



October 21, 2017

### **Lead-Free MV Coalition kicks-off of National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week**

The Community Foundation's Lead-Free MV Coalition is pleased to announce the kick-off of **National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week 2017**, October 22–28th, which is designed to raise local awareness about the danger of lead exposure and poisoning, and educate parents on how to reduce exposure to lead in their environment, prevent its serious health effects, and learn about the importance of testing children for lead.

National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week 2017 is a joint initiative of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes (HUD), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and state and local organizations.

For more information see the [LFMV Lead Resource List](#) of local resources.

#### **A Silent Danger**

In recent years, Oneida County has had one of the highest levels of childhood lead poisoning in the state. Experts say children can be exposed to lead through a variety of sources, including contaminated soil or water; imported toys, pottery or cosmetics; and paint used before 1978. At low levels, symptoms of poisoning are often hard to detect, but may include loss of appetite, weight loss, fatigue and abdominal discomfort.

Long-term lead exposure can result in developmental delays, learning difficulties and behavioral issues, with lifelong financial consequences. And despite a state law requiring early childhood testing for lead exposure, a third of pre-school children in Herkimer and Oneida Counties have not had the required blood test.

#### **Coalition for Change**

The Lead-Free MV coalition focuses on the reduction of lead hazards in pre-1978 housing, as well as expanding testing and community awareness of the problem. Efforts will range from direct outreach and education to strengthening legislation related to property maintenance.

In addition to providing the start-up funding, The Foundation serves as a "backbone organization" for Lead-Free MV and coordinates efforts among partner organizations. The coalition oversees the initiative's mission and progress and helps advance the cause within the community. Coalition members represent public health, local government, legal, insurance, healthcare, education, child care, construction and support services constituencies.

Interested in working with the coalition? Contact [info@leadfreemv.org](mailto:info@leadfreemv.org).