

# A Community Approach to Preventing Childhood Lead Poisoning



## The Claremont Story

# Understanding the Issue ( August 2016)

- Local conditions
  - Pre-1978 housing stock
    - 84%, higher than state average of 62%
  - Water Distribution System
    - Lead in service lines and connectors
- Lead exposure data
  - Less than 53% of one-year olds tested (statewide, 2015 data)
  - Less than 27% two-year olds tested (statewide, 2015 data)
  - 194 Claremont children (2010-2015) with elevated blood lead levels of 5mg/dl or higher
- Human/Economic Impact
  - opportunity loss
  - special education
  - burden on judicial system

# Identifying Key Stakeholders (2016/2017)

- City Council and Administration
  - Health Officer
  - Code Enforcement Inspector
  - Department of Public Works (DPW)
- School Board and Administration
  - School nurses
- Hospital
  - Pediatric health care providers
- Housing Affiliates
  - Southwestern Community Services
  - Habitat for Humanity
- Organizations with previous experience
  - Healthy homes committee

# Creating the Buy-In (2016/2017)

- Education Presentations by Subject Matter Experts to specific groups
  - Governing bodies – Joint Meeting of City Council and School Board Members
  - Special education and teachers
  - Child care and Head Start/Early Head Start
  - Home visiting agencies and Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) programs
- Roundtable discussions with key stakeholders
  - Childhood lead poisoning a community-wide priority
  - Goals and desired outcomes identified (i.e. Master Plan)
- Public forums to
  - Share information
  - Answer questions
  - Dispel misinformation

# Accomplishing the Goals (2017 to present)

- Action Groups
  - Healthy Vibrant Claremont
  - Claremont Lead Action Team
- Increased Screening Rates
  - School Board Policy requiring lead testing results
  - Point of care testing
  - Free Testing at Community Events
- Funding to Address Lead-Based Paint in Housing/Childcare Centers
  - State funding (i.e. NHHFA, Public Health Division, DES)
  - HUD grant
  - Habitat for Humanity
- Workforce Training and Increased Awareness
  - Renovate, Repair, Paint (RRP) training
  - RRP Certification Number on permits
- Lead Free Water Distribution System (Operation Get the Lead Out)
  - State funding to offset cost
  - Distribution of lead filters



# Measuring our progress (2020)

- Screening Rates
  - Higher 55% for 1 year-olds, 41% for 2 year-olds (2018 data)
  - Fewer children poisoned
- Better Trained Workforce
  - more local contractors are RRP and lead abatement certified
  - high school students entering workforce with RRP certification
- State/Federal Funding Leveraged
  - HUD Grant – \$1.7M for low income housing
  - State Revolving Loan Fund (15% forgiveness) - \$2M
  - Division of Public Health – childcare centers/RRP training
  - Habitat for Humanity - \$30,000
  - DES - \$500,000
- Greater Public Awareness
  - homeowners
  - contractors
  - Planning Board
  - Lead information/documentation on city webpage and at Planning & Development Dept

# In conclusion:

- Childhood Lead Poisoning is preventable and there is a solution. While 100% screening is the objective, prevention is the ultimate goal.
- It is a statewide problem that will require BROAD engagement in every community.
- We must stay engaged until childhood lead poisoning is a thing of the past. The human and economic cost of not doing so is much too high.

# Panelist Comments





# Questions



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