

## Healthy Homes Grantees in Region IV, Southeast, Caribbean

**Name of Grantee:** University of Alabama at Birmingham  
**Name of Project:** School of Public Health, Birmingham/ Jefferson County Healthy Homes Initiative  
**Amount Awarded:** \$ 850,000  
**Year of Grant:** 2001  
**Contact Info:**  
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**Project Partners:** UAB School of Public Health (Grant Applicant); Citizens' Lead Education and Poisoning Prevention (CLEPP) (Sub grantee), Jefferson County Committee for Economic Opportunity (JCCEO), Jefferson County Department of Health (JCDH), Woodlawn Family Resource Center, A World of Opportunity, YW Homes, Unified Testing Services, Inc. (UTS), and Alabama Safe Kids, Outreach, Inc.

### Summary of Project Activities:

The University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Public Health proposes to conduct with its community partners a comprehensive program to protect children by implementing cost-effective programs to identify and correct housing-related health and safety hazards that produce serious illnesses and injuries. An innovative element of this proposal is the education of Community Interns to become skilled and employable workers. The following agencies and organizations will have important roles in the project: UAB School of Public Health (Grant Applicant); Citizens' Lead Education and Poisoning Prevention (CLEPP) (Sub grantee), Jefferson County Committee for Economic Opportunity (JCCEO), Jefferson County Department of Health (JCDH), Woodlawn Family Resource Center, A World of Opportunity, YW Homes, Unified Testing Services, Inc. (UTS), and Alabama Safe Kids, Outreach, Inc.

Targeted neighborhoods in the City of Birmingham and in Jefferson County are West End, a Federally designated enterprise community, and Woodlawn. The neighborhoods in the County that will be targeted are some of the older industrial suburbs of Birmingham and include Brighton, and Lipscomb. Overall, the three communities (as defined by zip codes) have an African-American population of 75%, with approximately 53% of the residents earning less than 50% of the median income. Forty-nine percent of all households have very low incomes (at or below 50% of the median income); 70% have low incomes (between 50-80% of median income). Of the 9,197 children under six years of age, 4,152 (46%) live below the poverty level. Within the targeted areas there are 34,233 total housing units, 92% of which were built before 1980; 30% were built before 1950. It is estimated that approximately 59% of the housing in the targeted communities have some surfaces covered with lead-based paint. According to data from screenings by the Jefferson County Department of Health, 44% of the total number of children who were reported to have elevated blood lead levels lived in the targeted neighborhoods.

During a two-year period, the Children's Hospital reported a total of 1,527 hospital and emergency room admissions for asthma from the target area alone. Admissions to Children's Hospital for home-related burns totaled 125; hot water scalds caused 36.4% of burns. Alabama also ranks well above the national average of fire fatalities per 100,000 population. Exact data from the target area in childhood poisoning and firearm morbidity and mortality is currently unavailable, although chlorine ingestion accounted for 22.1% of unintentional poisonings. Cooperating agencies will provide data about these hazards prior to program implementation. In addition, home risk assessments will provide information regarding the potential of these child safety hazards in individual homes in the Target Area.

UAB and CLEPP staff have gained experience in all aspects of lead hazard control including establishing EBLL screening programs for children, inspection and risk assessment, development of abatement specifications, resident relocation, removal, replacement, and enclosure abatement methods, soil abatement, dust cleaning, clearance testing, waste disposal, selecting contractors and training workers and contractors. The CLEPP organization is continuously involved in activities related to reducing and eliminating lead hazards in the community, including educating parents and care givers about environmental hazards as they affect children, assisting parents of lead poisoned children in finding safe housing and relocating and advocating for parents of children EBLL.

The University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Public Health Department of Environmental Health complements CLEPP's experience in lead with experience conducted in low-income Birmingham communities remediating homes of individuals with asthma. Interventions include determining levels of indoor allergens and fungi and correcting moisture, controlling dust and ventilation problems identified in structural inspection, air and dust sampling, conducting household interviews and implementing behavioral aspects of asthma management practices. Key personnel within the School have also participated in recent community education projects for housing-based environmental health, including training workshops for Alabama Cooperative Extension Service agents and the EPA-funded Greater Birmingham Children's Environmental Health Initiative. In addition, the Center for Community Health Resource Development has extensive experience in community-based health promotion and disease prevention initiatives including the Alabama Smoke Alarm Initiative.

UAB will partner with CLEPP and numerous other not-for-profit and local governmental agencies to develop home hazard reduction activities in individual homes in: three zip codes where exposure problems are great, homes of children with significant health problems that may have resulted from exposure to environmental agents, and in homes otherwise identified as posing a hazardous environment to children.

**Product Outcomes/Outputs:**

Homes will be identified by the Jefferson County Health Department and Jefferson County Committee for Economic Opportunity through home surveys conducted by Community Interns who have been trained to assess and reduce the risks through

"Basic Interventions" conducted in 150 homes. Formal training programs will be organized and presented by UAB in conjunction with CLEPP and other groups.