



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO MEDIA ADVISORY

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FREE BLOOD LEAD TESTING FOR CHILDREN **County's Early Lead Poisoning Detection Program Has Dramatic Effect**

WHAT: Children ages 6 and under can get a free blood screening to detect lead poisoning. There will also be educational information available for parents and caregivers.

WHO: **Supervisor Ron Roberts**, District 4, San Diego County Board of Supervisors
Nick Macchione, Director, San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency
Leticia Ayala, Assistant Director for Programs, Environmental Health Coalition
San Diego County Parent of a child affected by lead poisoning
Hundreds of children being tested for lead poisoning

WHEN: Wednesday, Oct. 27, 2010, 9 a.m.

WHERE: Cherokee Point Elementary School
Hassan Family Community Theatre
3735 38th Street, San Diego, CA, 92105

WHY: Nearly a quarter of a million children living in the United States have blood lead levels high enough to cause significant damage to their health, according to estimates from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The number of children in San Diego County suffering from severe lead poisoning has seen a dramatic drop in recent years thanks to an early detection program. The County Health and Human Services Agency's (HHSA) Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program began an early prevention initiative in 2004 that has decreased by 61 percent the number of children with elevated levels of lead in their blood.

The County tested more than 49,000 children in 2009. This press conference will promote the need for continued testing and the protection of children from lead poisoning.