



# Holyoke's 2016 Childhood Lead Screening Progress Report

There is no safe level of exposure to lead. Children in Massachusetts continue to be exposed, and even low levels of lead may cause lasting harm, such as damage to the brain, kidneys, and nervous system. State law requires health care providers to screen every child and to report results. According to CDC guidelines, action should be taken when a child's level is  $\geq 5 \mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ .

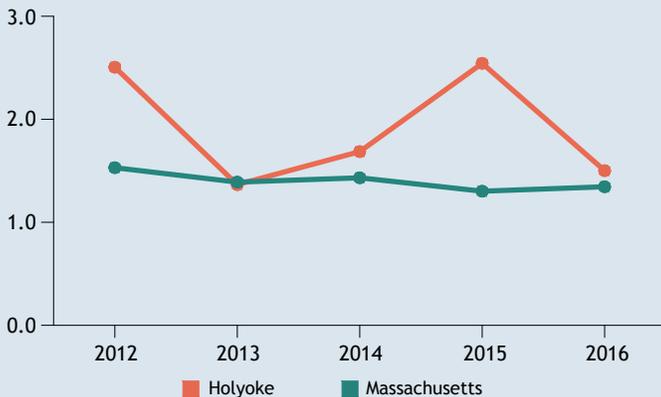
## Holyoke is a high-risk community

Children in high-risk communities are at greatest risk for lead poisoning due to a larger proportion of older homes and families with low to moderate income. The Massachusetts Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program assesses a community's risk level annually.

### How many children in Holyoke have elevated blood levels compared to the state?

A childhood blood lead level  $\geq 5 \mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$  indicates the child's exposure is higher than 97.5% of children nationally and that the child is in need of intervention according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

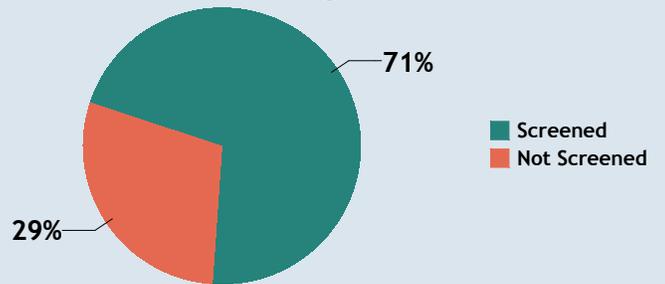
Percentage of Children with First-Time Blood Lead Levels  $\geq 5 \mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$



### Are all children in Holyoke screened for lead?

Screening is the only way to know if a child has been exposed to lead. All blood lead results must be reported to the state health department.

Screening Rate



### What portion of Holyoke's housing may have lead paint hazards?

Lead-containing paint was banned in 1978. Prior to that year, many household paints contained dangerous levels of lead. The number of homes built before 1978 is a contributing factor to a community's rate of elevated blood lead levels.

Percentage of Homes Built Before 1978  
(American Community Survey 2011-2015 estimates)



## Resources

For information about blood lead testing, Massachusetts lead poisoning prevention regulations, and annual and high-risk data reports, visit [mass.gov/dph/clppp](http://mass.gov/dph/clppp).

To access screening data, results at the census tract level, and inspection data by address, visit [mass.gov/dph/matracking](http://mass.gov/dph/matracking).

For information about lead in drinking water, visit [mass.gov/dph/lead-sources](http://mass.gov/dph/lead-sources).

For medical information and advice on protecting children from environmental hazards, visit [www.pehsu.net](http://www.pehsu.net).

# Your role in protecting children from lead

Even though initial symptoms may not be obvious, the effects of elevated blood lead levels can be profound. The health outcomes of lead exposure can include slowed growth and development, learning difficulties, damage to hearing and speech, and behavior problems.

## 1. Ensure children are screened for lead.

Any child can be exposed to lead, regardless of income, background or neighborhood. All children in Massachusetts are required to be screened for lead. Children must be screened between 9-12 months, at age 2, at age 3, and again at age 4 if they live in a high-risk community.

### Did You Know?

Capillary tests are prone to contamination. Venous tests are always confirmatory and recommended over capillary tests. An alcohol swab alone will not decontaminate a child's hand. Always wash the child's hand with soap and water first.



## 2. Report complete demographic data.

Data such as race and ethnicity enable the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program to identify vulnerable populations that would benefit from targeted outreach and prevention activities.

## 3. Always confirm capillary tests $\geq 5 \mu\text{g/dL}$ with a venous test.



In 2016, 75 children in Holyoke did not receive this follow-up test. Elevated venous results trigger necessary prevention services provided by the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program. Without a follow-up test, children may not receive these services and may continue to be exposed to lead.

## 4. Educate parents on lead hazards and deleading resources.

Children in Massachusetts are primarily exposed to lead through lead paint in older homes. Unsafe home renovations are a common cause of childhood lead exposure. To protect children, the Massachusetts lead law requires all homes with children under 6 to be de-leaded.

### Did You Know?

Low interest or 0% loans and grants are available for deleading homes. For more information, read about the "Get the Lead Out" program at [masshousing.com](http://masshousing.com).

## Sources of Lead



Call the Massachusetts Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program at 1-800-532-9571