

Culturally Relevant Lead Poisoning Prevention Strategies for Afghan Newcomer Communities



Oct. 18, 2023



»» About NRC-RIM

The National Resource Center for
Refugees, Immigrants and Migrants

>> History

- Funded by CDC, housed at University of Minnesota
- Established in Oct. 2020 as part of COVID-19 response
- Work with organizations serving RIM communities that are disproportionately impacted by health inequities



>> Goals

- **Strengthen partnerships** between health departments + communities
- **Support health departments + CBOs** that work with refugees, immigrants, + migrants
- **Reduce health disparities** + increase health equity

>> What We Do



Promising Practices
+ Toolkits



Health Education
+ Communications



Online Training



Technical Assistance



Pilot Projects



Dissemination

>> Core Partners



>> Our Work Today



Continuing
COVID-19 work on
a smaller scale



Public health
needs of Afghan
newcomers



Health requirements
for Ukrainian
Parolees

>> Our Speakers



Matt Wilson
Seattle King County
Public Health



Mohamed Ali
Seattle King County
Public Health



Navid Hamidi
Afghan Health
Initiative

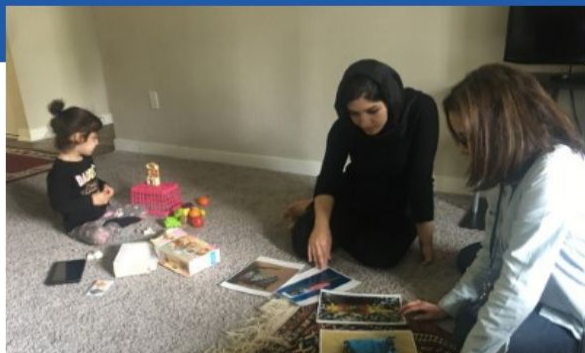
Culturally Relevant Lead Poisoning Prevention Strategies for Afghan Newcomer Communities.

Mohamed Ali, Matt Wilson & Navid Hamidi



Haz. Waste Management Program, Public Health Seattle & King County

Public education about hazardous exposures, prevention methods, and safer alternatives and practices.



Prevention

Hazardous waste disposal services for King County households and pre-qualified businesses.



Collection

Policy initiatives, like product stewardship, to address the production, use, and disposal of hazardous materials.



Policy



Residential Services Program



Aim

Reduce human and environmental exposure to residential hazardous materials while focusing our efforts on protecting the most impacted and vulnerable communities.



Exposure Reduction

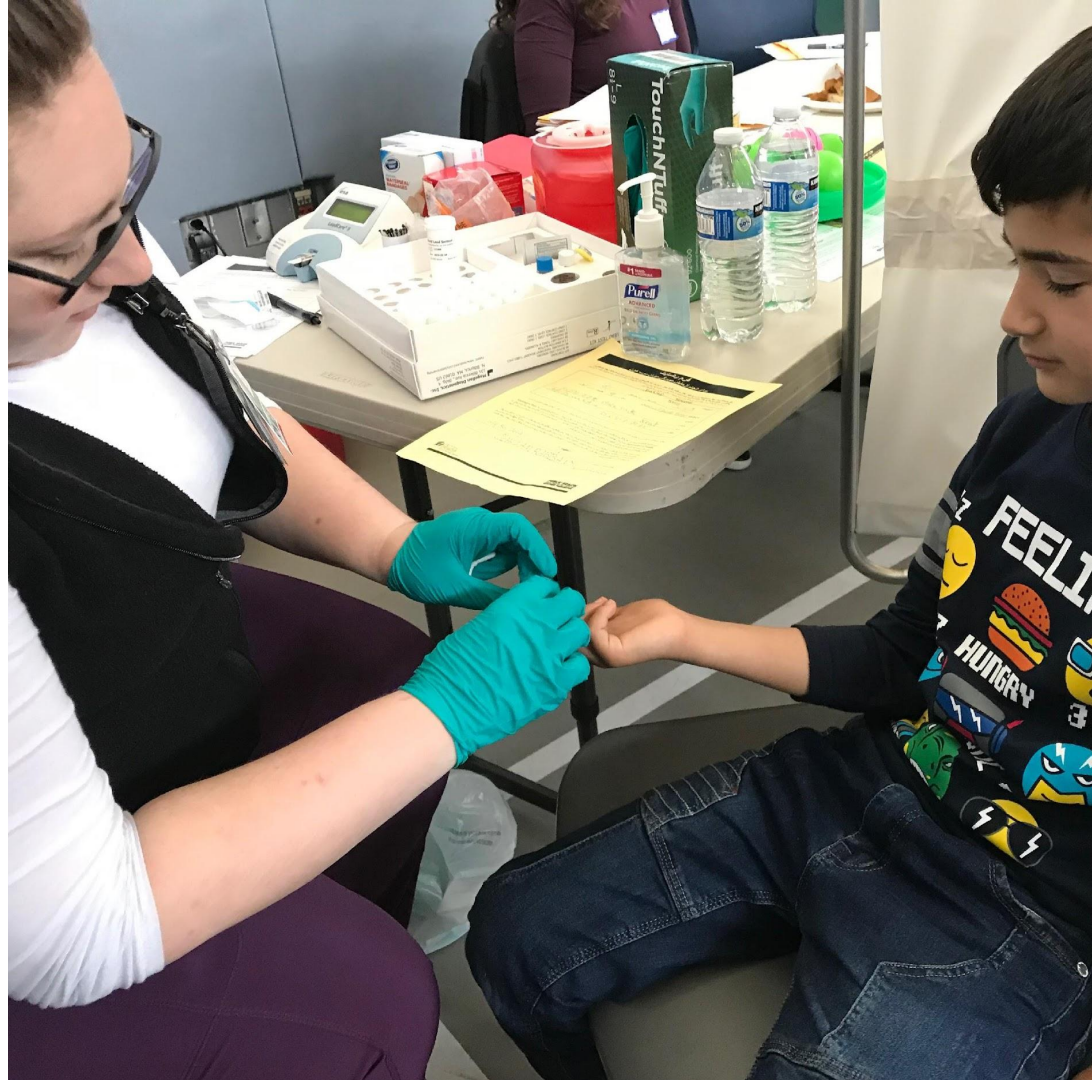
Reduce exposures to household hazardous materials through primary and secondary intervention strategies.



Community Partnership

Develop and maintain community partnerships and strengthen community capacity to identify and manage hazardous materials in and around homes.

Lead poisoning disproportionately impacts refugee and other newcomer children resettled in the United States.



Case Management Blood Lead Levels

- BLLs are notifiable conditions in Washington State.
- In King County, Washington, case investigations for children with BLLs at or above 5 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ are led by investigators from the Hazardous Waste Management Program (Haz Waste).

Opportunities 2018



**0.5 FTE
staff 2018**



**Tiered response
above 10 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$
cases**

(~ 4 visits/month)



**Letters to
parents**

(English/translations)

Opportunities and Challenges, 2018

- Language/Cultural barriers
- Lots lost to follow ups
- Huge eBLL case backlogs
- Directive of the Governor 16-06
- Haz Waste Racial Equity Implementation
- Haz Waste – 100% FTE increase
- Refugee Screening Clinic Partnership
- RFP for community partner

Public Health & Afghan Health Initiative

Navid Hamidi
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Community Health Advocate (CHA)

Who is the CHA?

- An individual with substantial social connections in the community.
- A natural convener.
- A trust builder.

What does the CHA do?

- Builds a bridge between our county partners, and the client.
- Accompanies county partners into client's home.
- Logistics, interpretation, and **education.**

Community Health Advocate (CHA) Scope of Work

Build Rapport and provide Pre-Visit Education.

Schedule home-visit and provide assurance and information about the visit.

Attend the visit, interpret, insure cultural appropriateness

Follow up with action plan, provide additional education, referrals, and often help establish care with a PCP at a home clinic

Serve as human touchpoint for follow-up questions and connection to additional resources as needed.

Community Reaction and Feedback

Initially:

- Families: unaware of lead, exposure sources, and how to prevent continuous exposure.
- Unaware of long-term mental and physical developmental delays that occur from lead.
- Gratitude toward CHA, and frustration with the situation.

Community Reaction and Feedback

Considerations for a new program:

- Immediately: families expressed fear and worry that they unknowingly did something wrong and there would be ramifications.
- Some hesitation from families in letting go of significant family heirlooms including Surma (traditional eyeliner, pressure cookers, etc.)
- Religious reasons for using surma (traditional eyeliner)- identification of safer alternatives helpful.



Culturally Appropriate BLL Case Management

Matt Wilson

Public Health Response and Investigation

✓ Healthcare providers test children	Health Environment Investigator (HEI) Provider communications	Community Health Advocate (CHA) - AHI Parent education.
✓ Report to DOH		In-language and In-culture education in-person or over phone.
✓ DOH reports to PHSKC - Over 300 poisoned children are reported to us annually	Education over phone and letter	Home visit scheduled

Joint HEI & CHA Home Visit



Home assessments for lead



In-person education



Data Analysis and Action Plan

- XRF data assessments
- Environmental sample collection and lab analysis
- Develop action plan
- Nutritional assessment
- Linkage to developmental screening
- Monitoring & evaluations
- Closing

HEI and CHA
Communication with
Provider and Family.



Identifying leaded cookware



**Traditional cooker made
in Afghanistan**



Safer Pressure Cookers



Safer alternative exchange



2023 Prestige Awards
AGENTS OF CHANGE

AWARDED TO
KING COUNTY HAZARDOUS WASTE
RESIDENTIAL SERVICES PROGRAM,
RESEARCH TEAM & AFGHAN HEALTH
INITIATIVE.



Acknowledgment

Our sincere thanks go out to the **Research team**, the exceptional individuals within **RSP and AHI**, and our partners in **Lead & Toxics**. Their collaborative efforts, expertise, and commitment have been instrumental in achieving the success of this project.

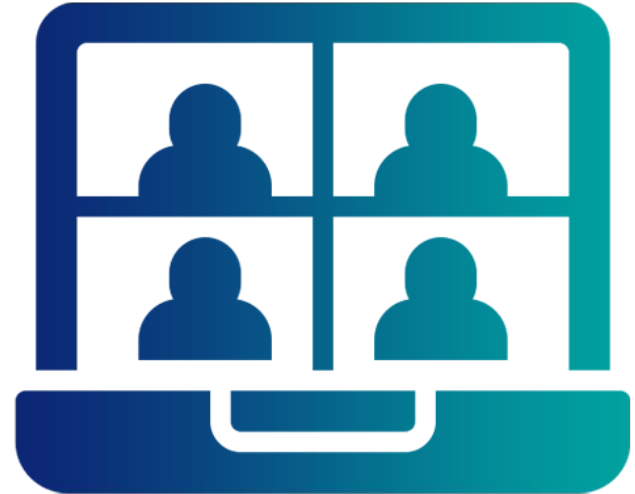


»» Health Education + Communications

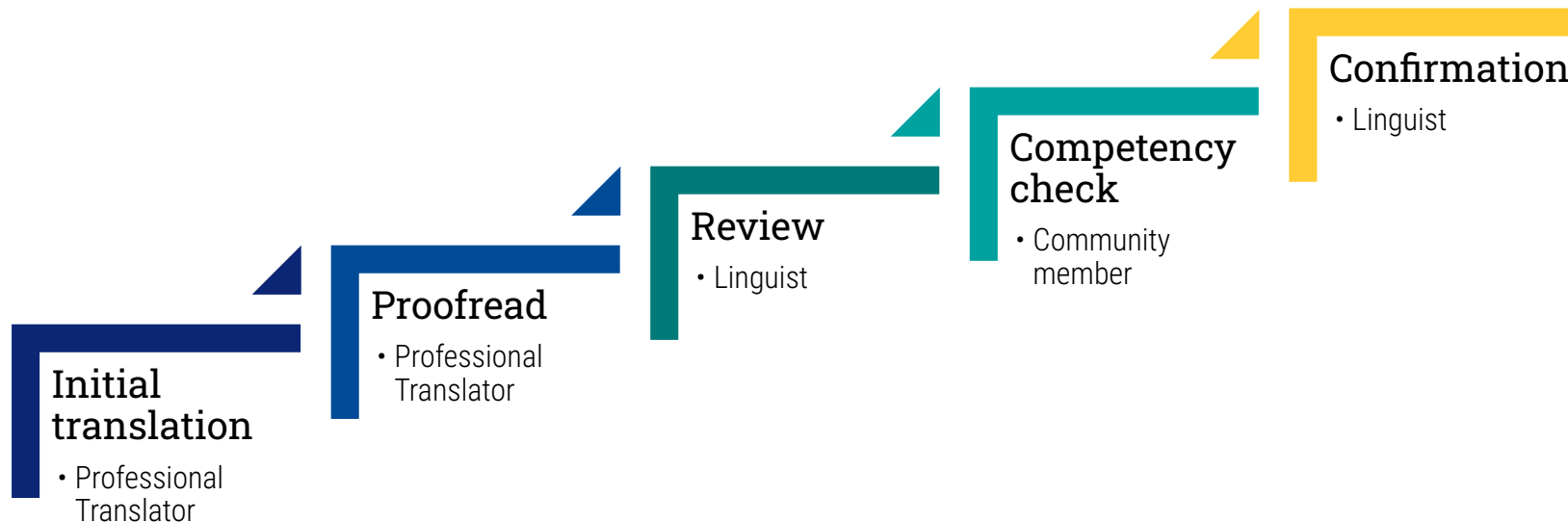
>> Learn from Communities

Content Advisors

- Achieved through listening sessions, community advisory boards, etc.
- Incorporate community perspectives
- Informs topics, framing, media, dissemination



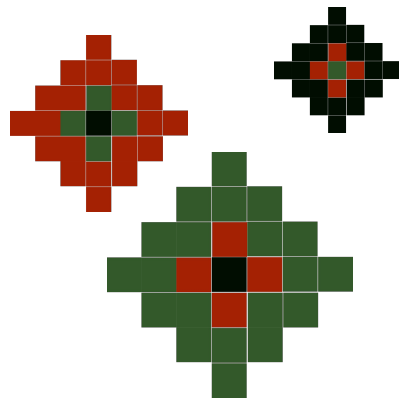
>> Robust Translation & Cultural Validation



>> Extended Cultural Validation



Photos



Brand



Messages



Symbols

>> Afghan Cultural References

PROTECT YOUR FAMILY FROM LEAD

Support your child's healthy development by using cosmetics from American or European brands instead of Surma.



PROTECT YOUR FAMILY FROM LEAD

Cook delicious Afghan dishes like lubya or korma in pressure cookers made with stainless steel.



PROTECT YOUR FAMILY FROM LEAD

Follow the Afghan tradition of removing your shoes before entering a home and keeping rugs at entryways clean.



» Topics covered



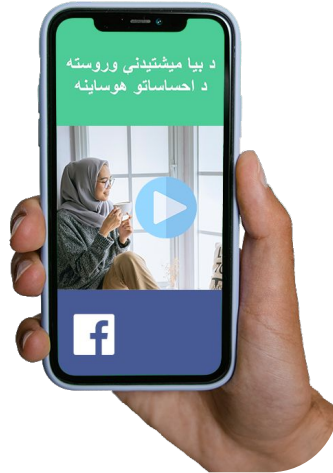
Testing + Treatment



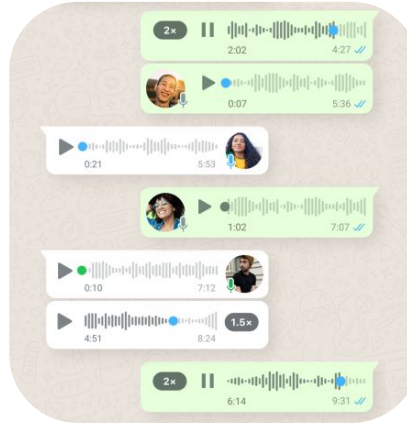
>> Formats to meet every need



Fact Sheets



Social Media



Audio



Video

» Honoring oral traditions



TEST & TREAT YOUR FAMILY FOR LEAD POISONING

There is **NO** safe amount of lead in the body.

Lead can:

- + Slow down growth and development
- + Make it hard to learn
- + Damage hearing and speech
- + Cause behavior problems

Ask your doctor to test you and your family for lead poisoning.

- + Most people, including children, do not feel sick when they have lead poisoning. A blood test is the best way to determine if you or your child has been exposed to lead.
- + In the United States, doctors screen all children for lead poisoning when they are 1 and 2 years old, but anyone can get tested for lead poisoning at any age.
- + Blood tests for lead are usually free for people with health insurance, including Medicaid.

That is why preventing exposure to lead, especially among children and pregnant people, is important.

If you or your children have low levels of lead, removing the source of the lead (such as dust or cockroaches) may be enough to reduce the amount of lead in your blood.

For more severe cases of lead poisoning, there are medicines that can help your body get rid of the lead. The medicine is called chelation therapy, and may be given in pills or in an injection.

Treatments for lead poisoning can relieve some problems but not others.

Avoid home remedies, as some may contain lead and could make your health problems worse. **Always follow your doctor's recommendations on how to treat lead poisoning.**

Eating foods with high iron, calcium and vitamin C can help protect you and your children against the harmful effects of lead. **There is no cure for lead poisoning.**

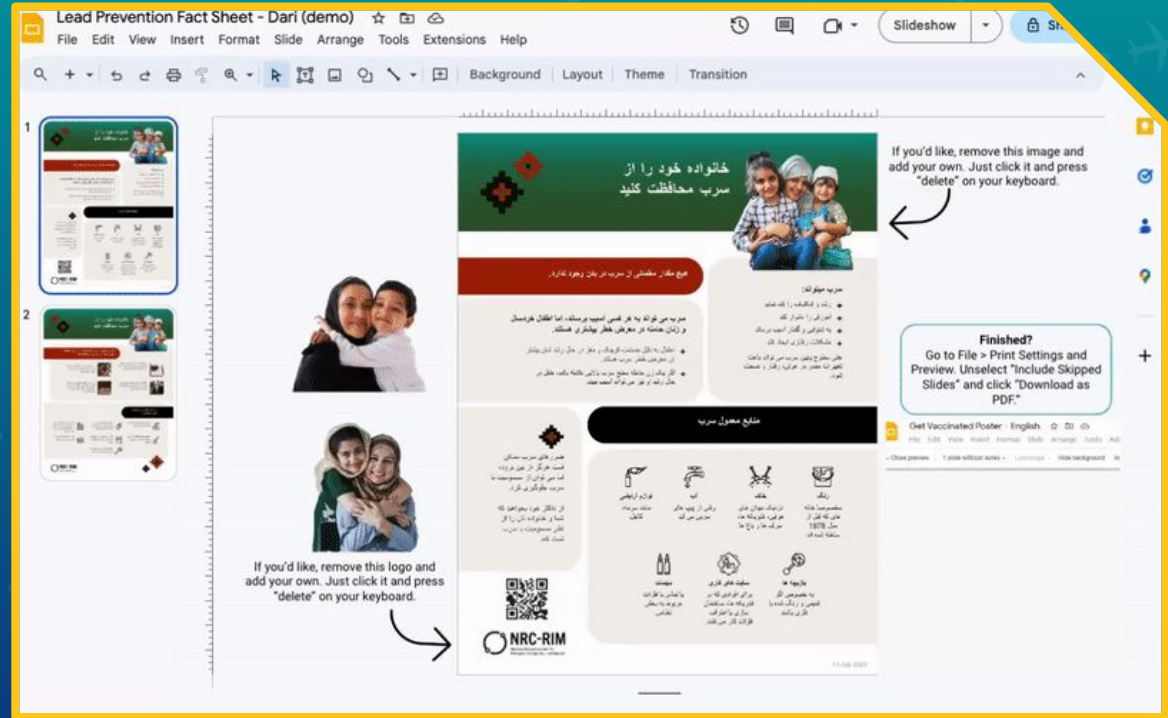
Ingredients that already exist in many traditional dishes often pose less risk. These include: chicken, meat, fish, eggs, lentils, leafy greens, fruit, milk, cheese, and yogurt.



Customizable Templates



Google Slides



>> Health Education Collections



Lead Poisoning



Summer Safety



Mental Health

»» Health Education Collections



Respiratory Illnesses



Wildfire Smoke



Women's Health

» Want to learn more?

Center of Excellence in Newcomer Health Webinar

Guidelines on Maternal Lead Screening for Immigrant and Refugees

Monday, November 6, 2023

12 – 1 p.m. ET | 11 – 12 p.m. CT | 10 – 11 p.m. MT | 9 – 10 p.m. PT

Learning Objectives:

- To better identify who is at risk for elevated lead.
- To understand the effects of lead on pregnant women and the fetus.
- To review ACOG guidelines for prenatal lead screening
- To understand the best practices for obtaining lead samples
- To know what to do when a pregnant or lactating patient has an elevated blood level.



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Q & A

>> How to Reach Us



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