

LeadWatch

A Publication of the Coalition to Prevent Lead Poisoning
Committed to Ending Childhood Lead Poisoning by 2010
January 7, 2004

CPLP Celebrates 2003, Anticipates 2004

LeadWatch is the CPLP newsletter, designed to share news and information about the prevention of childhood lead poisoning.

In this issue:

- o 2003 Accomplishments
- o 2004 Goals and Plans

News to share with CPLP members and friends?

Suggestions for the newsletter?

Send information to:
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New Meeting Location

The monthly meetings of the Coalition can no longer be held at St. Mary's Hospital. We are currently identifying another site. Watch your email for a notice of the new location before the next Coalition meeting, February 3.

Ending and beginning... a time for reflection, celebration, and re-energizing for the coming year. This edition of LeadWatch is devoted to a review of the accomplishments of 2003 and a look forward to our expectations for 2004.



2003 – Coming of Age

2003 was a coming of age year for the Coalition – a year in which the organization took important steps toward the goal of ending childhood lead poisoning in Monroe County and enlisted key partners in that effort.

Contributions to Community Action

The efforts of the Coalition and our many partners resulted in the commitment of \$12 million for the repair of lead hazards in Monroe County homes. Both the City and the County recognized the value of CPLP partnership in this effort and included the Coalition in their HUD grant proposals.

Coalition advocacy contributed to the decision by the Monroe County Health Department to lower the blood lead level at which they will do an environmental assessment, thereby increasing the num-

ber of homes made safe for children.

The City of Rochester made a commitment to a comprehensive lead safety ordinance and is relying on the Coalition to assist in the identification of best practices to assure that Rochester is a leader in lead safe housing.

New Partnerships

The strength and credibility of the Coalition drew the engagement of some key community partners in the fight against childhood lead poisoning. The United Way adopted lead poisoning as their top priority advocacy issue and backed up their support with a \$60,000 contribution to CPLP operations.

United Way, WXXI, Project Believe, and the Ad Council join Coalition efforts.

WXXI signed on with a commitment to provide not only broadcast airtime, but also the creative and production resources of the organization to bring the story of lead poisoning to a broader public.

Project Believe, a project of the University of Rochester, also identified childhood lead poisoning as a key priority, joining the University's Environmental Health Sciences Center as members of the Coalition. *more...*

New Partners...

At year-end, the Ad Council notified CPLP that our application for support had been accepted. Planning will begin in January for a comprehensive communications campaign.

Media Focus

One of the factors contributing to these achievements has been the success of the Coalition in generating media attention to the issue of childhood lead poisoning. During 2003, the Democrat and Chronicle published over a dozen news and editorial articles on the Coalition and the problem of childhood lead poisoning and printed numerous letters to the editor from Coalition members. Significantly, the editorial page itself included two strong statements of support for changes in the public policies that currently allow our children to be poisoned by the lead in their own homes. □

Internal Development

Underpinning all of these successes, the Coalition continued its organizational development. The Coalition was incorporated early in the year and developed a rigorous strategic action plan that articulates objectives and strategies that will result in the ending of childhood lead poisoning in Monroe County by 2010. Over 50 strategies have been assigned to CPLP committees and work groups, who have been hard at work developing implementation plans for each one. This highly structured process will ensure that our efforts are focused and our results are measurable.

The strategic plan is an outgrowth of the learning that has taken place within the Coalition over the past several years. The need to focus efforts, targeting the highest risk housing and implementing the most cost effective solutions, led the way to a strategy

that makes a seemingly intractable problem winnable.

CPLP embarked on several major initiatives that will bear fruit in 2004. Two work groups are addressing major obstacles to change in public policy: the Fund the Fix group is addressing the need for funds to do the actual lead hazard control work. They will provide a comprehensive list of available sources, identify gaps in funding availability, and work with the appropriate public and private organizations to fill those gaps.

The Sweet Spot work group is creating a handbook that will guide both property owners/contractors and policy makers in understanding the most cost-effective lead hazard control measure for a give situation.

Funders have recognized our capability with contributions for operations and for specific service deliverables. The Coalition begins 2004 with nearly \$300,000 in funding commitments over the next several years. This funding is important both for its own sake and for its ability to attract and leverage additional funding. □

Happy New Year!

2004 – Year of Commitment

So where do we go from here? 2004 will be a Year of Commitment for the Coalition and for the community. We will take our cue from the environmentalists' challenge: Think Globally and Act Locally. Our goals are:

- Enact comprehensive City ordinance
- Win County policy to make publicly-supported housing lead safe

- Reduce the number of lead poisoned children

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Coalition Plans

Internally, the Coalition will continue to enhance our capability with the addition of a Managing Director and Outreach Director. We will aggressively seek funding to support our initiatives, and recruit the individuals and organizations that are needed to implement our strategic plan and achieve our goals.

With the assistance of the Ad Council and our partners at the City Housing Department and the County Health Department, we will implement a major communications campaign to educate the community about how to eliminate childhood lead poisoning.

The Fund the Fix and Sweet Spot Work Groups will complete their work, removing or mitigating significant barriers to policy change and opening the doors to new and concrete commitments on the part of public and private leaders to do the work that is needed.

In June, the Coalition will bring the community together for a Lead Summit at which individuals and organizations will pledge to implement the concrete actions that together will eliminate childhood lead poisoning.

The year ahead will be filled with challenges; the effort is not trivial. But we are driven by this conviction:

Childhood lead poisoning is morally, economically, and politically unacceptable. We can, and we will, eliminate this scourge in Monroe County by 2010.