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CITY OF HARTFORD MARKS NATIONAL LEAD POISONING PREVENTION & EDUCATION WEEK OCTOBER 24-30, 2010

---MEDIA AND COMMUNITY ADVISORY---

Please join us in Hartford's observance of National Lead Poisoning Prevention & Education Week! Lead awareness events will take place at a variety of sites throughout the city:

- Thursday, October 28 (9:00 A.M. to 11:00 A.M.) at St. Francis Hospital
- Friday, October 29 (9:00 A.M. to noon) at Star Hardware store on Main Street

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, nearly **a quarter of a million** children living in the U.S. have blood lead levels high enough to cause significant damage to their health. Despite the publicity about lead-tainted children's toys, the major source of lead exposure among U.S. children continues to be lead-based paint and lead-contaminated dust found in deteriorating buildings.

"Lead poisoning is still a serious problem in Hartford, but it is a problem that is entirely preventable. Our goal is to brighten our children's future by keeping them safe from lead poisoning," stated Carlos Rivera, Director of the Hartford Department of Health and Human Services.

To increase awareness of how childhood lead poisoning can be prevented, the Department of Health and Human Services is participating in the 2010 National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week from October 24-30th and will be providing lead awareness to families, property owners and contractors.

This year's theme, "**Lead-Free Kids for a Healthy Future**", underscores the importance of testing your home, testing your child, and learning how to prevent lead poisoning's serious health effects. These effects include brain damage, learning and behavior problems or even death. This year's theme also highlights the federal Environmental Protection Agency new rule for contractors that conduct renovations, repairs, and painting activities.

Parents can reduce a child's exposure to lead in many ways. Here are some simple things you can do to help protect your family:

1. Get your Home Tested. Before you buy an older home, ask for a lead inspection.
2. Get your Child Tested. Even if your young children seem healthy, ask your doctor to test them for lead.
3. Get the Facts! Your local health department can provide you with helpful information about preventing childhood lead poisoning.

You can learn more about preventing lead poisoning by contacting Arlene Robertson at 860-757-4768 at the Lead Poisoning Prevention & Education Program in Hartford.