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The newsletter of The LEAD (Lead Education and Abatement Design) Group Inc.

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A Lead Safe World is in the Frame

This issue of *LEAD Action News* begins with a sombre placement of lead safety as the foundation of global child health and outlines a positive path forward from the Director of the Partnership for a Lead Free Future, including: “Addressing lead exposure in children is not another item on a long list of health concerns, it is the foundation upon which every other investment in a child’s life depends. It is an act of protection, dignity, and justice.”

The LEAD Group Inc is honored to be a Partner of the Partnership for a Lead-Free Future (PLF) and pleased to be able to let our readers know of the audacious funding of another PLF Partner, Pure Earth, and their director’s upcoming TEDTalk, April 13-17, 2026. Pure Earth President Drew McCartor writes: “One of the goals of my talk is to reframe our understanding of the scale of harm. Lead poisoning causes more deaths annually than all natural disasters, active wars, traffic accidents, HIV, and malaria *combined*.”

A Lead Safe World is in the frame and your entries in to Volcano Art Prize (VAP) are also great for your health, according to the new book [Art Cure by Prof Daisy Fancourt!](#) The VAP 2026 entry deadline is Mon 27th July 2026 and all the entries in VAP 2025 are published in this issue to inspire you!



2026 Volcano Art Prize
Entry Artists: Elizabeth O'Brien and Kerry O'Donnell; Title: Lead Safe World in the Frame; **Lead-Safety Message:** With the reframing of the huge health and environmental impacts of lead, and audacious funding support, a Lead Safe World is truly “in the frame” to happen in time to also save the world from climate disaster! Description of Work: [Lead Safe World](#) logo by Kerry O'Donnell,

inside a frame collaged from three photos by Elizabeth O'Brien, two co-founders of [The LEAD Group Inc](#). URL: <https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/lead-safe-world-in-the-frame/>



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Enter Volcano Art Prize 2026 by 27th July 2026!

To be in the running for this **annual lead-awareness-raising global art/photo/film competition open to all ages**, just go through your smart phone photos/videos and pick a landscape-orientation one, create a short Title and Lead-Safety Message and enter as many times as you like, at <https://volcanoartprize.com/submitentry/> by midnight at the end of the day, your timezone, on Monday 27th July 2026.

Once the entry deadline has passed, the Volcano Art Prize (VAP) 2026 Judge will choose the First Prize winner of \$400 and 30 prize winners of a mug from Pictureproducts and you can help pick the 2026 People’s Choice prizewinner. Just go to <https://volcanoartprize.com/peoples-choice/> and following pages, to vote (by giving a ThumbsUp) for all the VAP 2026 entries you like, so that The LEAD Group can count up the Likes to see who wins the People’s Choice Cash Prize of \$200.



It’s easy to create a VAP entry!!

See [Join us on our Global Lead Awareness](#) - a reel about how easy it is to make a **Volcano Art Prize entry!**



Be part of a global lead-awareness raising community of photographers, artists and caring individuals!

Enter artworks, photos and short videos in Volcano Art Prize (VAP). This annual art competition has both cash/sponsors’ prizes and certificates for children and encourages everyone to increase their lead knowledge by creating their Lead-Safety Message.

Images of people, old paint, pets, backyard chickens/vegetables, lead products/mining/smelting/recycling, solutions - lead-detox foods/activities/supplements, lead testing kits, etc and fun or serious videos all help The LEAD Group charity to spread the word about lead-safety around the world via social media, www.lead.org.au and www.leadsafeworld.com

Each entrant can enter multiple times.

Just go thru the camera roll on your phone or look around for inspiration and submit your own and your children’s entries at www.volcanoartprize.com/submitentry by the 4th Monday in July each year. That means Monday 27th July 2026 – so you have less than four months left to enter!!

Only adults in OECD countries pay the AU\$10 entry fee. All kids and everyone else enter for free!



Lead poisoning impairs more children globally than any other single hazard

Message from the Director, by Abdullah A. Fadil, Director, UNICEF's Partnership for a Lead Free Future (PLF) Secretariat. From a 4th March 2026 email to PLF Partners



Lead poisoning is the world's most widespread environmental health threat to children, affecting over 4 in 10 children – more than malnutrition, infectious disease, zero-dose and the unvaccinated, out of school, or those in conflict areas—in low and middle-income Countries (LMICs). No other single hazard impairs so many children, so silently, so invisibly and so irreversibly. Addressing lead exposure in children is not another item on a long list of



health concerns, it is the foundation upon which every other investment in a child's life depends. It is an act of protection, dignity, and justice.

Lead steals potential long before a child ever steps into a classroom or visits a clinic. Sometimes the damage begins even earlier during pregnancy, when lead crosses the placenta and starts disrupting early development. Toxic lead exposure impairs synapse formation and disrupts the development of vital organs such as the kidneys, heart and lungs. These harms undermine the impact of maternal, newborn and child health and nutrition interventions, including efforts to reduce stunting and anemia and to keep children developmentally on track.

Lead exposure also disrupts neurological and cognitive development at the cellular level, reducing IQ, attention and executive functions lowering reading and mathematics proficiency and weaker overall learning. Moreover, behavioral problems increase such as impulsivity and aggression, which are linked with future potential for higher risk of violence, bullying and conflict with the law. When these foundational neural pathways are compromised, the impact of investments in children's development is greatly reduced.

No builder lays bricks on shifting soil, and no society should build its future on a foundation poisoned at the earliest moments of life. Lead exposure functions like a hidden tax on human capital—one that compounds over a lifetime. It depresses lifetime earnings, raises household health costs and reinforces intergenerational poverty. The result is lowered lifetime earnings, decreased productivity, and significant GDP losses. Every dollar invested in education, nutrition, vaccines, and other health outcomes yields diminished returns when children begin from a biologically disadvantaged position caused by preventable lead poisoning.

We can expand vaccination coverage, strengthen nutrition programs, improve access to clean water and sanitation, and build robust schools and health systems—but children harmed early by lead exposure will not fully benefit from these efforts. The tragedy is that removing this toxicant is neither expensive nor complex; it is one of the most affordable and highest impact-actions we can take to protect children.

Lead prevention does not replace other priorities and is uniquely enabling as one of the few interventions that protect and amplify the value of every other commitment in children's lives. Once lead enters a child's body, even at low levels, the neurological harm is permanent and cannot be repaired by later programs or services. Unlike most child focused initiatives that build capacity, lead poisoning removes it at the start. That is why prevention, not treatment or cure, is our only effective path forward.

Until we eliminate this toxicant damaging children's future, no other investment can reach its full impact. Children deserve more than systems that help them cope with preventable harm; they deserve the freedom to thrive from the very beginning. Let's Fix the Foundation First.



PLF Update on Progress, Partnerships, and the Path Ahead

Pure Earth: Our Audacious Idea: Protect 500 Million Children from Lead Poisoning by 2033



Pure Earth’s Big Bold Audacious Idea

Last week, Pure Earth was named a grantee of The Audacious Project, receiving a major multi-year investment to help governments in more than 20 countries reduce lead exposure at scale and protect over 500 million children by 2033. We now begin one of the most ambitious global responses to lead poisoning prevention in history. Housed at TED, The Audacious Project is a collaborative funding initiative dedicated to supporting bold ideas with the potential to change the world. This is not simply a grant. It is transformational funding designed to accelerate national action and create effective public health systems that prevent lead exposure before harm occurs.

[**Read the Announcement**](#)

Stanford University: Stanford's Project Unleaded takes on global lead poisoning crisis



[Image credit: Akhil Chandran] Lead, one of the most toxic substances on Earth, has turned up recently in protein powders, apple sauce, and other common food products. The discoveries are reminders that lead exposure remains a threat everywhere, not just in developing countries. “Americans generally think we’ve solved the lead problem,” said Stephen Luby, principal

investigator for Project Unleaded, a Stanford University initiative based at the Center for Human and



Planetary Health working to identify and eliminate major sources of lead poisoning worldwide. “This is fundamentally not true.” Lead exposure kills approximately 5 million people annually and causes permanent brain damage in 800 million children across the globe. It lowers IQ, impairs learning, and costs the world economy over \$1 trillion each year. Yet until recently, the problem received less than 1% of the funding allocated to diseases like malaria or tuberculosis.

[**Read the News Release**](#)

Lead Exposure Elimination Project: Pakistan Follow-up Paint Study Results



A new study reveals that Pakistan has cut in half the share of lead paint on the market since LEEP began its work there. LEEP and the Pakistan

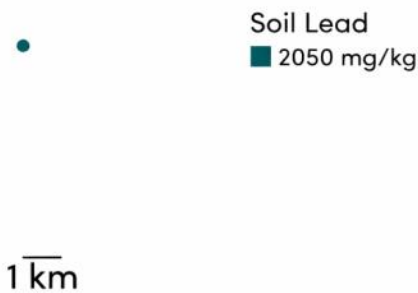
Standards & Quality Control Authority (PSQCA), in consultation with Pakistan Coating Association (PCA), conducted the study to examine shifts in how much of the market is still made up of lead paint. The results suggest that the market share of brands selling oil-based lead paint for home use has reduced from approximately 88% in 2021 to 41% in 2024. The progress was driven by major reformulation efforts: eight of Pakistan’s largest brands and 12 medium- and small-sized brands, which previously had high levels of lead, showed no detectable lead in the tested samples. These brands represent about 47% of the market, and the results suggest that they have switched to lead-free following LEEP’s engagement.

[**Read the Blog**](#)

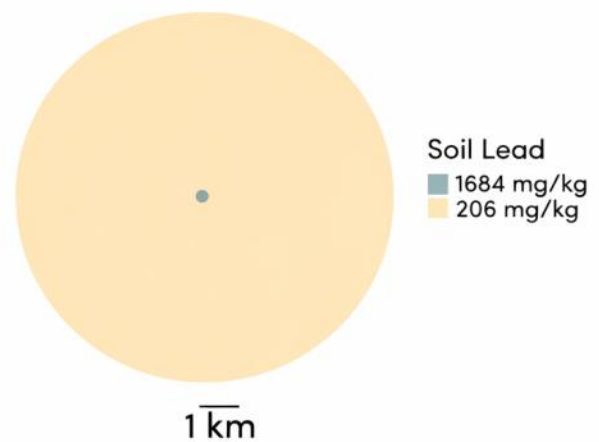


Center for Global Development: Battery Recycling Is a Far Bigger Source of Lead Exposure Than We Thought

Previous Model



Our Model



Policymakers are increasingly interested in tackling global lead exposure. One critical obstacle is that we don't have a clear sense of what the most common sources of exposure are. The single largest use of lead is in car batteries, and unsafe recycling of these batteries is harmful, but we don't know exactly how harmful. Prior estimates suggested battery recycling is only a small part of the problem. However, a new CGD working paper shows that it could account for a third of all lead exposure in low- and lower-middle-income countries. This estimate comes with a lot of uncertainty, with a 95 percent confidence interval spanning from 20 percent to 90 percent of the burden, and an 80 percent confidence interval from 26 percent to 71 percent of the burden. But the bottom line is clear: lead exposure from battery recycling is not insignificant.

[**Read the Blog**](#)



Lead Research for Action: Assessing Lead Exposure Risks from Commonly Used Consumer Products in Malawi

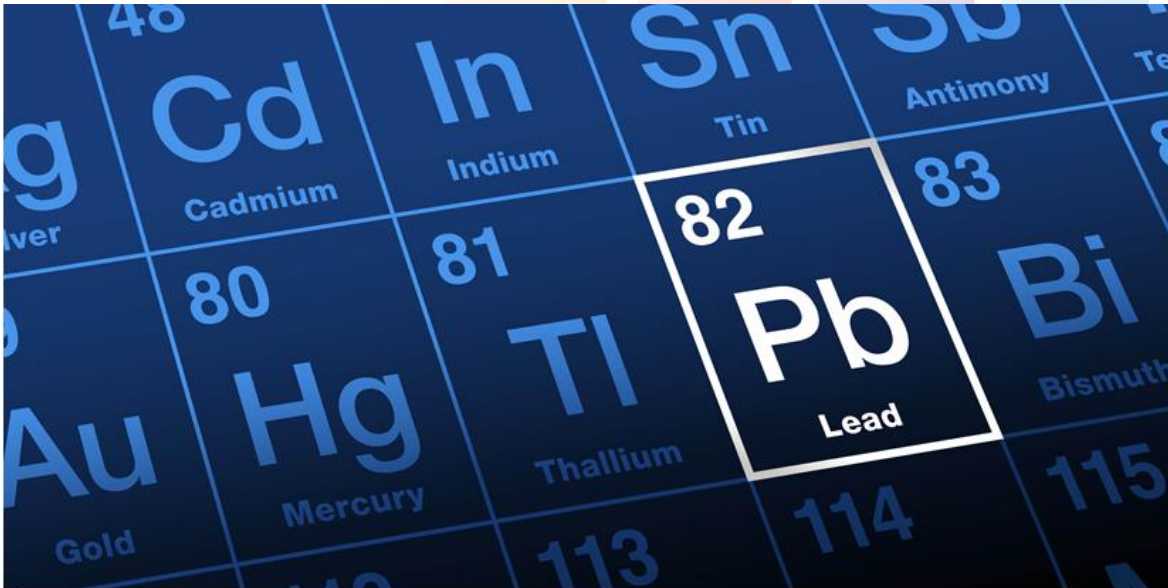


Lead poisoning remains a major but poorly characterized public health challenge in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). An estimated half of children in LMICs have elevated blood lead levels (BLLs), yet dominant exposure sources are often unknown. From February-September 2025, Lead Research for Action (LeRA) conducted a market-based lead content study in Malawi to assess lead exposure risks from commonly used consumer products. This study aimed to identify consumer products that may substantially contribute to lead exposure in Malawi.

[**Read the Report**](#)



Featured Research and Resources



- UN Environment Programme: [Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint](#)
 - Global Development Incubator: [Partnership for Battery Action \(Pb Action\)](#)
 - University of Michigan: [Cumulative lead exposure linked to increased Alzheimer's and dementia risk, U-M study finds](#)
 - Brown University: [Childhood lead exposure associated with increased depressive symptoms in adolescence](#)
 - BMJ Public Health: [Association between potential lead exposure assessed using a screening questionnaire and aggressive behaviour among adolescents in Jakarta, Indonesia: a cross-sectional study](#)
 - The University of Utah: [Banning lead in gas worked. The proof is in our hair](#)
- Environmental Defense Fund: [Lead pipes that deliver drinking water are a major health threat](#)
-

What We're Reading and Listening To!

- From Togo First: [Lomé hosts 23-nation workshop on lead paint regulations](#)
- From UNICEF Bhutan: [Nu 18Million worth of equipment handed over by UNICEF for a lead-free Bhutan](#)
- From the Examination: [Nigeria closes factories linked to U.S. auto industry amid lead poisoning inquiry](#)
- From the Star, Kenya: [African governments meet in Nairobi to fast-track lead paint regulations](#)
- From the Asia News Network: [Millions of Nepali exposed to lead in toothpaste, sindoor, and eyeliners](#)



- NBC News: [Harmful chemicals lurk in extensions and braiding hair marketed to Black women, study finds](#)
 - Governing: [Unsafe Levels of Lead Found in Half of New Orleans Playgrounds](#)
-

Upcoming Events

Seventy-ninth World Health Assembly

18-23 May 2026

Seventy-ninth World Health Assembly will be held on 18–23 May 2026 in Geneva, Switzerland and will include a discussion of draft global action plan on lead mitigation to be developed in consultation with Member States, relevant United Nations specialized agencies and other relevant stakeholders.

[Learn More](#)

UNITAR: THE UNITED NATIONS CHEMICALS AND WASTE MANAGEMENT STUDY PROGRAMME

18 - 22 May 2026 | 13 - 17 July 2026

During the upcoming year, UNITAR is pleased to deliver its 5-day in-person United Nations Chemicals and Waste Management Study Programme in Geneva. This flagship field visit offers participants a unique opportunity to engage directly with the global institutions shaping international chemicals and waste policy, while gaining first-hand exposure to multilateral environmental governance in a UN hub.

[Learn More](#)

Second Annual Research Conference on Global Lead Exposure

3-4 June 2026

The Center for Global Development is hosting its second annual Research Conference on Global Lead Exposure. The conference will convene researchers, policymakers, and implementers, all working to stamp out global lead poisoning.

[Learn More](#)

Key Links

- [PLF Resource Library](#)
 - [Toolkit to End Childhood Lead Poisoning](#)
 - [PLF Partners](#)
 - [Join the Partnership](#)
-



Do you have new resources, stories, or updates to share that are driving progress to end childhood lead poisoning? Please email us at leadfreefuture@unicef.org with your news, upcoming events you'll be attending, and any opportunities for collaboration. Let's keep building this community together—we look forward to hearing from you!

The Partnership for a Lead-Free Future is the first ever global partnership to drive attention and resources toward ending childhood lead poisoning. The PLF Secretariat, housed at UNICEF, aggregates knowledge, connects partners, and coordinates global action to a lead-free future for every child. Learn more about the PLF: www.leadfreefuture.org

LEAD Group Model National Lead-Safety Policy now in PLF Resources Library

In February 2026, The LEAD Group's "Lead Safe World - Model National Lead Safety Policy" was added to the PLF's Resources Library at <https://www.leadfreefuture.org/events-and-resources/knowledge-library/lead-safe-world-model-national-lead-safety-policy>; accessible via <https://www.leadfreefuture.org/events-and-resources/knowledge-library>

www.leadfreefuture.org/events-and-resources/knowledge-library



Resource type

POLICY

Source

The LEAD Group Inc

Geographic area

Global

The Policy was originally web-published in July 2023 at both www.leadfreefuture.org/events-and-resources/knowledge-library and

https://leadsafeworld.com/LANv21n4_Model_National_Lead_Safety_Policy_and_2023_VAP.pdf



Pure Earth is Bringing Lead Poisoning to the TED Mainstage at TED2026

Email from Drew McCartor, President, Pure Earth, to Pure Earth news subscribers, March 27, 2026



Dear Elizabeth,

I am thrilled to share that I will be speaking at [TED2026 in Vancouver](#), where I will take the mainstage to talk about Pure Earth's initiative to [protect 500 million children](#) from lead poisoning.



One of the goals of my talk is to reframe our understanding of the scale of harm. Lead poisoning causes more deaths annually than all natural disasters, active wars, traffic accidents, HIV, and malaria *combined*. It's time we stop treating this issue as a footnote in the human story and treat it as the headline it is.

My TED talk won't be available for a few months, but I'll be sharing updates on LinkedIn from behind the scenes. I hope you'll [follow along](#).

If you're interested in learning more about our Audacious Project, you can join us virtually on April 9th for *From Bold Ideas to Global Impact: How Collaborative Philanthropy Fuels Change*, a webinar hosted by Devex with The Audacious Project. Keep scrolling for more details and a registration link.

Sincerely,
Drew McCartor
President, Pure Earth



Webinar on April 9th with Devex and The Audacious Project

From Bold Ideas to Global Impact: How Collaborative Philanthropy Fuels Change

[Register for the Virtual Event](#)



On April 9th, Drew will join global leaders for a virtual conversation with Raj Kumar, President and Editor-in-Chief at Devex, to discuss how catalytic philanthropy is helping scale solutions to lead poisoning and other urgent global challenges.

Over the past eight years, The Audacious Project community has mobilized \$7.6 billion toward bold initiatives in health, climate, education, and economic opportunity. Drew will be among fellow grantee leaders sharing practical insights on how funding, cross-sector collaboration, and storytelling can accelerate real impact for communities worldwide.

[Register Now](#)



In Ghana, Training the Trainers



Earlier this month, Pure Earth brought together senior leadership, technical experts, and representatives from the Ghana and Ethiopian Environmental Protection Authorities for a Training of Trainers workshop in Ghana.

Participants built hands-on skills in identifying and assessing lead contamination risks, from used lead-acid battery recycling sites to consumer products found in everyday markets. The goal: equip teams not just to identify lead exposure, but to train others, building the regional capacity needed for lasting reductions in lead exposure.

[Read More on the Blog](#)

OUR MISSION

Pure Earth partners with governments, communities and industry leaders to identify and implement solutions that stop toxic exposures, protect health, and restore environments.

Solve Pollution. Save Lives. Protect The Planet.

[Donate to Support Our Work](#)

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US EPA's FY2026 Commitments Under Federal Lead Action Plan

[Editor's note: many thanks to Tom Neltner for his consistently great blog posts and permission for one of them to be re-printed in LEAD Action News. Whereas Tom writes re: the United States context: "Keep in mind that commercial and industrial buildings continue to be allowed to use paint with added lead; the [CPSC limits](#) only apply to residential and consumer applications", the huge advantage of what [The LEAD Group has achieved in Australia](#) is that nearly all **non-residential** new paints sold since 1st October 2021 have been required to comply with the WHO (also US CPSC) limit of less than 90 parts per million lead in paint. This means that Australian conversions from commercial or industrial premises to residential premises will only need to be concerned about lead paint for decades or centuries in to the future for all the buildings built prior to Oct 2021, whereas in the US, this lead-concern built date is prior to sometime in the future when all new paint sold will hopefully be required to comply with the WHO definition of unleaded paint in the USA too!].

Unleaded Kids blog

Agency plans greater focus on adaptive reuse, tribal needs, and soil cleanup.

By [Tom Neltner](#), [March 28, 2026](#)[General](#), [Housing](#), [Paint](#), [Pipes](#), [Products](#), [Soil](#)



What Happened

Almost halfway through the federal fiscal year, EPA published its [FY2026 commitments](#) it plans to accomplish pursuant to the [2018 Federal Lead Action Plan](#) issued by the [President's Task Force on Environmental Health Risks and](#)

[Safety Risks to Children](#). The agency has made [similar commitments](#) and posted progress reports since 2019.

Here are some highlights:

Adaptive Reuse: EPA plans to undertake an effort to support and accelerate the conversion of existing commercial and industrial buildings into new residential homes where lead and other environmental hazards are present. By June 30, 2026, it will host one private sector



forum on adaptive reuse and publish at least one case study on the issue by September 30, 2026.

Tribal Communities: In its [2022 Strategy to Reduce Lead Exposures and Disparities in U.S. Communities](#),¹ EPA said it would evaluate exposure pathways unique to tribal members and consider [traditional ecological or indigenous knowledge](#) at lead-contaminated sites impacting tribal nations. It also planned to support use of the EPA's [Tribal Lead Curriculum](#).

In its FY2026 commitments, EPA expanded on this saying it plans to:

- By September 30, 2026, “track and report EPA’s direct implementation activities related to lead programs in Indian country to better understand EPA program delivery and ensure human health and environmental protection is as strong in Indian country as outside of Indian country.”
- By December 31, 2026, identify tribes with priority lead concerns based on the EPA-Tribal Environmental Plans ([ETEPs](#)).² The goal is to “gain an understanding of what efforts Tribes currently have underway to address lead exposure and risks.”
- By December 31, 2026, “host a tribal workshop on lead risks, regulations, remediation, and available resources to support tribes in addressing contamination and administering lead programs.”

National Center of Excellence for CERCLA³ Residential Lead Cleanups: By the Fall of 2026, EPA plans “to establish a National Center of Excellence for CERCLA Residential Lead Cleanups.” EPA described the National Center in its [October 2025 announcement](#) that weakened its [soil cleanup guidelines](#) saying it would serve as a “centralized resource to share expertise across regions, identify and facilitate efficiencies, and establish best management practices across all phases of characterization and cleanup” for industrial and commercial operations that release lead into the environment. It will include:

- “A National Residential Lead Portfolio Manager to monitor the scope, schedule and cost of all CERCLA residential lead response actions, as well as identify and facilitate resolution of obstacles in conjunction with the Center of Excellence and site teams.”
- “A contracting strategy for CERCLA residential lead cleanups that allows for efficient acquisition of cleanup contractors and creates measurable efficiencies by focusing contracting tools to address the unique requirements and challenges associated with residential cleanups.”
- A model program “for early and sustained implementation of institutional controls and other non-engineered instruments to complement engineered cleanup components.”



EPA also committed to two rulemakings.

- By Winter of 2027, “propose a soil-lead hazard standard reconsideration rule to increase protection for children in homes and child-care facilities where soil-lead hazards are present.
- By end of the year, “finalize amendments to secondary lead smelters National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants.”

Why It Matters

Annual commitments to specific milestones are important tools to set priorities and focus efforts for any organization, including federal agencies. They are particularly important when made public in a timely manner so stakeholders can use the information to engage in the effort, track progress, and flag omissions.

Often the commitments can become a laundry list of tasks big and small that lack context. Fortunately, for federal agencies working to reduce people’s exposure to lead, the [2018 Federal Lead Action Plan](#) provides that context.

Our Take

We applaud EPA for publicly releasing its FY26 commitments that it plans to accomplish pursuant to the [2018 Federal Lead Action Plan](#). This type of accountability is important not just to staff and management but to stakeholders who may want to shape the agency’s priorities and plans. We encourage other agencies with significant responsibilities under the Plan, specifically HUD and CDC, to follow EPA’s example.⁴

We are excited to see the new focus on converting commercial and industrial properties to new residential uses to address environmental threats such as lead, asbestos, PCBs, mold, asthma triggers, formaldehyde, and carbon monoxide. Without careful consideration, these conversions can harm residents and undermine the value of the property.

We saw that happen in 2024 for an [old factory conversion project](#) in Connecticut. An EPA investigation of tenant complaints about dust-lead hazards resulted in EPA finding the building “may present an imminent and substantial endangerment.” EPA ordered a cleanup of those hazards pursuant to its hazardous waste authorities. Keep in mind that commercial and industrial buildings continue to be allowed to use paint with added lead; the [CPSC limits](#) only apply to residential and consumer applications.

Too often, federal agencies approach these environmental threats in a siloed manner that ignores conflicts that can increase costs and delay implementation or fail to leverage synergies to accelerate progress. An integrated healthy homes approach, such as those promoted by the [National Center for Healthy Housing](#) and [Green and Healthy Homes Initiative](#), provide a means to address root causes of environmental threats such as moisture damage and poor ventilation. This approach has a track record of success in delivering health and affordable housing crucial to thriving communities.

For that reason, we encourage EPA to include many of the healthy-homes focused organizations in the forum it plans to hold before June 30, 2026.



We similarly support EPA's plans for a National Center of Excellence for CERCLA Residential Lead Cleanups and encourage it be closely coordinated with the federal efforts to address lead-based paint hazards. While the sources may be different, the interventions are often similar. This national coordination is important because it is becoming clear that lead in soil is an important route of exposure and significant contributor to dust-lead hazards inside homes.

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...[check them out here](#).

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My leaded life story by electronics enthusiast Kim McWaters

By Kim McWaters, 16th Feb 2026

I've been asked to write "the story of me" in the hope that others suffering from lead poisoning may gain some insight into their potential future or guidance to avoid doing inappropriate things. I don't want to be an inspiration for anyone. That implies they are already ill. What I want is to be a warning about the dangers of lead exposure.

I have learnt a lot out of necessity because it feels like there hasn't been much help from the health system but there has been great support from my wife, Sharon.

My story began 13th Dec 1954, born in a country town on Yorke Peninsula South Australia. That's the leg shaped peninsula just across from Adelaide. I often joke that if the "Yorkes" wasn't here then Australia wouldn't have a leg to stand on. It's a great place with normally mild weather, low crime, great food (if you cook it right), great people and great beaches (although not so much at the moment).

My father, a mechanic, and mother, bookkeeper, operated a country garage. We were one of the larger petrol retailers in our area with a 24/7 service station. **Leaded petrol was phased out in 2002 but was the only available petrol up until unleaded petrol was introduced in to Australia in 1985.**

By the age of 7 I could count money and operate a petrol pump so I did a lot of that.

It included often running the servo solo from age 10 while my father played golf on some Saturday afternoons. If customers wanted their tanks filled (**which was common before the self-serve petrol era of the 1970s**), then I had to keep my ears close to the fuel spouts listening for the petrol rising up the spout **as automatic shut-off nozzles that stopped pumping petrol when the vehicle's tank was full didn't exist then.** I got to enjoy the smell of leaded petrol.

I also helped with lead-based soldering of radiators etc. and always washed my hands in leaded petrol before entering the house, **which was on the site of the service station. That's just what people did in those days, not realizing that the organic lead in the petrol could be absorbed via the skin and 100% of the organic lead in the fumes, plus the carcinogens in petrol fumes themselves were inhaled and absorbed via the lungs.**

Up until age 10 I wanted to be a doctor, but my mind was changed. 1964 was a time of huge advancements in electronics with the rise of transistorised devices. My brother brought home a "Practical Electronics" magazine, and I was hooked on the amazing technology. So electronics became an obsessive hobby for me.

Components were expensive so I started stripping parts from old TV sets (with their leaded cathode ray tubes, leaded glass and lead solder) and other appliances to be able to build basic electronic devices for myself. Occasionally I electrocuted myself but I have high skin resistance so I survived.



During primary school we did "intelligence tests" and I was apparently very good at them, so much so that once, when I was 10, I only achieved an average score, alarm bells rang and the headmaster called my mother and I in to the office to find out what was wrong. I had been ill during the test. I didn't mention that I had been making necklace pendants from soft lead fishing sinkers because I didn't suspect a connection. After that it was easy to get a day off school because my temperature was always slightly elevated so all I had to do was say I felt ill to stay home. My mother and doctor soon realised I was faking it, so it was back to full time schooling.

At 11 I broke my right leg twice so spent nearly 7 months in plaster. The doctor was worried I might have chalky bones. **I later found out that lead replaces calcium in the bones (and teeth).** It soon became apparent that sound equipment was very rewarding because good music was wonderful, so I started focusing on audio electronics. Some years later I was accused of making sound better than the original recordings.

I spent most of my time playing with electronics and studying new devices and technologies as they developed and realised that electronics was only limited by imagination. By the time I completed high school I had been building stereo amplifiers and speakers, even designing some circuits for myself.

I had also started smoking and broke my right hand 5 weeks before my final exams, the night I was starting my swatvac (**study vacation from school just prior to the end of high school exams**). I still managed university entrance with a full scholarship and attended the University of Adelaide studying electrical engineering. Much to my father's delight.

I had some health issues during my first year with glandular fever, bronchitis and concussion all coinciding with exams, so I quit university and worked a desk job for a car manufacturer for 14 months before returning to university. During my second try I realised a degree would have resulted in a desk job and I didn't want that so I quit to do something more hands-on.

My father had given me a used car while I was working so I made many modifications to it to enhance speed (**all cars ran on leaded petrol at this time as it was only from 1986 that all new cars had to run on unleaded petrol**) and handling and especially the sound system. I fitted 8 speakers and loved Crocodile Rock by Elton John because my seat vibrated with the bass.

So, I was back to working again now for my parents as showroom/spare parts guy for almost a year until an argument with my father over my "hippy" attire made me quit and get a job repairing TVs etc. at the local electrical appliance store. I was building a lot of amps and speakers and PA (public address) equipment. So, I had a reputation which got me the job. Later I built an entire PA system for a popular local band who also used it to record an album for sale. After over 6 years I tried to quit smoking but quit my job instead (in anger) and started my own business doing the same thing. That was in 1982 and my second son now runs it. I had a lot of sound equipment and provided PA systems for many school concerts and events like Christmas Carols, mostly for free. At one point my home "stereo" was 12 speakers and 6 channels of amplification and a special box of my own design to give 3D sound. Quadrophonic with a vertical component as well. "Time" and "Money" from Dark Side



of the Moon sounded amazing.

I also designed a cereal grain moisture meter and gained a "provisional specification" patent for my "Novel technique for measuring the moisture content of cereal grain" and subsequently built them myself (which required some lead tin soldering) and sold several thousand of them. Some farmers still prefer my meters to the modern digital devices.

Later I developed and built touch volume control and fully electronic switching with no mechanical contacts 6 months before it was commercially available, but I had waited 18 months for parts from America to be able to do it. That amplifier was extremely advanced with ultra-low distortion, huge dynamic range and ultra-low noise. I still have the speakers I built for that system. They are the size of refrigerators and weigh around 80 kgs each and I use them every day.

It became apparent that electronics alone wouldn't provide an adequate income in a small town, so I began repairing other appliances as well, fridges, washing machines etc. My qualifications now included "Tradesman Radio", "Refrigeration Mechanic" and "Electrician".

My family and work meant that I had little time for my sound system hobby, and my afterhours were now taken up by work so my exposure to lead solder and other toxics was still high. Work took up around 80 hours each week. I joined a gym to maintain my strength for the heavy work I did and was repping over 600 pound on the leg press.

Around 30 years ago (1996) I was concerned by lead toxicity, so my doctor took blood for testing. The lead level was 5 micrograms per decilitre (5 ug/dL) but he told me since it was below 10 ug/dL I shouldn't worry about it, so I didn't.

I began to suffer from very strong pain which was first diagnosed as degenerative disc disease (DDD) and widespread psoriasis. The latter was mostly triggered by food sensitivities I had developed. Then in 2005, our youngest son, at 17, was killed while a passenger in a car crash. It was very traumatic for Sharon and I.

He was a fantastic kid. Very bright and capable. He set school records in middle- and long-distance running, joined an Adelaide athletics club (lots of travelling) and won most points for his age group several years. Was ranked highest in the state in age pole vault and state champion triple jumper. Coaches wanted him to compete at the 2012 Olympics. Honors in classical piano and received a full scholarship to one of Adelaide's top colleges on his own merit. Also honours in state-based school maths and science tests. Received the Arts Award for Drama for two years at the college where a boarder's garden now carries his name. The sports day trophy at his primary school is now also named in his honour and also the most points trophy for his age group at the sports club.

I miss him.

The subsequent psychological effects gave rise to type 2 diabetes and depression. Constant pain became a problem, so I was prescribed various opioids for a few years. Codeine, Tramadol, Tapentadol, Endone and others. Between opioids and lead poisoning my gut started playing up so Movicol became and continues to be a nightly ritual.

I was diagnosed with diffuse idiopathic skeletal hypertrophy "DISH" disease after x-rays in



2010. Then in 2011, after hitting my thumb with a hammer, developed fungal septic shock after just 4 days. I hadn't been looking after myself, so the diabetes suppressed my immune system. The doctor was sure I would die so he shipped me to the [Royal Adelaide Hospital](#) (RAH) in a plane. Well, much to his surprise, I survived but developed functional myoclonus which, several years later forced me to retire early and my immune system has still not fully recovered. Things were going downhill.

I started seeing a nutritionist who was very helpful and after a while recommended a very good doctor who did some unconventional pain therapy. The doctor thought I might have chronic lead poisoning so arranged a hair [trace mineral](#) analysis (HTMA). I remember the out-of-the-blue mid-Thursday afternoon phone call well. "You've got an appointment 10:30 tomorrow morning" she announced. I asked if the results were back which she confirmed. It showed the second highest lead level she had ever seen, along with [high](#) Aluminium, Antimony, Arsenic, Cadmium and Uranium. The lead in solder is never pure. I began IV DMSA (intravenous Dimercapto succinic acid) chelation on the spot which continued for months. Then after a few months break did a second hair analysis. The levels had increased. My overall toxicity was now over 100% [of the normal HTMA toxic metal levels for a "representative" sample of the population](#). Oh my God, am I going to die? No, I was just going to get sicker. IV chelation started again.

I've had many IV and oral chelations since then and have another booked for late February this year (2026). There is a very good [chelation clinic](#) in Belair near Adelaide. It was expensive, but had to be done and involved over 6 hours of travel each time.

During this time I had eliminated all environmental and minimised occupational exposure [to lead](#) so the problem was now entirely due to my existing body [lead](#) burden.

2012, I was diagnosed with a hiatus hernia and reflux disease, then in 2013 it was heart disease. In 2015 it was diverticulitis and chronic constipation. I also joined a drug trial for a METAP2 inhibitor that year [because ???](#). It felt so good that I got back into my gym and trained for a 12km City-Bay fun run but only as a walk. I was doing so well that I pushed the last 500m too hard and collapsed across the finish line. I beat my best training time by nearly 2 minutes at 1hr 34min 23 sec. I was walking past joggers. Pretty good for a 60yo but spent 4 days in a hospital cardio ward. So began my heart problems.

2016 I developed hypothyroidism and grew my first kidney stone which was "blown up" by ultrasound and mostly removed. The last part came out in an Adelaide Airport toilet several weeks later. The surgeon was a bit rough and damaged my kidney. That was the worst pain I have ever had. So, when another stone developed several years later, I took advice from my favourite doctor and started taking well over 300mg of Vit B6 each day to dissolve it. This only works on some stones. I also had lemon every day and after 30 days another scan showed it was gone. The doctor didn't tell me to stop the Vit B6 and I didn't want another stone so I kept taking it.

2017 brought ocular hypertension and laser work to fix it. Oh, and I broke my foot.

2018 saw my abdominal myoclonus flare up so bad that after 5 days of spasticity in hospital, I



was told to make some changes in my life. We shut down our second business, and I retired early now with Valium on hand for the flare ups. Later I had a candida overgrowth in my gut, lost 7kg in 12 days and was hospitalised for 2 weeks. Spent time taking Nilstat and Fungilin after that.

2019 was interesting. During our longest ever holiday, 5 weeks in England and Europe, I had 2 cardiac events which I didn't recognise at the time. One in the middle of upstairs Palace of Versailles and the other in a Chinese airport on our journey home. I went back to the cardiologist I had seen before and he said "Kim, there's nothing wrong with you. What do you want to do?". My reply "With my family history, I'd rather be safe than sorry" so he booked me for an angiogram that week.

There I was, Sharon in the waiting room and me floating around the ceiling in the theatre. I was so high on fentanyl and other stuff. I heard the cardio ask for a 16 by 3.5 so I knew I was getting a stent but didn't care. When they finished, two nurses went to tell Sharon, and she freaked out "He only came in for a checkup". Turns out I was 95% blocked on the left and 65% blocked on the first branch on the right but he didn't do the right because it was too difficult. It was left for later.

I was rather upset next morning when he walked into my room and the first thing he said was "Well, Kim you weren't faking it after all." Was that a comment on his impression of me, or his competence? I also had numerous micro blockages so chest pain would persist and began taking numerous cardio medications.

7 weeks later a different cardiologist did that right stent.

2020 brought a kidney cyst, enlarged prostate (BPH), micro eye aneurisms, central sleep apnoea (CSA) and Cheyne Stokes respiration (CSR), spinal stenosis with nerve root compression at multiple levels and peripheral neuropathy. Wasn't a good year.

I discovered I had bradycardia in 2022 with pulse rate dropping into the 30s occasionally and had my left hip and knee replaced. The peripheral neuropathy was now severe. The hip and knee jobs didn't work out for me so I won't ever have the other side done, ever!

2023 was another terrible year. Pain was very high and there were other psychological problems, so I lost it. I had planned for a while how I would suicide and had things in place. Something non-violent and painless. I had been stockpiling opioids and antidepressants for some time. A police officer found me before I had ingested enough and I was institutionalised for several weeks. The "other psychological problems" were removed from our house, so I returned home. That was almost 3 years ago now and I still fight with my demons every day but those close to me keep me going.

2024 saw surgery to remove the last of my top teeth. Reflux disease had caused that. **Though my lead exposure probably didn't help.**

2025 came with cataracts (**which can be caused by lead poisoning**), enlarged right ventricle and another candida overgrowth now with a gastric bleed.

That brings me to now. I had my third heart stent Jan 19th this year (**2026**). Once again "nothing was wrong with me" when I was 80% blocked on the right and now also have severe



coronary artery calcification.

Well, here I am sitting at my desk, freaking out, worried about everything and searching for answers. My GP told me he "I don't know how to treat you" and my cardio said, "you're the most complicated patient I've had in a long time". It feels like doctors can't treat everything, so they don't treat anything. I'm beginning to direct my doctors to do what I need. I've had to research and learn a lot about this infirmity. Last year my best friend, of 57 years, and I joked that we had more lives than cats because we have each dodged a lot of bullets. It appears I am "luckier" than him, I guess, because he died Jan 1st 2026.

RIP Garry.

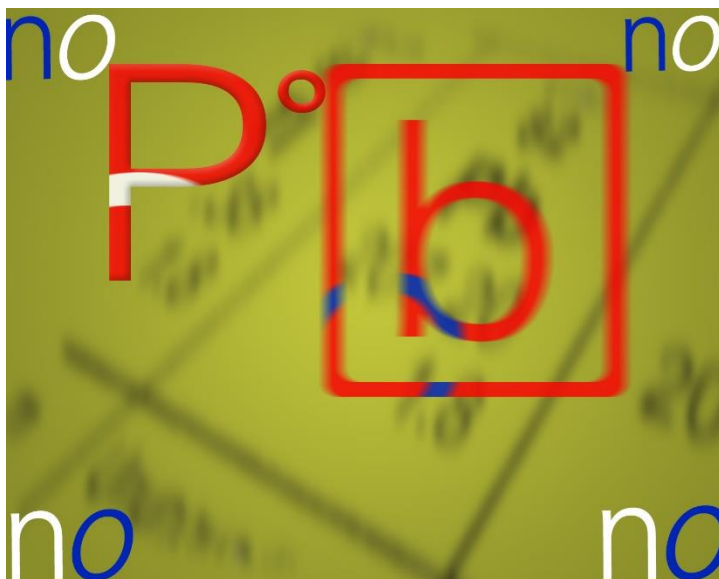
I try very hard to look like there's nothing wrong with me, that's just my pride taking control. Sometimes I wonder if death is my only avenue for healing. I certainly don't want to live to a "ripe old age" because for me it would be a "rotten old age".

There are many things I have omitted in this story, I've tried to keep it concise. I am currently taking around 50 medications every day. Even with government support it still amounts to over \$700 per month. Much of my meds are not covered by the PBS ([Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme](#)). I'm now on ketamine, CBD oil and THC for pain but it's losing its efficacy. Don't know where to next. I'm not looking forward to it.

I was exposed to lead for around 53 years, now I take precautions. Kim

Make electronics lead-free globally, to protect workers and kids

In the first year that Volcano Art Prize (VAP) was run by The LEAD Group – 2012 - this prize-winning graphic and message was entered by:



Artist: Dennis Leight

Title: Pb - No Lead Squared.

Lead-Safety Message: Making electronics lead-free globally, will protect electronics workers, e-waste recyclers (including many child-labourers in Africa and Asia) and the environment from lead.

URL:

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/pb/>



Why is bone lead important?

[Editor's note: the following post by Kids with Lead Poisoning FB Group moderator Dr Ulrich "Rick" Mack, is a good introduction to the author, who is the most recent addition to The LEAD Group's "Lead Away" category of Lead Safe World Partners at <https://leadsafeworld.com/partners/lead-away/>. Dr Mack became a Member of The LEAD Group's Technical Advisory Board on 22nd May 2025 and has since helped multiple LEAD Group clients and more recently FB Group members in multiple countries to understand and overcome their workplace and residential lead exposures. You can see my comment on this post below.]

URL :

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/375900123128937/permalink/1865860550799546/?mibextid=wwXifr&rdid=FkMdRD81hUU4mIz9#>

Rick Mack

Moderator

· **15th March 2026** ·

I've already talked about bone lead in the two posts about blood lead levels. Bone lead represents a longer-term risk to a child and an adult because even if you can avoid any further lead exposure, you carry your own source of lead in your bones, from previous exposure.

I've stated that bone lead contributes to your blood lead levels, and I've mentioned my wife's chelation cookies, but I haven't yet done a proper job of telling you what chelation is all about. That's next on the list but I want to finish the story on bone lead first.

There have been a lot of clinical studies where they've looked at the effects of chelation on children's blood lead levels. They showed that chelation lowers the blood lead level, **but when chelation is stopped**, blood lead levels go back up. They don't rise as far as before chelation, but that wasn't noted and the increase in blood lead levels after chelation was stopped was called **rebound**. Typically, after 2-3 months the symptoms that had been relieved by chelation often reappeared.

The conclusion in far too many of the studies was that chelation wasn't effective because of the rebound and that "symptoms" returned. The sad fact that really showcases the ignorance about bone lead, is that lead in bone wasn't mentioned. This is despite earlier cadaver analysis that showed that most of the body's lead was in the bones.

Where did they think that the lead responsible for an increase in blood lead levels and the renewed symptoms came from?

In medicine, in any disease condition, we can either treat the symptoms, or look for a cure. Chelation will treat the symptoms, but if we want a cure for lead-poisoning then chelation has to be continued until it gets rid of ALL the lead in bone. The challenge is that it is a very slow process and Medicine likes quick solutions.

If you have a lot of lead in your bones from previous exposure, it can take a long time (many months to years) to get rid of all the lead, even with chelation. But you can speed things up.

< **Kids with Lead Poisoning**





Anything that increases bone resorption will release lead from bone, and IF a chelator is there to remove the lead, it will speed up removal from the body. Calcium competes with lead, so if you have more calcium in your diet, lead is more likely to be replaced by calcium. Vitamin D increases bone resorption and calcium (and lead) absorption from the gut, so If a chelator is present that lead will be removed.

One very real scenario where lead is released more quickly from bone is during pregnancy and breastfeeding, and IF a chelator is present to remove the lead, the risk to the child is much lower. Osteoporosis and blood cancer also release lead from bone, and again, if a chelator is present, it will remove lead.

There have been case studies where older post-menopausal women with dementia symptoms were actually found to be lead-poisoned due to lead released from bone. There are also many neurological conditions which are caused by lead and improved by the removal of lead.

That's perhaps not terribly relevant to children, but overall I'm trying to point out that "natural" processes and situations that cause lead to be released from bone can be used as an opportunity to remove more lead from the body and provide protection.

I'd better add that sulphur-containing foods help displace lead from sulphur-enzymes and a bit of extra zinc is helpful as well in competing with lead in zinc-enzymes. Things like zeolites (TRS) that stop lead being absorbed are quite effective, as long as you're aware that zeolites bind a lot of stuff, some of which is beneficial. There are most certainly toxins (including lead) in the gut and TRS can remove them. But it doesn't remove lead from the body.

The most important goal has to be ridding the body of lead, which ultimately means ridding the bones of lead. A lot of things can help that process, but the most efficient and cost-effective way to remove lead that is in the circulation due to release from bone is using a chelator.

If you're trying to get rid of lead in your children's bodies, you have to be aware there is no quick fix. Chelation will remove the lead affecting their organs and produce fast results in terms of symptom relief, but your children aren't cured of lead poisoning until their bone lead is gone.

COMMENT:

Elizabeth O'Brien

That's very well explained thanks Rick. I would add that if you've requested a blood lead series referral from your child's doctor, then by retesting their blood lead level as frequently as circumstances allow, you track and can figure out when that period of many months or years of chelation can end. And that all the while that you are chelating, you of course need to be ensuring no new lead is coming in - typically by lab testing surface dust wipes, soil, degraded paint, drinking water and foods - AND, most importantly, you need to be doing everything you can to overcome the symptoms of lead poisoning eg by talking and reading to children (a lot!), singing with them, playing puzzles, doing gym or martial arts or dancing and other balance activities, art and writing activities and having their hearing and eyesight tested so you can overcome any deficits early.



Lead in bones in lead

In the second year that Volcano Art Prize (VAP) was run by The LEAD Group – 2013 - this prize-winning graphic and message was entered by:

Artist: Tony Lennon, Sculptor

Title: Lead in Bones in Lead.

Lead-Safety Message: 2013 VAP Entry. Title: Lead in Bones in Lead. Lead-Safety Message: As the lead stored in your bones leaches into your blood as you age, so you get closer to the grave.

Description of Work: Animal bones found in the bush, safely set in molten lead

URL: <https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/lead-in-bones-in-lead/>





Blood lead levels above 5ug/dL need action

By Dr Rick Mack, BSc PhD (UQ Medicine), Member, The LEAD Group's Technical Advisory Board

LeadToX.blog <https://leadtox.blog>;

<https://leadsafeworld.com/partners/lead-away/>

Kids with Lead Poisoning <https://www.facebook.com/groups/375900123128937>

Moderator

· **16th March 2026** ·

[URL:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/375900123128937/permalink/1867294027322865/?mibextid=wwXlfr&rdid=bHPaBLzhv3abACTV#>]

I've made the point several times that any blood level above 5ug/dL needs to be actioned. My personal opinion is anything above 2ug/dL is something that needs to be treated. But I'd like to provide some real clinical data to stress that I'm not making this up.

I think I can give you a pretty good idea with 2 very good reviews that were written in 2003 and 2017. I'm quoting the DOI reference for these articles because that's a shorthand way of accessing the articles.

The first is "**Lead neurotoxicity in children: basic mechanisms and clinical correlates**" by Theodore I. Lidsky and Jay S. Schneider. (DOI:

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/brain/awg014>) This article makes the point that the brain is affected by extremely low levels of lead and presents exhaustive details of those actions if you want to delve a lot deeper.

They make the following comment:

Accordingly, even after lead levels in the blood have decreased to seemingly insignificant concentrations, the lead that has been deposited in the brain continues to exert its neurotoxic influence. Thus, once an elevated blood lead concentration has been detected, it is too late to prevent lead's deleterious effects on the developing brain.

This fact, plus the very low blood lead levels established to negatively impact development, indicate that the only way to prevent childhood lead poisoning is to prevent lead from ever getting into children's bodies.

I don't agree with the **too late** comment because work by Dr Thomas Guilarte's group indicates it's never too late. It's clear though that lead in your child's bones and brain is a very real and continuing danger.

The second review is: "**Both physiology and epidemiology support zero tolerable Blood Lead Levels**", by Syeda T. Shefa and Paul Heroux. (DOI:

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.toxlet.2017.08.015>)

The quote that matters is:

The brain, along with the kidneys, are critically susceptible to lead toxicity for their hosting



of high affinity lead binding proteins, and very sensitive physiology. Prolonged low-lead exposure frequently remains unrecognized, causes subtle changes in these organ systems, and manifests later at an irreversible stage.

Many of the effects of lead are reversible.

I am appalled to read about kids that have blood lead levels well above 5ug/dL where doctors offer no solution. This is about your child's future.

COMMENTS:

Sophie Reakes

My son has lead poisoning

His levels were 46 ug/dL

And he had chelation.

His levels are now 15.95 ug/Dl.

And we have to go back to the hospital in 2/3 weeks for more bloods.

18h

Rick Mack

That's pretty serious because a blood lead that high can lead to encephalopathy, essentially brain swelling which can be deadly. Chelation was absolutely necessary and it's good that the hospital is doing follow-up intervention.

If you're lucky enough to be in New York at the Montefiore Medical Center you're in good hands.

Otherwise you have to consider what happens when the hospital says they've done everything they can. Please read my posts to get background information. I'd like to encourage you to consider chelation cookies (see my post). If you have any questions, just message me or just reply.

COMMENT:

Elizabeth O'Brien

The LEAD Group charity, based in Australia, under the direction of Professors Bruce Lanphear, Mark Taylor and the late great Chris Winder have been giving advice on exactly what actions to take for anyone with a blood lead level over 1ug/dL for more than 15 years now. Actions begin with taking a personal history, testing most likely environmental sources at a lab via a LEAD Group Kit and advising on priority actions to take in response to the results. We also have comprehensive advice online and in emailable Info Packs about Foods to fight Lead Poisoning, How to Lead-Safely

Manage Lead Paint, Lead-Contaminated Ceiling Void (or Attic) Dust, How to Remove Carpet and Get your Chimney Dust and Ash removed and Manage LeadLighting, etc. In 2025 we added an emailable Info Pack on Dr Ulrich and Sally Mack's oral chelation EDTA biscuits for removing lead from the body over months and years. This Rick for this solution which has been sadly absent from our arsenal for the 34 years we were operating without being



impressed with any previously proposed lead removal solution. I am 69 and after a year of oral EDTA on biscuits, seeded crackers, breads and cakes daily, have for the first time in 35 years finally got my blood lead down to 1ug/dL - all thanks to Rick Mack! [See the Volcano Art Prize entry below.]

56% drop in blood lead in just over a year of low dose oral EDTA chelation



2025 Volcano Art Prize Entry. Artist: Grandma Lead [aka Elizabeth O'Brien].

Title: Daily Detox. **Lead-Safety Message:** In February 2025 I added CaEDTA biscuits or crackers and then FeEDTA crackers or bread to my usual breakfast &/or lunch lead detox foods (fresh ginger and garlic, garlic paste and garlic-infused oil, red onion, coriander &/or parsley, mixed pepitas, sunflower & black & white sesame seeds, sesame seed halva, psyllium, wild blueberries, orange rind in syrup, lime/lemon zest & juice, a brazil nut, LivOn Vit C, Calcium with Vit D, Magnesium) then in September 2025 I added RC3 Sea Minerals in milk, omega-3 oil, creatine (after it was ok'ed by my GP) & pistachio nuts & sour cherries for dementia prevention and improved sleep (when the brain is being detoxed). I've brought my blood lead level down over this last year by 56% on this daily lead detox regime.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/daily-detox/>



LEAPP Alliance Report towards UK Lead Safety

Tim Pye reported to The LEAD Group Annual General Meeting held on 22nd October 2025, on the activities of: LEAPP Alliance (UK) - Lead Exposure and Poisoning Prevention Alliance. Tim's report was followed by a Q&A – Question and Answer session.

Tim Pye: A fantastic podcast series by Laura Hughes – with lots of contributions by LEAPP Alliance supporters to this series - will begin to be broadcast today – it's Season 3 Untold: Toxic Legacy, Ep. 1 – Silent Danger at

<https://open.spotify.com/episode/6Rmmx7zmSmpq2JnkXfire2> with the Transcript available at <https://www.ft.com/content/f1a2951a-bfed-44b7-96bc-05db6c50d5ba> - on the Financial Times UK website. [Episode description:

Laura Hughes receives a tip that horses are dropping dead in Wales. As she investigates, she finds decades of academic studies researching the problem. She learns these aren't isolated incidents. Something is spreading across the countryside. It's undetectable to humans, nobody knows it's there – until they fall ill.

For more information on how to live safely with lead, please visit the LEAPP Alliance - <https://leappalliance.org.uk/> website.]

On November 5th 2025 Podcast: "[Toxic Legacy, #3](#) – The Whisper and Scream" will be broadcast.

Transcript: "[UK reconsiders screening for lead poisoning in children](#)"

The article includes this striking quote - A spokesperson for the Department of Health and Social Care stated it is "*unacceptable that anyone in this country in the 21st century should fall victim to lead poisoning.*"

- Also from Laura, this on Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DQGyqTUjCyF>
- From the British Coatings Federation, a new version of their PaintSafe web page and leaflets. We had input into this. <https://coatings.org.uk/page/PaintSafe>.
- From the UK Health Security Agency on [X](#) and [BlueSky](#)

LEAPP Alliance is open to all to join at <https://leappalliance.org.uk/join/> and you can read about our campaigns at <https://leappalliance.org.uk/campaign/> and you are all invited to our annual meeting tomorrow online re:

- Summary of the past year
- Guest speakers:
 - Professor Seif Shaheen, Professor of Life Course Epidemiology, Queen Mary University of London
 - Dr Simon Reddy, Master Plumber, Lead in the Water
- Current initiatives – including 9 sign-on letters I've drafted



•Future format of the LEAPP Alliance

Finally, we are on the lookout for a good short list of health effects of lead. I know about the ATSDR Lead Toxicological Profile – <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxprofiles/tp13.pdf> - but it is very long.

Elizabeth O'Brien: And the NTP Lead Monograph is great but even longer, being some 1200 pages including 4 appendices. One of The LEAD Group's most popular fact sheets for downloading and that we've updated regularly to take with us to doctor education expos is the seven-page <https://leadsafeworld.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/The-LEAD-Group-Fact-Sheet-Health-Impacts-of-Lead-Poisoning-202009.pdf>, originally published as Fact Sheet #7 in 1998 – <https://lead.org.au/fs/fst7.html> - *Health Impacts of Lead Poisoning*. Of course, if anyone wanted to update the Sept 2020 version, using the same format - dot points listed headings for each body system and showing numbered references (mostly journal articles) that demonstrate each of the various impacts, then they'd be most welcome to do so.

Tim Pye: Everyone has some lead left in their bones by the time they die.

Anna: I asked a UK crematorium for their emissions data which they gave me and I ran a local campaign to stop wood burning in Australia (because there's lead in wood at a level dependent on the soil lead contamination level), and in the UK I asked people removing the self-adhesive lead strips from our windows to wear PPE and they asked "what is PPE?"

Tim Pye: the pieces of glass between the lead comes are called quarries. I've used Fluorospec to show loads of lead in dust beneath leaded windows. Our legislation says you can't use lead in building work etc if there's a safer alternative but no one pays any attention to it. Cooper Burnett in the US is doing a Right-to-Know campaign. Europe has just banned leaded AvGas but one company has been given a 7-year extension to use it. The UK still makes all the legally made TEL in the world and we have not banned AvGas.

The European Union ban on tetraethyl lead from 5th May 2025 is in the Commission Regulation (EU) 2022/586 of 8 April 2022. This can be found at this link - <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2022/586/oj>. However, Shell has been granted approval to continue manufacture of fuel containing tetraethyl lead until 2032. Two other manufacturers have also applied for approval.

2023 Volcano Art Prize Entry by Artist: Tim Pye.
Title: Peebee The Elephant. Lead-Safety Message:
Lead: The big, grey, dangerous, heavy element in the room. It could be your room.

URL: <https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/peebee-the-elephant/>





Max Mawby's Report on Union Action for Lead Safety in Australia

At The LEAD Group's AGM on 22nd October 2025 – Max Mawby, Power Industry Organiser for CEPU SA (South Australia) representing Union members in the Electricity Supply and Contracting Industry sector, to report on Chris Green & Sean Gibbons who were lead-poisoned from working at the AGL Torrens Island Power station and the CEPU's response.

Max Mawby's report to the AGM was supported by a slide show including some news video. Dropbox link to slide show -

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/jez8ow7jwh4rg3berzvrs/ALtoTohzLLqeOmFu83sYRlE?rlkey=vo20vev5y1jtke6ct81pmg5vp&st=iwa8g6xq&dl=0>

- **AGL workers poisoned by Lead** - <https://youtu.be/3iyZkbudMD8?si=XeeyO9UA-BqdWvpY>
- **Criminal proceedings launched against AGL over 'unsafe' lead levels** | **ABC NEWS** https://youtu.be/wx_rOynjSpo?si=oFLrHJpq921eXpKD
- **Lead in Bunnings hardware stores** - <https://youtu.be/FbRHENrTB-A?si=oejRnbDLhmACfuwR>

Max Mawby: In Australia, employers only have to treat work as lead risk work if the blood lead (PbB) could exceed 20ug/dL or 5ug/dL for reproductive females. There's no standard OHS Pb fact sheet so employers of lead risk workers can provide any information they choose. We've proposed a better system. You have to hit 30 ug/dL or 10 ug/dL for females of reproductive capacity before being removed from lead risk work in Australia.

Tim Pye: The suspension level is currently 60 ug/dL in the UK but there's a plan to reduce that to 30 ug/dL in 2026 and 15 ug/dL in 2028 for most workers, but to 5 ug/dL by 2028 for women of childbearing capacity. There is also an action level with a proposal for that to be 10ug/dL for most workers and 2 ug/dL for women of childbearing capacity by 2028.

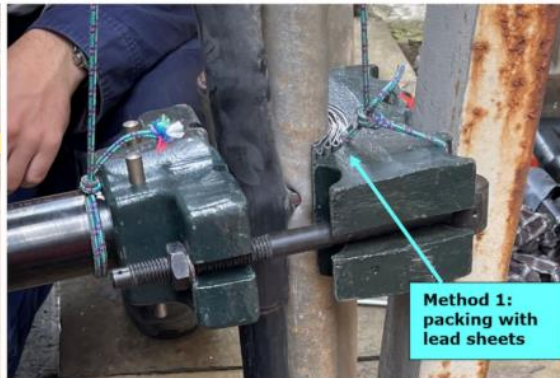
Ananda Card: In New Zealand, we have no blood lead level at which a worker must be removed from lead risk work. Lead workers get sick and can't work so they go on a disability pension for the rest of their lives.

Max Mawby (MM): SWA doc says do surface wipe sampling in place of air Pb but they provide no guidance on what the surface dust wipe lead level in the workplace should be before action is taken.

Elizabeth O'Brien (EO): since the revision of the Australian Standard on Lead Paint Management in 2017, there's been no dust wipe lead clearance level even for contractors managing lead paint in homes (they're supposed to consult an expert and agree to comply with what the expert says but that simply never happens and mostly dust wipes are not



collected even at the end of the paint management job) and the 1998 Lead Paint Management clearance level was astronomical so The LEAD Group Kit Interpretation Guide has for many years, used the US Lead Paint Dust Wipe Clearance level, but actually one tenth of the 12 ug/ft² level found to keep most children below 10ug/dL in US research in homes [by Dixon et al (2008) at <https://ehp.niehs.nih.gov/doi/full/10.1289/ehp.11918>], because we aim to keep



all blood lead levels below 1 ug/dL; and for occupational dust wipe lead clearance, LEAD Group Kits have always used the US level - making Posted LEAD Group Kits extremely



Bunnings Lead On Shelves



helpful both in homes and workplaces - everyone here should be using them! I noticed that you did achieve packaging of lead sheet in Bunnings stores (as per slide 7, pictured) but that their packaging is very flimsy and often broken.

MM: Yes we have seen broken cellophane or paper packaging in many stores and noticed that when the packaging was introduced, it was simply placed on the incredibly dusty shelves that had previously held the unwrapped lead sheeting.

MM: On 1/9/24 the law changed and I went to collect surface dust wipes at a worksite where one of our Union members had been lead poisoned but I was noticed collecting the samples and I was stopped from taking the samples off-site. SWA have appointed Prof Karen Walker-Bone to lead the Monash Uni research on blood lead and bone lead testing for workers. [See <https://lens.monash.edu/@karen-walker-bone>] We've put forward a Working with Lead Code of Practice which includes dust wipe clearance testing. We've only had one meeting but I'll propose something about a more stringent occupational dust wipe lead clearance level

EO: and hopefully one that takes in to account that some workplaces (like the workplaces of paint management contractors) return to being or become homes with young children or indoor pets or backyard chickens once the contractor has finished the job. Max, that was a fantastic presentation.




Entries in Volcano Art Prize 2025 – including Prize Winning & Highly Commended Images

Many thanks to our sponsor Pictureproducts, all our entrants and the VAP 2025 Judge, Artist, Michael Maratea!

Note: this list shows the Volcano Art Prize (VAP) 2025 entries, in the approximate order that they appeared on the website <https://volcanoartprize.com/> (see the LID or LEAD Group Library Identification number preceding each image below) when the **VAP 2025 Judge, Michael**, judged them.

Michael's high commendations and decisions on the Joint First Prize winners of the \$400 (\$200 each) cash prize, and the winners of the 30 Pictureproducts mugs

from our sponsor  , have been marked on this list. Congratulations to cash winners: Leo Manttan and stop-motion video-makers Phoenix and Alex Jewson from Australia!

Once people clicked the thumbs-up buttons on their favourite 2025 VAP entries at www.volcanoartprize.com up to the voting deadline of Thurs 20th Nov 2025, the winner of the People's Choice cash prize of \$200 was determined to be Paula Jacobe, Age: 10, from the Philippines.



Volcano Art Prize



LID 28874



Artist: Zoe Lu, Age 7, School: Creative Einstein

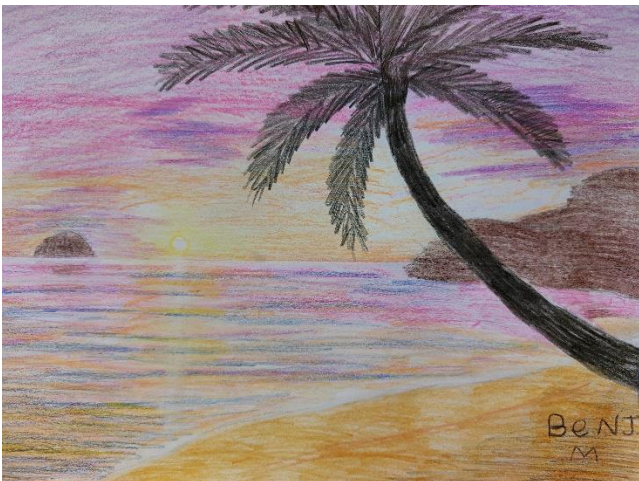
Title: Palm Island

Lead-Safety Message: Remote First Nations communities like Palm Island community where blood lead testing has never been done despite all the usual lead hazards being present, would benefit greatly by a portable XRF bone lead testing program.

Description of Work: Coloured pencil drawing.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/palm-island/>

LID 28881



Artist: Benji Muthukrishna, Age: 8, School Name: Creative Einstein

Title: Palm Islands Sunrise

Lead-Safety Message: Indigenous Australians such as those living on Palm Island, are more likely to have higher blood lead levels than non-Indigenous Australians. Governments should make efforts to test blood lead levels in order to Close the Gap for a brighter tomorrow.

Description of Work: Coloured pencil drawing.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/palm-islands-sunrise/>



LID 28882



Artist: Benji Muthukrishna, Age: 8, School Name: Creative Einstein

Title: Avocado Halves

Lead-Safety Message: Higher serum (blood) levels of α -carotene/ β -carotene, α -cryptoxanthin/ β -cryptoxanthin and other carotenoids – the pigments which make avocado flesh yellowish - are associated with lower blood lead levels.

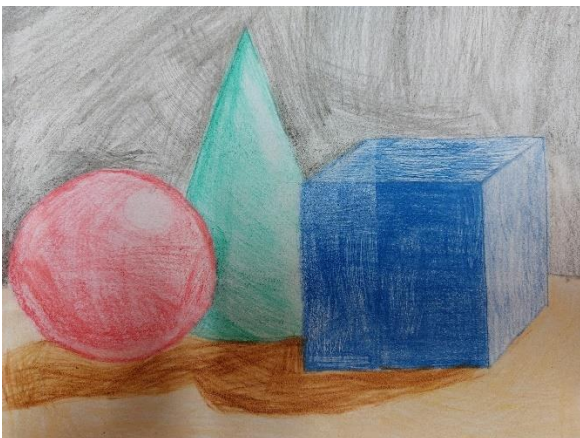
Description of Work: Coloured pencil drawing. References for Message:

<https://lead.org.au/lanv10n2/lanv10n2-8.html> and

<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC2796540/#>

URL: <https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/avocado-halves/>

Highly Commended by the Judge - LID 28883



Artist's Name: Benji Muthukrishna, Age: 8, School Name: Creative Einstein,

Title: Coloured Shapes

Lead-Safety Message: In the old days, “lead pencils” had lead in them and the pigments in yellow, orange, red, green and brown pencil cores were lead pigments and lead paint was used on the outside too but now lead is strictly limited in and on what we still call “lead” (but is actually graphite) pencils and coloured pencils.

Description of Work: Colouring pencils on paper.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/coloured-shapes/>



Highly Commended by the Judge LID 28884



Artist's Name: David Suh, Age: 10, School Name: Creative Einstein

Title: I Love Avocados

Lead-Safety Message: Tree fruits like avocados are not lead contaminated even when their soil is, and the carotenes in the yellow flesh may help remove lead from the body.

Description of Work: Colouring pencils on paper.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/i-love-avocados/>

LID 28885



Artist's Name: Zoe Lu, Age: 7, School Name: Creative Einstein

Title: Shape Shadows

Lead-Safety Message: Like a shadow, Lead gets into the brain by "pretending" to be Calcium. Lead sneaks into brain cells and kills cells and breaks up cell-to-cell communication, thus causing short attention span, poor memory and trouble learning.

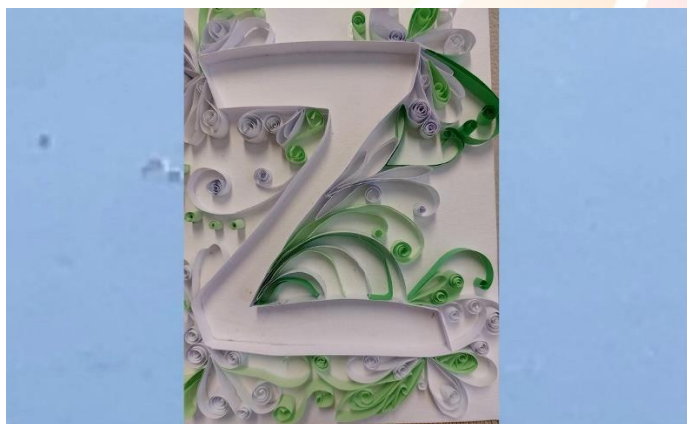
Description of Work: Colouring pencils on paper. Lead Safety Message from

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Lead_in_the_Head.png

URL: <https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/shape-shadows/>



LID 28888



Artist: Zoe Lu, Age: 7, School Name: Creative Einstein

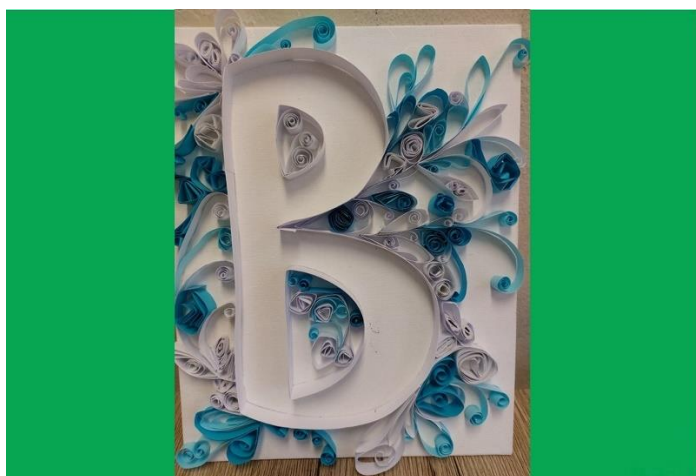
Title: Z is for Zoe

Lead-Safety Message: Z is also for Zinc. Zinc helps over 300 enzymes to work in our body. Lead poisoning involves lead binding to enzymes in place of the zinc or iron etc, inhibiting them; it's reversible because chelation with EDTA removes lead, restoring enzyme activity.

Description of Work: Coloured quilling paper cut, curled, and glued to a board. Lead Safety Message from: <https://lead.org.au/lanv10n2/lanv10n2-14.html>; <https://www.vaia.com/en-us/textbooks/chemistry/fundamentals-of-general-organic-and-biological-chemistry-2017-edition/chapter-19/problem-63-one-mechanism-by-which-lead-exerts-its-poisonous/> and <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/10801957/#>

URL: <https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/z-is-for-zoe/>

LID 28889



Artist: Benji Muthukrishna, Age: 8, School Name: Creative Einstein

Title: B is for Benji.

Lead-Safety Message: B is also for Bonus. The only way to avoid harm from lead in your body is to remove it. Chelators like EDTA bind to the lead in your blood so this biotoxin can be removed. As a



bonus, lead removal may reverse some of the bad effects of lead.

Description of Work: Coloured quilling paper cut, curled, and glued to a board.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/b-is-for-benji/>

LID 28890



Artist: David Suh, Age: 10, School Name: Creative Einstein

Title: D is for David

Lead-Safety Message: D is also for Delicious. Lead distorts the metabolism of Vitamin D, reducing the amount transformed into the form most useful to the human body. So I get my Vitamin D from sunshine and from delicious fish like haddock, salmon and sardines.

Description of Work: Coloured quilling paper cut, curled, and glued to a board. Reference for Lead-

Safety Message: <https://lead.org.au/lanv10n2/lanv10n2-10.html> - *Vitamin D - Nutrition to Fight Lead Poisoning*, in LEAD Action News vol 10 no 2 (LANv10n2), by Robert Taylor, The LEAD Group Inc.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/d-is-for-david/>



Highly Commended by the Judge - LID 28891



Artist: Zoe Lu, Age: 7, School Name: Creative Einstein

Title: Plain Sailing

Lead-Safety Message: Once lead-using industries like aviation fuel additive and paint manufacturers stop adding lead to their products to increase their profits, and we work out how to collect or abate all the lead contamination in children's environments, growing up unleaded will be plain sailing.

Description of Work: Colouring pencils on paper.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/plain-sailing/>



mug winner! LID 28892



Artist's Name: Benji Muthukrishna, Age: 8, School Name: Creative Einstein

Title: Sunset Clause

Lead-Safety Message: Australia needs a sunset clause, meaning a legislated date to cease the use of leaded aviation fuel. A good date would be 2030 or earlier.

Description of Work: Colouring pencils on paper.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/sunset-clause/>



LID 28893



Artist: Benji Muthukrishna, Age: 8, School Name: Creative Einstein

Title: New Era in China

Lead-Safety Message: Unlike in the past in China, when the industrial chelator TMT was mixed into contaminated sewage the TMT completely passivated the heavy metals so that food crop plants fertilised by the treated sewage were free of heavy metals, *including lead*.

Description of Work: Colouring pencils on paper. Lead-Safety Message from www.leadtox.blog by Dr Ulrich Mack.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/new-era-in-china/>

Highly Commended by the Judge - LID 28894



Artist: David Suh, Age: 10, School Name: Creative Einstein

Title: Past the Point

Lead-Safety Message: If we can stop kids being lead poisoned and get the lead out of everyone, we can create a global population smart enough to avert a climate crisis. We are not yet past the point of no return.

Description of Work: Colouring pencils on paper. Reference for Lead-Safety Message: The LEAD Group Inc [2023 December – LEAD Action News v21n4 – Model National Lead Safety Policy and 2023 VAP](#)

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/past-the-point/>



Highly Commended by the Judge LID 28895



Artist: Zoe Lu, Age: 7, School Name: Creative Einstein

Title: Every New Year

Lead-Safety Message: Every new year brings more global warming and climate disturbances. What are you going to do this year to avert the crisis? Move your money to a green bank, invest in super that doesn't invest in fossil fuels, switch from gas to electricity, get solar panels, ...?

Description of Work: Colouring pencils on paper.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/every-new-year/>



mug winner! LID 28896



Artist: Zoe Lu, Age: 7, School Name: Creative Einstein

Title: Flying

Lead-Safety Message: Whether they fly across the sun or the moon, over the land or the oceans, earth's creatures all depend on us to keep their home lead-safe and avoid a climate crisis.

Description of Work: Colouring pencils on paper.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/flying/>



Highly Commended by the Judge - LID 28897



Artist: Benji Muthukrishna, Age: 8, School Name: Creative Einstein

Title: Moonlit Dolphin Porpoising

Lead-Safety Message: Let dolphins thrive in the moonlight, not die by stranding themselves on beaches. Heavy metal exposure like lead, mercury and cadmium, has been linked to degenerative heart disease, immunodeficiency and increased parasite infestations, among other disease risks in stranded dolphins and whales. Keep heavy metals out of stormwater and the sea!

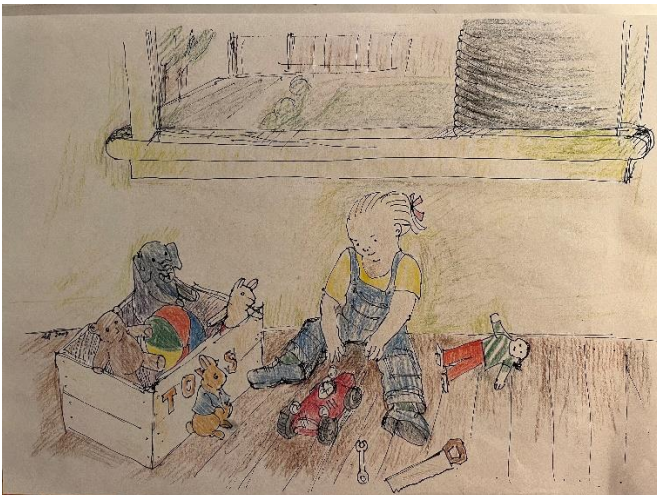
Description of Work: Coloured pencil drawing. Lead Safety Message from

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2024/02/240221160407.htm> - Toxic elements found in stranded whales, dolphins over 15 years.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/moonlit-dolphin-porpoising/>



mug winner! LID 28898



Artist: Anne Roberts, Age: 93.

Title: Toddler with Toys

Lead-Safety Message: A LEAD Group Kit is a fantastic tool for detecting lead in a toddler's environment through lab analysis of surface dust wipes from the playfloor and window sill, bare soil, water from brass taps installed in the last 3 years, from rain tanks or bores, paint, toy paint and ceiling



cavity dust or vacuum dust.

Description of Work: Colouring pencils and pen on paper. Lead-Safety Message from: <https://leadsafeworld.com/solutions/lead-group-diy-sampling-lab-analysis-lead-test-kits/> by The LEAD Group Inc.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/toddler-with-toys/>

LID 28899



Artist: Elizabeth O'Brien

Title: Pectin in Marmalade

Lead-Safety Message: Marmalade and other cooked citrus peel foods are a rich source of pectin which is a lead detox nutrient. Excellent when paired with high fibre wholemeal high-mineral seeded bread or toast.

Description of Work: iPhone photo of Lyn Bearlin's home-made marmalade. Lead-Safety Message from: https://lead.org.au/fs/Foods_for_Lead_Detox_A-Z_20150214.pdf - *Foods for Lead Detox - Alphabetical list of foods rich in the nutrients which fight lead poisoning and List of how those Nutrients help fight lead poisoning* by The LEAD Group Inc.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/pectin-in-marmalade/>



LID 28900



Artist: Elizabeth O'Brien

Title: Broken Hill Ore Trains

Lead-Safety Message: After more than a century of uncovered ore trains (inset) spreading toxic lead and other heavy and radioactive metals through Broken Hill and all along the train line to Port Pirie smelter, Jenny Rowbotham led a successful campaign to get the ore trucks covered so today you can see green trains snaking through the town between the mine waste dumps or line of lode (on the right) and nearby heavily contaminated residences.

Description of Work: iPhone8 colour photo and inset from

<https://digital.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/nodes/view/300> - Broken Hill Ore Train circa 1951.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/broken-hill-ore-trains/>

LID 28596



Artist: Louise Eaton

Title: Stop the Arms Trade

Lead Safety Message: Apart from preventing death and destruction, we need a world without war in order to stop spreading lead. Mega tons of lead are in ammunition, missiles, landmines and other weapons.

Description of Work: Collage of Anti-War Postcards published by Quaker Peace & Service, United Kingdom

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/stop-the-arms-trade/>



LID 28901



Artist: Elizabeth O'Brien

Title: Ban Lead Ammunition

Lead-Safety Message: [Lead from ammunition is a threat to everyone's health](#) (Hampton 2021). "Child blood lead was positively associated with household firearm ownership" in [Firearm-Related Lead Exposure and Child Lead Levels in the United States, 2012-2018](#) (Hoover et al 2024). [Study Links Childhood Lead Exposure to Later Gun Violence](#) (Hess 2019). EU regulation: [An unprecedented opportunity to protect children's and wildlife health from the toxic effects of lead ammunition](#) (Pain et al 2025).

Description of Work: Photo of spent lead bullet casings in a home.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/ban-lead-ammunition/>



mug winner! LID 28902



Artist: Lyn Hartwig

Title: Inspired by Children

Lead-Safety Message: My friend Elizabeth O'Brien was inspired by her children to dedicate the rest of her life to our lead-safe future. Prevention of lead poisoning is her goal for all.

Description of Work: Photo

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/inspired-by-children/>



Highly Commended by the Judge LID 28903



Artist: Danny Wang, Age: 8, School: Creative Einstein

Title: Monstera Deliciosa

Lead-Safety Message: Even when Monstera deliciosa is grown in lead-contaminated soil, the fruit called “Mexican breadfruit” is safe to eat because plants don’t put lead in their fruits. Just wash those monstera tiny spikes out under running water!

Description of Work: Coloured pencil drawing on paper

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/monstera-deliciosa/>



mug winner! LID 28904



Artist: Rishab Vohra, Age: 12, School: Creative Einstein

Title: Clown Fish

Lead-Safety Message: “Lead (Pb) is a highly toxic metal in aquatic environments. Fish are at the top of the food chain in most aquatic environments, and are the most susceptible to the toxic effects of Pb exposure.”

Description of Work: Coloured pencil drawing on paper. Lead-Safety Message from Toxic effects of lead exposure on bioaccumulation, oxidative stress, neurotoxicity, and immune responses in fish: A review, from <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30884452/>

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/clown-fish/>



mug winner! LID 28905



Artist: Jennifer Chuah, Age: 14, School: Creative Einstein

Title: Sushi

Lead-Safety Message: A Polish study found high lead and nickel levels in sushi and high levels of lead, nickel, cadmium and arsenic in nori – the red algae that is shredded, rack-dried and made into flat sheets and used to wrap sushi. None of the samples tested contained mercury. If you eat a lot of nori or sushi, ask your doctor for a blood lead series to find out if your sushi is heavy metal contaminated.

Description of Work: Coloured pencil drawing on paper. Lead-safety Message from [Heavy Metals in Sushi](#) and <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nori> - Wikipedia.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/sushi/>

LID 28906



Artist: Tim Pye

Title: Lead is a crime

Lead-Safety Message: There is no lead on this roof. Not because of toxicity concerns but because lead might get stolen. Lead increases criminality and the lead flashing on a roof provides the opportunity for crime.

Description of Work: Photograph of a sign on a wall.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/lead-is-a-crime/>



 **mug winner! LID 28707**



Artist: Anna Mutton

Title: Still Waters Heavy Metals

Lead Safety Message: This artwork, created using lead-free materials, depicts an aurora arcing gently over a quiet mountain range and undisturbed lake. But beneath the surface of this serene landscape lies a deeper reflection - on the unseen toxins that threaten both nature and our health. Many of our water sources are no longer as pure as they appear. Lead continues to leach into drinking water systems, homes and environments. Just as the aurora responds to invisible solar winds, our ecosystems react to pollutants we can't always see.

Description of Work: Watercolour and acrylic paint on watercolour paper.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/still-waters-heavy-metals/>

 **mug winner! LID 28907**



Artist: Phoenix Jewson, Age: 5, Home-Schooled

Title: Rainbow the Turtle

Lead Safety Message: Climate change significantly impacts coral reef ecosystems through ocean warming, acidification, and altered weather patterns, leading to coral bleaching, reduced growth, and increased mortality among fish, turtles, crabs and seahorses. Get your lead-free energy from the sun like we do at our farm.

Description of Work: crayon and watercolour drawing.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/rainbow-the-turtle/>



Judged as the best painting and  mug winner! LID 28908



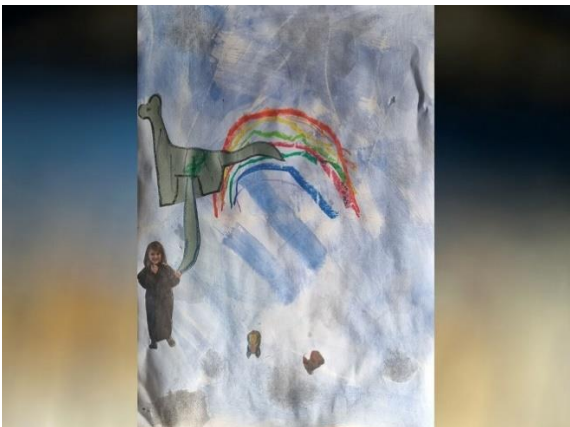
Artist: Phoenix Jewson, Age: 6, Home-Schooled
Title: Horned Owl

Lead Safety Message: Great horned owls are opportunistic predators that hunt mainly mammals like rats, mice, rabbits, ground squirrels, opossums, skunks, birds like geese, ducks, hawks, and smaller owls and also snakes, lizards, frogs, insects, scorpions and even fish. Lead is an opportunistic toxic that affects mainly the brain, heart and kidneys but also fertility, learning behaviour, balance, eyesight, hearing and any inherited weakness.

Description of Work: crayon and acrylic paint drawing.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/horned-owl/>

LID 28909



Artist: Phoenix Jewson, Age: 5, Home-Schooled
Title: Brachy Umbrella

Lead Safety Message: This is my Brachiosaurus umbrella, me, Scorpius Rex, Pyro, puddles, rain and a rainbow. Eating nutritious foods like quail eggs, berries and vegetables we grow on our farm protects me from any lead in my shop-bought food or my environment.

Description of Work: cut-out printed photos, fabric, crayon and watercolour paint drawing.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/brachy-umbrella/>



mug winner! LID 28910



[Go to <https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/farm-chores/> and click on the image online to watch the short video]

Artists: Justine Cooney (Film-maker) & Phoenix Jewson (Talent), Age: 5, Home-Schooled

Title: Farm Chores

Lead Safety Message: I have fun doing my daily chores in the lead-safe food garden and farm mummy has created for us, the quail, pigeons and chickens, cows, horses, rescued possum and magpie, by choosing low lead commercial stock feeds and testing with a LEAD Group Kit to ensure our soil and bore and rainwater all have low to non-detectable lead.

Description of work: Video shot on iPhone, edited in Splice with music from Shattershock (licensed by Splice video editing app).

URL: Farm Life with Phoenix Youtube channel <https://www.youtube.com/@FarmLife.13> - this short film: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7nWILZALxGU>

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/farm-chores/>



mug winner! LID 28911



Artist: Anne Roberts, Age: 93.



Title: Wooden Birds

Lead-Safety Message: We've long known that birds and trees can be poisoned by lead. Each tree ring records a year of growth, but also a year of pollution. By measuring lead in the rings, researchers can reconstruct the rise and fall of airborne lead across decades.

Description of Work: Birds sculpted from wood in pieces and bolted/glued together. Message adapted from Professor Bruce Lanphear's August 26, 2025 Substack -

<https://blanphear.substack.com/p/times-toxic-signature> - *The Chronicles of Lead Toxicity: A History Cast in Fire, Frozen in Ice.*

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/wooden-birds/>

Joint First Prize and  mug winner! LID 28912



[Go to <https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/gryposuchus-conquers-dilophosaurus/> and click on the image online to watch the short video]

Artists: Alex and Phoenix Jewson, Age: 5, Home-Schooled

Title: Gryposuchus Conquers Dilophosaurus

Lead-Safety Message: Just as Gryposuchus waits on the sidelines until Dilophosaurus has grown closer and closer, oral EDTA chelation has been around for 70 years and only now is poised to conquer lead poisoning globally – if only biscuit-makers and bread-bakers would come to the party and add this iron fortificant to commercially available foods that kids and adults like to eat daily. And in the background, lead-safety advocates will still be fighting to reduce lead emissions and make a circular economy for all lead products.

Description of Work: Stop-motion video.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/gryposuchus-conquers-dilophosaurus/>



LID 28913



[Go to <https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/harvesting-broccoli/> and click on the image online to watch the short video]

Artists: Justine Cooney (Film-maker) & Phoenix Jewson (Talent), Age: 6, Home-Schooled

Title: Harvesting Broccoli

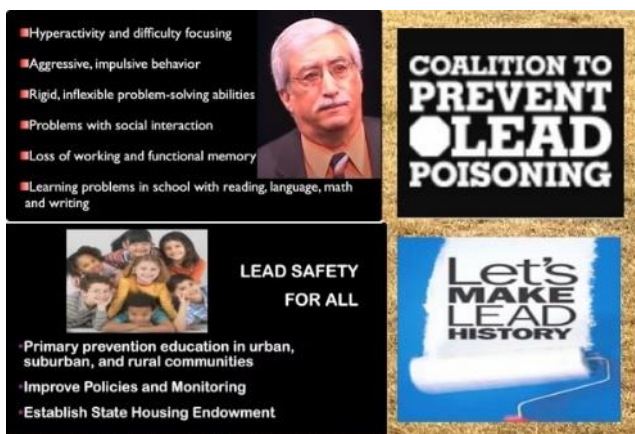
Lead-safety Message: We used a [LEAD Group Kit](#) to find out our farm soil is good and low in lead. The LEAD Group says broccoli is a great lead detox food, but in Port Pirie, children and pregnant women are told not to eat home-grown “leafy vegetables like lettuce, silverbeet, cabbage, broccoli and cauliflower”. Instead, they could treat the soil with [RC3 Yard N Garden Potassium Humate](#) to bind the lead to the soil, and then start eating their leafy greens and backyard eggs!

Description of work: Video shot on iPhone, edited in Splice with music from Shattershock (licensed by Splice video editing app). URLs: Farm Life with Phoenix Youtube channel

<https://www.youtube.com/@FarmLife.13> - this short film: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4e72-HUoA4k>. Message from [Pregnant women and parents misled about dangers of living with lead pollution](#). Broccoli is a good source of: [Alpha-linolenic acid \(ALA\)](#); is rich in [Calcium](#), [Vitamin C](#) and [Carotenoids](#); and contains [cysteine, a precursor of glutathione which detoxifies the brain and liver](#)

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/harvesting-broccoli/>

LID 28914



[Go to <https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/put-children-first/> and click on the image online to watch the short video]




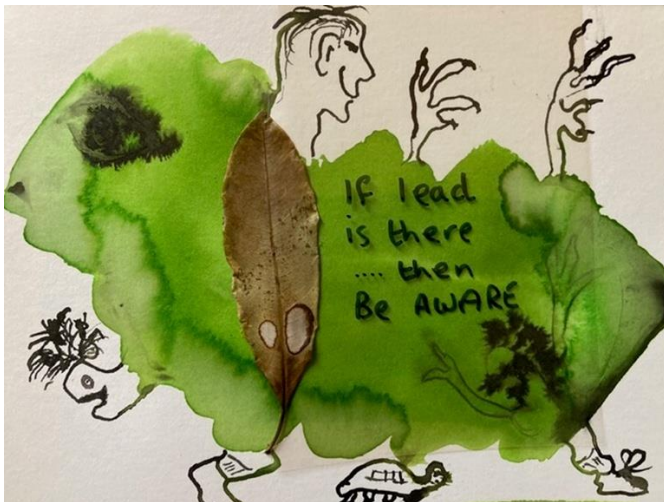
Artist/Presenter: Ralph Spezio, School Principal
Title: Put Children First

Lead Safety Message: When we have slain the lead monster, we will truly know we have put children first. When I found out that 100% of the 3-, 4- and 5-yr old special ed students at my school in Rochester USA had been found at age one or two to have blood lead levels above 10 µg/dL, I became a founding member of the Coalition to Prevent Lead Poisoning. Stay informed with our newsletter at <https://theleadcoalition.org/>

Description of Work: [TEDxRochester Ralph Spezio video](#) 1st Nov 2010 - screenshots including learning and behavioral problems caused by lead, and three simple solutions, collaged in Powerpoint and Paint.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/put-children-first/>

37.  mug winner! The Judge thought this was by a child which is his highest form of praise considering he prefers children's art over adult's art. Siobhan is actually a grandmother and child psychologist who often does art with her clients! **LID 28915**



Artist: Siobhan Hannigan


Title: Be Aware

Lead-Safety Message: If lead is there... then BE AWARE. To help make the world lead safe, you can donate to The LEAD Group's LEAF fund at <https://leadsafeworld.com/contribute/>

Description of Work: Ink drawing with watercolour and leaf.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/be-aware/>



 mug winner! LID 28916



Artist: Azalea Manttan, Age: 3

Title: Living Things

Lead-Safety Message: All living things deserve to be protected from lead. Use a [LEAD Group Kit](#) to test backyard eggs, water, soil, surface dust wipes, etc and treat any lead contaminated soil with [RC3 Yard N Garden Activated Humate for application to plants and soil](#) to bind the lead in and reduce egg lead levels.

Description of Work: Texta drawing on newsprint on coloured ink stamped paper.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/living-things/>

Highly Commended by the Judge LID 28917



Artist: Leo Manttan, Age: 6

Title: Family

Lead-Safety Message: Families that stay lead-safe together, thrive together. To leave a legacy of supporting lead safety, ask your will's lawyer to add a bequest to your will of a percentage of your estate or other gift to The LEAD Group Inc ABN 25819463114.

Description of Work: Coloured pencil drawing on paper.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/family/>



Joint First Prize and  mug winner! LID 28918



Artist: Leo Manttan, Age: 6

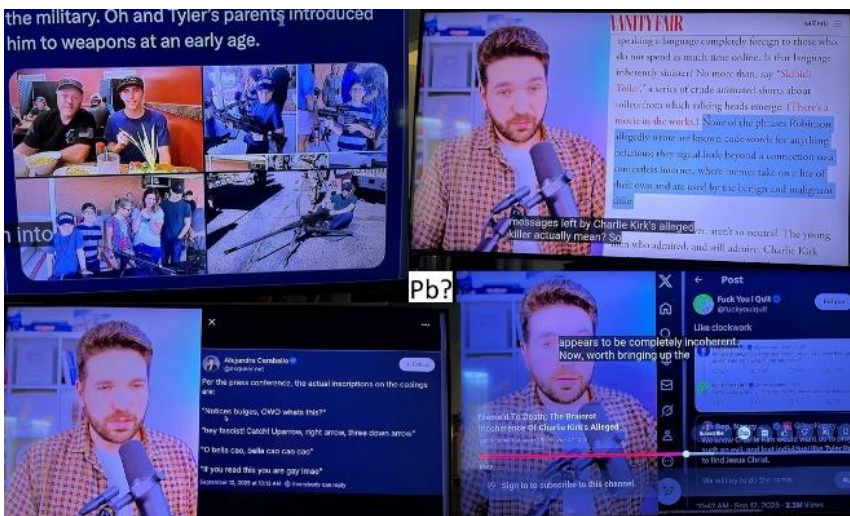
Title: Leaded Zebrafish

Lead-Safety Message: Researchers use see-thru zebrafish embryos to find out that high lead concentrations in the water cause death for 4 out of 5 fish eggs and even low lead levels cause faster heart beats and bending of the spine. Calcium ion rescue drugs can reverse the damage. Better still... let's prevent lead pollution of water!

Description of Work: Texta drawings cut and collaged with cardboard and paper cut-outs on painted paper. Lead-Safety Message from [Lead Exposure Causes Spinal Curvature during Embryonic Development in Zebrafish](#).

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/leaded-zebrafish/>

LID 28919



Artist: Grandma Lead

Title: Test Shooters for Lead



Lead-Safety Message: [A possibly lead poisoned shooter confessed on September 11, 2025](#) to assassinating Charlie Kirk. As a 3rd year electrical apprentice, the 22 year old shooter would have been protected from occupational lead exposure but there need to be regulations to protect child shooters from lead exposure that can cause frontal lobe damage, homicidal violent crime and brainrot incoherence. US criminologists and lead poisoning prevention advocates need to write to their congressional representatives demanding that he and all indicted shooters be bone lead and blood lead tested ASAP after being taken in to custody.

Description of Work: Collage of photos from YouTube video by [The Rational National, Meme'd To Death: The Brainrot Incoherence Of Charlie Kirk's Alleged Killer, September 14, 2025](#). Lead-Safety Message by Elizabeth O'Brien, AKA Grandma Lead.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/test-shooters-for-lead/>

Highly Commended by the Judge LID 28920



Artist: Leo Manttan, Age: 6.

Title: Green Future

Lead-Safety Message: For me and my little sister to have a green future, we need all the adults in all the countries to stop mining lead and burning fossil fuels, and switch to renewable energy and for someone to invent 100% recycled lead products.

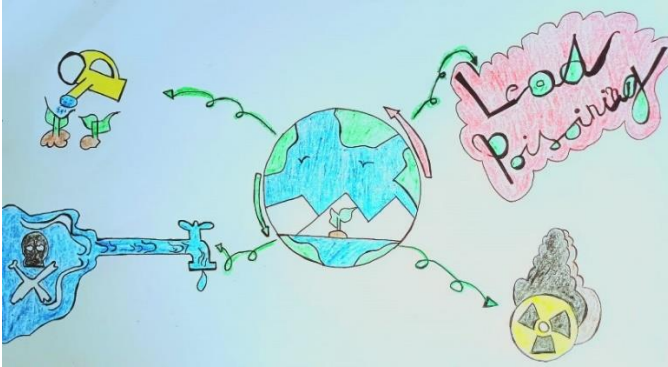
Description of Work: Painting over lead pencil drawing.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/green-future/>



People's Choice cash prize winner and  mug winner!

LID 28921



Artist: Paula Jacobe, Age: 10.

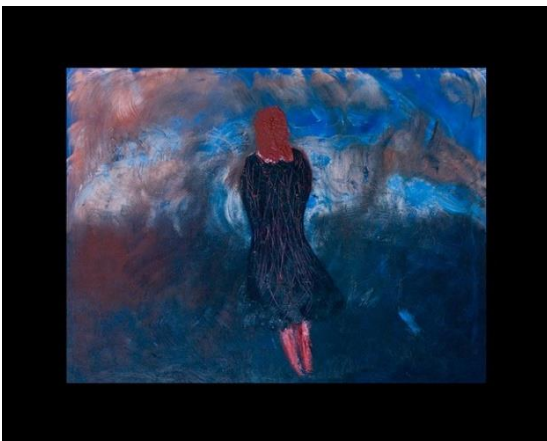
Title: Earth Under Attack

Lead-Safety Message: Lead may be invisible, but its damage costs 6-9% of global gross domestic product (GDP). It poisons the water we drink, the air we breathe, and the soil that grows our food. Let's protect our planet and our children—say no to lead, say yes to a safer tomorrow.

Description of Work: Coloured pencil and pen drawing. GDP estimate from [Global health burden and cost of lead exposure in children and adults - A health impact and economic modelling analysis](#) (2023).

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/earth-under-attack/>

 mug winner! LID 28922



Artist: Claire Leight

Title: Woman on a Mission

Lead-Safety Message: For thirty-five years, Elizabeth O'Brien has NOT turned her back on her campaign to rid the world of lead poisoning. I thank her.

Description of Work: Oil on canvas 122cm x 92cm.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/woman-on-a-mission/>



mug winner! LID 28923



Artist: Claire Leight

Title: On a Clear Day

Lead-Safety Message: If lead could be removed from aviation fuel, all days could look like this.

Description of Work: Digital photo.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/on-a-clear-day/>



mug winner! LID 28924



Artist: Khangai Davaasuren, Age: 8, School Name: Creative Einstein

Title: Semiquavers

Lead-Safety Message: Two semiquavers take the same time as an eighth note or quaver to play.

Children can play lead-safely if parents or grandparents get a LEAD Group Kit from www.lead safeworld.com/shop and collect 8 samples for lab lead analysis, including play soil, dusty indoor surfaces, degraded paint, ceiling cavity dust, water, etc. Take the time now to test, so children grow up to fulfil their potential.

Description of Work: Coloured quilling paper cut, curled, and glued to a board then collaged in Paint and Powerpoint.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/semiquavers/>



mug winner! LID 28925



Artist: Khangai Davaasuren, Age: 8, School Name: Creative Einstein

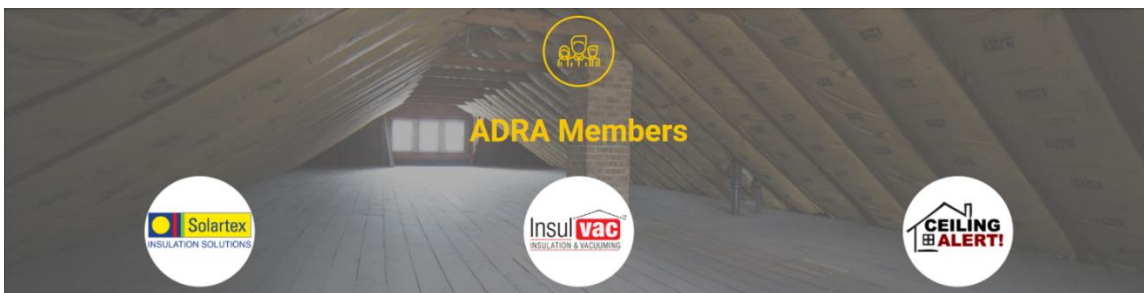
Title: Australian Koala

Lead-Safety Message: They say that there are no Koalas in Lue because they [Bowdens Silver who've proposed a lead mine at Lue, near Mudgee, NSW Australia] want to destroy 400 hectares of prime Koala habitat [if the mine is approved/viable]. Tell that to this guy.

Description of Work: Lead pencil drawing using a lead-free graphite pencil. Message from [Mudgee Region Action Group FB page](#), 25th March 2025.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/australian-koala/>

LID 28936



Artist: Australian Dust Removalists Association (ADRA) Webmaster

Title: ADRA Members Detox Attics

Lead-Safety Message: Solartex and Insulvac in Sydney and Ceiling Alert in Melbourne are the professionals you need to remove contaminated dust from your home, particularly before any demolition, building or insulation work is attempted. Ceiling dust can also be tested for lead, other toxic metals and asbestos prior to removal so you know how toxic the cavity dust was! With more frequent severe storms forecast, you really don't want to be like one of the 20,000 home-owners negatively impacted by ceiling dust in the April 1999 Sydney Hail Storm, before ADRA existed. Go climate resilience and lead-safety!

Description of Work: image downloaded from www.adra.com.au

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/adra-members-detox-attics/>



LID 28937



Artist: Australian Dust Removalists Association (ADRA) Webmaster

Title: ADRA Members detox roof spaces

Lead-Safety Message: Member companies of the Australian Dust Removalists Association have been detoxing the building cavities of homes, schools, churches and other buildings lead-safely since 1999. Get a quote from an ADRA Member for dust and old insulation removal and new insulation installation as your next step towards lead-safety and climate-safety...

Description of Work: Image downloaded from www.adra.com.au

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/adra-members-detox-roof-spaces/>



mug winner! LID 28938



Artist/Photographer: Joseph Lee

Title: Solar Ebike

Lead-Safety Message: Because my house has solar panels on the roof and a storage battery on the wall (inset), my default mode is now ebike to get to pickleball and tennis and I can even extend my journey by taking it on ferry, light rail and bus trips. Way to go to NOT contribute to climate change or burn fossil fuels that all emit some lead. Go SOLAR!

Description of Work: "Sticker" of ebike created on iPhone13. Smart phone photos and sticker collaged in Powerpoint and Paint.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/solar-ebike/>



LID 28939

These 6 LEAD Group Kits are making Australia lead-safe one family at a time – so adaptable!

Kit Type	Price
1-Sample Lead Test Kit (emailed)	\$66.00
2-Sample Lead Test Kit (emailed)	\$132.00
8-Sample Lead Test Kit (emailed)	\$288.00
1-Sample Lead Test Kit (posted)	\$76.00
2-Sample Lead Test Kit (posted)	\$142.00
8-Sample Lead Test Kit (posted)	\$298.00

Let's export the concept for a lead-safe world!

Artist: Grandma Lead aka Elizabeth O'Brien

Title: Grandma Lead Six Lead Test Kits

Lead-Safety Message: These 6 LEAD Group Kits – whether emailed or posted – are making Australia lead-safe one family at a time – so adaptable! Buy an Emailed LEAD Group Kit to test paint, toy paint, soil, backyard eggs, commercial chicken feed, ceiling cavity dust, vacuum dust, food, supplements, complementary medicine, or a Posted Kit to test any of these and/or surface dust wipes and water samples, for lead, other toxic metals, asbestos, pH, fluoride and even pesticides.

Description of Work: Screenshots from www.lead safeworld.com/shop collaged in Powerpoint and Paint.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/six-lead-test-kits/>

mug winner! LID 28940



Artist: Grandma Lead

Title: Insulvac Electric Vehicle

Lead-Safety Message: Being the President of the Australian Dust Removalists Association since 2004



and a Founding Partner of The LEAD Group's Lead Safe World Partnership since 2013, Gavin Clarke of Insulvac clearly takes cleaning up the built environment seriously. But his fully electric Kia and electric vehicle charging station at the office in Leichhardt, is the icing on the cake of Insulvac's achievement of thousands of clean Sydney roof spaces with insulation installed. If everyone took such steps... goodbye climate crisis, hello lead-safety!

Description of Work: Lead-Safety Message from <https://www.insulvac.com.au/> and <https://www.adra.com.au/> and iPhone 13 photos collaged in Powerpoint and Paint. <https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/insulvac-electric-vehicle/>

LID 28941



Artist: Grandma Lead

Title: Closing the Gap

Lead-Safety Message: The LEAD Group seeks to *Close the Gap* (in health, education and justice between First Nations and more recently arrived Australians) by offering a free 8-Sample LEAD Group Kit to anyone wishing to collect samples which could lead to the reduction of lead exposure in Indigenous Australians. To take up our offer, please fill in the form at <https://leadsafeworld.com/free-lead-group-kits-for-indigenous-australians/> or phone freecall 1800 626 086.

Description of Work: Message from www.leadsafeworld.com/shop/ & iPhone 13 photos of grasstree flower spikes growing closer together as they get higher off the ground, collaged in Powerpoint and Word.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/closing-the-gap/>



LID 28942



Artist: Grandma Lead aka Elizabeth O'Brien

Title: Butterflies Fluttering

Lead-Safety Message: "Passing by butterflies, fluttering for a day" - a line from *An ocean of strange islands*, reminds me of 1920s US tetra ethyl lead (TEL) factory workers who were so lead poisoned they hallucinated butterflies and soon after, died. I pray that the New Zealand Prime Minister will finally acknowledge and compensate the last one alive of the manual TEL plant workers, Brian Arndt (who turned 85 in 2025), for his exposure to TEL at New Zealand Petroleum Refinery 1965-1975.

Description of Work: Screenshot from [Nightwish – An ocean of strange islands \(official lyric video\)](#) & lyric by [Songwriter: Tuomas Holopainen](#). An Ocean of Strange Islands lyrics © Sony/ATV Music Publishing. Message from Rebecca Skloot's [Houses of Butterflies](#), Jan 2001, and Dr Ulrich Mack's LeadTox Blog [Institutional Manslaughter Part 1](#), 25 Jul 2025.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/butterflies-fluttering/>

LID 28943



Artist: Riley Jewson, Age: 6

Title: Persecuted by Butterflies

Lead-Safety Message: 1923 Sept - workers started dying in the DuPont TEL works... "sickening deaths and illnesses of hundreds of TEL workers... Gripped by violent bursts of insanity, the afflicted would imagine they were being persecuted by butterflies and other winged insects before expiring, their bodies having turned black and blue." (Kitman 2000)

Description of Work: Message from [Chronology of Leaded Gasoline / Leaded Petrol History](#), 2011 by Elizabeth O'Brien and Zac Gethin-Damon, 23 Dec 2011. Stencilled butterflies drawn in and around with coloured pencils.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/persecuted-by-butterflies/>



LID 28944



Artist: Grandma Lead aka Elizabeth O'Brien

Title: RC3 Your Garden

Lead-Safety Message: #Grandma Lead says finding out that RC3 Yard N Garden Activated Humate foliar spray plant growth promotor can also be added to soil to chelate or bind lead in the soil, is a game-changer! And the RC3 Potassium Humate and RC3 Sea Minerals also promote plant growth so get some RC3 products on your garden today!

Description of Work: iPhone 13 photos of RC3 products from <https://rc3.info/> collaged in Powerpoint and Paint.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/rc3-your-garden/>



mug winner! LID 28945



Artist: David Suh, Age: 11, School Name: Creative Einstein

Title: Wave Goodbye

Lead-Safety Message: Wave goodbye to the lead that's already in your body – we all have some – by eating food made with the iron fortificant Ferric EDTA or taking Calcium EDTA capsules every day for months or years. The more lead you are carrying the longer it takes.

Description of Work: Coloured pencil drawing. Lead-Safety Message from: <https://leadtox.blog/> - Dr Ulrich Mack's blog.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/wave-goodbye/>



mug winner! LID 28946



Artist: Tenzin Kuensel, Age: 12, School Name: Creative Einstein

Title: Homegrown Strawberry

Lead-Safety Message: Strawberries are moderately high in Vit C (which helps remove lead from your body) and they reduce the recycling of toxics within the body. If you grow strawberries, be sure to test your soil for lead with a LEAD Group Kit, and always wash them before eating them from the garden.

Description of Work: Coloured pencil drawing. Lead-Safety Message from: [Foods for Lead Detox - Foods which Fight Lead Poisoning - https://lead.org.au/fs/fst86.html](https://lead.org.au/fs/fst86.html) and www.leadsafeworld.com/shop to buy LEAD Group Kits.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/homegrown-strawberry/>

LID 28947



Artist: Tenzin Kuensel, Age: 12, School Name: Creative Einstein

Title: Daisy Shu

Lead-Safety Message: Daisy Shu wrote, in 2010, that: “Studies have shown that lead exposure can result in a reduced sensitivity of rod photoreceptors, blurred vision and irritated eyes as well as an increased susceptibility to cataract and optic neuritis.” Test the soil and playfloor surface dust for lead before young children play on them, with a Posted LEAD Group Kit from www.leadsafeworld.com/shop

Description of Work: Coloured pencil drawing. Lead-Safety Message from: [How does lead exposure affect our eyes? - https://lead.org.au/lanv10n3/lanv10n3-8.html](https://lead.org.au/lanv10n3/lanv10n3-8.html) - published by The LEAD Group Inc in LEAD Action News, June 2010.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/daisy-shu/>



mug winner! LID 28948



Artist: Danny Wang, Age: 8, School Name: Creative Einstein

Title: Redcapped Mushrooms

Lead-Safety Message: This could be a cluster of Scarlet Waxcap mushrooms OR it could be any one of similar-looking poisonous mushrooms so don't eat it!! With lead, it's much harder to know what contains poisonous lead so don't let your little brother or sister eat soil, paint or put their own dirty fingers in their mouth. Ask your parents to test for lead with a LEAD Group Kit from www.lead safeworld.com/shop if you see that happening.

Description of Work: Coloured pencil drawing.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/redcapped-mushrooms/>

LID 28949



Artist: Danny Wang, Age: 8, School Name: Creative Einstein

Title: Alien Landscape

Lead-Safety Message: "By the time the aliens fly by, rather than this pear-shaped Earth, let's show them: a well-informed, well-regulated, lead-knowledgable World - a Lead-Safe World." This is most easily achieved if national governments utilise The LEAD Group's our [Model National Lead Safety Policy](#) (2023).

Description of Work: [Message from Consumer Products and Lead Exposures: Vision for a Lead-Safe World](#) by Elizabeth O'Brien, LEAD Action News; June 2012 and <https://lead safeworld.com/directory> (2023). Coloured pencil drawing.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/alien-landscape/>



LID 28950



Artist: Grandma Lead

Title: Ferdy and Alex

Lead-Safety Message: Wonderful volunteers like Ferdy and 15-year old Alex helped me talk to attendees and handed out hundreds of copies of dozens of different LEAD Group lead-safety information handouts at Expos like this between 1997 and 2014 – whenever we had government funding to pay for the stall to raise lead poisoning awareness.

Description of Work: Photo of The LEAD Group's Lead Advisory Service Australia (LASA) stall in the Parents, Babies and Children's Expo 2000 brochure.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/ferdy-and-alex/>

 **mug winner!** LID 29003



Artist: Khai, Age: 7

Title: Two Girls Gardening

Lead-Safety Message: Trees, flowers, vegetables and herbs will all grow better if there's no available lead in your soil. Apply 4mL of RC3 Yard N Garden Activated Humate Foliar spray per sq metre of soil because it promotes plant growth and binds the lead safely.

Description of Work: Lead-Safety Message from <https://rc3.info/> and Dr Ulrich Mack. Pen and coloured texta drawing.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/two-girls-gardening/>



LID 29004



Artist: Paula Jacobe, Age: 10

Title: Painted Lion

Lead-Safety Message: Thankfully, since the Philippines banned lead in children's paints in 2013, the EcoWaste Coalition and UN/WHO Lead Paint Alliance has achieved a government ban on decorative (house) paints with lead - phased in from 2013 to 2016 - and a ban on lead-containing industrial paints by December 31, 2019.

Description of Work: Lead free children's paints painting of a lion stencil.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/painted-lion/>

LID 28951



Artist: Prince, Age: 8

Title: Rizal Monument

Lead-Safety Message: Rizal Monument in Manila includes a sculpture of Philippines national hero Jose Rizal, that was cast, in 1912, from molten bronze containing possibly up to 20% lead.

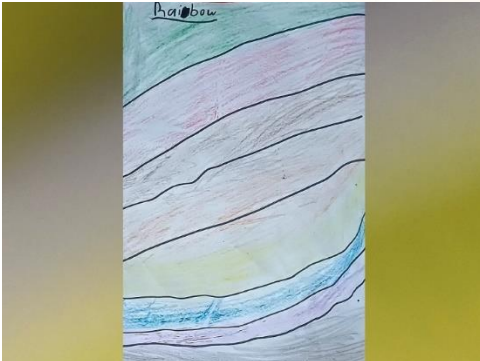
Occupational exposure to lead fumes back then would have been massive and would certainly have contributed to the early death of the bronze workers.

Description of Work: Pen and coloured textas on paper.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/rizal-monument/>



mug winner! LID 28952



Artist: Ella Mae Castro, Age: 4

Title: Dusty Rainbow

Lead-Safety Message: When there's too much heavy metal dust and smog in the air in Manila, the rainbow is greyer and less vivid. Lucky for me, Pure Earth has collaborated with local governments to include blood lead testing in to local health programs in the Philippines.

Description of Work: Message from [Pure Earth's Mitigating Lead Exposure in Low- and Middle-Income Countries - A Project to Reduce Lead Exposure in 7 Countries \[Colombia, Egypt, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Peru, and the Philippines\]](#). Texta line drawing coloured in with pencils.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/dusty-rainbow/>



mug winner! LID 28953



Artist: Paulo Castro, Age: 6

Title: Happy Family

Lead-Safety Message: My family will be happy for life if my parents take me to Philippine General Hospital for a blood lead test to find out if I should be treated for lead poisoning. EDTA in food can lower my blood lead level and supercharge my learning at home and at school.

Description of Work: Message from [Pure Earth's Mitigating Lead Exposure in the Philippines: Integrating Lead Detection Into National and Local Health Systems](#), and www.leadtox.blog by Dr Ulrich Mack. Texta drawings on coloured paper, cut-out and glued to paper.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/happy-family/>



mug winner! LID 28954



Artist: James Brando, Age: 4

Title: Masked Man

Lead-Safety Message: My city of Manila is ranked the 11th worst city in the world for air pollution. Wearing a mask protects me from some of the air pollution and from COVID19 too. If my parents take me to the local health program, I could get a blood lead test and then they'd know if I need to start lead detox with oral EDTA.

Description of Work: Message from Pure Earth's <https://www.pureearth.org/philippines/> - *Working to Solve Pollution in the Philippines Since 2008; Progress in Blood Lead Level (BLL) Testing in the Philippines (2021-Present)* and www.leadtox.blog by Dr Ulrich Mack. "Lead" pencil drawing with lead-free pencil.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/masked-man/>

LID 28955



Artist: Grandma Lead

Title: Solar Electrifying

Lead-Safety Message: I actually feel joyful now that I've had solar panels and a battery installed and replaced my gas hot water and stove with an electric heat pump and electric stove. Fairy lights and an electric plane lightshade in the lounge really top off the feeling of doing something to protect our planet from lead in fossil fuels and help avert a climate crisis. Having a \$300 credit for my electricity bill over the 6 months since the battery went in, instead of paying \$600 in that time, is icing on the elation cake!

Description of Work: iPhone13 photos collaged in Powerpoint and Paint.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/solar-electrifying/>



LID 28956



Artist: Dr Gemma O'Brien

Title: Hybrid Car

Lead-Safety Message: Since 2023, this plug-in hybrid car has been getting me around on way less petrol than my previous vehicle. It plugs in to charge in my garage using electricity from 100% renewable energy. Fully charged I can travel 50kms – which covers most of my local trips - without reverting to burning dead fossils (petrol). It feels so good to be able to make this move towards climate safety.

Description of Work: Selfie sticker made on iphone13. Smart phone photos collaged in Powerpoint and Paint.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/hybrid-car/>

LID 28957



Artist: Eric Evans, Age: 13. School: Ashfield Boys High

Title: Best Mum Ever

Lead-Safety Message: I swear when I gave this card to my mum there was very low-lead milk chocolate inside the packaging! I did my research and read: "It seems that despite the many health benefits of dark chocolate, in the case of lead, milk chocolate wins."

Description of Work: Message from [Chocolate: Lead and Cadmium](#) in LEAD Action News vol 22 no 1 April 2024 by The LEAD Group. Card made with love from purchased objects.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/best-mum-ever/>



LID 28958



Artist: Tony Lennon

Title: Growing Garlic

Lead-Safety Message: Grow your own garlic for maximum health benefits and minimum food travel miles! Near the winter solstice, plant good organic (not imported bleached Chinese) garlic cloves tip-upwards just below the surface 10 cm apart in deep rich well-drained elevated soil and water in well. Near the summer solstice pick the whole plants and hang up in a well-ventilated room in your home with no direct sun. Remember to keep the best bulbs for next season for seeds so to speak. You will then end up with garlic suited to your soil and location.

Description of Work: Smart phone photos collaged together.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/growing-garlic/>

LID 28959



Artist: Claire Leight

Title: Grey Sky

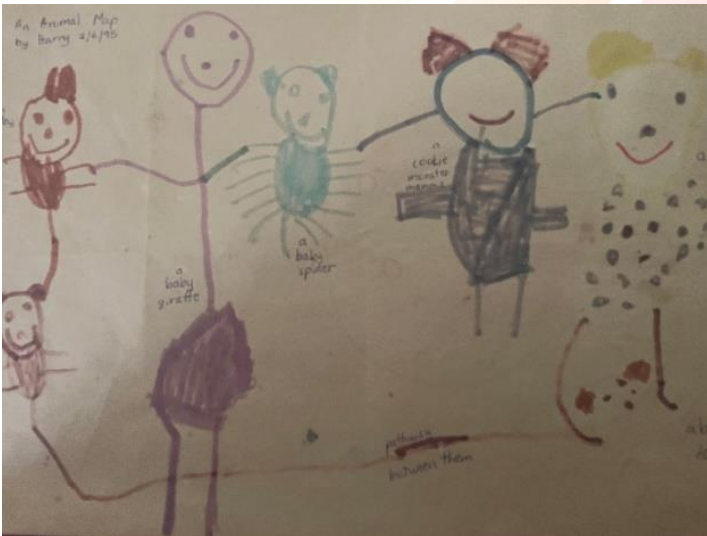
Lead-Safety Message: If we don't remove lead from aviation fuel, this may be the new normal, no more blue skies.

Description of Work: iPhone14 photo.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/grey-sky/>



LID 28960



Artist: Harrison Desmond, Age: 4, Pre-school: Summer Hill Children's Centre

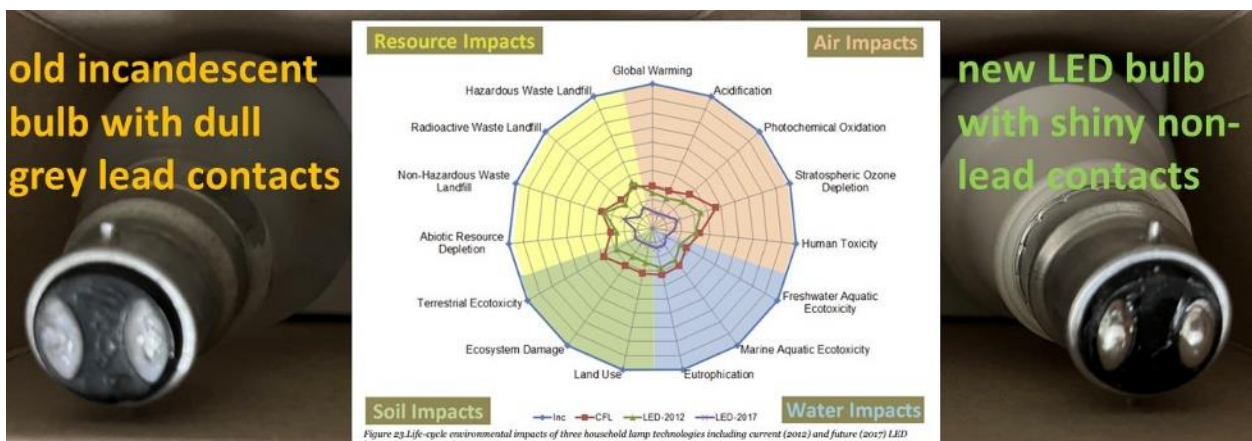
Title: Animal Map

Lead-Safety Message: All creatures on earth are connected by our need for clean air, water and soil. The lines between the animals on my map are pathways for us to be together.

Description of Work: coloured texta drawing on re-use paper.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/animal-map/>

LID 28961



Artist: Grandma Lead

Title: LED not lead

Lead-Safety Message: LED (Light Emitting Diode) bulbs sold today in Australia are not only more energy efficient but also don't contain lead cats-eyes contacts like the old incandescent bulbs did. So, while all light bulbs should be separated from general waste for recycling, mercury- and lead-free LED bulbs can be recycled for their glass and aluminium with less hazardous waste created, and hopefully, in the future we'll also extract valuable gallium and indium in the LED recycling process so we don't have to usurp good farming land to mine these rare minerals.



Description of Work: Message from energyrating.gov.au (including *Figure 23. Life-cycle environmental impacts of three household lamp technologies*, from US DOE 2012); recyclingnearyou.com.au; [Landline - Mineral Sands by Gillian Aeria 17 Nov 2024 \(TRANSCRIPT\)](#); and Peter Dixon, Lighting Expert. iPhone13 photo collaged in Powerpoint and Paint with Fig 23. <https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/led-not-lead/>

LID 28962

The Purpose of my Life is to:
be a powerful, visionary & passionate
woman inspiring others to become
lead safe and accept guidance on
how to protect the environment; to
be a teacher and mentor empowering
humankind to be free from toxic exposures;
to further my quest for environmental justice
and to enable children to reach their full
potential and preserve the world they will
inherit. To be all this with ease and pleasure.

Artist: Grandma Lead

Title: Purpose

Lead-Safety Message: The Purpose of my Life is to: be a powerful, visionary & passionate woman inspiring others to become lead-safe and accept guidance on how to protect the environment; to be a teacher and mentor empowering humankind to be free from toxic exposures; to further my quest for environmental justice and to enable children to reach their full potential and preserve the world they will inherit. To be all this with ease and pleasure.

Description of Work: Purpose hand-written by Elizabeth O'Brien in 2003 with pencil overwriting of faded phrase done in Paint with a vertical mouse in 2025.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/purpose/>



LID 28963



Artist: Grandma Lead

Title: Plumbing the Depths

Lead-Safety Message: While gazing at the saturnine moon behind the jacaranda, and noting my own thoughts about what I don't yet know about lead-safety, I have come to depend on a mellifluous Scottish sleepcast to lull me off to sleep: "No-one knows quite how deep the loch is. No plumblin' has ever reached its bottom... It could be as deep as it is still... The truth is, when it comes to its depth, we just don't know."

Description of Work: Message quote from *Soothing Scottish Loch* sleepcast in Headspace app; iPhone13 photo.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/plumbing-the-depths/>

LID 28964



Artist: Grandma Lead

Title: Daily Detox

Lead-Safety Message: In February 2025 I added CaEDTA biscuits or crackers and then FeEDTA crackers or bread to my usual breakfast &/or lunch lead detox foods (fresh ginger and garlic, garlic paste and garlic-infused oil, red onion, coriander &/or parsley, mixed pepitas, sunflower & black & white sesame seeds, sesame seed halva, psyllium, wild blueberries, orange rind in syrup, lime/lemon zest & juice, a brazil nut, LivOn Vit C, Calcium with Vit D, Magnesium) then in September 2025 I



added RC3 Sea Minerals in milk, omega-3 oil, creatine (after it was ok'ed by my GP) & pistachio nuts & sour cherries for dementia prevention and improved sleep (when the brain is being detoxed). I've brought my blood lead level down in just over one year by 56% on this daily lead detox regime.

Description of Work: iPhone13 photos collaged in Powerpoint and Paint.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/daily-detox/>

LID 28965



Artist: Grandma Lead

Title: Rosemary Alignment

Lead-Safety Message: Just as this rosemary plant is aligned perfectly towards the midday sun to help it grow, I hope that now that The LEAD Group has joined (in September 2025) UNICEF's Partnership for a Lead Free Future (PLF) and Children's Environmental Health Collaborative (CEH is co-founded by UNICEF, UN Environment Programme and the World Bank) we can work perfectly in alignment with all the governments, NGOs and others who have already or will join the PLF, to create global lead-safety ASAP and the grand prize of a Lead Free Future.

Description of Work: iPhone13 photos collaged in Powerpoint and Paint.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/rosemary-alignment/>



mug winner! LID 28966



Artist/Photographer: Jenny Rowbotham

Title: Broken Hill Monitoring System

Lead-Safety Message: With broken air monitors like this for the Broken Hill CML7 Mining Lease and totally incredibly low Lead & lead compounds emitted to air (fugitive/total) like [95kg in 2015/16](#); despite the astronomical Lead & lead compounds transferred to on-site tailing storage reported as 1,600,000 kg in the same year in the NSW EPA uploads to the National Pollutant Inventory (NPI), how can any government even consider renewing this surface lead Mining Lease and why doesn't NSW EPA interrogate/investigate BROKEN HILL OPERATIONS PTY LTD, CBH Resources- Rasp Mine – Broken Hill data before passing it on from the mine operators to NPI?

Description of Work: Lead-Safety Message data from www.npi.gov.au federal Australian government website. Smart phone photos collaged in Powerpoint and Paint.

<https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/broken-hill-monitoring-system/>



First, Do No Harm - A Ruthless Scrutiny of Ideas, Old and New

Plagues, Pollution & Poverty Substack



[BRUCE LANPHEAR](#), Exposing Hidden Threats to Human Health

MAY 05, 2025

[URL: <https://blanphear.substack.com/p/first-do-no-harm>]



Robert F. Kennedy Jr. has done something rare in public life: he's made the tangled relationship between science, skepticism, and tribalism impossible to ignore.

He leans hard into his role as a rebel truth-teller, raising alarms about food dyes, fluoridation, and vaccines. It's tempting to dismiss him outright. He gets much wrong. He fuels

conspiracy thinking. His mistrust of institutions can be corrosive.

By championing controversial causes—like the risks of food dyes, the dangers of water fluoridation, and, most divisively, vaccine skepticism—he pushes a difficult question into the spotlight:

When should scientists, or those who trust science, speak up—and when must we re-examine what we think we know?

It's a mistake to assume everything he questions must be wrong. His popularity points to a deeper failure in science communication—a failure to explain uncertainty, admit mistakes, and let evidence evolve without looking like we're "flip-flopping."

Should we defend what's long been accepted as protective, even when new evidence calls for re-examination? Should we ignore findings just because they appear on the fringe—or because we fear being mistaken for anti-science?

Carl Sagan put it well:

“At the heart of science is an essential balance between two seemingly contradictory attitudes—an openness to new ideas, no matter how bizarre or counterintuitive, and the most ruthless skeptical scrutiny of



all ideas, old and new.”

Openness and scrutiny. Both are necessary. Neither is easy.

The High Wire of Public Health

In today’s public debates—about vaccines, food dyes, fluoridation—we often abandon one for the other. Some cling to the gospel of absolute safety. Others embrace suspicion and forget what good science has built.

Neither approach is scientific.

The real work—the hard work—is balance. Accept the lifesaving power of vaccines, but stay honest about rare harms. Acknowledge that fluoridation may—or may not—protect teeth, but face the evidence it harms the developing brain. And stay open to new research on food dyes.

When an exposure is voluntary, the bar for evidence is lower. People can choose. But when a public health measure is mandated or an exposure universal, the burden of proof must be higher. Population-level exposures require clear evidence of net benefit and minimal harm—especially to the most vulnerable.

Geoffrey Rose, one of the great epidemiologists of the 20th century, said it best:

“People can buy toothpaste with or without added fluoride, but if fluoride is added to the drinking water, they can hardly avoid imbibing it. We should expect a higher level of scientific evidence and popular acceptability for measures such as water fluoridation which are imposed and not chosen by the recipients.”

Speaking From the Data

Unlike many who wade into these debates, I’ve studied fluoride neurotoxicity and how toxic chemicals increase the risk for autism. I’ve read the studies, the criticisms, and the defenses. And frankly, I’m disturbed by how many scientists make sweeping claims of safety—without carefully reviewing the latest evidence, without acknowledging credible signals of harm, and without the humility that real science requires.

The same thing happened when I was studying low-level lead poisoning. Most public health officials and physicians ignored the growing evidence. Some dismissed it because it was inconvenient. Too many hadn’t kept up with research.

And the consequences were—and still are—devastating. Every year of delay in strengthening lead regulations has meant another wave of children harmed, another generation with reduced potential, and another missed opportunity to prevent premature births and heart attacks. The science was there. The tools were available. What was missing was the will. We didn’t lack knowledge—we lacked the courage to act on it.

Public health loses credibility when scientists become defenders of orthodoxy instead of seekers of truth.

Skating to Where the Science Is Going



People often say, “follow the science,” as if that means deferring to whatever a government agency or professional body currently recommends. But science doesn’t live in policy documents. It lives in evidence. And evidence evolves.

Real science isn’t about clinging to old guidelines. It’s about watching the data, spotting patterns, and being willing to change course. That’s especially true in public health, where effects are complex, delayed, and politically inconvenient.

Wayne Gretzky said his secret was simple: “I skate to where the puck is going, not where it’s been.” Good science works the same way. It looks ahead. It listens for early signals. It acts to prevent harm before the system catches up—before early warnings become policy. Good science is the source of regulation, not a servant to it.

Waiting for consensus can be a way of avoiding action. **First, do no harm** means paying attention early—even when the evidence is still emerging.

What Builds Public Trust?

I believe in evidence-based, population-wide measures. I have my loyalties. Vaccines have saved millions of lives. But so could other evidence-based strategies—like a living wage and universal medical care. Public health isn’t just about shots and screenings; it’s about security, stability, and trust.

After living in Canada for the past 16 years, I’ve seen that people are far more likely to trust government—and follow its advice—when they feel supported by it. Trust isn’t built through slogans. It’s built through care. Do I receive a fair wage? Does my government ensure access to food, housing, and medical care? Or is it more concerned with protecting the rights of corporations?

Doing No Harm Means Acting Early

I also know this: widespread exposure to lead, air pollution, plastics, pesticides, and other chemicals is causing real harm—often at levels regulators still call “safe.” Too often, public health agencies downplay these risks.

As a physician, my first principle is simple: **do no harm.**

Mandating a population-level intervention—or permitting a universal exposure—requires not only stronger evidence of benefit, but also honesty about risks, even rare ones. It demands humility in the face of uncertainty and the courage to change course when necessary.

Before You Speak

As scientists, we should resist the pressure to speak about issues we haven’t studied closely. The best way to serve the public isn’t to speak more often—but to speak more carefully. If you haven’t thoroughly reviewed the evidence, don’t weigh in. Scientific authority is not a license to speculate. It’s a responsibility to know what you’re talking about—and to say so when you don’t.

One of the best compliments I ever received was: **“He knows his limits.”** In fact, the more I’ve mastered a subject—like lead poisoning—the more often I’ve found myself referring people to other experts. Knowing when to defer is part of knowing your field.



For me, offering a public opinion requires more than a quick review of the literature or a policy statement. It means investing time—usually more than 100 hours over several years—conducting studies, reviewing the literature, reading critiques, and weighing the evidence from multiple angles. That’s what I consider a reasonable foundation for speaking with authority.

Before I write or speak publicly about fluoridation or autism—both emotionally charged topics—I ask myself: ***Am I sure enough? Have I earned the right to speak? Can I offer something useful without pretending to know more than I do?***

If the answer is yes, I try to speak carefully, humbly, and with an invitation to think together—not divide (***though, in honesty, my wife says I need to work on this***).

Science or Dogma?

The task isn’t to defend yesterday’s truths. It’s to stay fiercely loyal to the process that reveals new ones.

First, do no harm.

Second, respect the boundaries of your expertise.

Third—and hardest of all—never confuse loyalty to science with loyalty to authority.

That’s the difference between science and dogma. And that’s the difference between serving the public—and protecting your beliefs.

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