

Teens speak out about life, love and living in a Supersize world. It's all about choices ...

...Fast Food High School at Alisal

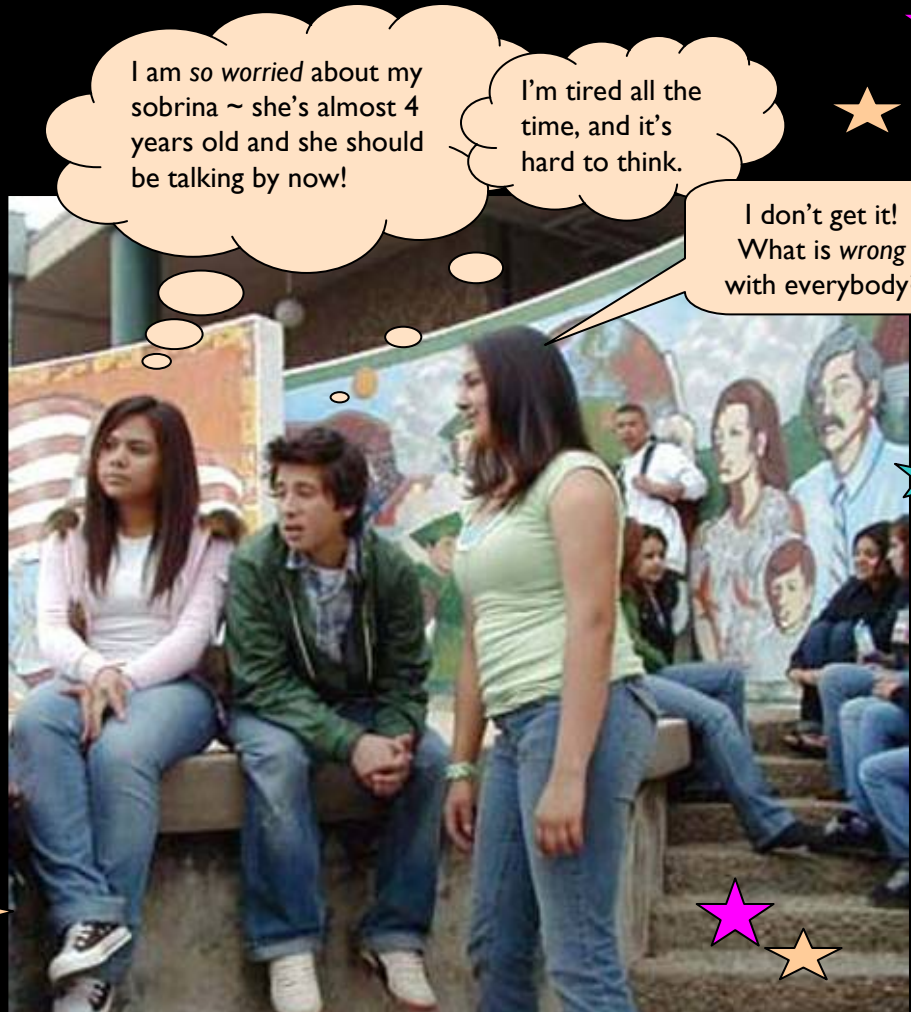
Volume II ~ Get the lead out!

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I am so worried about my sobrina ~ she's almost 4 years old and she should be talking by now!

I'm tired all the time, and it's hard to think.

I don't get it! What is wrong with everybody?

Alisal students have a lot to think about this spring. Life is more complicated than they thought just 3 years ago. In those days, they were working to improve school food.

Now there are more serious concerns on the minds of Alisal Trojans ~ real health concerns. Is it too much to expect teens to take on the challenge of environmental risks to community health?

Are they well informed? Will they make the right choices? ...A ver...

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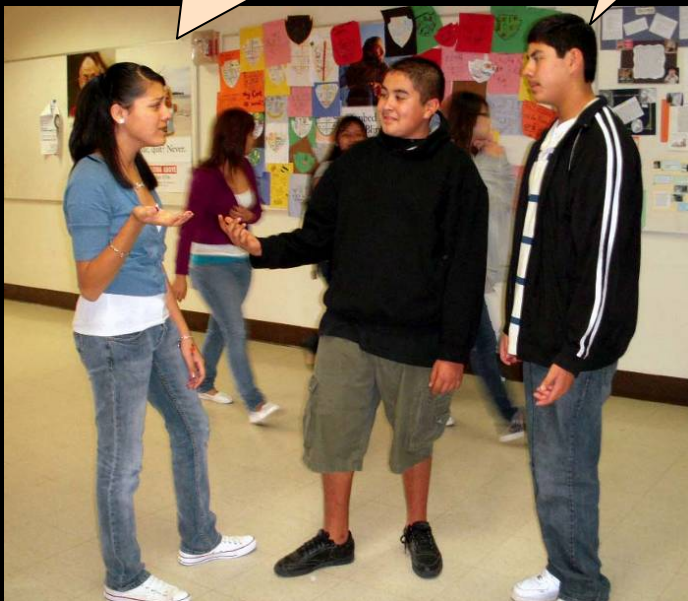
The bell rings... Mr. V. is at the door...

OK- get the lead out!

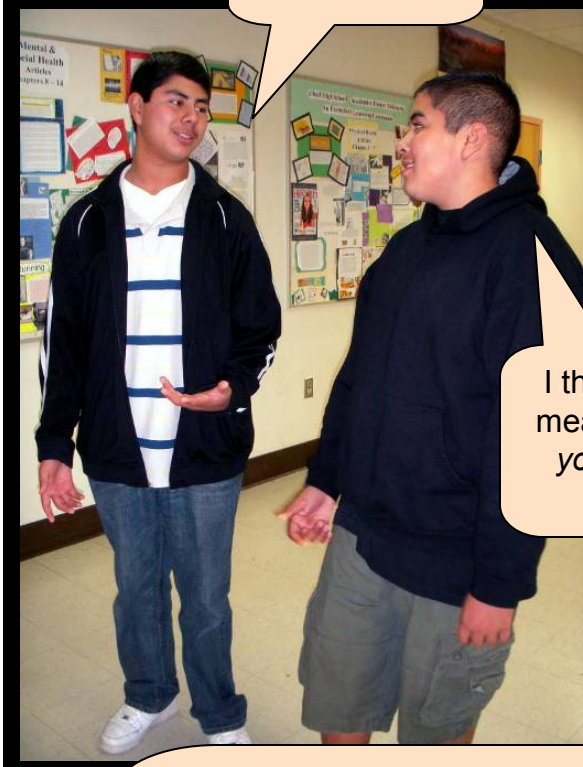


I know ALL about lead- my aunt is a nurse at the health department and she told me lead can cause developmental delays in children – they walk or talk later – they have learning problems – they can't think right – they can be aggressive or hyperactive – lots of other stuff – and for adults they can have weak sperm, be infertile, have brain disease - blah blah blah

Yawn.



He means "hurry up!"



I thought he meant lead – you know, plomo

And, lead can be found in old paint, garden hoses, vinyl mini-blinds, tap water in very old buildings, some imported candies and snacks, some home medical remedies, some pottery glazes, some imported vinyl lunch bags, some imported toys or kids' jewelry

How boring! I think we've heard enough!



They walk down the hall...

Come on- let's go get something to eat...



Well, that's messed up!

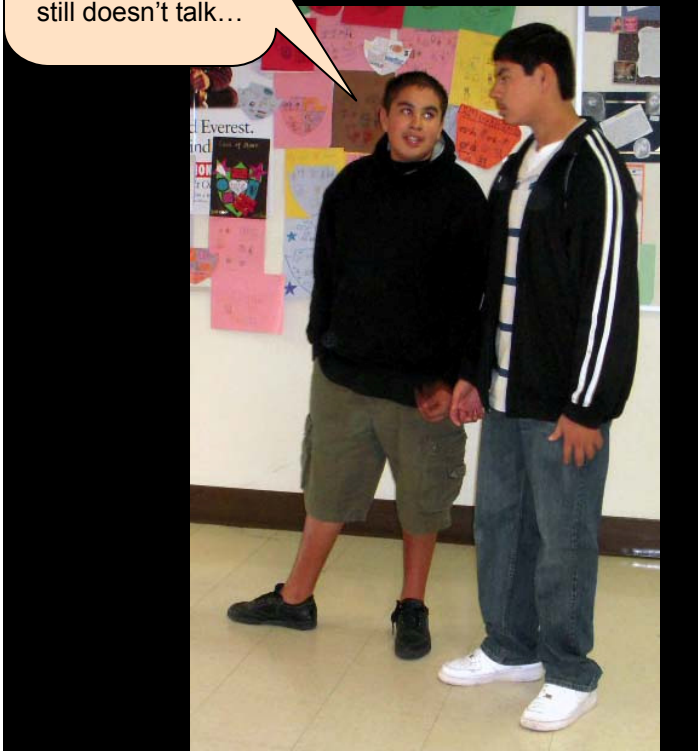
Larry and Bartholemew slow down- Larry has something personal to say to Bart...

Lead? I know it's kind of boring.. But it's something my family has been worried about for almost 2 years...



...It's my baby sister. She has - problems - she's almost 4 and she still doesn't talk...

What can a friend say?

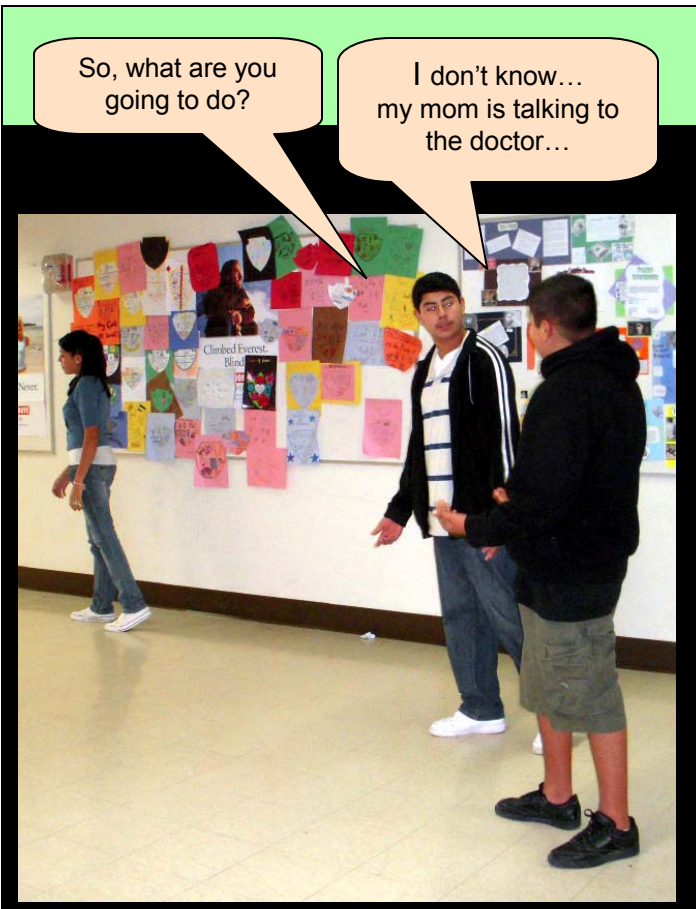
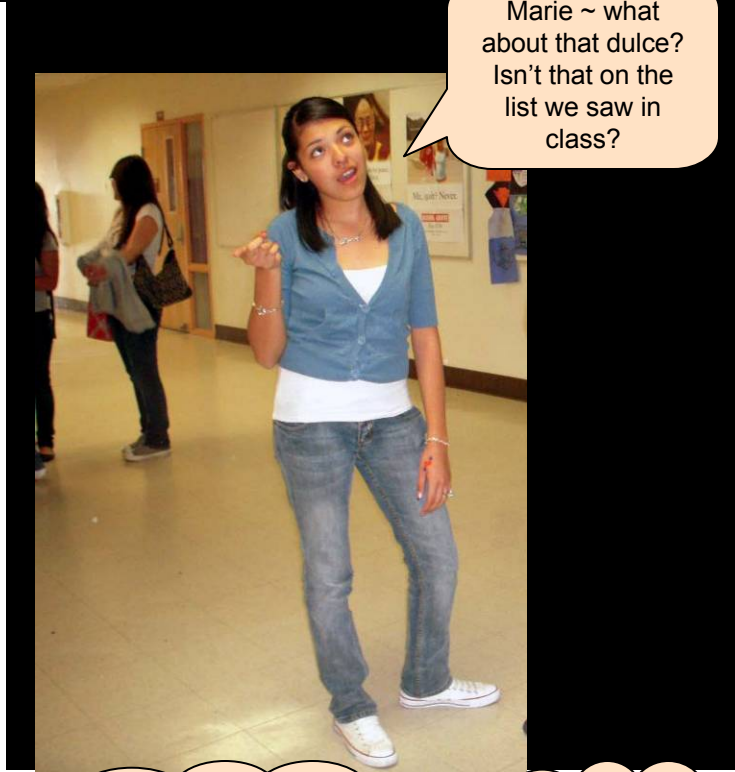


I remember she seemed OK till we moved to the apartment. Now she's just ~ not right

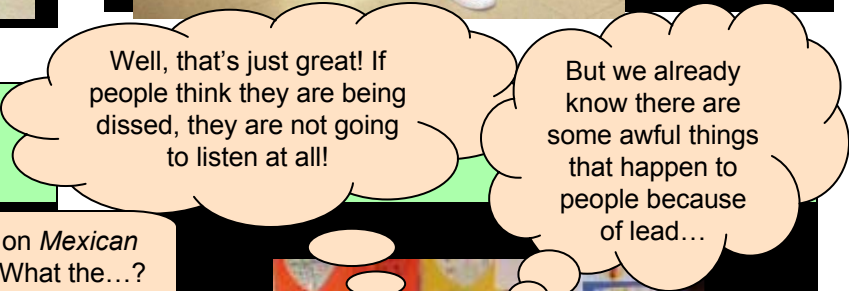
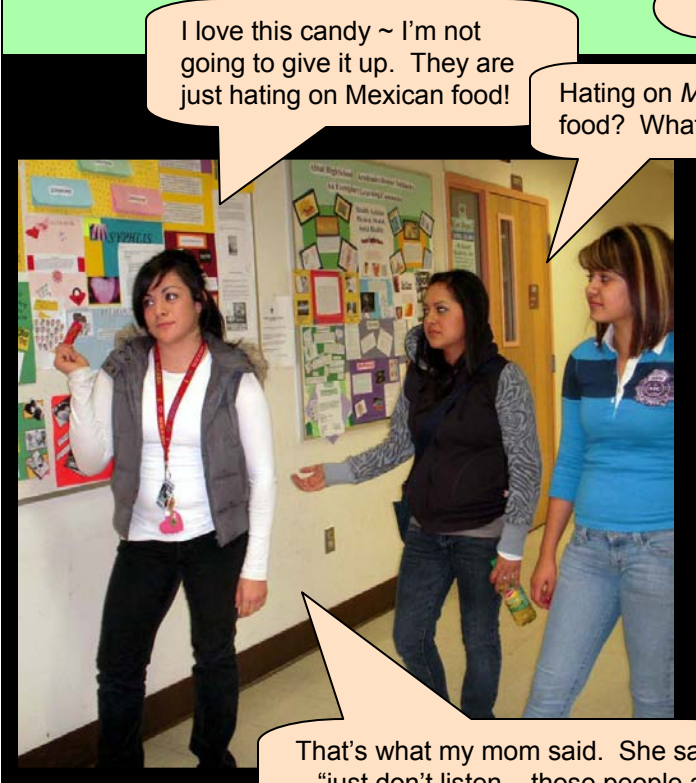
Ya know, I heard that Einstein didn't talk until he was 3 years old...



Allyson's still thinking about the lead in candy...



That was the wrong thing to say!



Next Week...

Marie, is your mom still against listening to what we have to say?

She's getting mad! She's still not listening - I don't talk about it anymore



And don't say a word to me about this candy. It's *not* on the list.

Allyson is persistent

OK, well that list has more than Mexican candies...

If her mom knew that, she wouldn't be mad



There's candy from China and Malaysia and even North Carolina! There's all that jewelry for kids that you find at the dollar store. And mini-blinds... and....

Feel like you're surrounded by poisons?

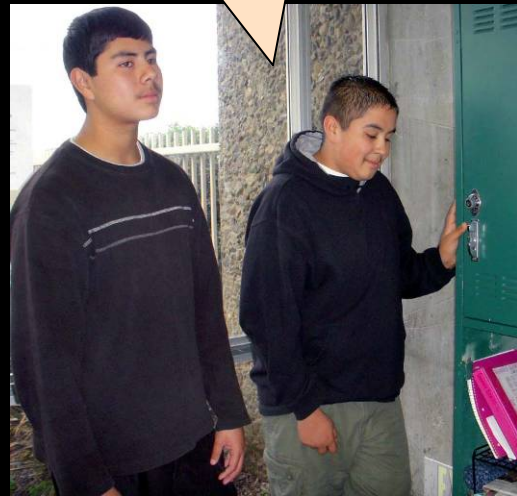
...and *that's* pretty scary!

You're right, Dora. It's messed up. Have you heard about Larry's little sister Lupita?



Scary news about Larry's sister Lupita...

We found out she has a pretty high level of lead in her blood. The doctor said we have to get her away from things that have lead in them ~ but we don't know what's doing it.



They're only high school students. What can *they* do?

Lupita's so cute!

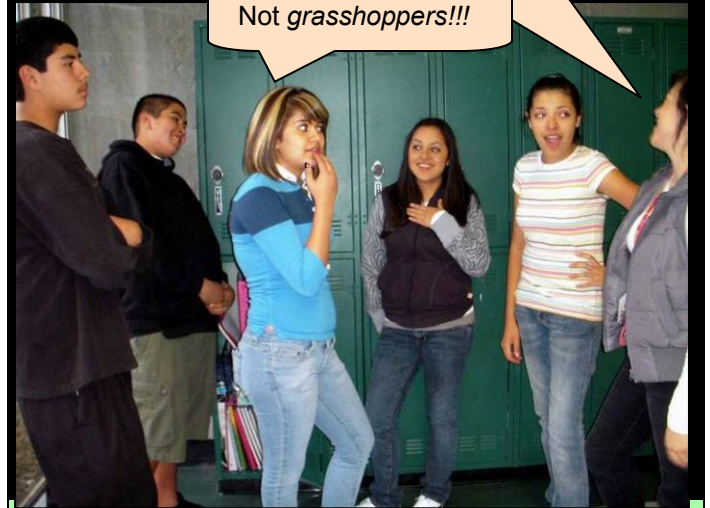
We want to help.

We can be detectives - lead detectives!



Not grasshoppers!!!

Don't forget – Larry's family gets food from Oaxaca. If we are lead detectives, we'll probably be eating some chapulines!



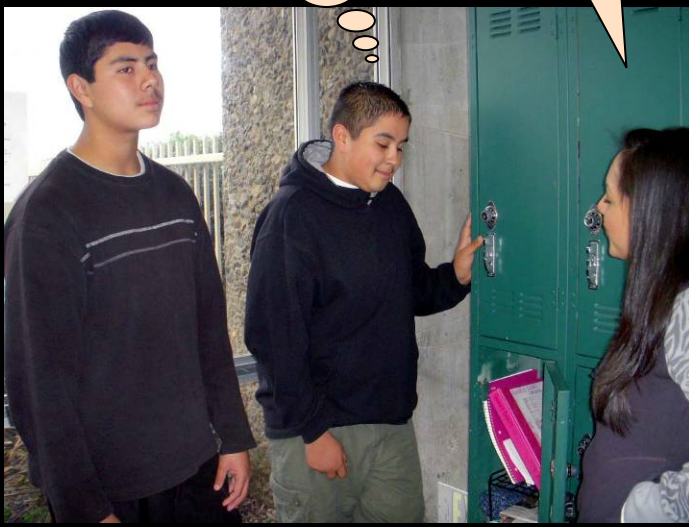
Don't Alisal students know that tasty grasshoppers can be a good protein source?

I can be the one to test stuff with those swab things.

They get organized.

OK Larry – should we do it? Should we make a check list?

I guess that's OK



Check List for Lupita's Lead Detectives:

1. Does her family really get food from Oaxaca?
2. Does her family use a chimolera?
3. Do they eat chapulines fixed at home?
4. Their apartment is old – does it have lead paint?
5. Does Lupita eat Jovy Tamarind lollipops? Or Hawthorn candy? Or Aussie-style Black Licorice?
6. Does she wear any of that jewelry we saw?
7. Does she have one of those vinyl lunchbags for preschool?

Where's Marie?

Next week, after school

She's not at school -she's sick. What's wrong, Larry?

He doesn't like your list!

Sometimes it's hard to find ways to understand the different ways of people, but these Alisal Trojans are friends and they are doing a good job of talking things out.



???

Well, "food from Oaxaca was #1 on the check list!"

We do get food from Oaxaca" ... and your point is....?

Why are you hating on Oaxacan food?

But...what about ...

Don't people get lead from the way they cook there?

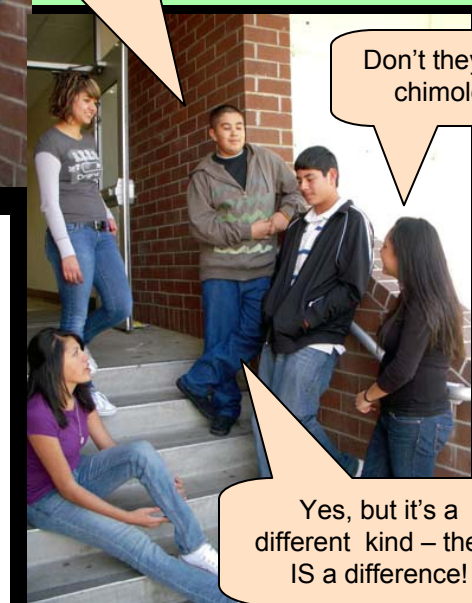
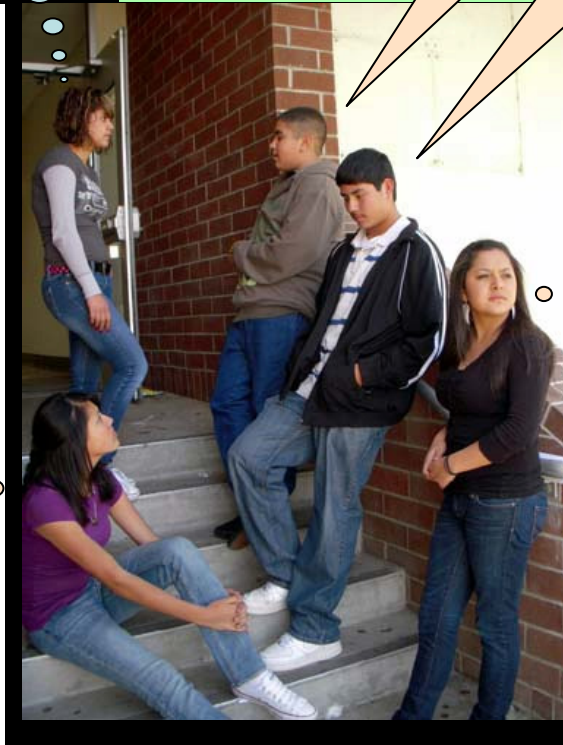
My family only sends us good stuff!

A chimolera?

Don't they use a chimolera?

We didn't mean to sound like we're hating on your family either, Larry...

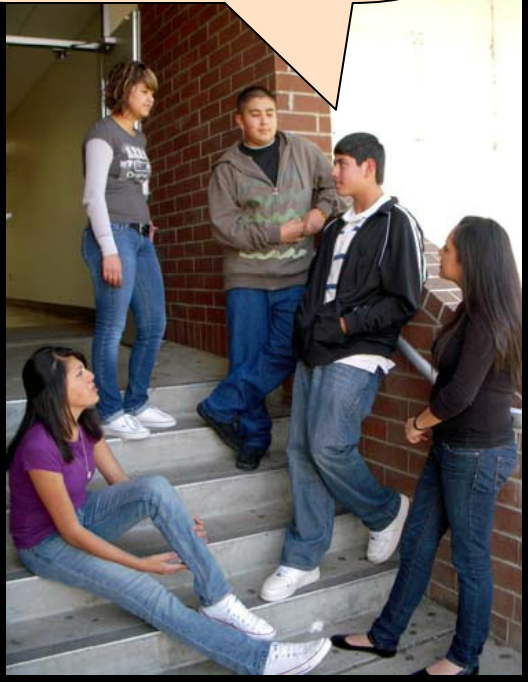
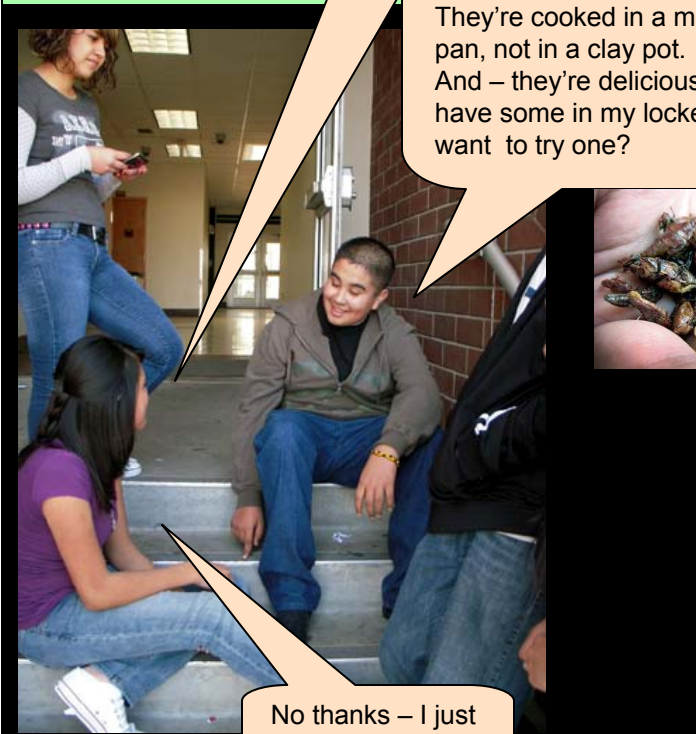
Yes, but it's a different kind - there IS a difference!



Doesn't your family make chapulines for you?

Yes, but they're safe. They're cooked in a metal pan, not in a clay pot. And – they're delicious. I have some in my locker- want to try one?

Didn't your Dad go to some classes at the health department when you still lived in Seaside?



No thanks – I just ate an apple.

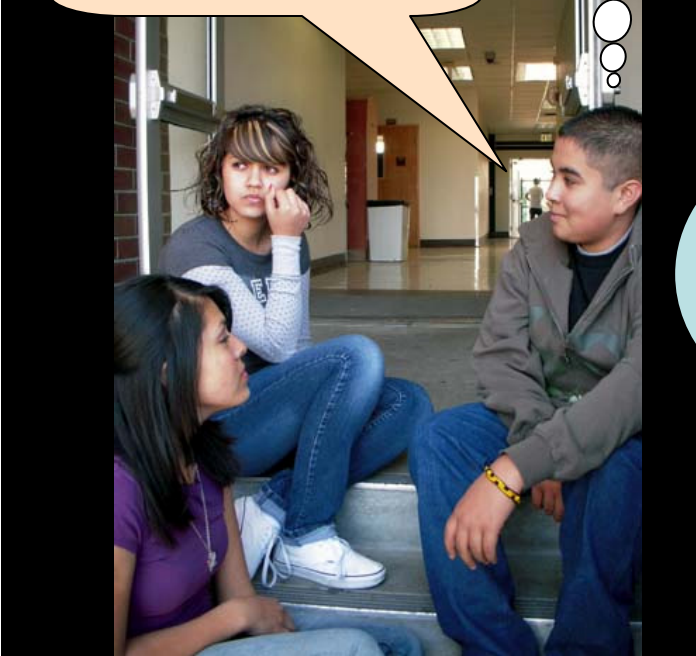
Yes, that was when Lupita was a baby.. I remember 3 years ago when Papi went to...



...the clinic in Seaside. Nurse Veronica told Papi we should use a chimolera with a "food-safe glaze" instead of the one we had been using...and answered his other questions about lead

How does lead affect the brain?

I heard that lead just "comes up" in women when they're pregnant... why?



Lead affects all parts of the body. The brain is one area that is most affected. In children, **THE BRAIN IS STILL DEVELOPING**, so there are **PROBLEMS IN ALL AREAS**. Problems with learning, concentrating and behavior can develop. The child may not be able to control impulses, or understand information well. In adults, the effects to the brain are often harder to see. A person might develop things like loss of memory and concentration.

Lead contamination can come from an environmental cause or from food. If a mother has been exposed to lead at some time in her life, her body has kept some of that lead inside. It can be in her bones. During her pregnancy, the baby needs nutrients from the mother. That's when the lead comes out of the bones into her blood. Then the baby gets more, just as its brain is growing the most.

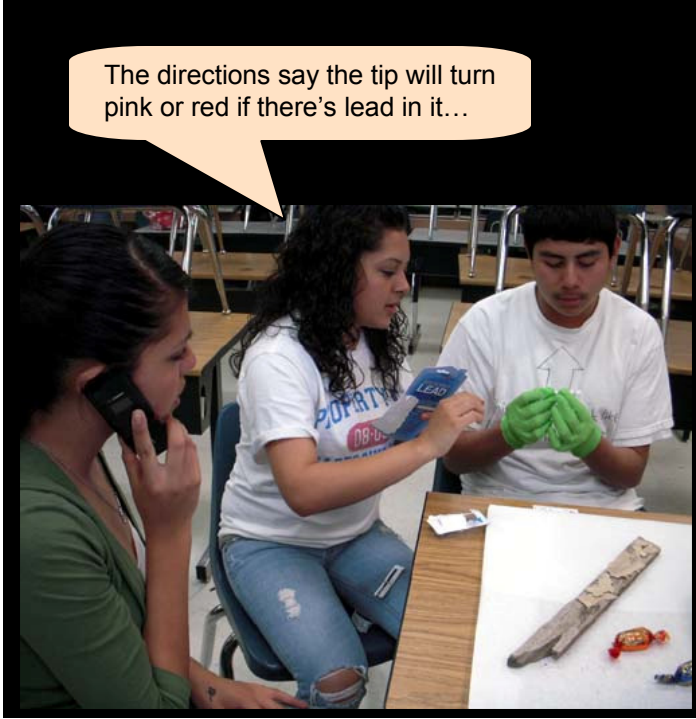


Wow! Lots of information - I get it now.

2009 - And now at Alisal the Lead Detectives are crossing items off the check list. Now it's time to do some testing...



Allyson calls Larry's mom to ask about any candy Lupita eats - or jewelry she wears...



The directions say the tip will turn pink or red if there's lead in it...

They check for lead in the paint on a board splintered off from Larry's apartment



No lead!

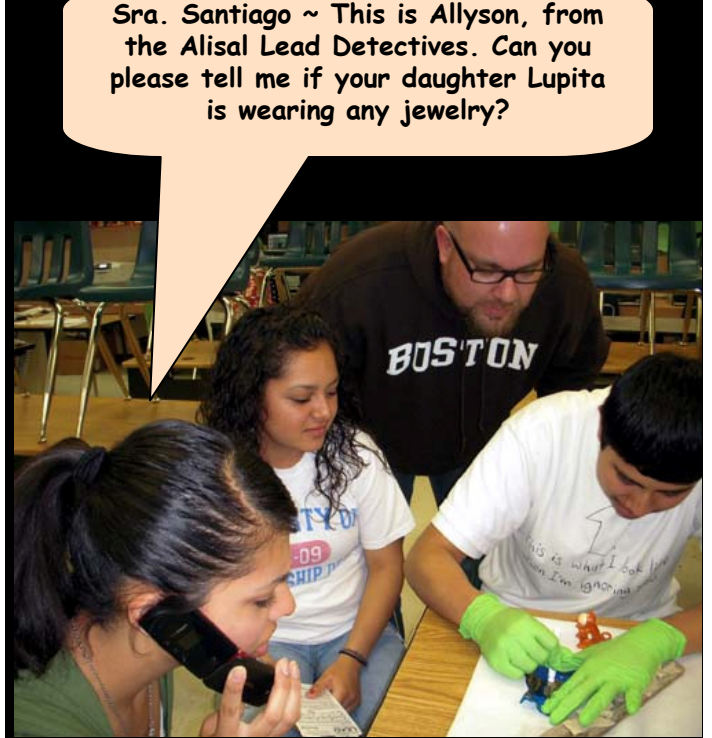
Bartholomew tests the lunch bag - it did have lead in it, but Lupita doesn't use one like that.

A lunch bag?
That's whack.



Allyson calls Lupita's mom to ask about jewelry...

Sra. Santiago ~ This is Allyson, from the Alisal Lead Detectives. Can you please tell me if your daughter Lupita is wearing any jewelry?



Marie comes in ~ she's back from the hospital where they tested her for lead and now she's totally given up candy...

Hope you learned your lesson!

Oh- Marie's
back! Yay!



Well, we tested it all, and except for the lunch bag, there was no lead in any of it.

That's the
good news!

But ~ we still don't
know what's making
her sick!



Next day, the students gather by the mural wall to figure out their next step.

What can we do now?

Could we...?

Hey - here's Marie...

OMG! I have the answer!

This plumber was at my house yesterday and he told my Dad that old houses could have water pipes with lead in the plumbing connections. That would contaminate the water coming from the faucet!

So, like everytime Lupita got a drink of water she got a drink of lead too?

Something like that ~ that's why the plumber told Marie's dad to run the cold water for awhile before drinking it.

Dora calls Allyson with the good news right away ~ Allyson will bring some drinking water for Lupita ...

Alisal students are satisfied with a job well done. They're happy ~ especially Larry ~ and they've learned a *lot* about lead.

That *could* be the answer, Marie ~ what a wake-up call!

Let's help Larry write a letter to his landlord!

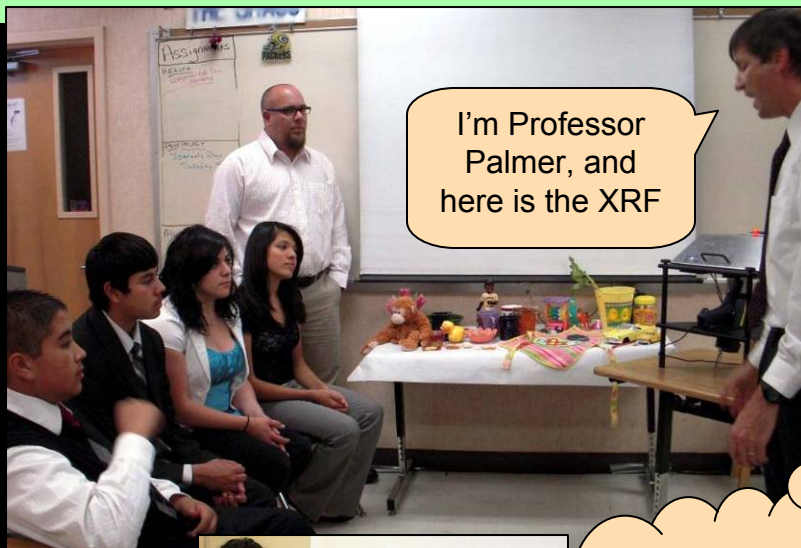
Here's some water ~ for now...



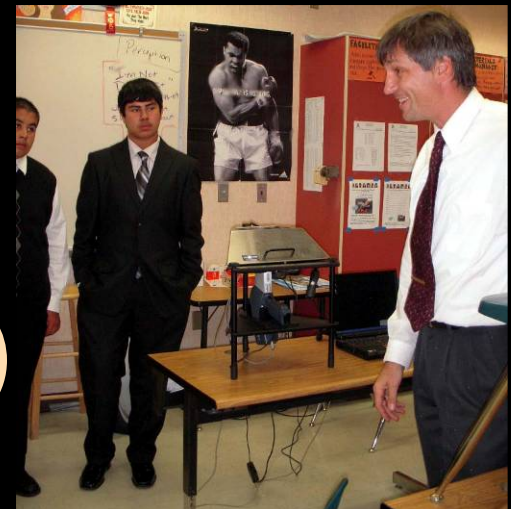
Later that spring, Alisal students get a chance to meet Professor Palmer from the Chemistry Department at San Francisco State. Professor Palmer is here to demonstrate the XRF, a lead-detecting device. He visits Mr. V's room where a table is piled with items their owners suspect may contain lead. The suspense builds.

Will Ms. N. have to give up that vinyl tablecloth that's been in her kitchen for years? Will Lennis have to take back that fancy -and expensive- designer hand bag made of vinyl? Will Shanna have to throw away all the jewelry and toys she bought for her daughter?

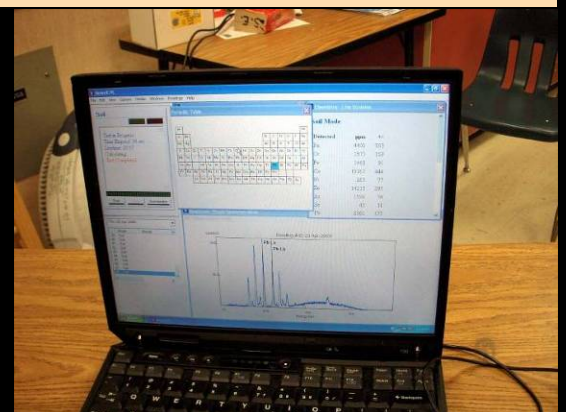
We'll see....



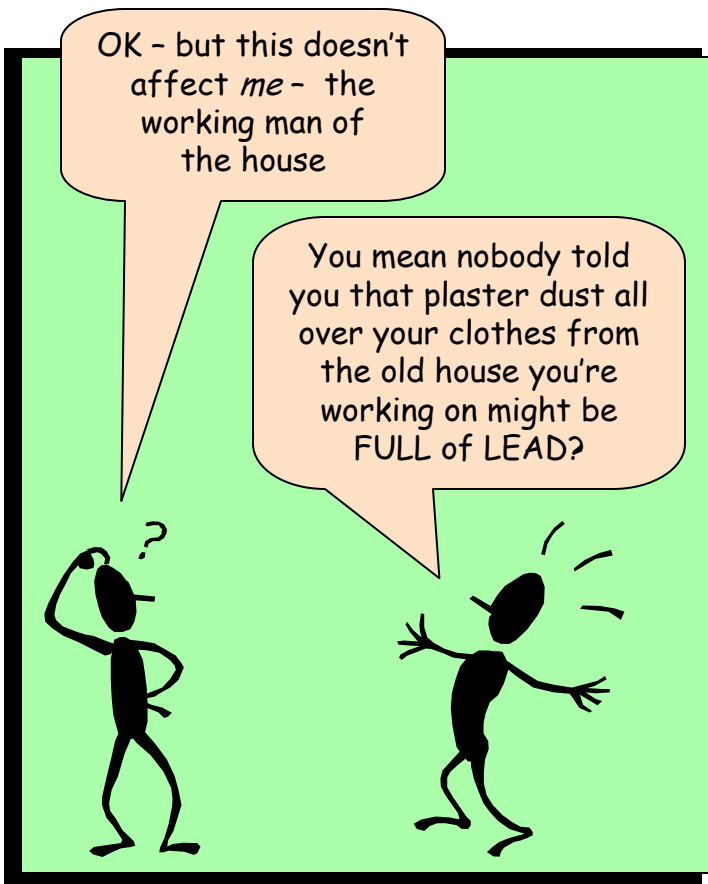
Sounds like he has fun being an analytical chemist!



Cynthia take a turn at testing. If you look closely at the computer screen you can see that K's mug tests "off the charts" for lead (tall spikes in display)



Thanks to!



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James Grieshop, CE Specialist Emeritus
Pete Palmer, PhD, Professor, Department of
Chemistry & Biochemistry, San Francisco State
University

You can contact this group with questions about lead exposure, or to find out the phone number of a branch close to you.

<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/CLPPB/Pages/Contact-CLPPB.aspx>

**Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention
Branch**
850 Marina Bay Parkway
Building P, Third Floor
Richmond, CA 94804-6403

(510) 620-5600
Fax: (510) 620-5656

This group provides a lot of great consumer information about lead. They also provide free lead testing for toys - in the S.F. Bay Area

http://cehca.nonprofitsoapbox.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=36&Itemid=51

Center For Environmental Health
2201 Broadway, Suite 302
Oakland, CA 94612

Tel: (510) 655-3900
Fax: (510) 655-9100

My action steps:

1. Talk to my health care provider
2. Find a Childhood Lead Prevention Program near here

Preventing Lead Poisoning

Small children are at higher risk of lead poisoning. Children that have lead poisoning may not act sick, but may have problems learning and paying attention. Lead can slow their growth and cause brain damage. If treated early, their development can be improved.

When someone has lead poisoning he may show no signs of problems or may have anemia, bad stomach pain, headaches, constipation, feel tired and irritable, have little appetite, and have problems sleeping.

Lead poisoning can be prevented by routine screening and education.



How to reduce the danger of lead poisoning

- ▶ Have children wash their hands before eating, and after playing outside.
- ▶ Prevent your child from eating paint that may contain lead, do not put cribs, playpens, beds, or high chairs next to areas where paint is chipping.
- ▶ Protect your child, do not use home remedies, such as greta or azarcón.
- ▶ Feed children regular and healthy meals. Meals should include a variety of foods, such as: fruits and vegetables, milk, cheese, yogurt, meat, chicken, iron-fortified cereals, raisins and dried fruit.
- ▶ Do not use low-fired, hand-made ceramic and pottery dishes to cook, serve or store foods.
- ▶ Keep your home as clean and free of dust as possible.
- ▶ If you think your home has lead-based paint, send samples of the chipped paint to your local Department of Health Services.
- ▶ Never sand, burn or scrape paint unless you know that it does not contain lead.
- ▶ Change out of work clothes and take a shower if you work with lead at your job.
- ▶ Let the tap water run for 30-60 seconds before drinking it or using it for cooking. It is not a good idea to drink hot tap water. Use cold water and heat it.

Martha L. López, Ed. D. Nutrition, Family & Consumer Sciences Advisor, University of California, Cooperative Extension, in collaboration with UC's Spanish News Service.

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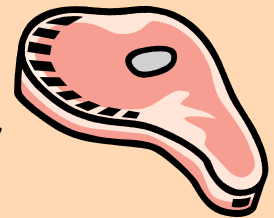
Thank you, Martha Lopez, for this info.

Yes, the levels of lead in the blood can increase if....

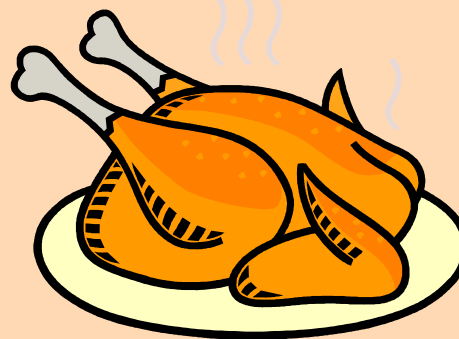
Your child eats too little - or too much protein. Serve 2 protein foods each day: fish, beans, lentils, chicken and peanut butter



Your child doesn't get enough iron. Serve meats, chicken, dried beans, dried fruits, leafy green veggies and cereal fortified with iron.



Your child eats too much fat. Over age 2? Serve fat-free or 1% dairy foods.



Your child doesn't get enough zinc. Serve meat, chicken and whole grain cereal

Your child doesn't get enough calcium. Serve 2-3 servings of milk, tofu, cheese, yogurt, broccoli and dark green leafy vegetables each day



An empty stomach may increase the chances of higher levels of lead. Snacks are an important part of your child's daily meal plan. Some children can't eat a lot at one meal. They may be hungry before you serve the next meal. **Offer regular meals and snacks to your children. This can help reduce their chances of having high blood levels of lead.**