



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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“It’s Backpack Stuffin’ Time” Nutrition Program for Kids Re-Launched for 2010-11 School Year

SAN BERNARDINO, CA (Thursday, Sept. 16, 2010) - It’s Thursday at Project Life Impact in San Bernardino - that can only mean one thing: it’s backpack stuffin’ time. Volunteers assemble each week with a mission, fill backpacks full of nutritious food for hungry kids in San Bernardino County. The **Kidz Fuel - Snack Pack** program is back again for the 2010-2011 school year. This program is administered by Community Action Partnership of San Bernardino County (CAPSBC) and program partners Project Life Impact in San Bernardino, Helping Hands Pantry in Redlands, Relive Ministry of Loma Linda University Church, San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools, San Bernardino City Unified School District, Arrowhead United Way, and City of San Bernardino Office of the Mayor.

The backpack program is about providing a backpack full of nutritious food every Friday for low-income and disadvantaged children every Friday. These students have school lunches to eat through the week, but do not always have food on the weekends. Last year, the program served 356 students, grades K-12 for 25 weeks. This year, new funding has made it possible to serve 1,095 school children in 18 schools throughout San Bernardino County.

The process by which the students receive their backpacks is amazing, thanks to the CAPSBC employees, our partners and their staff, students and volunteers. Every week at Project Life Impact, Pastor Willie Ulibarri, Jr. makes sure the food he receives in the morning from the CAPSBC Food Bank gets put into the 650 backpacks he’s in charge of stuffing. He has many volunteers who show up to help him every week, like the group of people from Social Vocational Services (SVS) we saw today. SVS direct service personnel worker Crystal Maybo organizes her group of volunteers who are adults with developmental disabilities. They are happy to do something like this to help needy children.



Volunteers from SVS help collect food items to be stuffed into children’s backpacks for the Kidz Fuel - Snack Pack program.

Also on hand this week to assist stuffing backpacks was Brenda Dowdy, Homeless Program Specialist for San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools. Brenda refers children to participate in the program. She has seen first-hand how kids experiencing hunger have difficulty concentrating, are often sick, socially withdrawn or rebellious and less likely to do well in school. Brenda stated, “There are 22,457 homeless children within the county school district.”

Meanwhile, over in Redlands at the Helping Hands Food Pantry, another group of volunteers puts together the remaining 445 backpacks. These volunteers are mostly students from Loma Linda Academy High School. They are well-versed at this task as they did it last year too. They were the ones who initiated the idea of the Kidz Fuel - Snack Pack program and worked to make it happen.

If you are interested in donating to the Kidz Fuel - Snack Pack program, please call the CAPSBC Food Bank at (909) 723-1580. All donations of money or food items are welcome. If you are interested in volunteering to stuff backpacks please contact Pastor Willie Ulibarri, Administrative Director of Project Life Impact, Inc. in San Bernardino at (909) 388-1700, or Burton Clark at the Helping Hands Pantry in Redlands at (909) 544-8672. Brenda Dowdy, Homeless Program Specialist with San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools can be reached at (909) 386-2634.

CAPSBC is the designated Community Action Agency for San Bernardino County charged with providing programs and services for low-income individuals and families to help lift them out of poverty. As one of the largest non-profit human services agency in San Bernardino County, CAPSBC provides resources and opportunities to the low-income to improve their lives, contribute to their communities and offer a return on investment for our communities, cities and county. Programs include Weatherization, Home Energy Assistance, Family Development, Assets for Independence/Individual Development Accounts, Volunteer Income Tax Assistance, Homeless Management Information Systems and the CAPSBC Food Bank. For more information about Community Action Partnership and it's programs call (909) 723-1514 or visit us on the web at www.capsbc.org