

**Strategic Plan**  
for the  
**Omaha Healthy Kids Alliance**



**July 21, 2008**

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## Acronyms

ATSDR:	Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
DCHD:	Douglas County Health Department
CAG:	Omaha Lead Site Community Advisory Group
CDC:	U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CEUs:	Continuing Education Credits
CHWs:	Community Health Workers
CLPPP:	Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program
CPSC:	Consumer Product Safety Commission
EPA:	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
HUD:	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
LIHTC:	Low-Income Housing Tax Credit
LSWP:	Lead Safe Work Practices
MOMS:	Metro Omaha Medical Society
NARI:	National Association of the Remodeling Industry
NDEQ:	Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality
NHHS:	Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services
NIFA:	Nebraska Investment Finance Authority
OB/GYN:	Obstetrician/Gynecologist
OHA:	Omaha Housing Authority
OHKA:	Omaha Healthy Kids Alliance
Omaha Urban AHEC:	Omaha Urban Area Health Education Center
TIF:	Tax Increment Financing
UNL Extension:	University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension in Douglas/Sarpy Counties.
UNMC:	University of Nebraska Medical Center
UNO:	University of Nebraska-Omaha
VNA:	Visiting Nurses Association
WIC:	Women, Infants, and Children



## ABOUT THIS PLAN

This is a draft strategic plan of the Omaha Healthy Kids Alliance (OHKA), presented for our partners and interested parties, for comment and assistance in approving. This plan describes the context of all parties working on the issue of lead poisoning and outlines OHKA's action plan – a plan that works for Omaha. OHKA's mission is to eliminate lead poisoning as fast as possible by:

- Enhancing the efforts of the existing regulatory agencies with education and empowerment, to help people in all different relevant positions to do what they can to reduce risk.
- Spreading information about easily implemented actions that will prevent risk, rather than to respond after someone is harmed.
- Monitoring the problem and enhancing communications between people about how well the problem is being addressed, and to increase understanding about what remains to be done and how it can be done.
- Seeking to create consensus on what those actions should be and motivate key parties in the City to take that action.
- Integrating our work with other work that is going on in the community to avoid duplication of services or the potential of wasting resources.
- Advocating for the needed attention, resources, and appropriate legislation, when necessary and feasible.

This plan was created by OHKA with input from lead experts in Omaha and from plans of other cities doing similar work. In December of 2007, a committee was convened to present ideas of what the plan would entail. In April of 2008, a community planning session was held to gather additional input from community partners. The plan is now ready to be implemented.



## INTRODUCTION

Omaha, like other cities, is concerned about lead poisoning. Multiple sources of lead exist in Omaha which have or have the potential to affect children's health. In 2006, 22% of Douglas County children were tested for lead levels and 238 or 2.2% had elevated blood lead levels. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has also identified approximately 40,000 homes in east Omaha which are being tested for soil lead hazards. Additionally, the City of Omaha reports that approximately 86,000 homes in Omaha were built before 1978 and, thus, are likely to have lead-based paint hazards.

Lead is a problem for everyone; it does not harm only children. However, the focus of OHKA is on kids because they cannot protect themselves and they are especially vulnerable. Children's brains and bodies are constantly developing and when lead interferes with that development, long-lasting injury can occur. Also, the kinds of damage we see from lead is not just injury to the individual, but injury to the community, as epidemiological studies have associated lead with violent, criminal and aggressive behavior, dropping out of school, difficulties in concentration, and reductions in IQ.

Local and State leaders, Omaha's congressional delegation, community leaders, health care providers, local and federal agencies, concerned citizens, and others have come together to address the issue of lead poisoning in Omaha.

**The good news is that lead poisoning is entirely preventable.** The link between identified sources of lead in the environment and human exposure is well known and well documented. The steps to prevent lead poisoning are clear: stop ongoing and unnecessary uses of lead in consumer products and abate lead hazards from the reservoir of past uses. Workable control measures and substitute products exist for virtually all sources of lead.

Local and State leaders, Omaha's congressional delegation, community leaders, health care providers, local and federal agencies, concerned citizens, and others have come together to address the issue of lead poisoning in Omaha. These partners envisioned and established the Omaha Healthy Kids Alliance (OHKA) and are committed to collaboratively addressing and ending childhood lead poisoning in Omaha through a well-designed, comprehensive approach, as outlined in this plan. OHKA will also serve as a model for other communities.



### *Purpose and Scope*

This document presents a strategic plan for comprehensively reducing the risks to children residing within Omaha of exposure to lead from multiple potential sources. This plan will provide a range of services to assist residents in reducing their exposure to lead in and around their homes.

OHKA will constantly monitor, identify, and evaluate the success of strategies.

This plan presents the framework for establishment and administration of OHKA as well as specific procedures for implementing various components of the program. Although this plan identifies specific goals and strategies, it is to be a fluid document. OHKA will constantly monitor, identify, and evaluate the success of strategies. As successes and barriers are identified, strategies will be altered and improved.

### *Sources of Childhood Exposure to Lead*

In Omaha and cities around the country, multiple potential sources of lead exist in a child's environment. Lead has been found in paint, dust, soil, toys, dishes, and elsewhere. Because of typical hand-to-mouth activities, it is easy for lead, especially dust with lead, to enter children's bodies.

Lead is most hazardous to young children, whose developing brains and nervous systems are particularly vulnerable. Low levels of exposure in children can produce permanent nervous system damage, including reduction in intelligence and attention span, reading and learning disabilities, and behavioral problems. Poor and disadvantaged populations are more vulnerable to lead poisoning because poor nourishment will increase the amount of ingested lead that is absorbed by the body. In addition, the poor and disadvantaged are more likely to live in the vicinity of lead-polluting industries, and live in older, substandard housing, which is more likely to contain deteriorating lead-based paint and lead-contaminated dust. Pregnant women are also vulnerable to lead. Studies have shown that lead absorbed in the bones during a woman's lifetime can be leached back into the blood during pregnancy, exposing the fetus to lead.

About 75% of homes built before 1978 contain some lead-based paint. Paints containing up to 50% lead were used on both the inside and outside of homes through the 1950s. Lead-based paint becomes a health hazard for children when it deteriorates, creating lead dust and paint chips. **The Douglas County Health Department (DCHD) reports, in 85-95% of the cases of childhood lead poisoning it investigates, lead-based paint hazards are found in the child's home.**



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The amount of lead in house dust has a strong correlation with blood lead levels in young children and is more predictive of blood lead levels in children than is the amount of lead in house paint (Lanphear et al. 1998). Lead from exterior paint, interior paint, and soil all contribute to levels of lead in house dust. In urban neighborhoods, high levels of lead have also been found in exterior dust collected from paved surfaces, such as sidewalks (EPA 1993).

Bare soil (soil that is not covered by grass or other material) may also be a source of childhood exposure to lead. In east Omaha, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has identified yards with high levels of lead in soil and has replaced 3,300 yards as of September 2007. Lead from paint, leaded gasoline, and former industrial plant emissions contribute to lead in soil.

Lead may be used in two aspects of toy manufacturing: paint and plastic. Lead was banned in house paint, on products marketed to children, and in dishes or cookware in the United States in 1978; however, it is still widely used in other countries and, therefore, can still be found on imported toys. It may also be found on older toys made in the United States before the ban. The use of lead in plastics has not been banned. Lead softens the plastic and makes it more flexible so that it can go back to its original shape. It may also be used in plastic toys to stabilize molecules from heat. When the plastic is exposed to substances such as sunlight, air, and detergents, the chemical bond between the lead and plastics breaks down and forms a dust.

Imported glazed ceramics and lead-containing pottery are also potential sources of dangerously high levels of lead. If lead glazed pottery is not fired to a high enough temperature for a long enough time, lead may be released from the glaze into food. Dishes and pottery made commercially in the United States since 1971 are generally safe to use. However, antiques and collectibles, dishes, and pottery made in foreign countries may contain lead (Physician's Handbook 1997).

Imported candies, particularly from Mexico, have been found to contain lead, either in the candy or on the wrappers. During the last decade, 112 brands of candy have tested high for lead in California. Many of these brands are available in Omaha. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued an alert in 2001 about lead found in some Mexican candy and the ink used on the wrappers. High levels of lead have been found in some tamarind candies or those rolled in chili powder.



### ***Omaha's Progress in Preventing Childhood Lead Poisoning***

Omaha has made great strides in preventing childhood lead poisoning. For years, multiple entities have been working to reduce and prevent childhood lead poisoning in Omaha. As a result of combined efforts and increased screening of children, blood lead levels in Douglas County have decreased from 21.2% in 1997 to 2.2% in 2006.

The Douglas County Health Department (DCHD) provides education through a community health worker (CHW) program; screens children for lead; collects and reviews screening data from across the county; provides outreach to healthcare providers; and administers a case management program to identify and remove lead hazards in the homes of children with elevated blood lead levels.

Omaha has made great strides in preventing childhood lead poisoning.

The City of Omaha runs a lead hazard control program, funded through a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grant. The City's program repairs lead hazards found in homes of income-eligible families within certain zip codes of Omaha. The City has also partnered with other groups to provide training opportunities for real estate professionals, painters, and others in the community through a campaign known as "Don't Spread Lead."

The University of Nebraska, Lincoln Douglas and Sarpy County Cooperative Extension (UNL Extension) provides educational materials on preventing lead poisoning and administers a lead-safe landscaping program, which educates families on how to reduce lead exposure through landscaping techniques.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has been testing yards in east Omaha for lead contamination since 1998. In 2003, the EPA officially designated a portion of east Omaha as a "Superfund site." Since 1998, the EPA has tested 31,709 yards for lead and replaced yard soil at 3,300 homes (as of September 2007). In 2006, the EPA began testing the exteriors of homes for lead-based paint, completing assessments on 1,775 homes. In a 2006 trial run, the EPA stabilized deteriorating lead-based paint on 18 homes, through a cooperative agreement with the City of Omaha.

In 2004, the Omaha Lead Site Community Advisory Group (CAG) was formed to discuss issues related to the Superfund site. The CAG brought together not only the groups administering the programs mentioned above, but also many other stakeholders, including public officials, concerned citizens,



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community-based organizations, business leaders, and others. The CAG quickly identified a clear need and community desire for a comprehensive program to oversee collaboration of the programs already in existence, find additional resources where needed, and provide missing program links to address all

**The CAG quickly identified a clear need and community desire for a comprehensive program.**

sources of lead. The CAG's idea for the comprehensive program was that if everyone came together, a plan could be created that would more efficiently address all areas of lead poisoning prevention, from housing repair to education. Such a plan would prevent overlap in services, provide consistent messaging to the community, direct resources where most-needed, and provide a conduit for improved and increased collaboration

and coordination. With this in mind, the CAG and City of Omaha Mayor Mike Fahey worked together to form the Omaha Healthy Kids Alliance (OHKA).

Since its establishment in 2006, the Omaha Healthy Kids Alliance (OHKA) has:

- Created a website with lead facts, local and national resources, a community events calendar, a blog, and more;
- Participated on community planning committees, including the Maternal Child and Family Health strategic planning committee, Omaha Continuum of Housing Repair, Omaha Diversity Committee, and Building Bright Futures Early Childhood Initiative;
- Formed a Housing Committee which meets every month;
- Moved the Omaha Lead Site Community Advisory Group (CAG) Education Committee under OHKA, continuing to meet monthly;
- Purchased a game board for an educational exhibit that was on display at the Omaha Children's Museum;
- Created a social marketing campaign, which has including magazine ads, flyers to Omaha Public Schools families, and television commercials;
- Been featured in interviews on local television and radio stations;
- Attended several community fairs and events to provide education and facilitate awareness;
- Applied for several grants and was awarded a Google grant, which provides free advertising, and an Omaha Urban Area Health Education Center (Omaha Urban AHEC) grant to train medical providers;



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- Received funding from the City of Omaha for outreach activities;
- Acquired sponsorships from Kwal Paints, No Frills, Chipotle, Ted and Wally's, KETV, and Boys Town Pediatrics;
- Created a lead-free lunch bag campaign;
- Created a home lead testing kit pilot program;
- Partnered with Girls Inc. to hold a lead poisoning prevention fair;
- Partnered with the City of Omaha's "Don't Spread Lead" campaign to provide information to painters and other contractors;
- Hosted multiple toy testing events throughout the community;
- Established a community lead information hotline; and
- Established and enhanced numerous partnerships with agencies and community groups in Omaha and across the nation.

**OHKA is now in a position to move forward with the Omaha community's comprehensive plan**, as presented in the following pages.



## OHKA CONCEPT & DESIGN

The purpose of the Omaha Healthy Kids Alliance (OHKA) is to be a comprehensive remedy for the Omaha Superfund site and provide a collaborative, coordinated, and holistic approach to address all sources of lead poisoning within Omaha. OHKA is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization, guided by a Board of Directors, with input from community-based committees.

OHKA provides for coordination of services through the collaborative efforts of Omaha service providers, including the Douglas County Health Department; City of Omaha; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region VII (EPA); University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension in Douglas/Sarpy Counties (UNL Extension); Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ); physicians and clinics; and community-based organizations. The participation of these entities combined in a collaborative effort will improve and expand services, benefiting the Omaha community and its children. The comprehensive program will

The purpose of the Omaha Healthy Kids Alliance (OHKA) is to be a comprehensive remedy to the Omaha Superfund site and provide a collaborative, coordinated, and holistic approach to address all sources of lead poisoning within Omaha.

work to reduce and prevent childhood lead poisoning by coordinating and providing outreach and awareness, education, collaboration, expanded and improved services, training, blood lead screening, case management, environmental testing, lead hazard control, and surveillance. While our mission is to eliminate childhood lead poisoning, we approach this with the understanding that the definition of “poisoned” can and has changed over time. It is OHKA’s contention that children in Omaha should not be exposed to an amount of lead that would significantly raise his/her blood lead level. We know that lead is a part of our environment. We also know that children deserve the most protection we can give them from it.

### *Mission*

The mission of OHKA is to provide a comprehensive approach through collaboration, coordination and education to prevent and eliminate childhood lead poisoning in Omaha.



### ***OHKA Partners***

OHKA is a partnership. Current partners include:

- Douglas County Health Department
- UNL Extension
- Mayor Fahey
- City of Omaha
- Charles Drew Health Center
- OneWorld Community Health Center
- Boys Town Pediatrics
- Omaha Lead Site Community Advisory Group
- University of Nebraska Medical Center
- United Way of the Midlands
- Omaha Chamber of Commerce
- Douglas County Board of Commissioners
- League of Women Voters
- University of Nebraska, Omaha Service-Learning
- Neighborhood Center for Greater Omaha
- Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality
- Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Sierra Club
- Omaha Public Schools
- Governor Heineman
- Senator Nelson
- Senator Hagel
- Congressman Lee Terry
- Urban League
- Creighton University
- Urban AHEC
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- New Community Development Corporation
- Weatherization Trust
- Sisters Together
- Latino Center of the Midlands
- State of Nebraska
- Union Pacific Railroad
- Metro Omaha Medical Society
- UNO Service-Learning
- Blackburn High School
- Girls Inc.
- Legal Aid of Nebraska
- Omaha Healthy Start
- Voices for Children
- 100 Black Men
- Creighton Clinics
- Metropolitan Community College
- Family Housing Advisory Services
- Habitat for Humanity
- National Coalition to End Childhood Lead Poisoning
- ClearCorps



**New partnerships are always desired, welcomed, and encouraged.**

### *Committees*

OHKA currently has two community-based committees: the Housing Committee and the Education Committee. Interested OHKA partners and citizens serve on the committees. The purpose of the committees is to coordinate services and activities, provide opportunities for collaboration, and develop new strategies for making housing safe and educating families. The committees have been instrumental and invaluable in developing a comprehensive program for Omaha.



## STRATEGIC PLAN FOR ELIMINATING CHILDHOOD LEAD POISONING IN OMAHA

### *Guiding Principals*

- This plan is for anyone in Omaha and beyond whose interest is in protecting children from lead.
- We utilize a collaborative approach with careful attention to avoiding duplication of services.
- We work within a culture of trust, honorability, and inclusion.
- All provided education is culturally competent and inclusive of all diverse populations in Omaha.
- We use national best practices including expertise from leaders in lead education and research for all programs/activities/initiatives.
- All programs and services include an evaluation mechanism.
- We use consistent and positive messaging in all education/marketing.
- We use science-based research to guide our processes.
- We tend to one small part of this garden; “authentic community,” where all members are contributory, is our overriding goal.
- This plan is fluid. We will update the plan regularly, assess for gaps, and allow for public comment at all times.
- At each juncture, the plan and its parts will ask the question – “is this good for the kids?”

### *Goals and Strategies*

The following **four goals** will allow us to fulfill our mission of preventing and eliminating lead poisoning in Omaha:

- #1 Omaha Residents Are Educated on Preventing Lead Poisoning.**
- #2 Children under the Age of Seven Receive Medical Monitoring for Lead and Follow-Up.**
- #3 Homes in Omaha Are Lead-Safe.**
- #4 Consumer Products in Omaha Are Lead-Safe/Lead-Free.**



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The following strategies are designed to meet OHKA’s four goals. This section describes the strategies and identifies principle organizations, partners and performance objectives for each strategy. **OHKA is poised to make a tremendous impact over the next five years.**

## **OVERALL GOAL: TO ASSIST OMAHA IN ELIMINATING LEAD RISKS**

### **#1 GOAL: Omaha Residents Are Educated on Preventing Lead Poisoning.**

Strategy 1.1: OHKA will develop programs of outreach and education for key community sectors:

Parents	University students
Health care providers	Non-English-speaking communities
Health and human service providers	Pregnant women
Real estate professionals	Children/youth
Hardware, paint, building supply, and other retailers	Child care providers
Contractors and painters	Housing inspectors
Do-it-yourself renovators	Home visitation program workers
Landlords	Places of worship
Tenants	Teachers/educators
Refugees	Neighborhood Groups
Business Community	Legal professionals

### **#2 GOAL: Children under the Age of Seven Receive Medial Monitoring for Lead and Follow-Up.**

OHKA will work with key partners to:

Strategy 2.1: Promote screening of all children ages 1, 2, and 3 by clinics and health care providers.

Strategy 2.2: Provide follow-up services to children with blood lead levels of concern.

### **#3 GOAL: Homes in Omaha Are Lead-Safe.**

OHKA will recruit participants and assist partners to:

Strategy 3.1: Provide resources for identifying lead hazards.

Strategy 3.2: Provide assistance to reduce and eliminate identified lead hazards.

Strategy 3.3: Advocate for legislation to provide resources and ensure actions occur to reduce lead hazards in housing.

Strategy 3.4: Provide sustainability and build capacity among entities in Omaha to maintain lead safe environments.

### **#4 GOAL: Consumer Products in Omaha are Lead-Safe/Lead-Free.**

Strategy 4.1: Provide resources to screen items for lead.

Strategy 4.2: Inform retailers about lead in products and provide materials for retailers to distribute.

Strategy 4.3: Assist in advancing legislation that would prohibit lead-containing consumer products from being sold.



## **Goal 1: Omaha Residents Are Educated on Preventing Lead Poisoning.**

OHKA will work with its partners to disseminate information on actions that can be implemented with available resources and will gather information to assist the community in learning what more may be needed, in order to prevent and eliminate childhood lead poisoning. OHKA will help Omaha citizens to understand the economic and social benefits to the community of concerted and sensible actions to reduce lead exposure. Our efforts will promote an approach to lead poisoning prevention that has many benefits, including reducing other risks to health and the preservation of affordable housing stock. OHKA will help Omaha citizens understand that lead is a shared problem and actions to prevent lead poisoning represent an opportunity to build a better Omaha.

OHKA's educational strategy focuses on utilizing multiple avenues to voice consistent, positive messaging throughout the community. OHKA believes that to be effective, education must be presented in numerous ways, to numerous audiences, and at all times of the year. Many tools have been developed by OHKA's Education Committee to educate various target audiences. Several T.V. commercials have recently aired and more are planned. Educational materials have been developed in multiple formats. Future programs will utilize innovative projects and best practices from other groups. Educational strategies will tie into existing programs and potential funding sources. Whenever possible, OHKA will follow-up with individuals to determine if education has resulted in behavior change to reduce exposure to lead hazards. The following section identifies target audiences for education.

### **Strategy 1.1: OHKA will develop programs of outreach and education for key community sectors.**

#### ***Parents***

Parents have the greatest opportunity to prevent lead poisoning. Simple measures, such as cleaning techniques, nutritional habits, and hygiene techniques can prevent lead poisoning. OHKA will educate parents through various avenues, including education materials and door-to-door visits by community health workers (CHWs) and volunteers, using consistent, positive messaging to arm them with the knowledge to easily protect their children from lead.



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Partners

OHKA	OPS
UNL Extension	Voices for Children
DCHD	Parent Groups
OPS PTA	

***Pregnant women***

Education utilizing consistent, positive messaging for pregnant women will be provided via hospitals; Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) clinics; health centers; etc. OHKA will also assist in identifying opportunities for groundbreaking research on pregnant women and blood lead levels. OHKA will follow-up with pregnant women to survey if education resulted in behavioral changes to reduce children's exposure to lead hazards.

Partners

OHKA	WIC – potential partner
DCHD	Planned Parenthood – potential partner
Omaha Healthy Start	OB/GYNs – potential partner
Health clinics	Office of Minority Health (Maternal Child Health) – potential partner
Hospitals	

***Health care providers***

In 2007, the Douglas County Health Department (DCHD) in conjunction with OHKA and Omaha Urban Area Health Education Center (Omaha Urban AHEC) conducted a training session for health care providers. Continuing Education Credits (CEUs) were provided through the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Additional training sessions are planned.

Partners

DCHD	One World
OHKA	Charles Drew
Boys Town Pediatrics	Omaha Urban AHEC
Metro Omaha Medical Society	CDC



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***Health and human service providers***

Following the same model as for health care providers, training sessions will be held for health and human service providers.

Partners

OHKA

Omaha area service providers

***Real estate professionals***

In 2006 and 2007, training sessions were held with great success. Mr. Rick Reibstein, an environmental analyst and former U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) enforcement attorney performed the training. He was well-received, and attendance exceeded expectations. The next training session will be held in April 2008. OHKA will follow-up with real estate professionals to survey if education resulted in behavioral changes to reduce children's exposure to lead hazards.

Partners

City of Omaha

Se Vende Se Renta

OHKA

UNL Extension

Board of Realtors

***Hardware, paint, building supply, and other retailers***

Education for hardware, paint, and building supply retailers is focused on offering sponsorship opportunities and providing educational materials that utilize consistent, positive messaging. Kwal Paint is a current sponsor of OHKA.

Partners

OHKA

Hardware Stores

UNL Extension

Building Supply Retailers

Kwal Paint

Paint Retailers

Drug stores – potential partner



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***Contractors and painters***

Contractors and painters will be educated through a “Don’t Spread Lead” campaign. This campaign was initiated by the City of Omaha and OHKA in 2007. Training sessions have been held and signs are available for contractors to post in yards when lead safe work practices (LSWP) are in action. Additional training sessions will be held. Educational materials utilizing consistent, positive messaging will be provided to distribute via the City’s permit department.

Partners

City of Omaha	NARI – potential partner
UNL Extension	City permit department – potential partner
OHKA	Continuum of Housing Repair
Unions – potential partner	

***Do-it-yourself renovators***

Lead safe work practices (LSWP) training will be provided for do-it-yourself renovators. OHKA will also continue to attend the annual Restore Omaha conference to provide educational materials and advice, utilizing consistent, positive messaging. OHKA will follow-up with do-it-yourself renovators to survey if education resulted in behavioral changes to reduce children’s exposure to lead hazards.

Partners

OHKA	Restore Omaha
Neighborhood Center for Greater Omaha	NARI – potential partner
Landlord Associations – potential partner	Hardware stores – potential partner

***Landlords***

Educational materials that utilize consistent, positive messaging will be provided to all landlords in Omaha. Gold stars will be awarded to landlords with certified “lead-safe” properties (see page 14).

Partners

OHKA	Landlord Associations
Section 8	OHA
HUD	City of Omaha (housing registry)



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***Tenants***

Educational materials that provide consistent, positive messaging will be provided to tenants. Legal Aid of Nebraska is creating a manual for low-income tenants with information about lead. In home and door-to-door education will be provided by community health workers (CHWs) and volunteers.

Partners

OHKA	UNL Extension
Legal Aid of Nebraska	Family Housing Advisory Services
DCHD	Creighton Law - potential partner

***Refugees***

Educational materials will be provided to all new refugees. Educational materials will provide consistent, positive messaging in foreign languages whenever possible.

Partners

DCHD	Lutheran Family Services
OHKA	Sudanese Refugee Center – potential partner
Latino Center of the Midlands	

***Non-English-speaking communities***

Educational materials will provide consistent, positive messaging in various languages, as needed. Community health workers (CHWs) will also provide education door-to-door.

Partners

OHKA  
DCHD

***University students***

University students are educated by engaging students in education and research. The University of Nebraska-Omaha (UNO) Chemistry Department currently teaches students about lead through a hands-on project where university students collect and test soil samples. OHKA is also working with the UNO Service-Learning Academy to create additional opportunities for university students to learn about lead,



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while simultaneously bettering their communities. OHKA will work with UNO and Creighton University to create additional learning and research opportunities for students.

Partners

OHKA	Metropolitan Community College
UNO	
Creighton University	

***Children/youth***

Children will be educated on how to prevent lead poisoning through school programs, displays at the Omaha Children’s Museum, and educational materials that utilize consistent, positive messaging. The UNL Extension has an educational, interactive CD, available online, called “Kids Run Better Lead Free.” OHKA has lead detective stickers, used as an outreach tool to get kids excited to learn about lead. OHKA has a game board, which has been displayed at the Omaha Children’s Museum and will be traveling to other locations around town. OHKA is developing school curriculum. OHKA plans to bring ClearCorp’s play, “Jimmy’s Getting Better,” an educational children’s play about preventing lead poisoning to Omaha.

Partners

OHKA	Community Playhouse – potential partner
OPS	ClearCorps
Omaha Children’s Museum	Middle school/high school drama departments –
Rose Theatre – potential partner	potential partner

***Child care providers***

Educational materials utilizing consistent, positive messaging will be provided to all licensed day care providers in Omaha. Day care providers will be encourage to make their homes “lead-safe” and to distribute educational materials to their clients. OHKA will follow-up with day care providers to survey if education resulted in behavioral changes to reduce children’s exposure to lead hazards.

Partners

OHKA	Early Childhood Education Center
NHHS – potential partner	UNL Extension



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***Housing inspectors***

Housing inspectors will be trained to visually identify potential lead hazards.

Partners

OHKA	HUD
City of Omaha	OHA/Section 8

***Home visitation program workers***

Home visitation workers will be trained to visually identify potential lead hazards. Home visitation workers will also be taught about simple measures, such as cleaning techniques, nutritional habits, and hygiene techniques that can be used to prevent lead poisoning. Training will utilize consistent, positive messaging.

Partners

OHKA	Omaha Head Start – potential partner
VNA – potential partner	Hospice – potential partner

***Places of worship***

Educational information will be distributed via places of worship. Educational materials and information will utilize consistent, positive messaging.

Partners

OHKA	Temples – potential partners
Interfaith Health Service – potential partner	Project Interfaith
Churches – potential partners	

***Teachers/educators***

Teachers and educators will have materials and trainings available to them. The OHKA education committee is presently creating a toolkit for OPS teachers.



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Partners

OHKA                                      Private schools – potential partners  
OPS

***Neighborhood groups***

The Neighborhood Center provides access to neighborhood associations throughout Omaha. Connections have been made and will continue to be made with active neighborhood associations and groups as needed or requested.

Partners

Neighborhood Center for Greater Omaha  
OHKA

***Business community***

OHKA will seek to inform the business community in Omaha of any news, education or updates on issues pertaining to lead and how these may affect local businesses.

Partners

Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce                                      UNL Extension  
OHKA



**Goal 2: Children under the Age of Seven Receive Medical Monitoring for Lead and Follow-Up.**

**Strategy 2.1: Promote screening of all children ages 1, 2, and 3 by clinics and health care providers.**

The Douglas County Health Department works with medical providers to increase screening rates in Omaha. A pilot program was recently initiated by the DCHD to screen children in the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) clinic at Charles Drew. This program will be expanded.

Partners

DCHD	Alegent Health System– potential partner
OHKA	Metro Omaha Medical Society
Boys Town Pediatrics	WIC
UNMC	One World Community Health Center
Creighton Pediatrics	Charles Drew Health Center
Methodist Health System – potential partner	

Performance Objectives

- Increase number of medical providers who regularly screen for lead.
- Increase the number of children screened in Omaha.

**Strategy 2.2: Provide follow-up services to children with blood lead levels of concern.**

Follow-up services are currently provided by the Douglas County Health Department (DCHD) for any child identified with a blood lead level  $\geq 10$   $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$  living in Douglas County. Follow-up services may include identifying lead hazards, addressing lead hazards, providing education to the family, and performing follow-up blood test to ensure blood lead levels are reduced. Recent studies have demonstrated the deleterious effects of low blood lead levels on children, relating them to criminal behavior, ADHD and low end of grade test scores.



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### Partners

DCHD

Health Clinics

OHKA

Health Care Providers

### Performance Objectives

- Increase services to provide follow-up services to children whose blood lead level is of concern.
- Increase numbers of children who receive follow-up services.
- Prevent possible elevated blood lead levels ( $>10$   $\mu\text{g/dL}$ ) in children by doing outreach with children at lower levels.



## Goal 3: Homes in Omaha Are Lead-Safe.

### Strategy 3.1: Provide resources for identifying lead hazards.

Home visits will be performed (including demographic survey, visual inspection, and environmental testing) as prioritized by the workgroup. Visits can be done by contractors, trained volunteers, CHWs, etc.

#### Partners

OHA

HUD

Continuum of Housing Repair

OHKA

EPA

DCHD

City of Omaha

#### Performance Objectives

- With the workgroup, determine number of homes which will qualify for lead hazard control. Depending on availability of resources, this number will vary from year to year.
- Homes where remediation activities are planned to occur receive education and case management to inform them of the process. This ensures that families are educated and respected in the process of making their environments lead safe.

### Strategy 3.2: Provide assistance to reduce and eliminate identified lead hazards.

Homes with lead hazards, identified by the OHKA workgroup, will be addressed through various mechanisms. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will provide yard soil replacement where the lead concentration in soil is above a certain level (to be determined in December 2008) and within certain geographical boundaries of the City. The UNL Extension Office will assist homeowners with lead-safe landscaping techniques who do not meet EPA's criteria or would otherwise benefit from



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lead-safe landscaping. The City of Omaha Lead Hazard Control Program and a community development partner will perform lead hazard control activities to address lead-based paint hazards. Additional resources, such as low-interest loans, do-it-yourself training, and educational materials will be provided to homeowners who are ineligible for City and community development partner services. These additional resources will also be available for homes with identified dust and water lead hazards, dependent upon individual property circumstances.

Upon completion of lead hazard control activities and confirmation visual inspection and/or clearance testing, a home will be eligible for inclusion on a City registry of “lead-safe” homes. The registry will be accessible to the public and available for online viewing. The registry will serve as an incentive for participation in OHKA’s comprehensive program and informational tool. Additionally, landlords with “lead-safe” homes will receive an OHKA gold star. Gold star recipients will be advertised and honored.

Partners

City of Omaha	New Community Development Corporation
EPA	Rebuilding Together – potential partner
UNL Extension	Continuum of Housing Repair
City Sprouts – potential partner	OHA
Methodist Garden Project – potential partner	

Performance Objectives

- Create a partnership with an entity performing lead-safe housing work.
- Create a lead-safe housing registry.
- Certify homes as “lead-safe.”
- Award gold stars to landlords.

**Strategy 3.3: Advocate for legislation to provide additional resources and ensure actions occur to reduce lead hazards in housing.**

Currently, the Douglas County Health Department (DCHD) is working with the City of Omaha to amend an ordinance that would specifically identify lead-based paint hazards in the nuisance code. Other potential legislative initiatives could include requiring lead safe work practices (LSWP) before granting City building/renovation permits; requiring City permits for any renovation that would disturb lead-based



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paint surfaces, such as window replacement or porch repair; and establishing LSWP training as a condition of doing renovation or remodeling business in the State of Nebraska.

Partners

DCHD

National Coalition to End Childhood Lead

OHKA

Poisoning

Voices for Children

Performance Objectives

- Advocate for City ordinances and other legislation that would aid in identifying and reducing lead hazards in housing.



**Goal 4: Consumer Products in Omaha are Lead-Safe/Lead-Free.**

**Strategy 4.1: Provide resources to screen items for lead.**

In 2007, OHKA and ATC Associates held 11 toy screening events at various locations in Omaha. The toy screening events were very popular with parents, allowing an opportunity to educate families, in addition to providing toy testing services. OHKA currently has lead testing kits available for use by the community.

Partners

ATC Associates  
OHKA

DCHD  
UNL Extension

Performance Objectives

- Provide up-to-date, researched, as-needed resources for the community to test products for lead.

**Strategy 4.2: Inform retailers about lead in products and provide materials for retailers to distribute.**

Education will be provided to retailers about products know to contain lead.

Partners

OHKA  
Food/pottery/imported goods stores – potential partners  
Restaurants and gaming centers that distribute toys – potential partners

Dollar stores, drug stores, etc – potential partners  
Hardware stores - potential partners

Performance Objectives

- Work with retailers to ensure the safety of their customers.
- Create sponsorship opportunities for retailers.



**Strategy 4.3: Assist in advancing legislation that would prohibit lead-containing consumer products from being sold.**

Congress is currently contemplating various legislative issues pertaining to lead in consumer products, particularly toys. Congress is also looking into reform of the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). Senator Preister proposed a bill in 2008 that would ban lead in toys and OHKA and DCHD testified on behalf of the bill.

Partners

OHKA

Voices for Children

DCHD

National Coalition to End Childhood Lead Poisoning

Performance Objectives

- Provide advocacy for legislation that seeks to reduce lead hazards.
- Create institutional controls to protect lead hazard work.



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