**LEAD-FREE KIDS FOR A HEALTHY FUTURE—NATIONAL LEAD POISONING PREVENTION WEEK**

Hundreds of thousands of children living in the United States have elevated blood lead levels that may cause significant damage to their health. They can develop behavior and learning problems (such as hyperactivity), slowed growth, hearing problems, and aggressive patterns of behavior. Stopping a child’s exposure to lead from leaded paint, house dust, or any other source is the best way to prevent the harmful effects of lead.

To raise awareness of the consequences of lead poisoning among parents and pregnant women who live in homes built before 1978, the (insert name of health department) is participating in National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week (NLPPW) October 20-26. (Insert name of health department) joins the Connecticut Department of Public Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in encouraging parents to learn more about how to prevent lead poisoning.

This year's NLPPW theme, "Lead-Free Kids for a Healthy Future," underscores the importance of testing your home, testing your child, learning about drinking water, and learning how to prevent lead poisoning’s serious health effects. Connecticut regulations require children to be tested for lead at least twice. Parents and guardians should talk to their medical provider about testing their children.

Established in 1999 by the US Senate, National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week occurs every year during the last week in October. During this week, many states and communities offer free blood-lead testing and conduct various education and awareness events. For more information about NLPPW activities in your area, contact (insert name of health department).

Here are some simple things parents can do to help protect their family from lead exposure:

* Get Your Child Tested. Even if your young children seem healthy, ask your doctor to test them for lead. It is the law that every child in Connecticut be tested.
* Learn About Lead Paint Hazards. Flaking, cracking and chipping paint in homes built before 1978 may be a hazard. Learn what you can do to prevent lead paint hazards.
* Understand the Facts! Your local health department can provide you with helpful information about preventing childhood lead poisoning.