disabilities, behavioral health issues and chronic disease associated with lead exposure." --**Krista Scott, Senior Director, Child Care Health Policy, Child Care Aware of America**

"Improving Kids' Environment supports the recommendations of the report Eliminating Lead in Schools and Child Care Facilities which is a critically important joint effort among a group of organizations and government agencies committed to children's health to urgently call out the need for and give direction to the effort to finally eliminate the neurotoxin lead from schools and the places where child care is provided. As our country looks to address serious infrastructure problems, our schools and child care facilities should be priorities in order to make them the safe and healthy places of learning they need to be for our children and our future." --- **Margaret Frericks, PhD, Program Manager, Improving Kids' Environment (IN)**

"Our kids deserve safe drinking water - especially at school and pre-school where they go each day to learn and play," said John Rumpler, clean water program director for Environment America Research & Policy Center. "We know that prevention is the best strategy for protecting all children from lead exposure. That means pro-actively removing lead-bearing pipes and fountains and taking other immediate steps to ensure safe drinking water at all schools. In short, it's time to get the lead out." --**John Rumpler, Senior Director, Clean Water for America Campaign and Senior Attorney, Environment America**

"We've known for centuries that lead is poisonous. Every child has a right to be safe from lead poisoning threats in their school, home and environment—we must act now." --**Erik Olson, Senior Director, Health & Food, Natural Resources Defense Council**

"When parents pack busy kids off for school for the day, one thing they shouldn't have to worry about is that the playground at school will be covered in lead contamination. Unfortunately, this report shows that the problem of lead in school and daycare is a real health risk. This report is the first step in getting rid of lead in schools and daycares." -- **Kara Cook, Toxics Program Director, US PIRG**

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