



PRESS RELEASE

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Policy Makers, Strategists, Scientists & Leading Advocates Unite & Commit to End Childhood Lead Poisoning by 2022

Unprecedented National Lead Summit produces a strategic Call to Action

(WASHINGTON, D.C.)—Leading advocates, scientists, and parents from the housing, health and environmental arenas as well as key policy makers and strategists united on December 4 and 5 at the [National Lead Summit](#) in Washington, D.C. The groups embraced a strategic call to action to end lead poisoning in the U.S. by 2022. A concerted new effort to eliminate a toxic chemical that continues to devastate children, families and communities nationwide, the summit produced a call to action and helped to build continued momentum for the public and political will to end lead poisoning.

The summit was led by [Green & Healthy Homes Initiative](#), [Healthy Babies Bright Futures](#), [Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai](#) and the [National Center for Healthy Housing](#) and attracted more than 250 leaders, policy makers, strategists, advocates, scientists, and parents. A full list of summit speakers can be found [here](#).

Decades after banning lead in paint, gasoline, solder and other sources, lead poisoning remains one of the nation's most devastating environmental health threats. According to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 535,000 children under the age of 6 are poisoned by lead each year, causing developmental and speech delays as well as long-term health effects on the kidneys, heart and brain. From Flint, Michigan, to Chicago, I.L. and Washington, D.C., communities across the nation are struggling to ensure that children grow up in safe conditions, protected from lead poisoning and the lifelong damage it brings.

“Lead poisoning is a costly, tragic and entirely preventable problem that has plagued our nation for far too long. It is a moral injustice. We must deliver on the promise to end lead poisoning and ensure every child has the ability to reach their full potential,” said GHHI President and CEO Ruth Ann Norton. “The National Lead Summit has produced a blueprint for action to better equip advocates and experts to work together more strategically to eradicate the toxic legacy of lead by 2022.”

“In a world of problems, lead poisoning is one we know how to solve,” explained Charlotte Brody, Director of Healthy Babies Bright Futures. “We need to collect the political power of

everyone who cares about children and add that to the solution knowledge. That's the purpose of the National Summit to End Lead Poisoning.”

“We have reduced children’s blood lead levels by more than 90% in the United States by getting rid of lead from gasoline and other sources. Now is the time to finish the job and to put in place a five-year plan to end childhood lead poisoning as a public health problem in America. We have eradicated smallpox from the world, we have ended polio in this country. We have the knowledge and the tools to end lead poisoning. We need leadership and we need action,” said Philip Landrigan, MD, pediatrician and Dean for Global Health in the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai.

“Methods of detecting and eliminating lead exposures are well validated,” explained David Jacobs, PhD, CIH, Chief Scientist with the National Center for Healthy Housing. “We should act on what the science tells us to protect our children.”

The [National Lead Summit](#) explored and embraced a call to action plan to change the course of lead poisoning in the U.S. and address issues related to housing conditions, infrastructure and racial and economic equity. The call to action supports working collaboratively to:

- Increase investments from new and expanded federal, state, local and private sector funding mechanisms to address lead exposures in housing by making lead testing and hazard remediation of homes a standard practice;
- Establish a Presidential Task Force to create, drive and implement a national strategy of interagency collaboration with the budget support to eliminate childhood lead exposures;
- Align and prioritize federal, state and local efforts to identify, fund and enforce existing laws and programs on sources of lead exposure;
- Update all federal lead regulations to create lead safe, health-based standards and action levels to better engage the health, health care and housing sectors and allied communities to identify and prevent lead exposure;
- Implement an enhanced national blood lead surveillance system to identify children who already have elevated blood lead levels for case management, investigation and support;
- Provide educational, social and clinical services to children exposed to lead to mitigate the harms of lead poisoning; and
- Expand the well-trained, well-protected national workforce capacity for lead hazard remediation to repair and restore communities and their infrastructures.

An updated version of the codified call to action supported by the National Lead Summit will be released in early 2017 and will be made available through the National Lead Summit website at NationalLeadSummit.org.

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[About the Green & Healthy Homes Initiative](#)

The Green & Healthy Homes Initiative (GHHI) is a national nonprofit working with partners in over 30 cities and counties to break the link between unhealthy housing and unhealthy children. Formerly known as the Coalition to End Childhood Lead Poisoning, GHHI replaces stand-alone intervention programs with an integrated, whole-house approach that produces healthy, safe and

energy efficient homes. As a result, GHHI is improving health, economic and social outcomes for families across the country. Learn more at ghhi.org and follow us @HealthyHousing.

[About Healthy Babies Bright Futures](#)

Healthy Babies Bright Futures (HBBF) is an alliance of scientists, nonprofit organizations and donors working to create and support initiatives that measurably reduce exposures to neurotoxic chemicals in the first 1,000 days of development. HBBF's efforts are inspired and supported by science and data, and designed to help restore the chance for a full life to children who would otherwise face brain-diminishing exposures to toxic chemicals beginning in utero. Learn more at hbbf.org and follow @HBBForg.

[About the Mount Sinai Health System](#)

The Mount Sinai Health System is an integrated health system committed to providing distinguished care, conducting transformative research, and advancing biomedical education. Structured around seven hospital campuses and a single medical school, the Health System has an extensive ambulatory network and a range of inpatient and outpatient services—from community-based facilities to tertiary and quaternary care. icahn.mssm.edu

[About the National Center for Healthy Housing](#)

Originally founded as the National Center for Lead-Safe Housing in 1992, the National Center for Healthy Housing (NCHH) is the preeminent national nonprofit dedicated to securing healthy homes for all. Since 1992, NCHH has successfully integrated healthy housing advocacy, research, and capacity-building under one roof to reduce health disparities nationwide. You can follow @nchh on Twitter or become a fan on Facebook. nchh.org

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