

**CONTACT:**

Kayla Ellis, Public Relations Coordinator
kellis@foundationhoc.org
315.735.8212 ext. 3740

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Lead-Free MV Coalition Observes National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week October 20-26

UTICA, NY – This week, October 20-26, the Lead-Free Mohawk Valley (LFMV) Coalition is observing National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week 2019. Every year, federal agencies encourage the week-long national outreach effort to bring together individuals, organizations, industry, and state and local governments to raise awareness of lead poisoning prevention and reduce childhood exposure to lead. Locally, this year's observance takes on new significance in light of the City of Utica's receipt of a \$3.5 million federal grant that will make 180 housing units lead safe, New York state's strengthening of the standard for acting on childhood lead poisoning, and a new law to protect tenants from landlord retaliation when lead is identified in rental housing.

"Lead-Free MV's collaboration with various community partners is advancing solutions to some of the major health risks that families in our communities face every day," said Alicia Dicks, president/CEO of The Community Foundation of Herkimer & Oneida Counties. "We can start to see some of the efforts of our Coalition taking shape and making some real positive changes in our community."

In 2016, The Community Foundation launched LFMV to create long-term solutions to the region's continuing public health challenge. Oneida County has had one of the highest levels of childhood lead poisoning in New York state, and Herkimer County levels are double the state average. LFMV includes more than 100 representatives from dozens of public health, government, law, insurance, healthcare, education, childcare, housing, construction, and support services.

In observance of National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week, LFMV is encouraging testing of children and homes, and greater awareness of lead exposure prevention. Visit leadfreemv.org and follow @foundationhoc on Facebook and Twitter for local lead-related information from LFMV partners the HomeOwnershipCenter, Legal Services of CNY, and Oneida County Department of Health. For Utica residents interested in learning more about whether their home could be eligible for federally funded assistance to make their home lead safe, call the HomeOwnershipCenter, 315-724-4197.

Since 1952, The Community Foundation has invested more than \$75 million in Oneida and Herkimer counties. The Community Foundation partners with various local organizations to make impactful investments in core areas of need, including economic development, education, health, and arts and culture. For information, visit www.foundationhoc.org or call 315-735-8212.

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