

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**Monday 16 February, 2009**

**MATERNAL INFECTION DURING PREGNANCY LINKED TO CEREBRAL PALSY**

Women who develop infections while pregnant have an increased risk of having a child with cerebral palsy, according to new research to be presented at the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Cerebral Palsy Conference held in Sydney this week (18-21 February 2009).

The research was carried out by a team from the Danish Cerebral Palsy Register and US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, led by Diana Schendel. It found such infections increased the risk of cerebral palsy by 3-6 times.

The good news is that common conditions such as urinary tract and vaginal infections are both easily treatable. This suggests that better detection of these infections and more successful treatments may reduce the number of babies born with cerebral palsy.

Diana Schendel and her team will present their findings at the Conference on Wednesday from 10.35am.

**\*\*\*ENDS\*\*\***

**MEDIA ARE INVITED TO ATTEND THE CONFERENCE**

**What:** 3<sup>rd</sup> International Cerebral Palsy Conference (the largest of its kind in the world)  
**When:** Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> to Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2009  
**Where:** Sydney Convention Centre  
Darling Harbour, Sydney

**Presentation:** Wednesday 10.35am – 11.55am session (presentation time 10.51am)  
Bayside 204B room

**FOR FURTHER DETAILS, MEDIA ACCREDITATION, ABSTRACTS OR TO OBTAIN A PROGRAM FOR THE CONFERENCE, PLEASE CONTACT:**

Liz Foy – General Manager, Service Development – 02 9479 7280 / 0419 405 181  
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**Facts about the Cerebral Palsy Institute**

- Researching prevention and curative strategies for cerebral palsy
- Custodians of the Australian Cerebral Palsy Register to monitor trends
- Funding targeted cerebral palsy research through the Cerebral Palsy Institute Grants Program

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