

Special Bulletin

For professional providers

October 17, 2025

Protect West Virginia's Children from Lead Poisoning

With National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week occurring this month (Oct. 19-25, 2025), it's important to prioritize blood lead screening for young children.

- **Extremely low screening rate for children** – Screening among children under 72 months in West Virginia was low in 2021, with [only 14.2% of children receiving blood lead screening](#).
- **New exposure risks** – Lead continues to be identified in [everyday items](#) like food, clothing, and toys.

As you know, lead exposure can have [devastating, long-lasting effects](#) on children, including slowed development, learning and behavior problems, and speech and hearing difficulties.

Take Action Today

- **Educate families:** Discuss the importance of lead screening and the dangers of lead poisoning with all parents or guardians.
- **Offer in-office screening:** Provide convenient in-office blood lead screening to improve completion rates and ensure continuity of care.
- **Test at every opportunity:** Each office visit, including sick visits, can be used to perform blood lead testing based on guidelines. Children should be screened for lead based on guidelines.
- **Use CPT Code 83655:** This code indicates that a blood lead test was performed.

Additional Resource for Parents

The National Lead Information Center (800-424-LEAD) can provide education and guidance for parents on preventing exposure, resources for lead removal, and consumer alerts.

The following entities serve West Virginia and are independent licensees of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association: Highmark West Virginia Inc. d/b/a Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield, Highmark Health Insurance Company or Highmark Senior Solutions Company.

All references to "Highmark" in this document are references to the Highmark company that is providing the member's health benefits or health benefit administration and/or to one or more of its affiliated Blue companies.

