



**JNESO**

DISTRICT COUNCIL 1, IUOE / AFL-CIO  
*the professional health care union*

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## **NURSES' UNION CONTINUES THE FIGHT TO CREATE AWARENESS REGARDING THE DANGERS OF LEAD POISONING**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**NEWARK** -Today, JNESO District Council 1 nurses at Newark's Department of Health and Community Wellness and other members joined community leaders and elected officials on the steps of Newark City Hall to host an event to create awareness regarding lead poison prevention in our communities.

"Lead poisoning is a serious health concern to our children living in inner cities," said Elfrieda Johnson, JNESO Board President and RN at Saint Michael's Medical Center, "New Jersey has 11 cities and two counties in which there was a higher concentration of children with elevated levels of lead in their blood than the 3.3% of the population of Flint, Michigan. Long before the crisis in Flint catapulted the issue of lead contamination in our communities into the national spotlight, JNESO's nurses in the City of Newark have served on the front lines educating the public about the life-altering dangers that lead exposure can have on the children and families that live in the city."

The 2016 Lead Awareness Walk was presented by the Newark Department of Health and Community Wellness, The Childhood Lead Poison Prevention Program and the Newark Partnership for Lead Safe Children and Healthy Homes. JNESO's Community Organizer Theresa Calhoun, played an integral part securing logistics and donations for this important event.

"Childhood lead poisoning is considered the most preventable environmental disease among young children." said JNESO Executive Director, Doug Placa "JNESO continues pressing for legislation at the federal and state levels to secure funding for education, testing, remediation and to create further awareness regarding the hazards of lead contamination in our homes, schools, healthcare facilities and communities."

After opening remarks, the walk continued from Newark City Hall to Military Park, where more than one hundred children between the ages of three and five walked with elected and community leaders all in an effort to create greater awareness about the importance of lead poison prevention.

New Jersey's lead exposure crisis primarily stems from the remnants of the materials used in some of our state's older buildings. The use of lead based paint and other materials in buildings constructed before 1978 are often cited as the primary culprits, and it is part of our members' jobs to ensure that members of the community have the information they need to protect themselves against this environmental health hazard.

*JNESO District Council 1 is a professional healthcare union representing over 5,000 healthcare professionals in New Jersey and Pennsylvania and is an affiliate of the International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE).*

**Learn more at: [www.jneso.org](http://www.jneso.org).**

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