



## **St. Lawrence County Public Health Department**

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### **Press Release**

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#### Lead and Holiday Toys

Many children get toys and toy jewelry as gifts during the holiday season. Some toys, especially imported toys, antique toys, and toy jewelry may contain lead. Although lead is invisible to the naked eye and has no smell, lead can seriously harm a child's health and future well-being. Even low levels of lead exposure can cause brain damage, slowed growth, development, learning and behavioral problems. Unfortunately, the effects of lead poisoning are often irreversible.

Young children tend to put their hands, toys, or other objects - which may be made of lead or contaminated with lead into their mouths. If you have a small child in your household, make sure the child does not have access to toys, jewelry, or other items that may contain lead.

#### Lead in Toys

Lead may be found in the paint, metal, and plastic parts of some toys and toy jewelry.

- In 2008, the Consumer Protection Safety Improvement Act was signed into law and required toys and infant products be tested to mandatory standards before being sold
- The use of lead in plastics has not been banned. Lead softens plastic, making a toy more flexible to return to its original shape. Lead may also be used in plastic toys to stabilize molecules from heat.
- Lead dust can form on toys when some plastics are exposed to sunlight, air, and detergents that break down the chemical bond between the lead and plastics
- Lead also may be combined with other metals, such as tin, to create alloys that are used to make toys

To reduce children's risk for lead exposure, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) tests and issues recalls of current products that may potentially expose children to lead. Check the [CPSC website](#) or call 1 (800) 638-2272 to be sure your child's toys are safe.

If you think your child has been exposed to a toy containing lead, or if your child has a recalled toy, take away the toy immediately and contact your child's healthcare provider. Most children who are exposed to lead have no symptoms. A blood lead test is the best way to find out if your child has been

exposed to lead. Your child's healthcare provider can help you decide whether a blood lead test is needed and can recommend appropriate follow-up actions if your child has been exposed.

Information taken directly from:

<https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/features/leadintoys/index.html>

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