Dear Parent or Guardian:

From birth to age three, babies have a LOT to learn. Helping your child to be healthy and ready to learn is an important part of your job as a parent or guardian. Giving your child good foods, keeping your child active, sharing books and music, cuddling, and playing games are all ways that you can help your child learn and grow.

High levels of lead in the blood can hurt your child’s ability to learn, damage your child’s brain and affect your child’s later success in school. However, there are steps you can take to make your child safe and healthy. This includes being aware of sources of lead around your home, giving your child healthy food, and watching how your child learns.

- Sources of lead around your home can include:
  - Lead paint in your home
  - Lead in toys
  - Lead in the dirt outside your home or your child’s daycare,
  - Lead in some health supplements (even those labeled “organic”) other than those that a medical provider prescribes
  - Lead in pipes supplying water used for drinking or cooking
  - Lead in your workplace that you might accidentally bring home

  Keep your child away from these potential sources of lead.

- Encourage your child to eat foods that may lower the amount of lead your child’s body takes in.
  - Give your child foods that contain calcium. These foods include milk, cheese, yogurt, broccoli, sardines, and canned salmon.
  - Give your child foods that contain iron. These foods include lean red meat, chicken, turkey, sardines, and tuna.
  - Foods with vitamin C (such as oranges, strawberries, green peppers, and potatoes) help your child absorb iron.
Watch to see how your child is learning.

- Does your child do many of the things expected for his or her age, or is your child missing some important skills (see enclosed Your Baby Deserves a Good Start in Life!)? Talk with your child’s doctor, read a good child development book, or go online to learn what things children are expected to do at each age.

- If you think your child is not developing and learning new skills like other children the same age, call the Child Development Infoline at 1-800-505-7000 and talk with them about your concerns.

- If your child is younger than three years old and is not developing well, you may request a free developmental evaluation from the Connecticut Birth to Three System.

- Help Me Grow is another program that can help you find community supports and monitor your child’s development through age five.

- If your child is in school, talk with your local school district for an evaluation.

For more information on lead, talk with your child’s doctor or go to www.ct.gov/dph

For more information on the Birth to Three System, go to www.birth23.org

For more information on child development, call the Child Development Infoline at 1-800-505-7000
Your Baby Deserves a Good Start in Life!!

Babies have a lot to learn, but not all babies are learning as well as they can.

If your baby or toddler is not developing as expected, there is help available through our state's Birth to Three System.

The following checklist offers some examples of typical child development:

- **1-2 months**
  - able to suck and swallow
  - startled by loud noise
  - pays attention to faces nearby

- **4-6 months**
  - reaches for and grasps objects
  - moves toys from hand to hand
  - smiles at others
  - rolls from tummy to back and back to tummy

- **9-12 months**
  - pulls to a stand
  - picks up small objects
  - waves “bye-bye”

- **15-18 months**
  - looks at picture books
  - likes to push, pull, and dump things
  - tries to talk and repeat words
  - walks without help

- **24-30 months**
  - runs well, with few falls
  - holds a crayon, likes to scribble
  - turns door knob, unscrews jars
  - can eat without help

- **3-4 months**
  - holds a rattle and smiles
  - holds head up well
  - shows gains in height and weight

- **6-9 months**
  - babbles and laughs out loud
  - sits up without help
  - plays peek-a-boo and pat-a-cake
  - creeps or crawls forward on tummy by moving arms and legs

- **12-15 months**
  - comes when called by name
  - drinks from a cup
  - takes turns rolling a ball

- **18-24 months**
  - carries objects while walking
  - uses 2 or 3 word sentences
  - gives hugs and kisses
  - follows simple directions

- **30 months and older**
  - helps with getting dressed
  - walks up and down stairs
  - sings simple songs
  - understands right from wrong

*If your baby or toddler is not yet doing most of the things expected for his age,*

**Don't Wait!!**

Talk with your family doctor about how your child may be helped by early intervention. Anyone can make a referral. Call:

**Child Development Infoline**

1-800-505-7000

www.birth23.org