



Department of Public Health

Monroe County, New York

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County Executive

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Commissioner of Public Health

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 29, 2026

MONROE COUNTY REPORTS 27% FEWER CHILDREN WITH ELEVATED BLOOD LEAD LEVELS IN 2025 TESTING

*More children tested in 2025; results released during National Lead
Poisoning Prevention Week*

ROCHESTER, NY — The number of Monroe County children found to have elevated blood lead levels decreased by 27% in 2025, even as the number of children tested increased, the Monroe County Department of Public Health announced today.

Of the 14,556 children tested in 2025, 217 had elevated blood lead levels of 5 micrograms per deciliter (µg/dL) or higher, compared with 299 in 2024. The number of children tested increased by 7% over the previous year.

“The decline in children with elevated blood lead levels is encouraging, but we still have too many children being exposed to lead in their homes,” **said Monroe County Executive Adam Bello**. “We’ve invested in programs to identify and remove lead hazards because the best way to protect children is to prevent exposure in the first place. We will continue supporting that work alongside our community partners.”

“Lead exposure can have lasting effects on a child’s ability to learn, grow and thrive,” said **Commissioner of Public Health Dr. Marielena Vélez de Brown**. “The harm can occur before a child shows any symptoms, which is why we can’t rely on signs of illness to tell us there’s a problem. Regular testing is essential to identifying children who have been exposed and making sure they get the care and follow-up they need.”

When a child is found to have an elevated blood lead level, the Monroe County Department of Public Health’s [Lead Poisoning Prevention Program](#) provides follow-up care, including medical case management and educational outreach to families. Program staff also investigate homes where affected children live or regularly spend time to identify sources of lead exposure. When hazards are found, the department can order property owners to correct them using EPA-compliant lead-safe procedures.

New York State requires all children to be tested for lead at ages 1 and 2. Health care providers must also assess children for lead exposure at routine well-child visits through age 6 and test those found to be at risk.

Parents and caregivers who have questions about lead testing or possible exposure should talk with their child's healthcare provider.

Many homes in Monroe County predate lead safety regulations and the 1978 federal ban on lead-based paint in residential housing. Deteriorating lead-based paint and lead-contaminated dust from older housing are the most common sources of lead exposure and childhood lead poisoning in our community.

The Coalition to Prevent Lead Poisoning works with community partners to reduce childhood lead exposure and promote safer housing throughout Monroe County.

"Childhood lead poisoning is 100% preventable, and every family in Monroe County deserves a lead-safe home," said **Clare Henrie, Program Director of the Coalition to Prevent Lead Poisoning at CauseWave Community Partners**. "These encouraging numbers show that our members' collective efforts are making a real difference. However, they also show that our work isn't done and we will continue building on our progress so that every child in our community can have a lead-safe future."

Among the 217 children found to have elevated blood lead levels in 2025, 155 had blood lead levels between 5 and 9.9 µg/dL, 30 had levels between 10 and 14.9 µg/dL, 17 had levels between 15 and 19.9 µg/dL and 15 had levels of 20 µg/dL or higher.

What elevated blood lead levels mean

There is no known safe level of lead in a child's blood. Even low levels of exposure can harm brain development and contribute to learning and behavioral problems. Children with higher blood lead levels may need more frequent testing, medical follow-up and additional steps to identify and eliminate sources of exposure. Families and caregivers can learn more about lead poisoning prevention by visiting <https://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/lead/>.

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ANNUAL CHILDHOOD LEAD SCREENING AND ELEVATED BLOOD LEAD (EBL) LEVEL DATA

SCREENING DATA							
TOTAL COUNTY	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Total # of Lead Tests Performed	17,289	15,088	13,307	13,735	14,958	15,632	16,443
Total # of Unique Children Tested	15,105	13,543	12,030	12,169	12,956	13,613	14,556

EBL DATA							
TOTAL COUNTY	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Total # of Children with Newly Identified EBL (≥ 5 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$) in Monroe County	254	184	186	140	243	299	217
% confirmed with Newly Identified EBL (>5 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$) of all Unique Children Tested	1.7%	1.4%	1.5%	1.2%	1.9%	2.2%	1.5%
# with confirmed lead levels 5-9.9 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$	176	138	128	103	178	230	155
% confirmed with lead levels 5-9.9 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ of all EBLs	69.3%	75.0%	68.8%	73.6%	73.3%	76.9%	71.4%
% confirmed with lead levels 5-9.9 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ of all Unique Children Tested	1.17%	1.02%	1.06%	0.85%	1.37%	1.69%	1.06%
# with confirmed lead levels 10-14.9 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$	40	26	29	19	33	35	30
% confirmed with lead levels 10-14.9 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ of all EBLs	15.7%	14.1%	15.6%	13.6%	13.6%	11.7%	13.8%
% confirmed with lead levels 10-14.9 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ of all Unique Children Tested	0.26%	0.19%	0.24%	0.16%	0.25%	0.26%	0.21%
# with confirmed lead levels 15-19.9 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$	17	10	15	7	16	14	17
% confirmed with lead levels 15-19.9 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ of all EBLs	6.7%	5.4%	8.1%	5.0%	6.6%	4.7%	7.8%
% confirmed with lead levels 15-19.9 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ of all Unique Children Tested	0.11%	0.07%	0.12%	0.06%	0.12%	0.10%	0.12%
# with confirmed lead levels ≥ 20 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$	21	10	14	11	16	20	15
% confirmed with lead levels ≥ 20 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ of all EBLs	8.3%	5.4%	7.5%	7.9%	6.6%	6.7%	6.9%
% confirmed with lead levels ≥ 20 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ of all Unique Children Tested	0.14%	0.07%	0.12%	0.09%	0.12%	0.15%	0.10%
# with confirmed levels of ≥ 45 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ (subset of # with confirmed lead levels of ≥ 20)	2	1	1	1	2	0	0

