



Working Toward a Sustainable Future



November 30, 2009

THE PERTH DECLARATION FOR THE GLOBAL REDUCTION OF CHILDHOOD LEAD EXPOSURE

Lead and other environmental toxicants have been linked to common diseases and disorders in children that have lifelong impacts on their development and wellbeing. There is a significant and sufficient body of evidence demonstrating that blood lead levels well below the widely used guideline of 10 µg/dL have detrimental health effects, including developmental, neurocognitive and socio-behavioural consequences.

Despite reductions in mean blood levels in many parts of the world lead remains a major global public health problem, as children in many countries continue to be exposed to levels that are unacceptably high. There is no safe level of lead exposure for children.

One hundred years ago the Australian Dr. Alfred Jeffries Turner, was the first to recognize that the only way to protect children from the effects of lead was to prevent exposure. His declaration that lead poisoning “*is certainly a matter which calls for legislative interference*” is still relevant today. Global action must be taken to reduce childhood lead exposure.

In order to protect children’s health and development now and in the future, we propose on behalf of the children of the world:

1. Banning all non-essential uses of lead worldwide.
2. Revising downward the levels of lead in environmental media recognizing that children are exposure by inhalation and ingestion of contaminated material.
3. Dramatically reducing the blood lead levels of children by lowering the action level for intervention for populations and individuals.
4. Promote an integrated and multi-dimensional approach to screening children, exposure reduction and interventions for communities at risk.

We call on the World Health Organization and other relevant national and international organizations to act to protect children.

Professor Bruce Lanphear,–

Associate Professor Mark P. Taylor – mark.taylor@mq.edu.au; 04220940916

Dr. Carolyn Schniering – carolyn.schniering@mq.edu.au; 04120387799

Professor Alison Jones – alison.jones@uws.edu.au; 0420378471

Professor Brian Gulson – brian.gulson@mq.edu.au; 0418472003

Dr. Lizbeth Lopez – lizbeth@correo.insp.mx

Dr. Mariano Cebrian – mcebrian@cinvestav.mx

Professor Peter D. Sly PBC Chair – peters@ichr.uwa.edu.au