



Start *simple*
with **MyPlate**



Healthy Eating for Kids

Healthy eating is important at every age. Offer kids a variety of fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy or fortified soy alternatives. When deciding on foods and beverages, choose options that are full of nutrients and limited in added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium. Start with these tips:



Offer variety

Include choices from each food group—fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy or fortified soy alternatives—in meals and snacks during each day.



Connect at mealtime

Eat meals together whenever possible. Turn off the TV and put away phones and tablets, so you can “unplug” and focus on healthy foods and each other.



Make good nutrition easy

Designate a shelf or a drawer in your fridge for your kids. Stock it with cut-up fruits and vegetables, yogurt, nut butters, and whole-wheat mini bagels and crackers.



Think about their drinks

Make water and low-fat or fat-free dairy milk or fortified soy alternatives easy options to grab in your home. Have ready-to-go containers filled and in the fridge to take on outings.



Get kids involved

Depending on their age, kids can peel fruits, assemble salads, measure, scoop, and slice. Let them create and name their own side dish.



Have a shopping buddy

Let kids participate in grocery shopping online or in the store. Reward them by letting them choose their favorite fruit or maybe a new one.



Go to **MyPlate.gov** for more information.
USDA is an equal opportunity provider,
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**The benefits of healthy eating
add up over time, bite by bite.**

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SUPPORTING CHILD WELL-BEING THROUGH

PREVENTING CHILDHOOD LEAD POISONING

Dec. 2025

WHY THIS MATTERS

Lead is a toxic metal that can poison humans. When a child swallows or breathes in lead or lead dust, they can be poisoned – and the damage can last a lifetime. Even low levels of lead adversely affects children's health including their mental, physical, cognitive, and social development. Lead poisoning is 100% preventable.¹



CHILDREN CAN BE TESTED FOR LEAD POISONING USING A SIMPLE BLOOD TEST AT THEIR DOCTOR'S OFFICE.

WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS

Lead exposure damages a child's developing brain, kidneys, and nervous system. It can cause learning disabilities, behavior problems, seizures, and in extreme cases, death. Lead is particularly dangerous to children under the age of six because their growing bodies absorb more lead than adults, and their developing brains and nervous systems are more sensitive to lead's damaging effects.

Lead poisoning is an Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE). The more ACEs in a child's life, the worse health outcomes they have.² Many children who are lead poisoned never show any symptoms, causing it to go undetected. Undiagnosed lead poisoning can cause a child's intellectual or behavioral issues to be misunderstood, misdiagnosed, or ignored.

There is no safe blood lead level (BLL).³ BLLs in U.S. children have steadily declined since the banning of lead-based paints and leaded gasoline. Still, an estimated 4 million U.S. children live in housing that exposes them to lead.⁴ Elevated BLLs are more prevalent among children who live in housing built before 1978, in low-income households, and those from historically marginalized racial and ethnic communities.

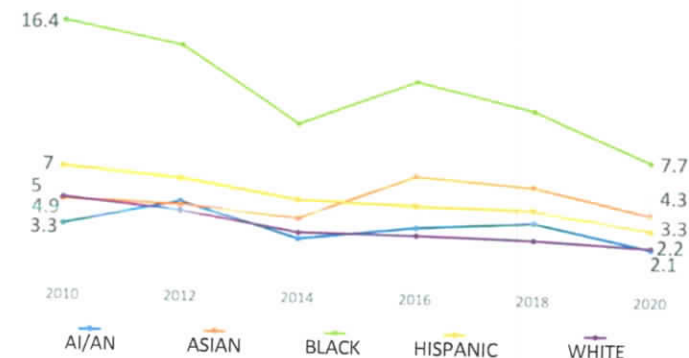
WHAT'S HAPPENING IN California?

Lead exposure is a problem in all 72 counties. Children are most at-risk of lead poisoning if they live in neighborhoods with older homes, lower housing values, or a higher proportion of rental properties. There are efforts to educate residents and build awareness of the dangers of lead exposure. [Lead-Safe Wisconsin](#) is a comprehensive resource for all Wisconsinites.

Homeowners and rental property owners can receive assistance from state and local programs, like [Lead-Safe Homes](#), to remove lead-based paint hazards; or [Lead Service Line Replacement](#), to minimize lead in drinking water.

While rates of lead poisoning in California have declined over time, there are dramatic differences for children of color, especially **Black children who are poisoned more than three times the rate of White children.**

PERCENT OF California CHILDREN WITH LEAD POISONING 2010-2020 BY RACE



Source: Wisconsin Department of Health Services, [Environmental Health Data Tracker](#)



Children's
Mental Health