



USEP-OHIO PARENT TIP

Toy Checkup

This brief Parent Tip is provided at no cost by United Services for Effective Parenting-Ohio, Inc. as a tool to assist parents, teachers, grandparents and all who help to care for and to raise our children. For more information on this and other tools from USEP-OHIO refer to the conclusion of this Parent Tip.

Parents, grandparents, early childhood caregivers and educators are trying to keep up with the recent attention to recalls due to the threat of lead poisoning to youngsters who ingest lead from their toys. The federal limit for lead paint is .06 percent lead content in a product's paint. Some of the toys tested proved to have lead from 4 times to almost 200 hundred times the limit allowed by American standards. According to some news sources, more than 80 percent of toys are made in China, where lead level standards in paint do not match US Safety Standards.

But how do we feel safe and reassure ourselves that our toys are safe and kids are O.K.?

One of the problems is that many of the toys in circulation are perfectly safe, and may have been manufactured long before the recent trade agreements and contracts with offshore companies whose paint is contaminated. But we must have some assurance that they are safe. We know that many of you are not only parents, but provide school or community programs for children. While it is not too complicated to simply purge the suspect toys at home, it is more difficult to make those determinations at school, church, private or community care centers. Try a lead testing kit to help make decisions and feel secure that your toys are safe. Suggest that others you know do the same. While there are many out there, here is a list of some easy to order testing kits for lead that we found. Let us know what works for you.

- **LeadCheck Swabs** by Hybrivet Systems Inc. www.leadcheck.com

8 swabs for \$18.45 or 96 swabs for \$149.95. These are simple to use; like a small pencil, has a yellow solution at the tip that turns pink or red if rubbed on a lead-containing surface.

- **Lead Inspector** test kit by Abotex Enterprises Ltd. www.leadinspector.com
Pack of 8 for \$12.99/100 for \$49.99. Pour on swab, rub surface for 30 seconds; tip turns yellow, brown or black if lead is present. Be sure the toy is clean first. Grime or dirt on surface also looks brown or black.

- **The Lead Detective** by Innovative Synthesis Corp.
www.gis.net/~mtf/tldhome.htm
\$29.95 for 150 tests. Requires mixing and shaking in order to turn paint a range of colors if leaded.

- **Pro-Lab Lead Surface Test Kit** by Professional Laboratories Inc.
www.prolabinc.com

\$9.95 for six tests. Drip water on small pad and apply to surface 2 minutes.

- Some stores like Home Depot and Lowes are selling kits that can test 1-4 toys for around \$6.00.

Don't panic, but take action to protect the kids around you. With the variety of toys available, we have to be watchdogs for our kids' sake, watching for magnets, small parts and other hazards too.

For more information go to Consumer Product Safety Commission

www.cpsc.gov; the WebMD website or to

[http://children.webmd.com/news/20071005/more-toys-recalled-due-to-](http://children.webmd.com/news/20071005/more-toys-recalled-due-to-lead)

[lead](http://children.webmd.com/news/20071005/more-toys-recalled-due-to-lead); also visit <http://service.mattel.com/us/recall.asp> or

<http://recallsrc2.com> for their recall lists. Watch or call your local TV news outlets for more information. Children who ingest even small amounts of lead can suffer brain damage; large doses can be deadly.

We invite you to share this USEP-OHIO publication with other parents, students and professionals at home or work. You have permission to copy Tips as written, send on as email, or print for a newsletter or handout. Email usepohio@usepohio.com or call 1-800-262-4KIDS to add email addresses to our list, to give us feedback about how the information works for you, or for other topics, publications and programs.

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