



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 2, 2010

Contact: Tom Christensen (619) 595-4513

HEALTH AND DENTAL CHECK-UPS NEEDED FOR SCHOOL *Make Sure Your Children Are Ready to Start School*

Did you know that school supplies are not all a child needs to start school? Make sure your children have the necessary health check-ups to start school, San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency officials reminded parents today.

California law requires all children entering first grade to have a health check-up. Check-ups, even when a child is not sick, allow the doctor to find and treat many health problems before they become serious and affect a child's ability to succeed in school. Check-ups are also an opportunity for parents to ask questions about their child's health.

"Check-ups help to prevent medical and dental problems and ensure that children don't miss school; they help ensure children are able to do their best and succeed." said Wilma Wooten, M.D., M.P.H., San Diego County Public Health Officer.

California law also requires children entering public school for the first time at kindergarten or first grade to have an oral health assessment or "dental check-up". Nationally, 51 million school hours are lost each year due to dental disease. Dental problems are painful and can affect a child's ability to concentrate. Most importantly, dental diseases are preventable. Dental check-ups provide an opportunity for preventive care such as fluoride varnish and sealants and early detection of dental disease.

"Health check-ups and dental exams are integral to a child's success in school and children need regular and ongoing preventive care throughout their childhood," added Wooten.

Parents can get both the health examination form and the oral health assessment form at their child's school. Families unable to find or afford medical and dental check-ups may be eligible for exams at no cost by calling the San Diego County, Maternal, Child and Family Health Services at 800-675-2229.

To learn more about school entry medical and dental requirements, visit www.sdmcfhs.org or call (619) 692-8808.

###

COUNTY COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE
1600 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, ROOM 208 • SAN DIEGO, CA 92101-2472