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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

National Infant Immunization Week Urges Parents to Stay on Track with Immunizations

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the California Department of Public Health, and the San Bernardino County Department of Public Health Immunization Program will launch National Infant Immunization Week (NIIW), April 19-26, 2009. Communities throughout California are encouraged to participate in NIIW by sponsoring activities emphasizing the importance of timely infant, childhood, and adult immunizations.

NIIW is an annual observance emphasizing the need to fully immunize children ages two and younger against vaccine-preventable disease. This year, California is encouraging infant and toddler immunizations with their theme, "Immunizations: Stay on track for a lifetime of good health". Children and their caregivers need timely immunizations to protect themselves and their communities from vaccine-preventable diseases.

"We can now protect more children and adults in California from more diseases than ever before," said Dr. Ohikhuare, San Bernardino County Health Officer. "Parents and caregivers can easily pass diseases to children. Take the time to keep your children and yourself on track with immunizations to ensure a healthy family."

Immunizations are among the most successful and cost-effective public health tools available for preventing disease and death. High immunization coverage levels in a community translate into a healthy community. A decision to vaccinate is a decision to protect not only an individual, but the entire community as well.

If your infant or child does not have health insurance, or is only partially insured, ask your doctor or local health department about getting low cost vaccines. Please visit the San Bernardino Department of Public Health website at www.sbcounty.gov/dph for low cost clinics in San Bernardino County (click on Public Health Clinics located at the top left corner) or call the Immunization Program at 1-800-722-4794 , Monday through Friday from 8 AM to 5 PM for assistance.