

From Housing Security to Healthy Housing — Engaging Pediatric Providers

American Academy of Pediatrics
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CHILDREN'S
HOSPITAL
ASSOCIATION

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Families Experiencing Homelessness, Evictions, or Housing Insecurity and Healthcare

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Illinois Chapter, American Academy of
Pediatrics

Commercial
disclosure

I have no financial relationships to
disclose.

Topics to Be Covered

Basic terminology and statistics



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graph TD; A[Basic terminology and statistics] --> B[Health effects of housing insecurity on pregnant persons and children]; B --> C[Screening and connecting to resources]; C --> D[Advocacy]
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Health effects of housing insecurity on pregnant persons and children

Screening and connecting to resources

Advocacy



Crash Course on Homelessness

Background
Information

HUD definitions of homelessness



1. Individuals and families who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate night-time residence and includes a subset for an individual who is exiting an institution where he or she resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or a place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution;



2. Individuals and families who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence



3. Unaccompanied youth
and families with children and youth who are defined as homeless under other federal statutes who do not otherwise qualify as homeless under this definition



4. Individuals and families who are fleeing, or are attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the individual or a family member.



McKinney-Vento Act requires schools to provide services to students living doubled-up.

For education, the definition of homelessness includes the HUD definitions, plus:

Children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason.

Other Important Terms for Pediatricians

Continuums of Care (CoC's) coordinate homelessness services within a set geographic area. There are over 400 in the United States.

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth are young people under age 25 who are not with a parent or guardian during their episode of homelessness.

Parenting Youth are people under age 25 who are the parents or legal guardians of one or more children who are present with or sleeping in the same place as that youth parent.

The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act defines Homeless Youth as “less than 21... for whom it is not possible to live in a safe environment with a relative and who have no safe alternative living arrangement”

National Statistics on Homelessness

HUD 2022 Point in Time Count (sheltered & unsheltered):

582,462 people

50,767 families

2018-2019 McKinney-Vento estimate of number of children under 6 years-old

(includes doubled-up):

1,297,513

2020-2021 McKinney-Vento number of kindergarten-12th grade students:

1,099,221

The Health Risks of Homelessness, Evictions and Housing Insecurity

From Pregnancy
through Adolescence



Pregnant persons experiencing homelessness are at higher risk of complications than their housed peers

Bleeding: 1.9 times higher

Premature labor: 2 times higher

Risk of Severe Maternal Morbidity: 2.3 times higher

Risk of death at the time of delivery: 10 times higher

Clark RE, Weinreb L, Flahive JM, Seifert RW. Homelessness Contributes To Pregnancy Complications. Health Affairs. 2019;38(1):139-146. doi:10.1377/hlthaff.2018.05156

Green J, Fabricant S, Duval C, et al. Trends, characteristics, and maternal morbidity associated with unhoused status in pregnancy. JAMA Network Open. 2023;6(7):1-14.



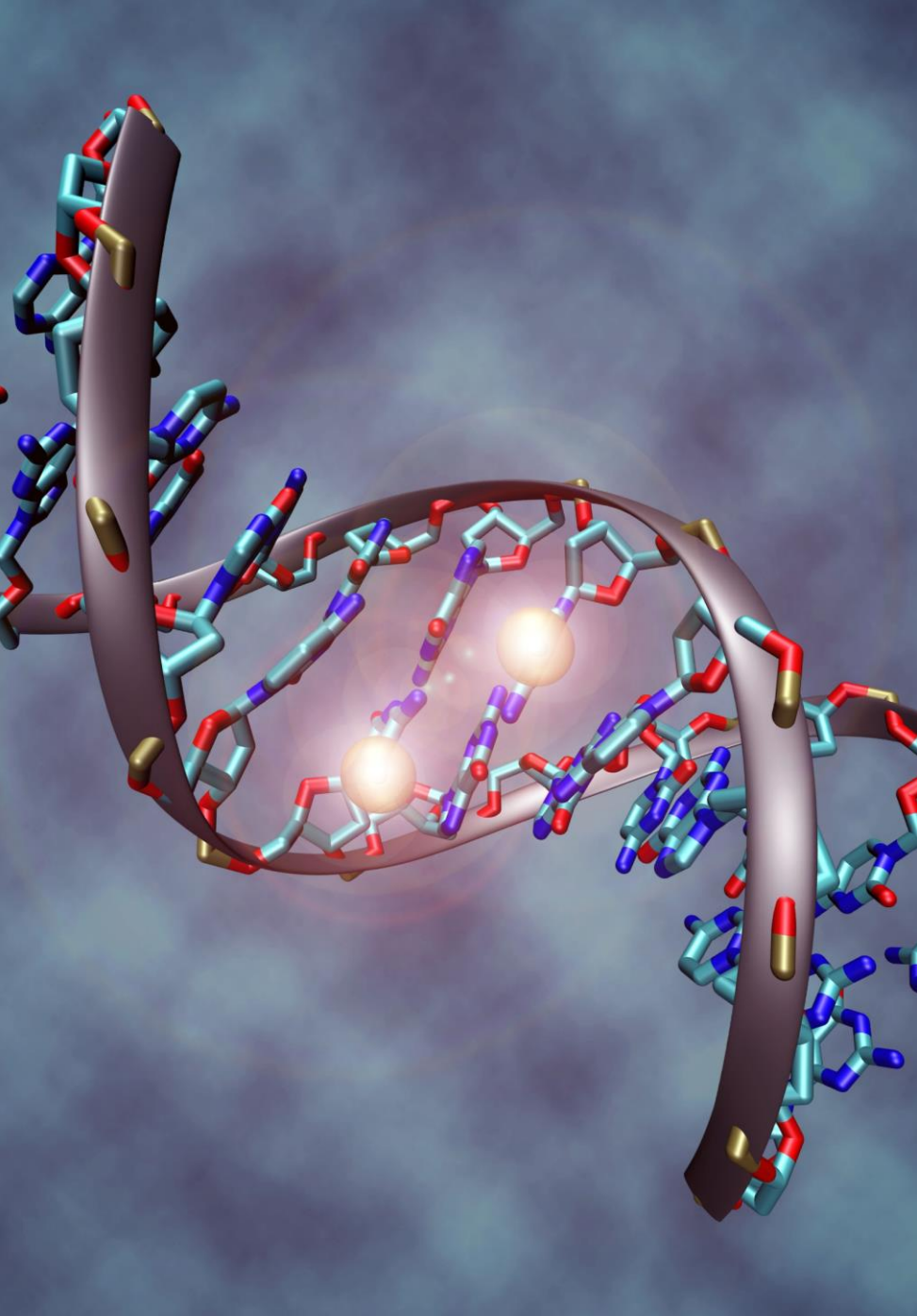
Ken Hammond (USDA), Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons



While still in the womb

Excessive stress = permanent changes

*20+ years of studies by multiple researchers



The fetus prepares for a world of danger:



Epigenetic changes which can pass to later generations



Changes to specific deep brain structures: hypothalamus, amygdala, limbic system



Altered body stress pathways

Fight or flight
response to
minor stress



Risks to newborns

Low birth weight

Prematurity

NICU stay



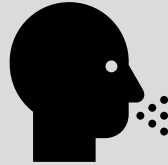
Stanford
study on
homelessness
and pregnant
persons



Mental health problems



Substance use disorder



Asthma



Pre-existing diabetes



Pre-existing hypertension

539 homeless, pregnant women in California were compared to 1,000,000 women who were not homeless.

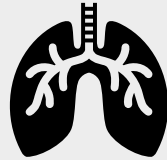
Newborns
from the
Stanford study



Low Birth Weight



Prematurity



Respiratory Distress Syndrome

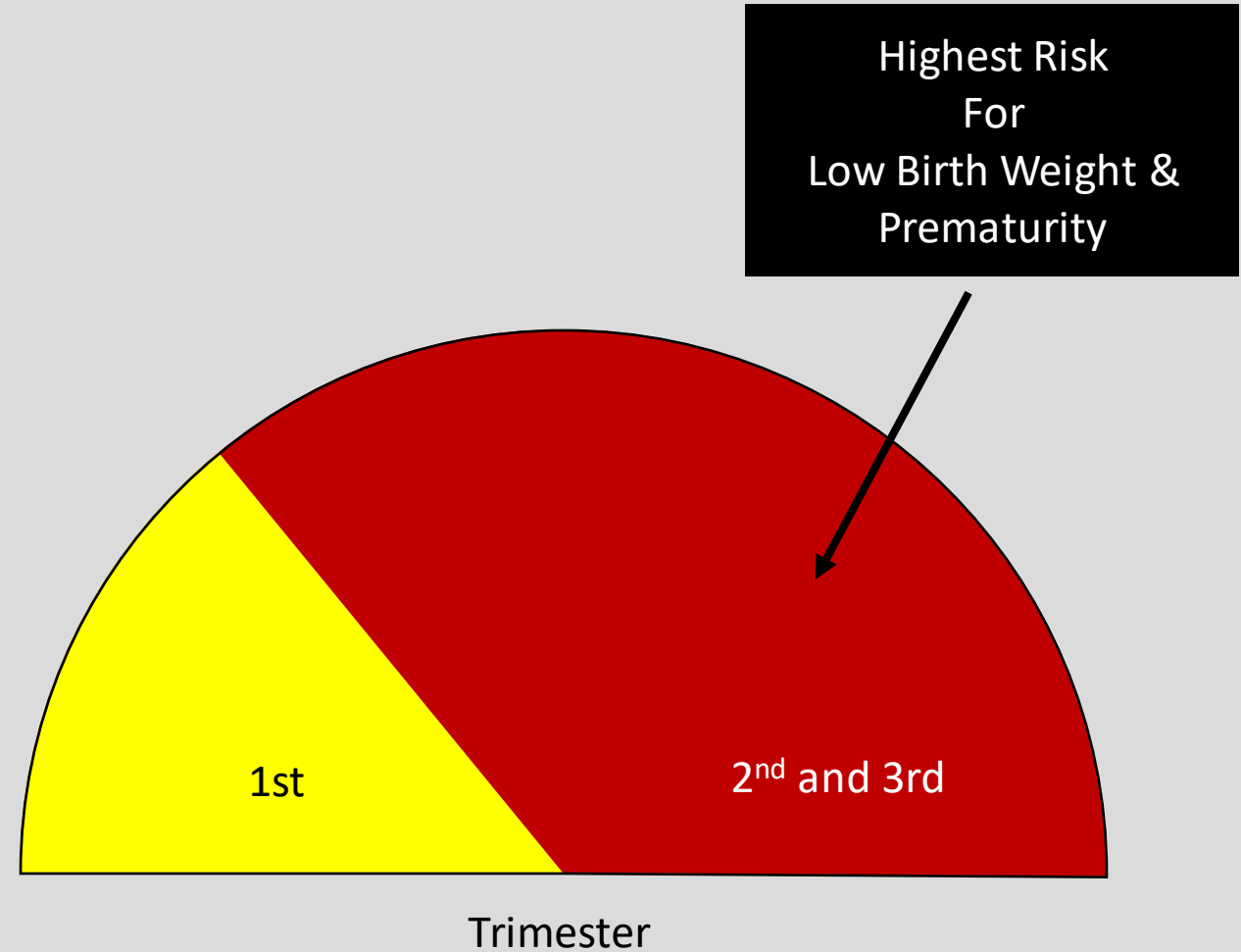


Intraventricular Hemorrhage



Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome

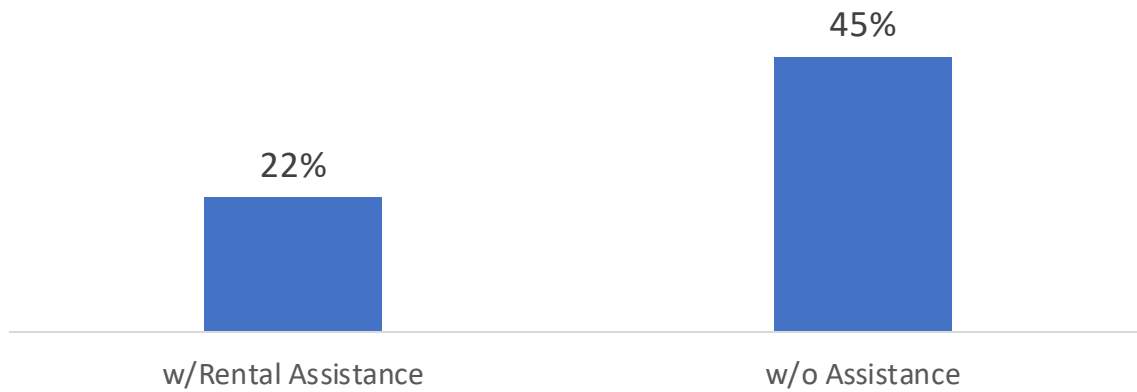
Evictions' Negative Impact



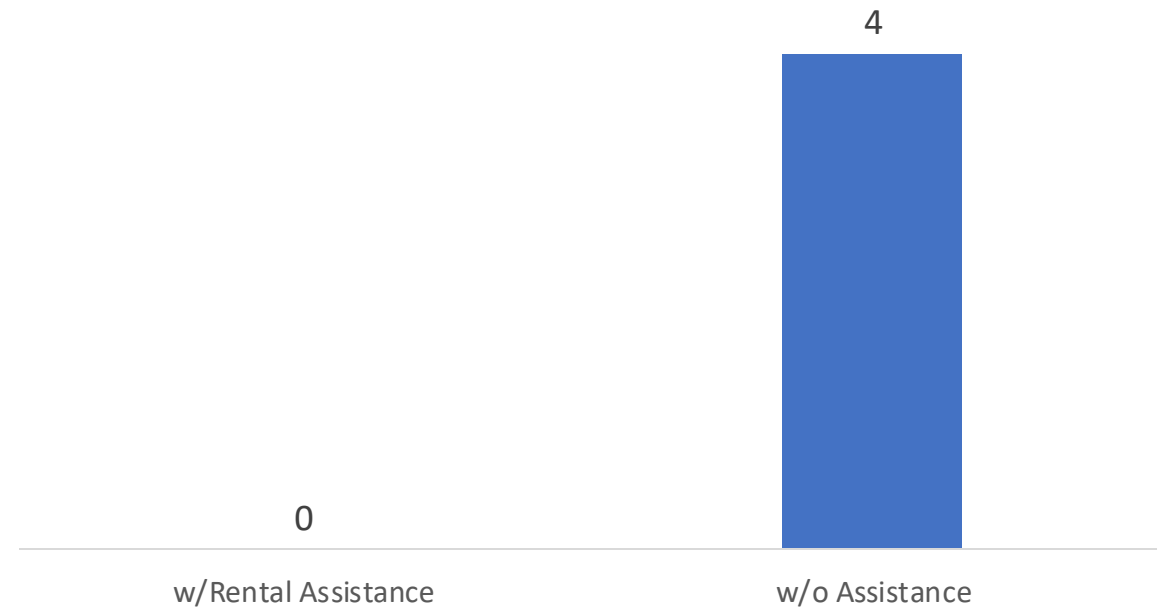
Study of 89,000 births to 45,000 mothers who experienced evictions during the period 2000-2016 in Georgia

Housing Insecurity Hurts Unborn Babies; Rental Assistance Reduces the Impact

Prematurity or Low Birthweight
Of Housing Insecure Pregnancies



Fetal Mortality
of 99 Housing Insecure Pregnancies





Health risks: infancy through 6 years old

Developmental Delays - especially speech

Asthma severity is increased

Scabies and other skin infections

Otitis media

Obesity

Caries

Injuries- both accidental and intentional

Academic risks

Not being ready to start school

Academic failures

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADHD)

Decreased working memory and decreased higher-level thinking skills in teens



Homeless teens face special risks, even when living with their families.

Self-injury: almost 30 %

Suicidal ideation: 21-44 %

Suicide attempts: 9-28 %



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Barnes, A., Gilbertson, J. and Chatterjee, D., 2018. Emotional Health Among Youth Experiencing Family Homelessness. Pediatrics, 141(4), p.e20171767

Liu M, Wadhera RK, Koh KA, Hwang S. Mental health and substance use among US homeless adolescents. JAMA. 2022;328(9). doi:10.1001/jama.2022.11625

Unaccompanied youth become the victims of crime

While experiencing homelessness:

Mental health problems like depression

Substance use disorder

Pregnancy

Sexually transmitted diseases



Toxic stress and ACEs

Homelessness exacerbates the effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

Exposure to a significant number of ACEs increases risk in adulthood for chronic illnesses: diabetes, hypertension, coronary artery disease, stroke, anxiety, and depression



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Screening for Housing Insecurity

AAP Policy Statement: Providing Care for Children and Adolescents Facing Homelessness and Housing Insecurity- 2013

Pediatricians should seek to identify the issues of homelessness and housing insecurity in their patient populations. Pediatricians can use methods such as:



routine screening on intake



making note of frequent address changes



history of scattered care provision

Examples of Screening Tools for Housing

Children's HealthWatch Housing Stability Vital Sign

- Asks if behind in rent/mortgage in the last 12 months
- Multiple moves in the last 12 months
- Current or recent homelessness in the last 12 months

Accountable Health Communities

- Current housing quality
- Current/anticipated housing instability

Housing
resources
vary by
geographic
location and
change over
time!

There are not enough resources for the number of people who need them.

If your patient is in the hospital, involve a social worker on Day One. They understand the system and need time to make connections.

Some populations have a separate process: survivors of domestic violence, veterans, & youth ages 18-24.

Connect families to Medicaid, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

Advocating for Families





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Start with
your team
and
colleagues

2013 AAP Recommendations

1. *Support local, state, and federal policies that lead to increased availability of low-income, transitional, and permanent housing.*

2. *Support policies and programs, such as the “Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program,” that aim to quickly place families in stable, permanent housing rather than a continuum of emergency and temporary housing (like shelters.) Permanent housing has been demonstrated to be more cost-effective and more stabilizing for families, who can be exposed to significant trauma while experiencing homelessness.*





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Memphis CHILD

Medical Legal Partnership



How Medical-Legal Partnerships Support Healthy Housing

Katy Ramsey Mason, Esq.
Assistant Professor of Law

Director, Medical-Legal Partnership Clinic
University of Memphis School of Law



WHAT IS MEDICAL LEGAL PARTNERSHIP?

MEDICAL-LEGAL PARTNERSHIP

(MLP) is an intervention where legal and health care professionals collaborate to help patients resolve

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC & ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

that contribute to

HEALTH DISPARITIES

and have a remedy in civil law.

MEMPHIS CHILD PARTNERS

- **The University of Memphis School of Law**
 - Professor Katy Ramsey Mason, MLP Clinic Director
 - Lainey Goodwill, MLP Clinic Staff Attorney
 - Everytown Legal Fellow
 - Law Students
- **Le Bonheur Children's Hospital (LB)**
 - Tim Flack, Esq., Senior Attorney
 - Haley Greenwell, Social Worker
 - Sharee Bennett, Admin Support
- **Memphis Area Legal Services (MALS)**
 - Nicole Smith, Esq.
 - Josh Warren, Esq.
- **University of Tennessee Health Science Center, Department of Pediatrics**
 - Dr. Emilee Dobish, Memphis CHILD Medical Champion
 - Medical Residents

What Memphis CHILD Does



- Direct legal and social work services
- Professional training
- Advocacy/research/policy

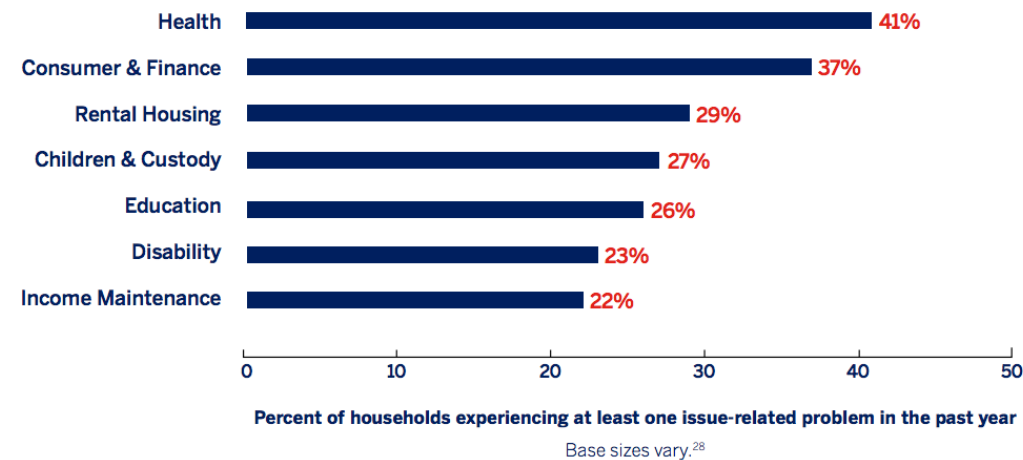
Social Determinants of Health



Access to Justice

- 80% cannot afford legal assistance
- 71% experience at least one civil legal problem per year
- 1 in 4 experienced 6+ legal problems in one year

Figure 2: Common Civil Legal Problem Categories²⁷



Legal Needs Impact Health

Edited from Original Source: National Center for Medical –Legal Partnerships, “Core Components and Activities,” <http://www.medical-legalpartnership.org/model/core-components>, The Advisory Board Company interviews and analysis.



- Income & Insurance



- Housing & Utilities



- Education & Employment



- Legal Status



- Personal & Family Stability

LEGAL PROBLEMS ARE HEALTH PROBLEMS

Social Determinant of Health	Common Legal Problem
Housing	Families at risk of eviction
Housing	Children living in housing with mold or rodents, in violation of housing laws
Income	Family unable to pay rent
Safety	Children living in high-crime neighborhood

Adapted from slides by Ellen Lawton, taken from the National Medical Legal Partnership Center website

Housing Success Story

- Family with 9 children living in rental home with black mold
- Landlord unresponsive
- Legal team partnered with GHHI to get a mold inspection
- Legal team worked with doctors to draft demand letter explaining health impacts of mold for children
- Negotiated relocation for the whole family and \$5000 settlement

Advocacy/Research/Policy

- 2019: Law students make public comments at Medicaid block grant hearing
- 2020: Cross-clinic collaboration with UT-Knoxville around evictions & the pandemic
- 2020-2021: Leadership of Memphis-Shelby County Emergency Rent Assistance Program & statewide and national advocacy
- 2021: Professor Ramsey Mason testifies at U.S. House subcommittee hearing on evictions
- 2021: UTHSC resident presents on MCHILD special education data at Pediatric Academic Societies national meeting
- 2021: Law student drafts policy briefs for UCI
- 2022: Partner with Shelby County Lead Prevention Council on lead remediation and prevention ordinance

Thank you!

