Two Friends Learn About Lead

Introduction

I am going to tell you a story about two friends who get very sick because they ate paint chips and played with dirt that contained lead. These children had to go to the [doctor’s office or clinic] ______________ and take medicine to get better. Now, these friends want to tell you what to do so lead won’t make you sick!

Story

Once upon a time, there were two friends who lived in [houses, apartments] _______ right next to each other. One friend was called [girl’s name] _______ and the other friend was called [boy’s name] ______________.

[Girl’s name] _______ [boy’s name] ____________ liked each other so much that they would play together every day. Sometimes they played cars, and they would drive their [bikes, trikes, or hot wheels] ______________ all over the [backyard, play yard, or playground] ___________. making lots of loud car sounds. Other times they would play in the sandbox all day long!

Of all the games they played together, their favorite was “Honey, I’m Home!” When they played this game, [girl’s name] _______ was always the mommy and [boy’s name] _____________ was always the daddy, and they would always make the sandbox their house!

Sometimes [girl’s name] _______ would come into the house and say, “Homey, I’m home!” Then [boy’s name] _______ would say, “Okay, honey! I’m in the kitchen. Come and help me make dinner!”

Other times, [boy’s name] ______ would walk in the door and say “Honey, I’m home! and [girl’s name] _________ would say, “Okay, honey! I’m in the kitchen. Come and help me make dinner!”

Whenever they played this game, they would look all over the yard for things to “eat” for dinner. Sometimes they would pull up grass and pretend it was lettuce. Other times, they would collect rocks, and leaves and twigs and pretend that they were macaroni and cheese!

They would look for a pretend “dessert.” Most of the time, they would go over to the steps of the [house, apartment] ______ to scrape up the paint chips that had fallen into the dirt. And then they would go over to the wall of the [house,
apartment] ______ to pick off the paint chips that were sticking up. They would pretend that these things were cookies!

Once they had found all their “food,” they would pretend to eat their whole “dinner.”

Most of the time, they didn’t really put these things in their mouths. But sometimes, when they were laughing and talking and having fun, they would forget that they were only pretending. Then they would eat the paint chips and the dirt and the grass and the twigs and the rocks! Whenever this happened, they would spit the pretend food onto the ground. But sometimes, by accident, they would swallow some pieces of dirt and paint chips. This is what made [girl’s name] ________ and [boy’s name] __________ sick!

One day, when [girl’s name] ________ and [boy’s name] ________ woke up, they didn’t feel like playing with each other. They felt sick! Their heads hurt and their tummies ached. [Girl’s name] _______ felt so tired that she didn’t want to get out of bed, and [boy’s name] ______ felt grumpy and cried for no reason.

The children’s [mothers, fathers, parents, or guardians] __________ became worried. They said, “Whatever could be wrong with our children?” [Girl’s name] _______ and [boy’s name] ________ look sick and act sick, but they don’t have runny hoses or coughs or temperatures!”

Finally, the [mothers, fathers, parents, or guardians] ____ decided to take the children to the [doctor’s office or clinic] _________ for a checkup. The doctor checked the children and listened carefully to the [mothers, fathers, parents, or guardians] ________.

Then the doctor asked questions about the children’s homes and play areas. The doctor asked if there was any chipping, peeling, or missing paint in the home or in the yard or on the children’s toys. The [mothers, fathers, parents, or guardians] _____ said ‘Yes, there is. There’s some chipping and peeling paint in the yard where the children play every day!’

Then the doctor said, “I Think we should test the children to see if they have lead in their bodies. Lead can be found in paint that has chipped, peeled or turned to dust. If it gets inside the bodies of children, it can make them sick, just like [girl’s name] _____ and [boy’s name] __________.

The doctor told [girl’s name] _____ and [boy’s name] ________ that they would have to have their blood tested. The children were scared. “Will it hurt” asked
“Just a little,” said the doctor. “Can I cry?” asked [boy’s name] _______. “Sure you can,” said the doctor.

The children sat on their [mother’s, father’s, parents, or guardian’s] laps, while the doctor pricked their fingers with a needle and took some blood. “Ouch!” said the [girl’s name] _______. “Ow!” said and [boy’s name] _______. “It’s all over!” said the doctor as she gave each of them a [lollipop or sucker] __________.

The blood tests showed that [girl’s name] _________ and [boy’s name] __________ had lead inside their bodies, so the doctor gave them medicine to help make them feel better. The doctor also told the children that they could do things to stop lead poisoning.

This is what the doctor told them
• “Children, you can wash your hands with soap and water before you eat and sleep and after you “lay outdoors.”
• “Children, you can leave your shoes near the outside door and wear slippers or socks when you are inside your home or day care, or wipe your shoes well on a mat before you go inside,”
• Children, you can eat healthy foods that keep lead from staying inside your body. Some of these foods are dried beans, milk, cheese, yogurt, lean meat and green vegetables like collards, beans, broccoli, and spinach.”
• “Children, you can stay away from paint chips and dust.”

The children thought about everything the doctor had just said. The doctor asked [girl’s name] _________ and [boy’s name] __________ if they could do these things, The children smiled and said, “Yes, we can.”

This is what the children said to the doctor:
• “Yes, we can wash our hands with soap and water before we eat and sleep and after we play outdoors.”
• “Yes, we can leave our shoes near the outside door and wear slippers or socks when we are inside our home or day care, or wipe our shoes well on a mat before we go inside,”
• “Yes, we can eat healthy foods that keep lead from staying inside our bodies. Some of these foods are dried beans, milk, cheese, yogurt, lean meat and green vegetables like collards, beans, broccoli, and spinach.”
• “Yes, we can stay away from paint chips and dust.”

Then the children thought of something else that they could do:
“We can tell all of our friends how they can keep lead out of their bodies, too!”
And that is what they have just told you!

Discussion Questions:

- What made [girl’s name] ________ and [boy’s name] ________ sick”
  [Answer: Paint that chipped, peeled or flaked.]
- What happened when [girl’s name] ________ and [boy’s name] ________ went to the [doctor’s office or clinic] ________? [Answer: The children were tested for lead in their blood.]
- Why did the doctor have to test [girl’s name] ________’s and [boy’s name] ________’s blood? [Answer: Testing it was the only way to be sure that lead was making them sick.]
- Do you think it hurt to have the blood tests done? [Answer: It probably hurt a little.]
- What would you do if you had to have blood taken?
- Why did the children have to take medicine? [Answer: It was the only way to get the lead out of their bodies.]
- If you were sick like [girl’s name] ________ and [boy’s name] ________, would you take the medicine that the doctor gave you?
- What are some things that you could do to make sure that you don’t get lead inside your body?
  [Answer: We can wash our hands with soap and water before we eat and sleep and after we play outdoors. We can leave our shoes near the outside door and wear slippers or socks when we are inside our home or day care, or wipe our shoes well on a mat before we go inside.]
- We can eat healthy foods that keep lead from staying inside our bodies. We can stay away from paint chips and dust.]
Activity 1 (Felt Board Story) Extensions

The felt board activity can be extended in the following ways:

A: Dramatization

Procedure (same as with felt board, adding after second step):
- Allow children to take turns acting out parts of the story.

B: Story Telling With Props

Materials
- Toy cars
- Sand box toys
- A bunch of grass
- A few small rocks
- A few small twigs
- Cardboard cutouts of paint chips
- Toy doctor kit, or some piece of toy doctor equipment
- Toy needle
- Lollipop
- Cards with names of children in class
- Note: use a picture of the object if you are not able to obtain the object itself

Procedure (same as with felt board, except for second step:)
- Read the story to children, holding up the appropriate prop, picture or card when it is mentioned.

C: Story Telling with Puppets

Materials
- Felt board figures (see patterns)
- Crayons or markers
- Scissors
- Cardboard
- Glue
- Popsicle sticks
or

- Lunch-sized paper bags

Preparation

- Make cardboard figures using the patterns provided. There are two ways to do so.

1. Coloring in photocopy pattern
   a) Photocopy the pattern pages.
   b) Color in the objects on the photocopy or have the children color them in. Paste chalk dust on the picture of dust. Paste real new (non-lead) paint chips on the picture of the paint chip, or paint it with white tempera paint.
   c) Cut out each object.
   d) Trace the patterns onto cardboard and cut out cardboard shapes.
   e) Glue the colored patterns onto the cardboard.

2. Coloring in cardboard shape
   a) Photocopy the pattern pages.
   b) Cut out the patterns on the photocopy.
   c) Trace them onto cardboard.
   d) Color the cardboard shapes, or have children color them. Use different colors for different objects. Decorate by writing on the shapes with markers. Paste chalk dust on the picture of dust. Paste real new (non-lead) paint chips on the picture of the paint chip, or paint it with white tempera paint.
   e) Cut out the cardboard shapes.

3. Glue cardboard figures onto Popsicle sticks to make puppets.

or

1. Glue cardboard figures onto paper bags to make puppets.

Procedure (same as with felt board, except for second step:)

- Read the story and use the puppets to show the children the actions.
- Allow children to take turns working the puppets for parts of the story.
Activity 2. Lead Paint and Dust Source Chart

Objective
• To explain to children why lead dust is harmful and where lead dust might occur in a home or daycare.

Key Concepts
• There are parts of the body that we can’t see but we need to live (heart, skeleton, brain).
• Lead can make you sick. It’s a sickness you can never get better from.
• Lead dust is created from peeling, flaking lead paint.
• Lead dust is created when lead-painted surfaces rub against each other.

Introduction
• Explain to the children that lead is a poison that can make children sick and can hurt their brains, that it’s a sickness they might never get better from, and that old lead paint has lead in it.
• Explain that when something hard or rough rubs on wood with lead paint on it, very tiny dust is formed. It can’t be seen because it is so small, but the dust has the poison in it and can hurt children, especially their brains.
• Discuss the sources of lead in the home and discuss the sources of lead paint and lead dust in a home or day care center, illustrating with the pictures at the end of this manual. Use the manual for background information.

Materials
• Newsprint or chart paper
• Marker

Preparation
• Draw a chart with each child’s name on one side and a space on the other side.

Procedure
• Ask each child in turn to name a place or object that could have lead dust or lead paint.
• Write each child’s suggestion on the chart next to that child’s name.
Closure
• Ask the children what they have learned about the sources of lead paint and dust.
• Ask them which of the sources they mentioned could also be in a day care.

Home-School Connection
• Include information in your parent newsletter about this activity and its goals, as well as basic tips for preventing lead poisoning in the home (included in this manual).
Activity 3. Healthy Food/Unhealthy Food Chart

Objective
- To familiarize children with healthy foods that will help keep lead from staying in their bodies and making them sick.

Key Concepts
- Eating good foods, from the food pyramid, keeps us healthy and strong.
- Eating foods that are rich in calcium, iron, vitamin C and zinc, and low in fat help protect against lead poisoning by helping to keep lead from staying in children’s bodies.

Introduction
- Discuss what a healthy diet is, using the food pyramid.
- Based on the nutrition section of this manual, give examples of foods that have the four nutrients important for protecting children from lead poisoning (iron, calcium, vitamin C and zinc).

Materials
- Newsprint or chart paper
- Marker

Preparation
- Draw a chart with HEALTHY written on one side and UNHEALTHY written on the other.
- Collect pictures of food from children’s work and from this manual.

Procedure
- Ask children to name foods and tell whether they are healthy or unhealthy.
- Write the name of the food on the chart in the appropriate column.
- Point to pictures of food, either on a food pyramid, in other work children might have done, or in the back of this manual, and ask if they are healthy or unhealthy.

Closure
- Ask the children what they have learned about healthy foods and unhealthy foods.
- Ask them to tell which of the healthy foods they like best.
Home-School Connection

- Include information in your parent newsletter about this activity and its goals. Also provide information about nutrition and lead poisoning prevention (provided in the manual).