

Lead Paint Safety: The Paint Detectives

A Fun At-Home Activity for Families with Young Children (Ages 3-9)

What You'll Need:

- White paper
- Washable paint in 2-3 colors
- Paint brushes
- Newspaper
- Paper plates (for paint)
- Baby wipes or damp paper towels
- Magnifying glass (optional)
- Adult supervisor

Step-by-Step Instructions:

1. **Time to set up!**
 - Cover your workspace with newspaper or a disposable tablecloth
 - Put small amounts of paint on paper plates
 - Give each child a piece of white paper
2. **The Paint Detective Story**
 - Tell children: "Today we're going to be paint detectives! Just like grown-up's test houses to make sure the paint is safe, we're going to practice being safety experts."
3. **Let's Paint!**
 - Have children paint different sections of their paper with different colors
 - While painting, talk about how some old paint can be unsafe, but new paint (like what we're using) is made to be safe
4. **Time to Investigate**
 - Once the paint dries, let children use magnifying glasses to "inspect" their artwork
 - Guide them to pretend they're testing different areas, just like real paint inspectors do
 - Ask: "What color is this section?" "Does it look smooth or bumpy?"
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5. **Time to clean things up!**
 - Practice safe clean-up by washing hands thoroughly
 - Discuss why it's important to always wash hands after touching paint or dusty surfaces

Key things to share with:

- Always tell a grown-up if you see peeling or chipping paint
- Never touch or put paint chips in your mouth
- Wash hands after playing outside or in dusty areas

- Let grown-ups handle any real paint testing

For Parents/Caregivers:

This activity opens a dialogue about lead paint safety in a kid-friendly way. While playing, please ensure that children know that real lead paint testing should only be done by trained professionals. Use this opportunity to teach children about general lead safety in their environment.

Safety note: Important Safety Message for Kids

Paint that's chipping, cracking, or peeling off walls might look interesting, but keep your hands away! Old paint can be harmful, so if you see any damaged paint, tell a grown-up right away. Let's stay safe while we learn and explore!

Resources:

<https://www.kankakeehealth.org/healthy-homes/lead-poisoning-prevention-program/>

<https://ecda.citykankakee-il.gov/community/programs/>

[https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/healthy_homes/healthyhomes/lead#:~:text=Take%20a%20moment%20to%20look,%2C%20Somali%2C%20and%20Arabic\).](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/healthy_homes/healthyhomes/lead#:~:text=Take%20a%20moment%20to%20look,%2C%20Somali%2C%20and%20Arabic).)

<https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/lead-based-paint/lshr-toolkit/introduction/>

https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/healthy_homes/lbp/hudguidelines

