



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

# MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 25, 2009

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## **HEALTHLINK NORTH COUNTY CELEBRATES 10 YEARS OF IMPROVING THE HEALTH OF SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN**

*Public/Private Partnership at Work in 25 North County School Districts*

**WHAT:** HealthLink North County is a school-focused, public/private partnership that has been working to improve health and education outcomes for North County school-aged children for the past decade. The collaborative has been instrumental in various regional and countywide school health initiatives. The award-winning 2005 *School Food* and 2006 *School Fitness Summits* brought hundreds of people together to implement school-based strategies for healthier campuses. Other notable accomplishments include a partnership with the North County Dental Task Force to promote free dental screenings reaching over 1,500 North County children; the development and distribution of "Nutrition to Grow On" garden toolkits to all North County elementary school districts; and support for school-based diabetes screening.

In keeping with the traditional 10-year anniversary gift of aluminum or tin, participants at the event are encouraged to donate canned food items to support North Region's "Little Angels Pantry" which provides food to hungry families with children.

**WHO:** **Supervisor Bill Horn**, Fifth District, County Board of Supervisors  
**Aaron Byzak**, Policy Advisor to Supervisor Pam Slater-Price, Third District, County Board of Supervisors  
**Nick Macchione**, Director, County Health and Human Services Agency  
**Donna Hand**, Deputy Director, County Health and Human Services Agency  
**Dean Sidelinger**, San Diego County Deputy Public Health Officer  
Over 40 participants representing school districts, school nurses, community clinics and community-based programs

**WHEN:** Tuesday, September 29, 2009  
8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

**WHERE:** North County Regional Education Center  
255 Pico Ave., San Marcos

**WHY:** As the numbers of school-aged children developing chronic diseases rise, schools have emerged as important venues to promote children's health. HealthLink North County serves as a vital link between the Health and Human Services Agency, family-focused community health programs and school personnel from the 25 North San Diego County school districts to promote campuses where students are healthy, in class and ready to learn.

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