MotherToBaby UT Marks 30th Anniversary With 230,000th Call

(Salt Lake City, UT) – For three decades, the Pregnancy Risk Line's (PRL) MotherToBaby service has helped mothers and health care providers keep babies safe during pregnancy and while breastfeeding. On May 30, the program celebrates 30 years of service and will take its 230,000th call, give or take a few.

The experts at MotherToBaby answer questions about a variety of potential exposures like foods, prescriptions, OTC medications, diseases, and immunizations a baby can be exposed to through Mom. "Health care providers ask about pain medications, moms want to know if it's safe to paint the nursery, even grandmothers call to ask whether mom is doing too much exercise," says program coordinator Lynn Martinez. "Every call is important. We're happy to be helping families feel safer and navigate through a stressful time."

Geneticist John C. Carey, M.D., founder and MotherToBaby medical director, remembers getting the idea for the service in 1979 when he first started his practice in pediatric genetics. "We struggled with helping moms without making them feel guilty about birth defects, not caused by the exposure they had, but by genetic factors they had no control over," said Carey. "The service still faces some of the same challenges today," he added. "With access to information more available but not always reliable, moms feel the risk to baby is higher than what has been proven, and providers often find conflicting information in published research."Experts at MotherToBaby review new studies, compare findings to past studies, and work with professionals from other disciplines to determine the risks for exposures.

"The personalized risk assessments we provide help clinicians and mothers determine the best course for each situation," Martinez said, "Sometimes there are risky conditions and risky medications, such as using an antiepileptic medication versus the danger of leaving the mom's epilepsy uncontrolled. We provide the latest evidence-based information to help the primary care provider and mom make an informed choice, together."

Former First Lady Norma Matheson was on hand 30 years ago and said hello to the first caller. She is happy to return to help celebrate the anniversary. "The Risk Line has been a reassuring resource for moms who just want to do what's best for their growing baby," said the First Lady. I'm proud of the work MotherToBaby staff have been doing for Utah mothers-to-be and wish them another 30 year of helping save babies' lives."

PRL's MotherToBaby is a joint partnership between the Utah Department of Health and the University of Utah. It is one of 16 member services of the North American Organization of Teratology Information Specialists, now known as MotherToBaby. The service is open for calls Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. at 1-800-822-2229 or 801-328-2229. For more information visit https://mothertobaby.org//a> or follow them on Facebook and Twitter.

Questions? Call 866.626.6847 | Text 855.999.3525 | Email or Chat at MotherToBaby.org.

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