

Healthy Homes *Advisor*

Coalition of West Michigan

Summer 2013



L to R: Kathie Hoffmann and Megan Martin of Kent Regional 4-C and Kim Sturgeon of Bethany Christian Services

Collaborating with Community

One of the ways that the Healthy Homes Coalition achieves its mission is by continuously collaborating with community partners to ensure healthy housing conditions for children.

“This partnership shows the importance and need for these services,” said Kim Sturgeon of Bethany Christian Services. Kim works with refugee women, guiding them through the licensing process to start in-home day care services.

Healthy Homes plays a role with these families by providing the smoke alarms, carbon monoxide detectors and radon tests required to receive their day care licenses, and educates families on the importance of fire safety and the risks of carbon monoxide poisoning. Carbon monoxide is colorless, tasteless and the leading cause of poisoning deaths in the United States.

Healthy Homes not only makes these homes safer for children, but also helps to empower women who are launching small businesses. “Many of these women have children themselves.” Kim explained. “Starting the day care offers a way for them to earn income while also providing for their families and their community,”

“The hope is that by going through this process, women become empowered as business owners and share the knowledge with other families that have recently immigrated,” said Kathie Hoffman of Kent Regional 4-C. Kathie handles day care licensing for the county. “As recent immigrants, these women are able to gain knowledge that benefits the health of their own families as well as the families they serve.”

The licensing process to begin in-home day care takes months. Throughout that time, the women are connected with resources at many other organizations such as Safe Kids, ICCF and Grand Valley State University.

Together with our community partners, the Healthy Homes Coalition is proud to ensure safe and healthy housing for children.

Thank you!

The Healthy Homes Coalition is grateful for the generous contributions and grants received from Sebastian Foundation, FEMA, the Dyer-Ives Foundation and others. See pages 2-4 for more information on how these contributions help Healthy Homes continue our work to eliminate harmful housing conditions.



Summer & Fall Events

Building Healthy Futures Luncheon

Healthy Homes Coalition is happy to host our community partners and share our mission to advocate for healthy housing for children.

September 25, Noon

Prince Conference Center

Building Healthy Homes Tours

Come learn more about what the Healthy Homes Coalition does and how you can get involved. Light lunch provided. Questions? Call Paul at **(616) 241-3300**.

August 15, Noon

Lead Safe Painting Classes

If you want to learn how to keep your home lead safe while doing home repairs, come to one of our FREE classes! Call Candace at **(616) 241-3300** for more information.

August 21, 10:30am - 12:00pm

September 23, 3:00pm - 4:30pm

Intro to Healthy Homes Class

Learn how to keep your children safe from environmental hazards found in the home. Classes can be schedule for groups of 5 or more people that are interested in finding out how to keep their children safe and healthy in the home environment. Call Candace at **(616) 241-3300** for more information.



Painting this Summer? Be Sure to Paint Lead-Safe!

Summer is home renovation time in Michigan. Recently, the Healthy Homes Coalition partnered with local news outlets to inform the public about the importance of using lead-safe practices while renovating and painting homes.

It is important to know that lead paint chips that fall from houses into the yard during power washing or dry scraping are harmful to children. Lead chips contaminate the soil and create lead dust that exposes children to the risk of lead poisoning. An estimated 40% of lead poisoned children in Michigan live in older homes that are currently or recently have undergone renovations.

The City of Grand Rapids' housing code requires that lead-safe work practices be used when re-painting or repairing pre-1978 homes. Paid contractors and landlords are also required to be trained and certified by the US-EPA and must use lead-safe work practices. The Healthy Homes Coalition continues to advocate for lead safe work practices to ensure the safety of children in their homes.

WOOD-TV News 8 and the Grand Rapids Press helped the Healthy Homes Coalition inform the public by featuring stories on this important topic..

If you see someone spreading paint chips by using unsafe work practices, please report the violation to help keep kids safe. For more information on how to work lead-safe or report violations, contact Healthy Homes at **(616) 241-3300**.

To sign up for a FREE class to learn how to keep your children safe while making repairs in your home, see the information on Lead Safe Painting Classes in the panel to the left.

Thank You for Supporting our *Healthy Homes 100* Campaign!

Healthy Homes would like to give a big “thank you” to the 100 donors who supported our *Healthy Homes 100* campaign, responding to the generous challenge grant offered by the Sebastian Foundation this past spring. Together, individual donors and the Sebastian Foundation contributed a total of \$36,385 to double the capacity of the *Healthy Homes for Healthy Kids* program in 2013. Through this program, donors are providing families with resources to identify and resolve lead hazards and asthma triggers in the home such as dust wipe sampling, lead safe cleaning supplies, integrated pest management supplies and more!

AAA Lead Inspections, Inc.	Dianne Slager	Kristen Admiraal	Nolan Gardner
Aidan Gardner	Francine Gaston	Kyle & Earle Irwin	Paul Haan & Julie Nietling
Amy Brower & Eric Doyle	Gayle VanGessel	Kym Spring	Penny Pestle
Amy Roeda-Borst & Dan Borst	Greg & Audrey Sundstrom	Laura Hanley & John Schutz	Phyllis VanVugt-Bratt
Amy Turner-Thole & Nick Thole	Greg & Kelly Cline	Lauren & Rev. Sean Baker	Rachel Hood & David Petroeije
Anonymous	Harold Mast	Laurie & Donald Gardner	Rev. Karsten Voskuil & Gretchen Rumohr-Voskuil
Barb & Bill Meconis	James & Maureen Shutz	Lee Nelson Weber	Robert & Angie Haan
Barbara & David Smith	Jamie Myers-Keaton	Lisa Van Dyk	Robert & Sue Cobb
Barbara Stanford & Mark Coleman	Jane Gietzen	Lockhard Tax Service, Inc.	Robert Brechting
Ben Emdin	Jason Gardner	Lori Lemieux-Woodcock & Patrick Woodcock	Robert Goodrich
Bethany Gordon	Jennifer & Stephen McMahon	Lynn Heemstra	Roberta Dischinger-Smedes & Jim Smedes
Betty Zylstra & Rev. David Baak	Jennifer Spiller	Margaret & Peter Vander Meulen	Sandy Walls
Bill & Susan Lewis	Joan Dyer & Alex Zyskowski	Marta Johnson-Ebels	Sarah Zachow
Brandon & Michelle Davis-Poeder	Joann Hoganson	Mary Hockwalt	Selma Tucker
Bryan Judge	John & Julia LaPorte	Mary Sue Schottenfels	Sue Karsen
Burgett Floral	John Hunting	Marylou Dykstra	Susan Wakefield & William Katz
Carolyn Hennessy	Joseph Kuilema & Joshlyn Litzenberger	Matthew & Beth Dykstra	Suspa, Inc.
Cindy Locklin	Judy Freeman	Melissa & Henry Kuiper	Sylvia Daining
Claire Whitman	Karsten Voskuil & Gretchen Rumohr-Voskuil	Michael & Mary Alice Williams	The Meanwhile Bar
Clarence & Grace Joldersma	Kathy & Robert Brower	Michelle Gordon	The Sebastian Foundaiton
Connie Bellows & Darlene Zwart	Ken & Gail Heffner	Mike Nelson & Carol Donovan	Theresa & Jeffery Jacobs
Courtney Myers-Keaton	Kent County Health Dept. - Jeans Day	Monica Randles & Andrew Maternowski	Uko Zylstra
Diana Jackson-Whitfield		Nicole Notario-Risk	Virginia Kuilema
Dianna & Randy Baker			Winnie Brinks

Reaching Out to Community Leaders

One of the key strategies at the Healthy Homes Coalition is to improve children’s housing and protect their health and wellbeing is through advocacy. Effective advocacy is not something that is just done in one’s spare time, but it must be well planned and resources must be dedicated to this activity.

The Dyer-Ives Foundation recently provided the Healthy Homes Coalition with a grant to mobilize advocates on behalf of safe homes for children. Support from Dyer-Ives will enable the Healthy Homes Coalition to craft its message in a way that communicates clearly and effectively to a wide variety of key decision-makers in our community to ensure that quality housing for children is advanced as a key strategy.

During the coming year, advocates will be meeting with 100 community leaders to help them better understand the impact that better housing can have upon outcomes for children. The campaign will also speak to the return on investment that comes from investing in safe environments for kids. But the campaign will do more than just inform—it will also seek commitments from these leaders to take action steps that make children’s housing healthier.

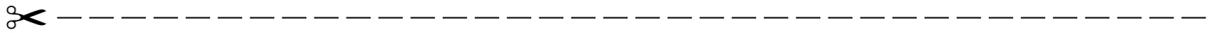
FEMA Renews Support for Fire Safety

The Healthy Homes Coalition was awarded its third grant from FEMA this past spring, increasing the number of families that will receive smoke and carbon monoxide alarms. Since April 2013, Healthy Homes has been able to provide more than 75 families with alarms. With this opportunity, Healthy Homes is able to expand the range of families served to include not only Grand Rapids, but also Kentwood and Wyoming. Families with children under 14 are eligible.

The Healthy Homes Coalition has received FEMA funding since 2008 to install smoke and carbon monoxide alarms in homes. Through June 2013, the Healthy Homes Coalition has installed 1,010 carbon monoxide alarms and 2,327 smoke alarms, serving 1,085 households.

In 2012, the Grand Rapids Fire Department (GRFD) received a similar FEMA award. Recognizing the need for full collaboration and non-duplication of services, the Healthy Homes Coalition immediately reached out to request that services be coordinated. The Healthy Homes program is unique in that it offers carbon monoxide alarms in addition to smoke detectors, serves families living in rental housing, and also offers services to Kentwood and Wyoming residents. The Healthy Homes Coalition welcomes the partnership and will continue to work with GRFD to coordinate activities, maximize impact, and keep children and families safe.

If you are interested in an alarm installation, set up an appointment today!
Call (616) 241-3300.



Yes! I'd like to help children grow up strong, smart, and healthy by protecting them from environmental hazards in their homes and becoming a member of Healthy Homes Coalition!



Names(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Sponsorship Amount

- \$25.00 Basic Member
- \$50.00 Regular Member
- \$100.00 Supporting Member
- \$200.00 Sustaining Member

Join our **Giving Circle** by pledging a special gift over the next five years.

- Healthy Futures Conservator \$1,000 per year for five years.
- Healthy Futures Builder \$500 per year for five years.
- Healthy Futures Friend \$250 per year for five years.

Checks should be made payable to:
Healthy Homes Coalition
742 Franklin SE
Grand Rapids MI 49507

Or made online at
www.HealthyHomesCoalition.org

Believing in Opportunities for Children



When you look around west Michigan, it's hard to find anyone who does not believe that children should be afforded every opportunity to succeed in life. A caring community embraces their children and does all that it can to make sure they have a good start in life.

This includes the hundreds of supporters who want to make sure that the very homes where children grow up do not limit the

potential of those children by harming their health.

Believing is the first step. The next step is action.

Healthy Homes is proud to say that there are also a lot of people of action in west Michigan. Just look at this newsletter and you will see the names of one-hundred people who responded by making donations to support our *Healthy Homes for Healthy Kids* program. Then there are the foundations who recognize that children's homes and health are key to their future success.

But action is more than donating. Michigan Representative Rob VerHuelen and Senator Dave Hildenbrand took action this spring to make sure lead poisoned children are protected by reinstating State funding for lead hazard control. WOOD TV-8 and the Grand Rapids Press took action by conveying the message that anyone painting an older home must work lead-safe. And Kathie, Megan and Kim are taking action by making sure new neighbors are informed and connected with resources as they prepare to care for their communities' children.

How can you take action? The Healthy Homes Coalition invites you to join the ranks of those who both believe in *and* create opportunities for children by taking action.

Paul Haan, Executive Director

Healthy Homes Advocates and Michigan Approves \$1.28 Million in Lead Funding

Under the recently announced budget for the State of Michigan, \$1.28 million is now available to address childhood lead poisoning. Kent County has the second highest number of lead poisoning cases in the state. With this appropriation, more aide will be devoted to abating lead hazards in homes across the state.

The Healthy Homes Coalition is happy to have played a key role working alongside State officials, and is grateful to those that supported the effort to ensure all children have the opportunity to grow up safe and healthy. A big thank you to Representative VerHuelen and Senator Dave Hildenbrand for playing leadership roles in this effort!



Our Current Programs

Healthy Homes Assessments

Trained staff assess the home for a wide variety of children's environmental health concerns, including lead, asthma triggers, radon, carbon monoxide, accidental injury, and more. Assessments are followed-up by the development of an action plan, education, and connection to resources.

Smoke and CO Alarms

Free smoke and carbon monoxide alarms installed in homes for families with children up to 14 years of age.

Radon Testing

Free radon testing for families participating in Healthy Homes Assessments. \$5 do-it-yourself kits available for all others.

Pest Management

Help eradicating cockroaches, mice and rats using child and environmentally friendly tactics.

Classes and Education

Healthy Homes offers a wide variety of classes for parents and professionals.

Eligibility

Most of Healthy Homes' programs are restricted to low-moderate income families with children birth through age five living in pre-1978 housing in Grand Rapids and northeast Wyoming. Call for details.

 Sustainably printed, with our kids' future in mind!

Pest Strategies for Summer

With the heat and humidity of summer, it isn't uncommon to see an increase of bugs and pests in the home. Following three simple steps can help you safely get rid of pests in the home without the use of harmful chemicals.



- 1. Starve them OUT!** A few crumbs might not seem like much, but can be an entire meal for pests. Clean up spills and crumbs right away. Store food, snacks and pet food in tightly sealed containers. Empty trash frequently and use a garbage can with a tight fitted lid.
- 2. Dry them OUT!** A leaky faucet or a dish with water can provide a source for pests. Report or fix leaks. Wipe off counters and floors when wet. Do not leave water standing overnight.
- 3. Keep them OUT!** Mice are small and can fit through a hole the size of a dime. Cockroaches can fit in even smaller areas. Get rid of clutter where pests like to hide. Plug holes with copper mesh, spray foam or caulk from the group level up to five feet.

Lastly, do not use unapproved pesticides or poison. With a few simple changes, you can get rid of pests! For more information on integrated pest management and a list of pest management supplies call Healthy Homes at (616) 241-3300.