

Lead Poisoning and Violence in Children

Greetings Readers! As you faithful readers know, from time to time, I do not answer a question so I can write updated information on an important topic. This is one of such times. I have written about the dangers of Lead Poisoning in children before. Lead poisoning occurs when young children ingest lead paint from chipped walls or other surfaces or by inhaling lead dust. Pregnant women can also pass it on to their fetuses hence lead is one of the metals tested for by Obstetricians. Lead exposure occurs in many older homes throughout New York State. Most people know about lead in peeling paint chips that young kids pick up and put it in their mouths. However, most people do not know that friction surfaces containing lead emit lead dust. Lead dust is invisible, has no smell, can't be felt, and it is deadly. Because it is inhaled, it goes directly into the bloodstream. Windows and doors are common lead dust sources and every time they are opened and closed, the friction causes and stirs up lead dust.

According to the **Wikipedia** online encyclopedia, symptoms of chronic lead poisoning include neurological problems, such as reduced [cognitive abilities](#), or [nau](#)

[sea](#)

,
[abdominal pain](#)

,
[irritability](#)

,
[insomnia](#)

, metal taste in oral cavity, excess

[lethargy](#)

or

[hyperactivity](#)

,
[headache](#)

and, in extreme cases,

[seizure](#)

and

[coma](#)

. There are also associated gastrointestinal problems, such as

[constipation](#)

,

[diarrhea](#)

,
[vomiting](#)

,
[poor appetite](#)

,
[weight loss](#)

, which are common in acute poisoning. Other associated effects are

[anemia](#)

,
[kidney problems, and reproductive problems](#)

. In a nutshell, Lead damages children's brains and at high levels can wipe out their memory, ability to learn, and cause ADHD (Attention Deficits/Hyperactivity Disorder).

The update in a July 8, 2007 study found that lead poisoning was directly linked to violent crime rates in the U.S. and other countries. Reporter Shankar Vedantam, who writes for the Washington Post, wrote an article about this topic that also appeared on the **EDNews.org** website. Research results showed that although crime did fall dramatically in New York during **Mayor Giuliani's**

tenure, a broad range of scientific research has emerged in recent years to show that the mayor deserves only a fraction of the credit that he claims. The most compelling information has come from an economist in

Fairfax

who has argued in a series of hardly noticed papers that the "New York miracle" was caused by local and federal efforts decades earlier to reduce lead poisoning. The theory offered by the economist,

Rick Nevin

, is that lead poisoning accounts for much of the variation in violent crime in the United States. It offers a unifying new neuro-chemical theory for fluctuations in the crime rate, and it is based on studies linking children's exposure to lead with violent behavior later in their lives.

What makes Nevin's work persuasive is that he has shown an identical, decades-long association between lead poisoning and crime rates in nine countries. This topic is even more important for **new immigrants** who often live in low-income housing while they work for a better future for their children, only to have them exposed to lead poisoning.

The Incidence of Lead Poisoning

Lead poisoning is the number one environmental hazard threatening children throughout the United States and affecting an estimated 310,000 children under the age of six. Children under 6 and pregnant women are at the greatest risk for lead poisoning because lead inhibits proper physical and cognitive development in children and infants. Even low levels of lead poisoning can cause hyperactivity, ADHD, aggressive behavior, learning disabilities, lowered IQ, speech delay and hearing impairment, and slowed or decreased growth. High levels of lead can cause severe mental disabilities, convulsions, coma or even death.

Studies have shown children who are lead poisoned are more likely to become involved with the juvenile justice system and that