

SPOTLIGHT:

ROBUST COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

KENT COUNTY LEAD ACTION TEAM

Targeted Problem:



Despite education efforts, lead poisoning of Kent County children continues to be a problem. In 2022, Kent County reported high numbers of lead-poisoned children, with escalating concerns in several Grand Rapids' zip codes. In fact, some of the highest levels of lead poisoning in Michigan children occur in Grand Rapids.

The Strategy:



Kent County Health Department established the Kent County Lead Action Team. With funding from the National Association of County and City Health Officials, this Team designed and conducted a Community Lead Knowledge Survey to gather baseline data of residents' knowledge of the effects of lead exposure, where environmental exposures exist, and awareness of local resources to address lead issues. Extensive efforts were made to gather responses from diverse residents, including those who lived in the neighborhoods with the highest rates of lead poisoning.

The Results:



- **Collected lead knowledge surveys from approximately 1000 diverse community members.**
- **Adjusted health education and outreach efforts in response to survey findings.** Findings revealed community residents' misconception that drinking water is the main source of lead poisoning. Education/outreach efforts have pivoted to emphasize lead dust as the leading cause of lead poisoning.
- **Continued cross-sector collaboration has supported subsequent rounds of surveys** to gauge the effectiveness of the targeted education plan and to inform additional modifications to ensure efforts meet community needs.

Why It Worked:

- Partners provided significant feedback during survey development, ensuring the format and language options accommodated resident needs.
- Partners recruited survey responses from diverse residents by sharing the survey link on different social media platforms as well as word of mouth.
- The translation of survey findings into improved education efforts fostered trust and strengthened local partnerships.

Success Tips:

- **Build in survey response security measures.** Significant time was spent authenticating and cleaning surveys because of the numerous responses from bots and individuals outside the targeted area. Building in further survey security measures earlier in the process would have helped alleviate back-end data cleaning.
- **Consider the pros and cons of gift cards.** While the offer of a limited number of gift cards may have greatly increased the survey response rate, it may have also resulted in a high number of invalid responses.

**Kent County Health
Department**

PARTNERS

NACCHO

Community Connectors

Healthy Homes Coalition of
West Michigan

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