

# DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

and the Environment



In the U.S., about **1 in 6** children have a developmental disability.



People with developmental disabilities have problems with major life activities such as language, movement, learning, self-help, and living by themselves. These disabilities can begin anytime during development up to age 22. Developmental disabilities usually last throughout a person's lifetime.

## SOME CAUSES OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES INCLUDE:

- genetics or chromosomal abnormalities,
- maternal conditions before and during pregnancy, or
- childhood exposures to
  - certain foods or drinks,
  - hazardous substances,
  - infections,
  - physical trauma, or
  - stress.



Environmental contaminants can be especially harmful to the brains of babies and small children because they may affect their developing central nervous system.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- 1.** Avoid workplace hazards if you are pregnant.
- 2.** Avoid smoking and drinking alcohol if you are pregnant.
- 3.** Learn about safe fish eating recommendations for women who might become pregnant, pregnant women, nursing mothers, and young children.
- 4.** Remove or prevent contact with household sources of lead, such as lead based paint and lead contaminated dust.
- 5.** Make sure your child gets all the regular childhood vaccines.
- 6.** Keep your child away from high noise levels, such as very loud toys.

## LEARN MORE!

Visit CDC's Environmental Public Health Tracking Network to learn more about carbon monoxide poisoning

[www.cdc.gov/ephtracking](http://www.cdc.gov/ephtracking)

[www.cdc.gov/ncbddd](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd)

