

## Bridges “Did You Know” Campaign

### (Original)

*Did you know that in your Palm Beach County community ...*

- **Half of all pregnant women don’t see a doctor or nurse during the first three months of pregnancy?** This can put a woman and her baby in danger if serious medical conditions, like diabetes or high-blood pressure, go untreated.
- **At least 1 out of 10 babies are born weighing less than a sack of flour? (5.5 pounds or less)?** This places them at risk for long hospital stays at birth – and a life of health problems and learning difficulties.
- **Thousands of children can’t sit still or follow directions – let alone recognize letters and numbers – when they start kindergarten?** Children who start kindergarten unprepared must struggle to catch up to other children their age.
- **At least 2 out of 5 third graders can’t read on grade level?** This increases their chances of eventually dropping out of school.
- **As many as 4 out of 10 teens don’t graduate high school.** This limits their earning opportunities and makes them more likely to turn to crime or need government assistance.

### (Revised)

*Did You Know ...*

- **When you eat well and live a healthy lifestyle, even if you aren’t pregnant, you make a huge difference in the health of your future**

**children?** So try to eat lots of fruits, vegetables and whole grains; exercise regularly to maintain a healthy weight; and take folic acid, also known as vitamin B.

- **If you visit your doctor during the first three months of pregnancy, or as soon as you know you're pregnant, you may be saving your baby's life?** Doctors can care for life-threatening health problems, like diabetes and high-blood pressure, very early in your pregnancy. This can help save your life, and the life of your baby. If you need help finding affordable medical care, call 888-634-7900.
- **If you carry your baby full term (at least 39 weeks), he or she will be stronger and healthier – and less likely to suffer lifelong health and learning problems?** Sadly, being born too early is the number one reason newborns die. So if you're pregnant, see your doctor regularly and try to eat well, reduce your stress and get lots of rest. If you're the friend, boyfriend or husband of a pregnant woman, encourage her to take good care of herself. It will make a big difference in both her life and the baby's.
- **Breast milk is the perfect food for your baby?** Studies have shown that breastfed babies are smarter and healthier than formula-fed babies. So breastfeed as long as you can. And if you need help, ask for the name of a lactation consultant.
- **Babies and young children grow and develop at different rates?** Try to take your child for regular checkups so a doctor or nurse can keep track of his or her growth. And if you have questions about your child's growth, development or learning, ask for help or call 888-634-7900.
- **Babies and young children are amazingly smart?** Babies of mothers who speak to them often learn almost 300 more words by age 2 than other children the same age. And when babies and young children are read to

and spoken to, they are much more likely to do well in school. So read, sing and cuddle your baby whenever you can. You're making a big impact on the rest of your child's life.

- **By the time your child is 5 years old, her brain is almost the size of an adult's?** So do whatever you can to talk to your child, play with your child and be patient with your child. Answering all their questions will definitely pay off.
- **When children are on grade level by the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, they're much more likely to graduate from high school and go on to lead successful lives?** So encourage your child to do his homework. And if he's having trouble, talk to your child's teacher or ask for the name of a tutor who can help.
- **Children who graduate high school are much less likely to turn to crime or need help from the government?** High school graduates on average earn \$170 more a week – or nearly \$9,000 more a year – than high school drop outs. And college graduates on average earn double what high school graduates make – or nearly \$30,000 more a year.

Sources: March of Dimes website; March of Dimes. (2010), Prematurity Campaign; State of the Child: 2010 Birth Outcomes Update, Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County; American Academy of Pediatrics Policy Statement, Breastfeeding and the Use of Human Milk, 2005; KidsHealth website, Nemours; Hawley, T. & Gunner, M. (2000), Starting Smart: How Early Experiences Affect Brain Development; Ounce of Prevention Fund and ZERO TO THREE: National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Families; Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, 2010, "Reading on Grade Level in Third Grade: How Is It Related to High School Performance and College Enrollment?"; ChildTrends Databank; Fight Crime: Invest in Kids; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; Palm Beach County Selected Zip Code Data, Maps & Child Information, Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County.