

"Lead is not welcome here..."

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Luis Fierro was poisoned by lead at 5 years of age. Thanks to his family and services he received, Louis is doing well in school.

"My son did not speak, fell constantly and was very hyperactive," shared Luis Fierro, father of an adolescent who at the age of five was lead poisoned.

The family rented an old apartment in Council Bluffs and didn't know paint on the inside and outside contained lead. According to an inspection of the apartment in 2013, by the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH), lead paint hazards were found on doors, windows and floors on the inside. Lead hazards were also found on the outside porch ceiling, rail, and posts where the paint was cracking, peeling and

chipping away.

According to the parents of Luis Fierro (son), he liked to play everywhere, inside and outside the apartment, and always put his toys and fingers in his mouth. "This is how he probably got lead in his body", concluded IDPH.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says no level of lead in a child's body is safe. Lead in a child's body can result in kidney damage, colic (severe stomach pain), muscle weakness, brain damage, and death, if large amounts of lead are swallowed.

"My son", said Mrs. Leticia Soria "needed speech therapy and special education to learn and move forward". "I cried to see my son struggling... I wasn't sure if he would ever have his health back". Fortunately, he did after several years of treatment and work, commented the child's mother. In some cases, chemical treatment may be needed to help remove lead from a child's body. In this case, the child is likely to recover once the lead poisoning ends, but there is no guarantee long-term health effects from lead will be avoided, reports CDC.

When lead is found in a child's body, it is important to remove it as quickly as possible to prevent long term health impacts from occurring. The Fierro Soria family ended up buying and moving to their own home where "lead is not welcome" there.

Contact the Iowa Department of Public Health at (515) 281-3225 or at 800-972-2026 or visit us online at <https://idph.iowa.gov/Environmental-Health-Services/Child-hood-Lead-Poisoning-Prevention>