Spring

Grandmother said, "Spring is a time when many people plant new gardens. I will tell you a story about a garden."

Grandmother said, "Carla Laughing Girl, this story is about your family from long ago."

Here is Grandmother's story.

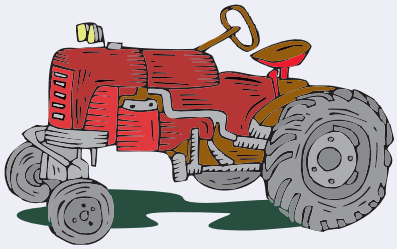
Laughing Girl wanted to surprise her mother. She wanted to plant a new garden near their old barn. She picked up a shovel and some seeds. She walked past the barn and started to dig.

Suddenly, Laughing Girl heard soft growling. She looked up and saw a great bear.

Laughing Girl asked, "Mother Bear, why are you here?"

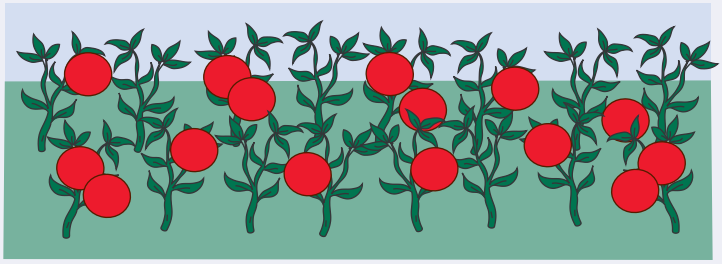
Mother Bear said, "Do not be afraid. I am here to warn you about a danger. The danger is lead."

Mother Bear said, "There is lead in the dirt near the barn. Lead from old paint dust and flakes from the barn fell into the dirt. Lead from old gas in cars and tractors fell into the dirt.



This place is not safe for a garden. You can find another place."

Laughing Girl did as Mother Bear said. She said, "I know another place. It is far from old paint dust and flakes. It is far from old gas. I will make my mother's garden there."



Mother Bear's Healthy Food Quiz

Mother Bear said, "Some foods can help keep your body safe from lead. These healthy foods include fruits and vegetables, beans, lean meats, lowfat dairy foods, and bread, cereal, and rice. Other foods do not help keep your body safe from lead. These foods have a lot of sugar, fat, or salt. If you eat them, eat only small amounts, and eat them only once in a while."

Here is a quiz Mother Bear made for you.

Which foods on the list below can help keep your body safe from lead? Put a check mark ☑ next to the healthy foods. Draw a line through the foods that do not help keep your body safe from lead.

- ❒ Apple
- ❒ Apple pie
- ❒ Beans
- ❒ Berries
- ❒ Bread
- ❒ Carrots
- ❒ Cereal

- ❒ Cheese
- ❒ Clam (quahog) chowder
- ❒ Corn
- ❒ Chocolate candy bar
- ❒ Cupcakes
- ❒ Doughnuts

- ❒ Fried potatoes
- ❒ Hot dogs
- ❒ Milk (lowfat)

- ❒ Oatmeal
- ❒ Oranges or orange juice
- ❒ Peaches
- ❒ Peanut butter

- ❒ Popcorn (plain or with a little butter and salt)
- ❒ Potato chips

- ❒ Rice
- ❒ Roasted chicken
- ❒ Squash
- ❒ Yogurt (lowfat)

Now draw a circle around your favorite foods. Are they healthy foods? If not, what are some healthy foods you can eat instead? Write the healthy foods here:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Answer Key

- ☑ Apple
- ~~Apple pie~~
- ☑ Beans
- ☑ Berries
- ☑ Bread
- ☑ Carrots
- ☑ Cereal
- ☑ Cheese
- ☑ Clam (quahog) chowder
- ☑ Corn
- ~~Chocolate candy bar~~
- ~~Cupcakes~~
- ~~Doughnuts~~
- ~~Fried potatoes~~
- ~~Hot dogs~~
- ☑ Milk (lowfat)
- ☑ Oatmeal
- ☑ Oranges or orange juice
- ☑ Peaches
- ☑ Peanut butter
- ☑ Popcorn (plain or with a little butter and salt)
- ~~Potato chips~~
- ☑ Rice
- ☑ Roasted chicken
- ☑ Squash
- ☑ Yogurt (lowfat)

Grandmother's Advice

Grandmother said, "Children, I have told you what Mother Bear taught our children long ago so that they could be safe from lead dangers. Do you have any questions?"

Jesse Bright Sun said, "Grandmother, I am worried. I know that some paint has lead. I am afraid to use my paint box and finger-paints."

Molly Small Deer said, "Grandmother, I am worried too. I have a pencil. I heard someone call it a 'lead pencil.' I am afraid to use my pencil."

Kyle Fire Walker and Carla Laughing Girl nodded. They too were worried.

Grandmother said, "Children, you do not have to worry. Your paint boxes are safe. They are marked 'nontoxic.' That means there is no lead in the paint."

NONTOXIC

Grandmother said, "Your finger-paints are safe too. They are marked 'nontoxic.' That means there is no lead in the finger-paints."

Grandmother said, "Your pencils are safe. A long time ago, pencils had lead in them. But today there is no lead in pencils."

Grandmother said, "Children, it is good that you ask these questions. Always ask a grownup if you are worried about lead."

Let's Write about It

Do you have any questions about lead? You can write them here.

_____

_____

_____

Who are some grownups you can ask about lead?

Maybe it's your mother or father.

Maybe it's your grandmother or grandfather.

Maybe it's your aunt or uncle.

Maybe it's your teacher or a tribal elder.

You can write their names here.

_____

_____

Illustrations by Calvin Francis.

Mother Bear's Pledge

Grandmother said, "Mother Bear wants all children to be safe from lead dangers. You can help Mother Bear by taking this pledge."

I promise to look out
for lead dangers.

I promise to tell a grownup if
I see any lead dangers.

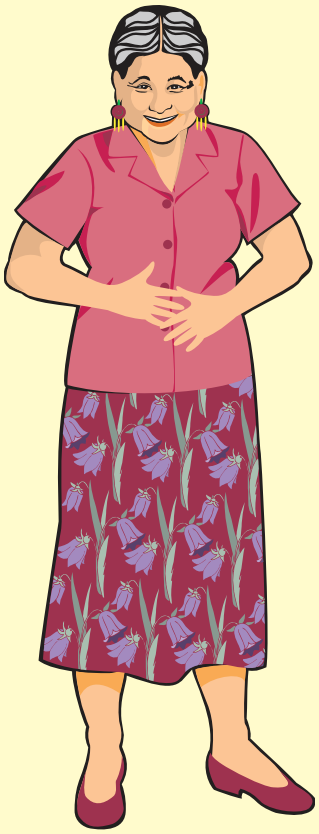
I promise to keep away from
lead paint dust and lead paint flakes.

I promise to wash my hands before I eat
and after I play.

I promise to leave my shoes at the door and wear
socks or slippers in my house.

I promise to eat healthy foods.

The children all stood and said Mother Bear's pledge. Can you do that now? You can make Mother Bear's pledge into a chant if you like.



Grandmother said, "Children, you have done good work today. You have learned about lead. You can stay safe from lead, and you can help your brothers and sisters stay safe. Mother Bear will be happy."

Illustration by Calvin Francis.

Grandmother said, "Children, now you can teach other people how to be safe. Mother Bear will be happy."

Below, write the names of other children or grownups you would like to tell about lead safety.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Illustration by Calvin Francis.

Make a Poster for Your Home

Make your own lead-safety poster in the space below. You can draw or write anything that will help other people learn how to be safe from lead. You can use crayons, markers, pencils, pens, or paint.

Secret word: BEAR

Text: Copyright © 2003 by Joan Bothell, Mary-Margaret Gaudio, and Maureen T. Mulroy

This book was developed by Healthy Environments for Children Initiative for the Penobscot Indian Nation.

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