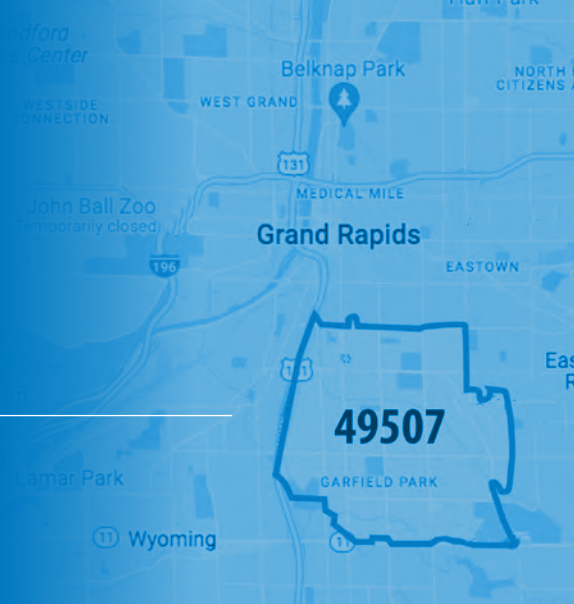


HEALTHY HOMES COALITION OF WEST MICHIGAN

Grand Rapids, Michigan



The Advancing Environmental Justice through Technical Assistance Mini-Grants Program

is hosted by the National Environmental Health Partnership Council with support from CDC National Center for Environmental Health and Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry. In Year 3, five organizations, including [Healthy Homes Coalition of West Michigan](#), are supported through \$10,000 mini-grants and technical assistance.

Credit: Photo by Olivia Hodges, courtesy of Unsplash.

MISSION

To prioritize children's health and well-being by eliminating harmful housing conditions, beginning in Grand Rapids' hardest hit neighborhoods.

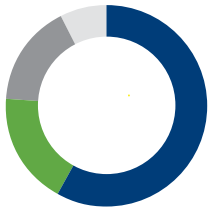
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE CONCERNS

- Lead poisoning
- Substandard housing
- Asthma
- Children's health
- Chemical vapor
- Lack of enforcement

SUBSTANDARD HOUSING HURTS CHILDREN. The 49507 ZIP code in Grand Rapids has the most lead-poisoned children in the state of Michigan. This ZIP code contains many high-minority, low-income census tracts, making this not only an urgent children's health issue, but an environmental injustice. Lead poisoning is higher among children with low socioeconomic status,¹ who are already at increased risk of poor health outcomes due to the chronic stress of poverty, unsafe neighborhoods and racial injustices. This community has also been exposed to toxic chemical vapor intrusion from a former dry-cleaning business that required Environmental Protection Agency intervention.²

Impacted Populations

Grand Rapids, MI



Racial demographics³

- White: 58.2%
- Black or African American: 18.1%
- Hispanic: 16.3%
- Other: 7.4%

50%
49507 ZIP code living in poverty

The 49507 ZIP code is home to **50% of all people living in poverty in Grand Rapids** while only comprising 32% of the entire population.

All parents who plan and implement projects with the organization are **at or below 200%** of the federal poverty level.



50%

of these partners live in ZIP codes with highest numbers of lead poisoned children in the state

In full partnership with parents, the programs at the Healthy Homes Coalition of West Michigan address harmful housing conditions that negatively impact families, especially children. At a grassroots level, the organization uses a leadership development/community organizing model to mobilize parents and community leaders in support of systemic changes that promote healthier housing for children. This group, known as Parents for Healthy Homes, advocates for expanded enforcement of the county’s housing regulation and local code ordinances for proactive rental lead inspections.

Due to the Flint water crisis and the fact that the 49507 ZIP code has the most lead-poisoned children in the state, the Healthy Homes Coalition of West Michigan and activist parents have been able to create a significant amount of awareness of Grand Rapids and the 49507 ZIP code as lead hot-spots both in the community and with elected officials. The organization has a direct service home visiting program which has provided case management, education and resources for more than 5,000 low-income families to eliminate harmful housing conditions in the greater Grand Rapids community since 2006. Healthy Homes Coalition of West Michigan has also been a leader in Grand Rapids to provide educational workshops on lead and other housing hazards at schools, community centers and with neighborhood associations to increase environmental health safety.

GRANT PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

- Expanding program services related to healthy housing to further reach Grand Rapids families and continuing to establish more community partnerships and expand representation in the community
 - ▶ Building an electronic learning module about lead hazards in the home
- Strengthening communication efforts, including online presence and donor engagement strategies



1 Marshall, A.T., Betts, S., Kan, E.C., McConnell, R., Lanphear, B. P. & Sowell, E. R. (2020). Association of lead-exposure risk and family income with childhood brain outcomes. *Nature Medicine* 26, 91-97. <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41591-019-0713-y>

2 Environmental Protection Agency (2022). *Downtown Grand Rapids Vapor Intrusion Site*. <https://www.epa.gov/mi/downtown-grand-rapids-vapor-intrusion-site>

3 United States Census Bureau. (2021). *QuickFacts: Grand Rapids city, Michigan*. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/grandrapidscitymichigan>

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