Measuring Toxic Metal Exposure: The Truth Fairy Project
Community • History • Knowledge • Health • Justice

EYCEJ and USC worked together to collect baby teeth of children who lived within a 2 mile radius of Exide.

Exide 7 million lbs. of lead that residents have been exposed to over 30 years

Teeth can provide "windows" into prenatal and early childhood exposures to toxic metals such as lead.

Estimated Residential Soil Lead Levels (ppm)

ppm: parts per million

Teeth can provide "windows" into prenatal and early childhood exposures to toxic metals such as lead.

Health effects of lead...

Lead exposure in childhood causes...
- Brain damage
- Decrease in IQ
- Stunted growth
- Problems with learning & behavior

Adults who were exposed to lead as children are at higher risk for...
- Headaches
- Memory loss
- High blood pressure
- Kidney disease
- Joint pain

#NoMoPlomo

East LA
Boyle Heights
Maywood
Commerce
Huntington Park

97% of properties tested were above the State of CA threshold of soil Lead contamination: 80 ppm
East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice (EYCEJ) is an environmental health and justice non-profit organization working towards a safe and healthy environment for communities that are disproportionately suffering the negative impacts of industrial pollution.

**Truth Fairy Project Findings**

Lead levels in children's teeth and soil

The communities with the highest soil lead levels also found highest Lead levels in children's teeth.

![Graph showing lead levels in soil and teeth](image)

- **Boyle Heights**
- **East LA**
- **Maywood**
- **Huntington Park**
- **Commerce**
- **Huntington Park**

**80 ppm: State of CA threshold**

- **Lead in teeth**: 100%
- **arsenic**: 40%
- **43** Kids participated in this first phase of the study
- **5** Communities were represented in the study

**Communities around Exide had twice as much Lead in the teeth, compared to a similar urban community (Boston, MA) that did a tooth based research study.**

**Toxic Metals in Teeth**

Teeth grow in rings like trees do, starting during pregnancy through early childhood.

- **2nd trimester**: Teeth start to form in the mother's womb beginning in the 13th week of pregnancy.
- **3rd trimester**: The baby is growing rapidly & incorporates nutrients and toxins to which the mother is exposed.
- **Infancy**: After a child is born, they can be exposed to toxic metals in their environment. Infants are at higher risk because they crawl and put their hands and toys in their mouths.
- **Birth**: Teeth start to form in the mother's womb beginning in the 13th week of pregnancy.

**Find out more**

**Blood lead testing**

Los Angeles County, Department of Public Health
Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (800) LA-4-LEAD lead@ph.lacounty.gov

**Environmental Health Centers**

**Teeth testing**

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Supported by: National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (Grant #5P30ES007048)