Health and Education Resource Guide on Childhood Lead Poisoning for Parents and Other Advocates in Illinois
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Lead Safe Housing Initiatives
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**Table of Contents**

CHILDHOOD LEAD POISONING: AN URGENT PROBLEM IN THE STATE OF ILLINOIS AND WHERE TO GO FOR HELP ...............5

HEALTH RESOURCES ..................................................9

  Two Types of Lead Screening:
  Blood Testing and Risk Assessment for Lead Poisoning ..........9

  Listing of Blood Lead Testing and Risk Assessment Resources by Geographic Area .............10

  Case Management Resources for Lead Poisoned Children ..........14

  Listing of Case Management Resources by Geographic Area . . .16

SPECIAL EDUCATION RESOURCES .................................21

  Listing of Special Education Resources for Parent Support
  and Case Management by Geographic Area .................23

  Listing of Legal Advocacy for Special Education Services
  by Geographic Area ..................................................27

  Statewide Advocacy and Education Resources ....................33

  National Advocacy and Education Resources .....................35

APPENDIX ..................................................................39

  Images of Peeling and Flaking Lead Paint .........................39

  High Risk Zip Codes ...............................................40

  Materials for Parents ..............................................42

  Illinois Risk Assessment Questionnaire ..........................42

  Questions to Ask the Doctor ......................................43

  Suggestions for Communicating with Your Child’s School ....44

  Sample Letters ......................................................46

ALPHABETICAL LISTING OF RESOURCES ......................51
Lead poisoning can lead to life-long difficulties for children. Despite suffering the harmful effects of lead, a majority of children who are poisoned do not look sick. Irritability, anemia, headaches, trouble concentrating in school, hyperactivity, and aggression are some of the signs that a child may be lead poisoned. A blood test is the only way to be certain.

The challenges for the family of a lead poisoned child can be great. Lead poisoning can slow or stop academic achievement, cripple creativity, and cause a loss of future earning power for exposed children and the communities in which they live. Recent research suggests a link between lead exposure and a greater likelihood of delinquency and criminal behavior.

The Problem in Illinois

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Illinois leads the nation in the number of children identified as lead poisoned. The CDC defines lead poisoning as a blood lead level of 10 µg/dL or higher.1 In 2002, the number of Illinois children reported lead poisoned was more than 20% of all reported cases nationwide. Even lower levels of lead, however, have been shown to cause learning difficulties and behavior problems in children. And the Illinois Department of Public Health estimates that over 80,000 Illinois children are harmed by lead. There is no safe level of lead in the body.

Most children are lead poisoned in their own homes through exposure to lead dust or paint chips from paint surfaces that have deteriorated or been disturbed during home renovation or repainting. According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development almost seven percent of all housing units in Illinois—210,000—are at high risk for lead-based paint hazards because they were built before 1978 when lead paint was banned from residential housing. Although lead harms all children age 6 years and younger, children under age 3 years are at greatest risk because of the extent to which they crawl and put their hands in their mouths, picking up lead dust that has settled in window sills, toys, or on the floor. Children from low-income families are also at greatest risk because they often live in houses or apartments where the paint is likely to be chipping and spreading lead dust. The damage lead poisoning causes to the developing brain of a child is irreversible.

Raising and educating children who have been lead poisoned requires patience and hard work to help them meet life’s challenges. Caretakers need to know where to go for help and support for a child’s health and educational needs.

This resource guide to health and educational services and support, including legal advocacy for families who may need specialized educational services, seeks to provide easy to use information for families and other caretakers in Illinois who are working to give children exposed to lead a better chance to live healthy and productive lives and to prevent lead poisoning from occurring in the first place.

The guide is divided into three sections: Health Resources, Special Education Resources, and an Appendix. The Health Resources Section explains the two types of screening for lead poisoning and provides locations in Illinois that offer screenings for lead poisoning. The Section

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10 µg/dL means 10 micrograms per deciliter. This very small unit of measurement is used to determine the amount of lead in the blood.
also explains what “case management” is and provides a listing of case management services for children who have been found to be lead poisoned. Both lists begin with Chicago and then are alphabetically organized by county.

The Special Education Resources Section lists agencies that provide parent support and case management for special education services to families with lead poisoned children, beginning with Chicago and then organized by county. Next, in this Section there is a list of Legal Advocacy resources for families that need special education services for their children who have been poisoned by lead. This list is organized by geographic area beginning with Chicago, and then alphabetically by county, including a list of attorneys in private practice who specialize in learning disabilities law. A list of Statewide Resources, National Resources, and Useful Websites for special education follows.

The Appendix includes photographs of peeling and flaking lead paint. It provides a listing of high risk zip codes in Illinois identified by the Illinois Department of Public Health as being at high risk for lead hazards in housing, and the questions asked when assessing a child’s risk for lead poisoning. The Appendix also provides materials that can be helpful in communicating with the school and advocating for a child who is lead poisoned.

Finally, an Alphabetical Listing of the resources found in this guide is provided.

Inclusion in the guide is not an endorsement of the services or agencies by Loyola’s Civitas ChildLaw Center, and the listing is not intended to be inclusive of all available services. The guide is arranged in a ring binder to allow Loyola University Chicago’s ChildLaw Center to update the resources provided and to make it easier for the reader to add additional material. Please contact us to let us know that you have received this guide so that we may supplement your copy with updated and new materials as they become available. The contact information is: Telephone: 312 915 6481; FAX: 312 915 6485, Attn: Lead Safe Housing Initiatives.

Note that prevention is key. Using lead safe work practices when repairing or maintaining one’s home can help prevent children from being poisoned by deteriorating lead paint and lead dust. For information on how to work safely with paint that has lead in it and to learn rights as a tenant, visit www.leadsafeillinois.org and click on the pages for Parents and for Tenants.
Eliminating Childhood Lead Poisoning
Between 1997 and 2000, more than 55,000 children in Illinois were identified as lead poisoned. This means that the children had an elevated blood lead level (defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as a blood level at or above 10 µg/dL). These numbers underestimate the problem: most children throughout the State do not have their blood tested, nor are they assessed for risk of poisoning.

Two Types of Lead Screening: Blood Testing and Risk Assessment

**Blood Testing:** The Illinois Department of Public Health has identified zip code areas in which children are considered at greatest risk for lead poisoning due to the age of the housing stock and income levels. Children who live in a high-risk zip code are required to have a blood test at certain ages to determine whether they are lead poisoned. A list of high risk zip codes is included in the Appendix. In addition, all children with siblings who have elevated blood lead levels should have a blood test.

**Risk Assessment:** Children who do not live in a high risk zip code area or whose sibling does not have an elevated amount of lead in her blood are required to be screened for lead through the use of a list of questions doctors are required to ask the child’s parents or guardian to identify risk factors. This is called risk assessment. These questions are included in the Appendix. Depending on the answers, the doctor may be required to order a blood test for lead.

In Illinois, physicians are legally required to screen all children from 6 months through 6 years of age either by a blood test or the use of a risk assessment questionnaire. The following testing schedule is highly recommended by the State of Illinois:

- Children in high risk ZIP codes should have a blood test for lead at 12 and 24 months.
- All Chicago children under 4 years should have a blood test for lead at 6, 12, 18, 24 and 36 months or at 9, 15, 24 and 36 months.
- Children covered by Medicaid or KidCare should have a blood test for lead at 12 and 24 months.
- For those children not living in high risk zip codes, doctors should review the risk assessment questions at ages 1 and 2 years.

Regular follow up testing is required when a child has been identified as lead poisoned.
Listing of Blood Lead Testing and Risk Assessment Resources by Chicago and County*

ILLINOIS
Note: The cost for a blood lead test is included for children covered by Illinois Medicaid/KidCare.

KIDCARE
Health benefits and KidCare help line.
1-866-4-OUR-KIDS or
1-866-468-7543
TTY 1-877-204-1012

CHICAGO
The following public health clinics offer free or minimal cost lead screenings. Parents can also call the Chicago Department of Public Health at (312) 747-LEAD for more information on where to go to have a child tested for lead in Chicago. All zip codes in Chicago are designated high risk, meaning that children must be screened for lead poisoning using a blood test.

Englewood Health Clinic
641 W. 63rd St.
(312) 747-7831

West Town Health Clinic
2418 W. Division
(312) 744-0943

Uptown Health Clinic
845 W. Wilson
(312) 744-1938

Roseland Health Clinic
200 E. 115th St.
(312) 747-9500

Lower West Side Health Clinic
1713 S. Ashland
(312) 746-5157

The following agencies provide blood tests for lead but charge fees based on a sliding scale.

Circle Family Center
4909 W. Division
(773) 921-8100

Mile Square Health Center
2045 W. Washington
(312) 996-2000

Lawndale Christian Health Center
3860 W. Ogden
(773) 521-5006
(773) 257-6472

Mount Sinai Hospital
California Avenue at
15th Street
(773) 542-2000

The hospital accepts insurance and Medicaid and offers sliding scale fees for the uninsured.

The following locations provide a blood test for lead poisoning free of charge to their enrolled clients:

Lakeview Neighborhood Health Center
2849 N. Clark
(773) 528-1188

Komed Health Clinic
4259 S. Berkeley St.
(773) 268-7600

South Chicago Center
2938 E. 89th Street
(312) 747-5285

Woodlawn Adult Health Center
6337 S. Woodlawn
(312) 747-7700

South Lawndale Center
3059 W. 26th Street
(312) 747-0066

Hartgrove Hospital
520 N. Ridgeway
(800) 478-4783
(773) 722-3113

*The contact and fee information included in this listing is accurate as of the date of publication of this Guide.
The following locations provide blood tests for lead poisoning but tests are not free. Medicaid and most insurance plans are accepted.

**Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke’s Medical Center**  
1650 W. Harrison  
(312) 942-5000  
Blood tests for lead must be ordered by doctor.

**University of Illinois Medical Center**  
1740 W. Taylor  
(312) 355-4000  
Blood tests for lead must be ordered by doctor.

**St. Elizabeth Hospital**  
1431 N. Claremont  
(773) 278-2000

**St. Mary of Nazareth Hospital Center**  
2233 W. Division  
(312) 770-2000

**COOK COUNTY**

**John Stroger Hospital of Cook County**  
1901 W. Harrison  
(312) 864-6000  
Provides blood tests for lead poisoning but tests are not free. Medicaid and most insurance plans are accepted.

**EVANSTON**

**Evanston Health and Human Services Department**  
Evanston Civic Center  
2100 Ridge  
Evanston, IL 60202  
(847) 866-2951  
Contact: Alisa Dean

**OAK PARK**

**West Suburban Hospital**  
3 Erie Ct.  
Oak Park, IL 60302  
(708) 383-6200  
Tests are performed at the hospital but must be ordered by a doctor, and the hospital will send test out for results. Bring insurance information.

**SKOKIE**

**Skokie Health Department**  
5127 Oakton St.  
Skokie, IL 60077  
(847) 933-8252  
Contact: Joan Hartford  
Provides blood tests for lead for $18; free for individuals with Medicaid card.

**DUPAGE COUNTY**

Screening only provided by private physicians.

**KANE COUNTY**

**Kane County Health Department**  
1330 N. Highland Ave.  
Aurora, IL 60506  
(630) 897-1124  
Conducts blood tests for lead; free for individuals with Medicaid card.

**Kane County Public Health Center**  
113 S. Grove Ave.  
Elgin, IL 60120  
(630) 695-0848  
Conducts blood tests for lead; free for individuals with Medicaid card.
Listing of Blood Lead Testing and Risk Assessment Resources

KANKAKEE COUNTY
Kankakee County Health Department
2930 W. Station St.
Kankakee, IL 60901
(815) 937-3560
Conducts blood tests for lead for $19.

LAKE COUNTY
Lake County Health Department
2400 Belvidere Road.
Waukegan, IL 60085
(847) 377-8400
Provides blood tests for lead for $43, but only $4 with Medicaid card. Sliding scale fee for individuals without Medicaid card but proof of income.

MACON COUNTY
Macon County Health Department
1221 E. Condit St.
Decatur, IL 62521
(217) 423-6988
Provides blood tests for lead free for individuals with Medicaid card or proof of income at 185% of poverty level. Provides private insurance blood tests for lead for $30.

PEORIA COUNTY
Peoria County Health Department
2116 N. Sheridan Rd.
Peoria, IL 61604
(309) 679-6068
Provides blood tests for lead free for individuals with Medicaid card; $15 for others.

ROCK ISLAND COUNTY
Rock Island County Health Department
2112 25th Ave.
Rock Island, IL 61201
(309) 793-1955 x 295
Contact: Kathy Lemburg
Provides blood tests for lead free with WIC appointment; sliding scale fees for others.

ST. CLAIR COUNTY
St. Clair County Health Department
19 Public Square, Suite 150
Belleville, IL 62220-1624
(618) 233-6175 x 4468
Contact: Jerry Obst
Provides blood tests for lead free for individuals with Medicaid card.

SANGAMON COUNTY
Sangamon County Public Health Clinic
2501 N. Dirksen Parkway
Springfield, IL 62702
(217) 535-3102
Provides blood tests for lead free if WIC eligible or for individuals with Medicaid card; fee is otherwise $28.

Springfield Department of Public Health
1415 E. Jefferson
Springfield, IL 62703
(217) 789-2182
Provides blood tests for lead free to children at 185% of poverty level; $38 for others.
LEAD SAFE ILLINOIS 13

Eliminating Childhood Lead Poisoning

STEPHENSON COUNTY

Stephenson County Health Department
10 W. Linden St.
Freeport, IL 61032
(815) 235-8360
Contact: Diane Jordan-Williams
Provides blood tests for lead: free for individuals that qualify for the WIC program.

VERMILION COUNTY

Vermilion County Health Department
200 South College Street, Suite A
Danville, IL 61832
(217) 431-2662
Provides blood tests for lead: free for individuals with Medicaid card; $30 with private insurance.

WILL COUNTY

Will County Health Department
501 Ella Ave.
Joliet, IL 60433
(815) 727-8480
Provides blood tests for lead free if resident of Will County; charges sliding scale fee for non-residents.

WINNEBAGO COUNTY

Winnebago County Health Department
401 Division Street
Rockford, IL 61104
(815) 720-4000
Provides free blood tests for lead for individuals with Medicaid card; otherwise $10 fee.
Case Management for Lead Poisoned Children

When a child is identified as lead poisoned (this means that the child has a level of lead in his blood of 10 µg/dL [micrograms per deciliter] or higher) the Illinois Department of Public Health or the city or county health departments provide case management services to the family. These services include: counseling regarding possible sources of lead hazards and information on nutrition, hygiene and prevention. Other services include referrals for Public Aid and Early Intervention, and programs such as WIC and Food Stamps. Case management services vary but may also include referrals to home inspectors, special education programs, medical care, and housing resources. An environmental inspection can look at locations other than the home where the child spends time, such as day-care facilities. Case managers may also administer developmental tests. Additional services are offered through community based agencies, and clinics.

The Public Health Department is required to provide the following case management services as indicated by the blood lead levels below:

When a child **under three years of age** has a blood lead level of **10 µg/dL or higher**:

- A licensed lead risk assessor must inspect the home and common areas of the building.
- (Note: The Chicago Department of Public Health will conduct a home inspection for infants younger than 1-year-old who have blood lead levels equal to or above 6 µg/dL.)

When **any child** has a blood lead level of **10-19 µg/dL**:

- Parents are counseled on the need for repeat testing in three months.
- A home inspection is conducted if a child has three successive blood lead levels of 15-24 µg/dL, or one test result greater than 15 µg/dL and a second test result at least 5 µg/dL higher than the first.
- (Note: The Chicago Department of Public Health will conduct a home inspection for children 3 years of age and older when the child’s blood lead level is 15 µg/dL or above.)
When a child has a blood lead level of 20-44 µg/dL:

- Parents are referred to a physician for medical evaluation and treatment within 10 days; a home visit by a health department nurse is scheduled; an inspection of the home for possible lead hazards by a licensed lead risk assessor may be conducted; and parents are counseled on the need for repeat testing monthly or per physician instructions.
- A physician also may request an inspection at levels of 20 µg/dL.
- At levels greater than or equal to 25 µg/dL, an inspection of the home for possible lead hazards is conducted by a licensed lead risk assessor and a home visit by a health department nurse is conducted.

When a child has a blood lead level of 45-69 µg/dL:

- Parents are referred to a physician for medical evaluation and treatment within 48 hours
- A home visit is conducted by a health department nurse within 5 working days
- Parents are counseled on the need for repeat testing monthly or per physician instructions
- An inspection of the home for possible lead hazards is conducted within 5 working days.

When a child has a blood lead level of greater than or equal to 70 µg/dL:

- Parents are referred to a physician for medical evaluation and treatment immediately. This is a medical emergency.
- A home visit is conducted by a health department nurse within 24-48 hours.

The Department of Public Health also must inspect homes under the following circumstances:

- Children under 6 years of age, or a pregnant woman lives in the building, and
- The parent or guardian of the child, or the pregnant woman requests the inspection, and
- Mitigation notices to repair lead hazards have been given for two or more units in the same building within the last five years.
CHICAGO
Provides case management services free or at minimal cost to families of lead-poisoned children and physician consultation through the Department of Public Health and the resources listed below.

Chicago Department of Public Health
2133 W. Lexington
Chicago, IL 60612
(312) 747-LEAD
Provides free case management services to families of lead poisoned children.

Children’s Memorial Hospital
2300 Children’s Plaza
Chicago, IL 60614
1-800-543-7362
1-800-KIDS-DOC
Dr. Helen Binns, M.D., provides health care follow-up and case management services to families of lead-poisoned children upon referral by primary care physician.
Accepts Medicaid, insurance, or provides sliding scale of fees for uninsured families.

Jorge Prieto Health Center
2424 S. Pulaski Rd.
Chicago, IL 60623
(773) 521-0750
Contact: Jim Donahue
Provides medical care and case management.

Westside Health Authority
5437 W. Division
Chicago, IL 60651
(773) 378-5034
Provides education and environmental case management but does not provide medical care.

Lawndale Christian Health Center
3860 W. Ogden Ave.
Chicago, IL 60623
(773) 846-3000

Howard Area Community Center
7648 N. Paulina
Chicago, IL 60626
(773) 262-6622
PrimeCare Northwest
4235 W. North Ave.
Chicago, IL 60639
(773) 278-6868

COOK COUNTY
The following will refer parents to public health nurses who provide free or minimal cost case management to families of lead poisoned children.

EVANSTON
Health and Human Services Department
2100 Ridge
Evanston, IL 60202
(847) 866-2951
Contact: Alisa Dean

OAK PARK
Cook County Department of Public Health
Lead Poisoning Prevention Unit
1010 Lake St.
Oak Park, IL 60301
(708) 492-2076
Refers families of lead-poisoned children to public health nurses nearest to the family.

Oak Park Health Department
123 Madison
Oak Park, IL 60302
(708) 358-5486
Provides case management services to children with elevated blood lead levels.

PCC Community Wellness Center
14 W. Lake St.
Oak Park, IL 60302
(708) 383-0113

*The contact and fee information included in this listing is accurate as of the date of publication of this guide.
SKOKIE

Skokie Health Department
5127 Oakton St.
Skokie, IL 60077
(847) 933-8252
Contact: Joan Hartford

Provides case management services to children with elevated blood lead levels.

DUPAGE COUNTY

DuPage County Health Department
111 N. County Farm Rd.
Wheaton, IL 60187
(630) 682-7979 x 7566
Contact: Lorene Pesole

Provides case management services to children with elevated blood lead levels.

KANE COUNTY

Kane County Health Department
1330 N. Highland Ave.
Aurora, IL 60506
(630) 897-1124

Provides case management services to children with elevated blood lead levels.

Kane County Public Health Center
113 S. Grove Ave.
Elgin, IL 60120
(630) 695-0848

Provides case management services to children with elevated blood lead levels.

KANKAKEE

Kankakee County Health Department
2930 W. Station St.
Kankakee, IL 60901
(815) 937-3560
Contact: Connie Treece

Provides case management services to children with elevated blood lead levels.

LAKE COUNTY

Lake County Health Department
Belvidere Medical Building
2400 Belvidere Rd.
Waukegan, IL 60085
(847) 377-8400

Provides case management services to children with elevated blood lead levels.

MACON COUNTY

Macon County Health Department
1221 E. Condit St.
Decatur, IL 62521
(217) 423-6988
Contact: Cindy Smith, Children’s Health Clinic

Provides case management services to children with elevated blood lead levels.

PEORIA COUNTY

Peoria County Health Department
2116 N. Sheridan Rd.
Peoria, IL 61604
(309) 679-6068

Provides case management services to children with elevated blood lead levels.

ROCK ISLAND COUNTY

Rock Island County Health Department
2112 25th Ave.
Rock Island, IL 61201
(309) 793-1955 x 295
Contact: Julie Engstrom

Provides case management services for children with elevated blood lead levels.
ST. CLAIR COUNTY
St. Clair County Health Department
19 Public Square, Suite 150
Belleville, IL 62220-1624
(618) 233-6175 x 4468
Contact: Jerry Obst
Provides case management services for children with elevated blood lead levels.

SANGAMON COUNTY
Sangamon County Public Health Clinic
2501 N. Dirksen Parkway
Springfield, IL 62702
(217) 535-3102
Provides case management services for children with elevated blood lead levels, but does not provide environmental investigations.

Springfield Department of Public Health
1415 E. Jefferson
Springfield, IL 62703
(217) 789-2182
Provides case management services for children with elevated blood lead levels and does provide environmental investigations.

STEPHENSON COUNTY
Stephenson County Health Department
10 W. Linden St.
Freeport, IL 61032
(815) 235-8360
Contact: Diane Jordan-Williams
Provides case management services to children with elevated blood lead levels.

VERMILION COUNTY
Vermilion County Health Department
200 South College Street, Suite A
Danville, IL 61832
(217) 431-2662
Provides case management services to children with elevated blood lead levels.

WILL COUNTY
Will County Health Department
501 Ella Ave.
Joliet, IL 60433
(815) 727-8480
Provides case management services to children with elevated blood lead levels.

WINNEBAGO COUNTY
Winnebago County Health Department
401 Division Street
Rockford, IL 61104
(815) 720-4000
Provides case management services to children with elevated blood lead levels.
Special Education Resources
Recent scientific research concludes that 90% of brain development occurs between birth and age three. Lead poisoning is most harmful during these years because it interferes with brain development. This may lead to learning disabilities in the future. A lead poisoned child may show no signs that learning will be a problem until academic and social problems start showing up in school. She may have trouble concentrating, or be hyperactive and aggressive with other children, and lag behind the class in learning her numbers and letters. This, in turn, makes her more frustrated and slower to learn basic skills. The effects of lead can cause lifelong learning problems.

Parents may feel frustrated and overwhelmed, too, and may not know how to get help or what services are available. If the child’s blood shows that she is lead poisoned, the school should be told of the child’s condition. The parent or the teacher may conclude that the child would benefit from special education classes.

A diagnosis of lead poisoning does not automatically make a child eligible for special education. To be eligible for special education, a child must (1) have a disability and (2) need special education and related services. This means a child must show the effects of the lead poisoning in the form of a disability that interferes with the child’s ability to learn in the classroom, such as a specific learning disability, behavior problems, or physical problems that require individualized services.

The determination of whether a child is eligible for special education is made after the child has been evaluated. Parents concerned that their child may have a disability and need special education and related services, can request their school district to evaluate their child.

Keep in mind that a school may be required to offer accommodations to a child who does not qualify for special education services but who has problems that limit his ability to learn in major ways, such as hearing or breathing difficulties or an inability to organize or express his thoughts in the time it takes his classmates. The school, for instance, may accommodate a child who suffers from learning difficulties due to lead poisoning by giving the child extra time to complete assignments.

Because procedures and regulations are complicated, and it may be difficult to get accommodations, it is advisable to research carefully the evaluation and eligibility process, maintain good records of the child’s medical and educational history, and, if necessary, seek legal advocacy to obtain educational services and accommodations. Parent advocacy groups can also be a source of support and guidance. The Appendix provides suggestions for communicating with a child’s school and sample letters that may assist parents to request services or accommodations from the school.
The following listing includes resource centers and attorneys that provide advocacy, training, case management and/or legal services to families of children with disabilities needing special education. Chicago resources are listed first, followed by a statewide list alphabetically categorized by county. Inclusion on this list is not an endorsement of the services or agencies by Loyola’s Civitas ChildLaw Center, and the listing is not intended to be inclusive of available services.

The agencies and individuals listed in this section were compiled in part from the following resources: “One Parent to Another: Protecting the Educational Rights of Our Children” by Betsy E. Borgacz; “A Parent’s Guide to the Educational Rights of Students with Disabilities” by the Illinois State Department of Education; the “2005 Directory of Health and Human Services in Metropolitan Chicago” by the Community Resource Network of United Way of Metropolitan Chicago; and Deborah Pergament, J.D.
Listing of Special Education Resources for Parent Support and Case Management by City*

CHICAGO

Center for Disability and Elder Law
710 N. Lake Shore Drive,
3rd Floor
312/908-4463
312/908-8705 (TTY)
Fees: None

Provides legal assistance to parents of children with special education needs. Parents must meet income qualifications.

Designs for Change
29 E. Madison, Suite 950
Chicago, IL 60602
1-800-851-8728 or 312-236-7252
http://designsforchange.org
Fees: None

Provides training and technical assistance and referrals to parents of children with disabilities. Upon request, will offer presentations on disability law and children’s rights.

Family Resource Center on Disabilities
20 E. Jackson Blvd., Room 300
Chicago, IL 60604
1-800-952-4199
312-939-3513
www.frccd.org
Fees: None

This organization provides free, weekly seminars for parents about special education law. It also provides parent-to-parent training, individualized help with Individualized Education Programs (IEP’s), and a support group (Family Support Project) for parents of children with disabilities.

BELLEVILLE

Living Independently Now Center for Independent Living (LINC)
120 East A St.
Belleville, IL 62220
618/235-9988 (V/TTY)
www.lincinc.org
Fees: None

Provides a youth and family caseworker to assist parents with special education needs for their children.

BLOOMINGTON

IL-TASH
406 W. Wood
Bloomington, IL 61701
630/584-0970
www.tash.org/chapters/illinois

This organization does not provide services, but it holds a statewide conference each year that addresses the learning characteristics and environments for children with disabilities.

DECATUR

Soyland Access to Independent Living (SAIL)
2449 Federal Drive
Decatur, IL 62526
217/876-8888 (V/TTY)
800/358-8080 (V/TTY)
www.decatursail.org

Program Manager: Emily Dobson

Provides parent support groups and training for families with special education needs.

*The information included in this listing is accurate as of the date of publication of this guide.
EFFINGHAM

Family Matters Parent Training and Information Center
2502 S. Veterans Drive
Effingham, IL 62401
217/347-5428
866/4FMPTIC or 866/436-7842
www.fmptic.org
Fees: None

Provides one-on-one support and case management for families with special education needs in 94 counties in Illinois not including Cook County. This parent training and information center helps with Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings and provides periodic trainings on special education information. This organization has worked with lead-poisoned children and their families in the past.

GLEN ELLYN

DuPage Center for Independent Living
739 Roosevelt Rd., Bldg. 8, Suite 109
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137
630/469-2300
Fees: None

Provides case management and general assistance to families with special education needs.

ELGIN

Fox River Valley Center for Independent Living
730 W. Chicago St.
Elgin, IL 60123
847/695-5892
847/695-5868 (TTY)
Fees: None

Provides case management for children and families with special education needs.

JACKSONVILLE

Jacksonville Area Center for Independent Living
60 East Central Park Plaza
Jacksonville, IL 62650
217/245-8371 (V/TTY)
www.jacil.org
Fees: None

Provides case management and general assistance to families with special education needs.

FOREST PARK

Progress Center for Independent Living
7521 Madison St.
Forest Park, IL 60130
708/209-1500
708/209-1826 (TTY)
http://progresscil.org
Fees: None

Educates parents about their rights and processes under special education law. Advocates on behalf of parents to obtain special education services for their children.

JOLIET

Will/Grundy Center for Independent Living
2415-A West Jefferson St.
Joliet, IL 60435
815/729-0162 (V)
815/729-2085 (TTY)
www.will-grundycil.org
Fees: None

Provides parent support and training for families with special education needs.

KANKAKEE

Options Center for Independent Living
61 Meadowview Center
Kankakee, IL 60901
815/936-0100
815/936-0132 (TTY)
Fees: None
Contact: Dawn Hansen.

Provides general assistance to families with special education needs, including attending Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings.
MT. VERNON

Opportunities for Access
4206 Williamson Place, Suite 3
Mt. Vernon, IL 62864
618/244-9212
618/244-9575 (TDD)
Fees: None
Provides case management and general assistance to families with special education needs.

MUNDELEIN

Lake County Center for Independent Living
377 North Seymore
Mundelein, IL 60060
847/949-4440 (V/TTY)
847/949-0641 (TTY)
www.lccil.org
Fees: None
Provides Individualized Education Program (IEP) guidance, independent living skills, leadership training, mentor program, and employment readiness training to children and families with special education needs. Must reside in Lake County.

PARK FOREST

Progress Center South
400 Forest Blvd.
Park Forest, IL 60466
708/748-5156
Fees: None
Educates parents about their rights and processes under special education law. Advocates on behalf of parents to obtain special education services for their children.

PEORIA

Central Illinois Center for Independent Living
614 W. Glen
Peoria, IL 61614
309/682-3500
www.cicil.org
Fees: None
Provides Individualized Education Program (IEP) guidance, independent living skills, leadership training, mentor program, and employment readiness training to children and families with special education needs.

QUINCY

Independence Network Center
Durst Building, 406 N. 24th St., Suite 3.
Quincy, IL 62301
217/223-0400
217/233-0475 (TDD/TTY)
Fees: None
Contact: Yasmin Evans, Youth Advocate.
Advocates for parents of children with special education needs. Primarily attends Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings.

ROCK FALLS

Northwestern Illinois Center for Independent Living
229 First Ave. Suite 2
Rock Falls, IL 61071
815/625-7860
815/625-7863 (TTY)
Fees: None
Provides Individualized Education Program (IEP) guidance, independent living skills, leadership training, mentor program, and employment readiness training to children and families with special education needs.
ROCKFORD
Regional Access and Mobilization Project (RAMP)
202 Market Street
Rockford, IL 61107
815/968-7467 (V/TTY)
815/968-2401 (TTY)
Fees: None
Provides one-on-one case management for families with special education needs. Provides training, education, and assistance with Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings.

SPRINGFIELD
Division of Special Care for Children
2815 W. Washington Blvd., Suite 300
Chicago, IL 60612
217/793-2350
Fees: None
Provides case coordination, one-on-one counseling, and special education advocacy for families with special education needs. There are financial and medical requirements to receive services.

Springfield Center for Independent Living
330 S. Grand Ave. West
Springfield, IL 62704
217/523-2587 (V/TTY)
www.scil.org
Fees: None
Provides Individualized Education Program (IEP) guidance, independent living skills, leadership training, mentor program, and employment readiness training to children and families with special education needs.

URBANA
Persons Assuming Control of Their Environment (PACE)
1317 E. Florida
Urbana, IL 61801
217/344-5433
217/344-5024 (TTY)
www.pacecil.org
Listing of Legal Advocacy for Special Education Services by City*

CHICAGO

Children’s Law Group
47 W. Polk, Suite 300
Chicago, IL 60605
312/663-4426
lgranger@childrenslawgroup.com
dpergament@childrenslawgroup.com
www.childrenslawgroup7.com

Matthew D. Cohen
Law Offices of Monahan & Cohen
225 W. Washington #2300
Chicago, IL 60606
312/419-0252
www.monahan-cohen.com

Law Office of Bruce de Medici
333 W. Wacker Dr., Suite 300
Chicago, IL 60606
312/759-2194
bmedeci@mandellmenkes.com
Provides legal assistance to children and adults with physical and mental disabilities. See also Springfield Office.

Equip for Equality
20 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 300
Chicago, IL 60602
312/341-0022
800/537-2632
800/610-2779 (TTY)
www.equipforequality.org
Fees: Sliding scale
Provides legal assistance to children and adults with physical and mental disabilities. See also Springfield Office.

Law Office of Charles P. Fox
20 N. Clark St. #1725
Chicago, IL 60602
312/606-0221

Legal Aid Bureau Metropolitan
Family Services
1 N. Dearborn
Chicago, IL 60602
312/986-4000

Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago
111 W. Jackson Blvd., Suite 300
Chicago, IL 60604
312/341-1070
www.lafchicago.org
Fees: None for families at 125% poverty level.
Provides free legal assistance to families with special education needs.

Law Offices of Michael O’Connor and Sara Mauk
1427 Howard St.
Chicago, IL 60626
773/262-2377

Law Office of Charles Stone
79 W. Monroe
Chicago, IL 60603
312/372-9220

ALTON

Impact, Inc.
2735 E. Broadway
Alton, IL 62002
618/474-5333
618/474-5303 (TTY)
www.impactcil.org
Fees: None
Two parent advocates for children with special education needs. Debbie Goodman, one of the advocates, will attend Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings, counsel parents, and advocate for accommodations for children with special education needs.

*The information included in this listing is accurate as of the date of publication of this guide.
Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation, Inc.
413 E. Broadway
Alton, IL 62002
618/462-0029
800/642-5570
Fees: None
877/342-7891 – Legal advice and referral number: available Mon – Fri 8:30 A.M. to 1:30 P.M.
Provides legal services and advice to low-income families of children with a variety of needs, including special education.

Law Offices of Thomas E. Kennedy
2745 E. Broadway #101
Alton, IL 62002
618/474-5326

BATAVIA

Prairie State Legal Services, Inc.
201 Houston St., Suite 200
Batavia, IL 60510
630/232-9415
800-942-4612
630/232-9414 (TDD)
Fees: None
Provides legal services and advice to low-income families of children who have been denied required special education services.

BLOOMINGTON

Prairie State Legal Services, Inc.
316 W. Washington St.
Bloomington, IL 61701
309/827-5021
800/874-2536
309/828-3986 (TDD)
Fees: None
Provides legal services and advice to low-income families of children who have been denied required special education services.

BUFFALO GROVE

Brian Rubin & Associates
1110 W. Lake Cook Rd., Suite 165
Buffalo Grove, IL 60089-1997
847/279-7999

CAROL STREAM

Prairie State Legal Services, Inc.
350 South Schmale Road, Suite 150
Carol Stream, IL 60188
630/690-2130
800/690-2130
630/690-2308 (TDD)
Fees: None
Provides legal services and advice to low-income families of children who have been denied required special education services.

CHAMPAIGN

Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation, Inc.
1817 South Neil, Suite 203
P.O. Box 1278
Champaign, IL 61820
217/356-1351
800/747-5523
Fees: None
Provides legal services and advice to low-income families of children with a variety of needs, including special education.

DOWNER’S GROVE

Law Office of Michael L. Kiser
4713 Seeley Ave.
Downer’s Grove, IL 60515
630/725-0064
EAST ST. LOUIS

Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation, Inc.
327 Missouri Ave., Suite 300
East St. Louis, IL 62201
618/271-9140
Fees: None

Provides legal services and advice to low income families of children with a variety of needs, including special education.

EVANSTON

Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago
828 Davis Street, Room 201
Evanston, IL 60201
847/475-3703
Fees: None

Provides legal assistance to families with special education needs. Families must be 125% over poverty level to receive services.

FLORA

Law Office of Barry D. Bright
P.O. Box 603
Flora, IL 62839
618/662-9585

GALESBURG

Prairie State Legal Services, Inc.
1614 East Knox St.
Galesburg, IL 61401
309/343-2141
800/331-0617

HARVEY

Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago
900 East 162nd Street, Suite 101
South Holland, IL 60473
708/271-4950
Fees: None

Provides legal services to families with special education needs. Family must be 125% over poverty level to receive services.

JOLIET

Will County Legal Assistance Program
5 East Van Buren, Suite 310
Joliet, IL 60432
815/727-5123
Fees: None

Provides legal services to families with special education needs. Family must be 125% over poverty level to receive services.

KANKAKEE

Prairie State Legal Services, Inc.
191 South Chicago Street
Kankakee, IL 60901
815/935-2750
800/346-2864
815/935-2764
Fees: None

Provides legal services and advice to low income families of children who have been denied required special education services.
MATTOON
Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation, Inc.
80 Broadway, Suite 202
Mattoon, IL 61938
217/345-4063
Fees: None
Provides legal services and advice to low income families of children with a variety of needs, including special education.

MURPHYSBORO
Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation
509 S. University, 3rd Floor
Carbondale, IL 62901
(618) 457-7800
(877) 342-7891
Fees: None
Provides free legal services and advice to low income families of children with a variety of needs, including special education.

Law Office of Joni Beth Taylor
Office located on the courthouse square,
Jackson County
1008 Walnut St.
Murphysboro, IL 62966
618/684-8668

NAPERVILLE
Law Offices of Cahill & Associates
1155 S. Washington St. #106
Naperville, IL 60540
630/778-6500

NORTHBROOK/SKOKIE
Law Offices of Addis, Greenberg, & Schultz, L.L.C.
707 Skokie Blvd Ste 540
Northbrook, IL 60062
847/412-1863
www.agselaw.com

Law Office of Steven Glink
3338 Commercial Avenue
Northbrook, IL 60062
847/480-7749
www.educationrights.com

Micki Moran
The Child and Family Law Center Ltd.
105 Revere Dr., Suite C
Northbrook, IL 60062
847/929-0101

Law Offices of Brooke R. Whitted and Lara A. Cleary
Whitted & Cleary LLC
3000 Dundee Rd., #303
Northbrook, IL 60062
847/564-8662
www.whittedcleary.com

OTTAWA
Prairie State Legal Services, Inc.
1021 Clinton St.
Ottawa, IL 61350
815/434-5903
800/892-7888
Fees: None
Provides legal services and advice to low income families of children who have been denied required special education services.

PALATINE
Special Education Advocacy Center
Jill Dressner, Executive Director
1935 Plum Grove Rd. #274
Palatine, IL 60067
847/736-8286
Fees: None
Provides legal representation for low-income parents of children with special education needs. Represents children at mediation, due process hearings, and other court appearances.
PEORIA
Prairie State Legal Services, Inc.
331 Fulton St., Suite 600
Peoria, IL 61602
309/674-9831
800/322-2280
Fees: None
Provides legal services and advice to low income families of children who have been denied required special education services.

ROCK ISLAND
Equip for Equality, Inc.
Northwestern Region
1612 Second Ave.
Rock Island, IL 61204
309/786-6868
800/610/2779 (TTY)
Fees: Sliding scale
Provides legal assistance to children and adults with physical and mental disabilities, serving families throughout Illinois.
Prairie State Legal Services, Inc.
208-18th Street, Suite 202
P.O. Box 4863
Rock Island, IL 61204
309/794-1328
800/322-2280
309/793-1302 (TDD)
Fees: None
Provides legal services and advice to low income families of children who have been denied required special education services.

ROCKFORD
Prairie State Legal Services, Inc.
975 N. Main St.
Rockford, IL 61103
815/965-2902
800/892-2985
815/965-5114 (TDD)
Fees: None
Provides legal services and advice to low income families of children who have been denied required special education services.

SPRINGFIELD
Equip for Equality, Inc.
Central/Southern Region
427 E. Monroe, Suite 302
P.O. Box 276
Chicago, IL 60603
217/544-0464
800/758-0464
Fees: Sliding scale
Provides legal assistance to children and adults with physical and mental disabilities, serving families throughout Illinois.
Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation
730 E. Vine, Suite 214
P.O. Box 2206
Springfield, IL 62705
217/753-3300
800/252-8629
Fees: None
Provides free legal services and advice to low income families of children with a variety of needs, including special education.
WAUKEGAN

Prairie State Legal Services, Inc.
325 W. Washington St, Suite 100
Waukegan, IL 60085
847/662-6925
800/942-3940
847/662-4441

Fees: None

Provides legal services to low income families who have been denied special education services.
Statewide Advocacy and Education Resources*

CHICAGO
Council for Disability Rights
30 E. Adams,#1130
Chicago, IL 60603
312/444-9484
www.disabilityrights.org

Peer managed and staffed information agency advocating for rights and responsibilities of people with disabilities and their families for their full inclusion in society.

Voices for Illinois Children
208 S. LaSalle Street, Suite 1490
Chicago, IL 60604
312/456-0600
www.voices4kids.org

Develops and promotes a variety of legislative and policy initiatives that support the development of children and families in Illinois.

HOMEWOOD
The Arc of Illinois
1820 Ridge Road, Suite 300
708/206-1930
www.thearcofil.org

Provides public policy advocacy, education and training, referrals, technical support, and lobbying for people with disabilities and their families.

SPRINGFIELD
Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities in Illinois
300 E. Monroe, Suite 100
Springfield IL 62701
217/522-7016
www.ccdionline.org

A statewide advocacy organization advocating equal opportunities for all people with disabilities through change at the local, state, and federal levels.

Community and Residential Services Authority
100 N. First St., S-100
Springfield, IL 62777
217/782-2438

The CRSA is an agency created by the Illinois Legislature to coordinate services to meet the needs of individuals 21 years of age or younger with a behavior disorder or a severe emotional disturbance and their family. A parent, agency, or other advocate may refer a dispute on behalf of the individual to CRSA to receive help in resolving disagreements about service, placement, or funding for services.

State Department of Education:
Special Education
Center for Innovation & Reform
Program Compliance
Jan Shook, Division Administrator
100 N. First Street, E-228
Springfield, IL 62777
217/782-5589

Help Me Grow Hotline
535 W. Jefferson
Springfield, IL 62704
217/557-3776
800/323-GROW

Offers referrals and information about child and family services statewide including: preventive health care, immunizations, parental and family involvement, child abuse prevention, child safety, drug and alcohol abuse prevention, intergenerational interaction, and gang and violence prevention.

*The information included in this listing is accurate as of the date of publication of this guide.
Illinois Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities
830 S. Spring Street
Springfield, IL 62704
217/782-9696

ICDD is responsible for investing in new programs to improve the delivery of services and supports to individuals with developmental disabilities and their families in Illinois. The Council focuses on education, employment, transportation, community living, health care and other areas so that people with developmental disabilities can enjoy their lives to the fullest extent possible. ICDD also works to build the capabilities of individuals, families and communities, enabling each to become more self-sufficient through the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act (the DD Act).

Illinois State Bar Association
424 S. Second St.
217/525-1760
(800) 252-8908

Provides a legal referral service.

Parent Training and Partnership Project
Deb Kunz, Statewide Parent Consultant
Illinois State Board of Education
100 N. First St. E228
Springfield, IL 62777-0001
217-782-5589

Parent Training and Information Centers (PTICs) are located throughout Illinois to provide training and technical assistance to parents of children and youth with disabilities.

WHERE TO FIND ILLINOIS SPECIAL EDUCATION LAW:
or contact:
Illinois State Board of Education
100 N. 1st St.
Springfield, IL 62777

A Parents’ Guide: the Educational Rights of Students with Disabilities
This free, 86-page guide created by the Illinois State Board of Education, includes helpful information on special education screening, eligibility, Individual Education Programs (IEP’s), private schools, behavioral interventions, discipline, conflict resolution, school records, early childhood services, Medicaid, laws (IDEA, ADA, Section 504, and Early Intervention), information about least restrictive environment, a dictionary, sample letters, and information on obtaining legal or advocacy assistance.

[English version]

[Spanish version]
National Advocacy and Education Resources

**Council of Parents, Attorneys and Advocates**
P.O. Box 6767  
Towson, MD 21285  
443/851-5270  
www.copaa.org  
Fees: $50 annual membership fee for parents  
Exclusive membership benefits include two email discussion groups (listservs); an annual training and educational conference for parents, advocates, and attorneys; access to database of legal documents to assist parents in advocacy process; and access to expert materials produced by leading special education attorneys and advocates.

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**Office of Civil Rights – Region V**  
111 N. Canal St., Room 1053  
Chicago, IL 60606  
312/886-8434  

Serves student populations to resolve complaints of discrimination in school.

**USEFUL WEB SITES**

http://illinoisparents.org/  
IllinoisParents.org links parents directly to local programs, services, and community agencies. The site contains statewide resources, local resources by county, and telephone hotlines.

www.illinoisspecialed.com  
This site is dedicated to helping parents of children with disabilities in Illinois. There is an extensive list of resources that includes parent groups, child advocates, IEP books, legal research sources, special education links, the Illinois Board of Education, and contact information for Illinois politicians.

http://www.isbe.state.il.us/iicc/pdf/advocate_fact_sheet.pdf  
The Illinois State Board of Education provides these guidelines for choosing a lay advocate for special education. The site also explains the role of a lay advocate for special education and how the lay advocate can assist the parents of a child with special education needs.

http://www.isbe.state.il.us/spec-ed/pdfs/attorney_guideline.pdf  
The Illinois State Board of Education provides these guidelines for choosing an attorney for special education representation.

http://www.iser.com/index.shtml  
Internet Special Education Resources (ISER) is a nationwide directory of professionals that work with learning disabilities and special education. ISER helps parents find local special education professionals.

www.oneparent2another.4t.com  
Betsy Borgacz is a Chicago parent who has turned her own experiences as a parent with a special needs child into a guidebook for other parents.
Parents Helping Parents (PHP) is a nonprofit, family resource center for children with special needs, including learning disabilities and behavior disorders. PHP aims to help children with special needs receive the respect, hope, and the health and education resources they need from strong families, dedicated professionals, and responsive systems.


This site contains information for parents of children with disabilities focusing on learning differences. There are numerous timely and frequently updated articles on advocating for children and services for children.

This site provides information and support for financial planning for families that have a member with special needs or a disability. The project is run by two financial consultants who each have family members with special needs.

Web site with useful information on special education law. It provides legal resources that are accessible to parents, training for advocates, and other information.
Images of Peeling and Flaking Lead Paint

Most children are lead poisoned in their homes, and deteriorating lead paint on windows, doors, and porches in homes built before 1978 is the main cause. Lead poisoning occurs when children touch lead-contaminated dust or paint chips and then put their hands in their mouths. Lead hazards are not always as apparent as in these images.

Pictures courtesy of Chicago Department of Public Health
## High-Risk ZIP Code Areas

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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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LEAD SAFE ILLINOIS 40 Eliminating Childhood Lead Poisoning
**Appendix**

**High Risk ZIP Code Areas**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>ZIP Codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lee</td>
<td>62685, 62686, 62690, 62691, 62692, 62694, 62695, 62696, 62697, 62698</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menard</td>
<td>62420, 62421, 62422, 62423, 62424, 62425, 62426, 62427, 62428, 62429</td>
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<tr>
<td>Perry</td>
<td>62832, 62833, 62834, 62835, 62836, 62837, 62838, 62839, 62840, 62841</td>
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<tr>
<td>St. Clair</td>
<td>62201, 62202, 62203, 62204, 62205, 62206, 62207, 62208, 62209, 62210</td>
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<td>Union</td>
<td>62905, 62906, 62907, 62908, 62909, 62910, 62911, 62912, 62913, 62914</td>
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<tr>
<td>LEAD SAFE ILLINOIS 41  Eliminating Childhood Lead Poisoning</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Materials for Parents

Illinois Department of Public Health
Childhood Lead Risk Assessment Questionnaire

ALL CHILDREN 6 MONTHS THROUGH 6 YEARS MUST BE ASSESSED FOR LEAD POISONING.
(410 ILCS 45/6.2)

A documented result of a blood lead test or a properly filled out Childhood Lead Risk Assessment Questionnaire must be attached to a Certificate of Child Health Examination form for purposes of admission to an Illinois Department of Children and Family Services or state regulated child-care facility, including those operated by a school district.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child’s Name</th>
<th>Today’s Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child’s Age</td>
<td>Child’s Birthdate</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respond to the following questions by circling the appropriate answer.</th>
<th>RESPONSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Is this child eligible for or enrolled in Medicaid, Head Start, KidCare, All Kids or WIC?</td>
<td>Yes No Don’t Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Does this child have a sibling with a blood lead level of 10 mcg/dL or higher?</td>
<td>Yes No Don’t Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Does this child live in or regularly visit a home that was built before 1978?</td>
<td>Yes No Don’t Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. In the past one year, has this child been exposed to repairs, repainting, or renovation of a home built before 1978?</td>
<td>Yes No Don’t Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Is this child a refugee or an adoptee from any foreign country?</td>
<td>Yes No Don’t Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Has this child ever been to Mexico, Central or South America, Asian countries (i.e., China or India), or any country where exposure to lead from certain items could have occurred (for example, cosmetics, home remedies, folk medicines or glazed pottery)?</td>
<td>Yes No Don’t Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Does this child live with someone who has a job or a hobby that may involve lead (for example, jewelry making, building renovation or repair, bridge construction, plumbing, furniture refinishing, or work with automobile batteries or radiators, lead solder, leaded glass, lead shots, bullets or lead fishing sinkers)?</td>
<td>Yes No Don’t Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. At any time, has this child lived near a factory where lead is used (for example, a lead smelter or a paint factory)?</td>
<td>Yes No Don’t Know</td>
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If there is any “Yes” or “Don’t Know” response; and
- there has been no change in the child’s living conditions; and
- the child has proof of two (2) consecutive blood lead test results (documented below) that are each less than 10 mcg/dL (with one test at age 2 or older), a blood lead test is not needed at this time.

Test 1: Blood Lead Result____mcg/dL Date _____

Test 2: Blood Lead Result____mcg/dL Date _____

Please discuss any questions or concerns with your child’s health care provider. For more information, call:

Illinois Department of Public Health
Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program
800-545-2200 or 217-782-0403
TTY (hearing impaired use only) 800-547-0466

Eliminating Childhood Lead Poisoning
Questions You Should Be asked at a Child’s Medical Check-Up

1. Does the child live, or has the child recently resided, in a high-risk ZIP code?

2. Does the child live in or regularly visit a home that was built before 1950? Has the child ever lived in or regularly visited a home that was built before 1950?

3. If the child lives in or regularly visits a home, school or daycare center built before 1978 (older than 20 years), does it have peeling or chipping paint? Is it being repaired or remodeled?

4. Is the child eligible for or enrolled in Medicaid, Head Start, KidCare or WIC?

5. Does the child live with someone whose occupation or hobby may involve lead (e.g., building renovation or repair, bridge construction, plumbing, furniture refinishing, or work with automobile batteries or radiators, lead solder, leaded glass, lead shots, bullets or lead fishing sinkers)?

6. At any time has the child lived near a factory where lead is used (e.g., a lead smelter or a paint factory)?

7. Has the child ever been to Mexico, Central or South America, Asia or any country where exposure to lead from certain items (e.g., cosmetics, home remedies, folk medicines or glazed pottery) could potentially occur?

Children with one or more positive responses, or responses of “I don’t know,” to any portion of this questionnaire will be considered high risk and will need a blood test for lead poisoning.

Questions to Ask the Doctor

1. How will you test my child for lead?

2. What are the differences between lead tests?

3. What are the symptoms of lead poisoning?

4. What are the effects of lead poisoning?

5. What is my child’s blood lead level?

6. What do the test results mean?

7. If treatment is needed, what treatment is recommended?

8. What are the side effects of the treatment?

9. When should my child be tested again?

10. What foods should my child be eating at this time?

11. When can other family members be tested?

The list of “Questions to Ask the Doctor” was prepared by the University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension System for the Connecticut Department of Public Health and funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – New England.
Suggestions for Communicating with Your Child’s School

Parents should be aware that schools are required by law to follow-up on developmental concerns about a child by evaluating the child. Parents should start by writing the school (and having the child’s doctor write the school) to request a developmental evaluation and development of an IEP (individualized education program). In Illinois, the school has sixty (60) days to conduct the evaluation and develop the plan.

READY TO FIRE OFF AN ANGRY LETTER TO SCHOOL?
CONSIDER THESE TEN TIPS FIRST

1. STATE WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, HOW
   Begin your letter with a brief statement of the problem or issue you wish addressed and what action you would like the school to take. When describing an event or incident, use neutral language, avoid accusations.

2. KEEP IT SHORT AND SIMPLE
   Like most of us, teachers and administrators are busy people. Do not drudge up issues that have been resolved before. Stick to the point. A letter is simply a tool to state a problem and seek a reasonable resolution.

3. WRITE TO THE RIGHT PERSON ABOUT THE RIGHT ISSUE
   Make sure you are writing to someone who has the authority to investigate the problem or take the appropriate action. Sending correspondence to individuals without a legitimate interest just to intimidate school personnel can get you in trouble.

4. YOUR LETTER WILL HAVE A LIFE OF ITS OWN
   Once you send a letter you lose control over the information and statements contained in it. Do not include any information or any statement that you do not want disclosed to other parties.

5. KEEP GOOD RECORDS
   Make copies of all letters and emails and notes of all of the meetings and conversations you have about an issue. If you hire a lawyer, provide her with copies of all your documents.

6. DO NOT MAKE THREATS
   Do not state you have or will take a specific action unless you mean it. Overstatements usually result in a loss of credibility.

7. ALWAYS BE POLITE
   Avoid the temptation to hurl zingers, no matter how well deserved, against school personnel. Parents have been sued for libel over statements made in letters about bad teachers and coaches.
8. BE REALISTIC ABOUT YOUR CHILD’S SITUATION

Parents naturally want to advocate strongly for their children and protect them. However, no child is perfect; acting like he is will not resolve the situation.

9. TALK TO YOUR CHILDREN

If developmentally and emotionally appropriate, talk to your child about the letter. Your child may have strong feelings about your plan and good suggestions about a course of action.

10. SOME ISSUES ARE TOO BIG TO HANDLE ALONE

If your child is facing disciplinary action like suspension or expulsion, you may want to consider consulting with an attorney. Or, if your child may have a disability and is not receiving the services required, you may want legal help.

This list was developed by the Children’s Law Group. For more suggestions on working with schools, visit www.childrenslawgroup.com.
Sample Letters

(Parent Address)
(Parent Phone Number)
(Date)

Mr./Mrs. __________________________
(Superintendent or Principal)
(District Address)

Dear __________________________
I am the parent of________________________ whose date of birth is__________________, and who is a student in the__________________ grade at ____________________ School.
I am referring my child for a special education case study evaluation for the following reasons:
1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 

I understand that if the school district accepts my referral request, the 60-school-day timeline for the case study begins with receipt of this letter. I also understand that the district must obtain my consent prior to conducting the case study evaluation.
Finally, if the school district turns down my request, I will expect the district to provide me with a written explanation of the reasons for not conducting a case study evaluation promptly as is required by the state regulations.
Thank you in advance for your prompt response to this request.
Sincerely,
(Parent’s Signature)

This sample letter reprinted with the permission of Helen Binns, M.D., Children’s Memorial Hospital, Chicago, Illinois
Below is a sample letter that you may ask your doctor to send to the school district requesting an evaluation and case study.

Date: 4/22/03
To: Whom it May Concern
Re: Referral to School District for Follow-Up Developmental Screening/Assessment and Case Study

(Name here) (DOB xx/xx/xx) is being seen at (name of hospital) for lead poisoning. Lead poisoning can cause serious damage to a child’s neurological system. Children who have been lead poisoned are at greater risk for developing behavioral, learning, communication, and global developmental difficulties. We have, therefore, begun to screen all children who are patients in Lead Clinic for signs of early developmental and behavioral challenges that might ultimately affect adaptation and school performance.

Lead Clinic appointments include a developmental screening using the Denver II. The results of this screening identified the following area(s) of concern for (Name): (specific problem here, for example: Speech/Language; Cognitive/Memory; Behavior.) As a result of these findings, we are requesting that the school district initiate a case study evaluation to include further assessment of this child’s developmental/behavioral functioning and his eligibility for special education and related services through the public school system.

We understand that the school district has a 60-day timeline from receipt of a request for evaluation and case study in which to either initiate the process or inform the family in writing the reasons for its denial. We will continue to follow (Name) and his family in Lead Clinic and trust we will hear from them at an upcoming appointment that the evaluation process has begun. Please feel free to contact our clinic at (phone number) with any questions or for further information.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and prompt attention to this child.
Sincerely,

__________________________, M.D.

(Name of Doctor)

__________________________

(Name of Hospital)

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LEAD SAFE ILLINOIS

ALPHABETICAL INDEX
ALPHABETICAL INDEX

Arc of Illinois, The ..................................................33
Center for Disability and Elder Law ..................................23
Central Illinois Center for Independent Living ......................25
Chicago Department of Public Health ..................................16
Children’s Law Group ..................................................27
Children’s Memorial Hospital ...........................................16
Circle Family Center ....................................................10
Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities in Illinois ...................33
Community and Residential Services Authority ..................33
Cook County Department of Public Health Lead poisoning Prevention Unit ........................................16
Council for Disability Rights ..........................................33
Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates .......................35
Designs for Change ....................................................23
Division of Special Care for Children ................................26
DuPage Center for Independent Living ................................24
DuPage County Health Department ..................................17
Englewood Health Clinic ..............................................10
Equip for Equality, Chicago ...........................................27
Equip for Equality, Northwestern Region ..........................31
Equip for Equality, Central/Southern Region .....................31
Evanston Health and Human Services Department ..............11, 16
Family Matters Parent Training and Information Center ........24
Family Resource Center on Disabilities ..............................23
Fox River Valley Center for Independent Living ..................24
Hartgrove Hospital ......................................................10
Help Me Grow Hotline ................................................33
Howard Area Community Center ......................................16
Illinois Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities .......34
Illinois State Bar Association .........................................34
IL-TASH ........................................................................23
Impact, Inc. ....................................................................27
Independence Network Center .........................................25
Jacksonville Area Center for Independent Living .................24
John Stroger Hospital of Cook County ................................11
Jorge Preito Health Center .............................................16
Kane County Health Department ......................................11, 17
Kane County Public Health Center ....................................11, 17
Kankakee County Health Department ..............................12, 17
KIDCARE ....................................................................10
Komed Health Clinic .....................................................10
Lake County Center for Independent Living .......................25
Lake County Health Department ......................................12, 17
Lakeview Neighborhood Health Center ............................10
Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation, Inc., Alton ........28
Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation, Inc., Carbondale ....30
Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation, Inc., Champaign ....28
Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation, Inc., East St. Louis ...29
Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation, Inc., Mattoon ......30
Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation, Inc., Springfield ....31
Lawndale Christian Health Center ..................................10, 16
Law Offices:

Addis, Greenberg, & Schultz, L.L.C. ..................................30
Bright, Barry D. .........................................................29
Cahill & Associates ....................................................30
Cohen, Matthew .........................................................27
de Medici, Bruce .........................................................27
Fox, Charles P. ..........................................................27
Glink, Steven ................................................................30
Granger, Lorraine .........................................................27
Kennedy, Thomas E. ....................................................28
Kiser, Michael L. ........................................................28
Monahan & Cohen .....................................................27
Moran, Micki ..............................................................30
O’Connor, Michael and Mauk, Sara ................................27
Pergament, Deborah ....................................................27
Rubin, Brian & Associates ............................................28
Stone, Charles .............................................................27
Taylor, Joni Beth .........................................................30
Whitted & Cleary, L.L.C. ..............................................30
Legal Aid Bureau Metropolitan Family Services ...27
Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago.................................27
North Suburban Office: Evanston.....................................................29
South Suburban Office: South Holland ................................................29
Living Independently Now Center for Independent Living........................23
Lower West Side Health Clinic ..........................................................10
Macon County Health Department ....................................................12, 17
Mile Square Health Center .................................................................10
Mount Sinai Hospital ...........................................................................10
Northwestern Illinois Center for Independent Living..............................25
Oak Park Health Department ..................................................................16
Opportunities for Access .....................................................................25
Options Center for Independent Living ..................................................24
Parent Training and Partnership Project ................................................34
Peoria County Health Department .........................................................12, 17
Persons Assuming Control of their Environment (PACE) .........................26
PCC Community Wellness Center .........................................................16
Prairie State Legal Services, Inc., Batavia .............................................28
Prairie State Legal Services, Inc., Bloomington ......................................28
Prairie State Legal Services, Inc., Carol Stream ......................................28
Prairie State Legal Services, Inc., Galesburg ..........................................29
Prairie State Legal Services, Inc., Kankakee ..........................................29
Prairie State Legal Services, Inc., Ottawa ..............................................30
Prairie State Legal Services, Inc., Peoria .............................................31
Prairie State Legal Services, Inc., Rock Island .......................................31
Prairie State Legal Services, Inc., Rockford ..........................................31
Prairie State Legal Services, Inc., Waukegan .........................................32
PrimeCare Northwest ..........................................................................16
Progress Center for Independent Living ................................................24
Progress Center South .........................................................................25
Regional Access and Mobilization Project (RAMP) ..................................26
Rock Island County Health Department .............................................12, 17
Roseland Health Clinic .........................................................................10
Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke’s Medical Center .........................................11
Sangamon County Public Health Clinic ...............................................12, 18
Skokie Health Department ..................................................................11, 17
South Chicago Center ..........................................................................10
South Lawndale Center ........................................................................10
Soyland Access to Independent Living (SAIL) ........................................23
Special Education Advocacy Center .....................................................30
Springfield Center for Independent Living ..............................................26
Springfield Department of Public Health .............................................12, 18
St. Clair County Health Department ....................................................12, 18
St. Elizabeth Hospital ...........................................................................11
St. Mary of Nazareth Hospital Center ...................................................11
State Department of Education: Special Education Center for Innovation & Reform .............................................................................33
Stephenson County Health Department ..............................................13, 18
University of Illinois ............................................................................11
Uptown Health Clinic ...........................................................................10
United States Department of Education ................................................35
Vermillion County Health Department ................................................13, 18
Voices for Illinois Children ...................................................................33
West Suburban Hospital .........................................................................11
West Town Health Clinic .......................................................................10
Westside Health Authority ...................................................................16
Will County Health Department ............................................................13, 18
Will County Legal Assistance Program ................................................29
Will/Grundy Center for Independent Living .........................................24
Winnebago County Health Department ..............................................13, 18
Woodlawn Adult Health Center ...........................................................10
Eliminating Childhood Lead Poisoning

Lead Safe Housing Initiatives
ChildLaw Policy Institute/Civitas ChildLaw Center
Loyola University Chicago School of Law
16 E. Pearson St.
Chicago, Illinois 60611

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FAX: 312 915 6485
www.leadsafeillinois.org