



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS ADVISORY

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FOSTER SIBLINGS REUNITE AT CAMP CONNECT *New Activities Await Campers*

WHAT: More than 75 foster youth will gather to board a bus bound for Camp Connect San Diego which takes place at a campground in Julian. This year's expanded four-day camp gives foster youth siblings who are unable to be placed in the same household an opportunity to strengthen their family bonds through activities such as rock wall climbing, swimming, hiking, scrap booking and many other great activities. The first "Camp Connect's Got Talent" show put on by the children and the inaugural Camp Connect Dance will also take place.

WHO: Debra Zanders-Willis, Director, San Diego County HHS Child Welfare Services
Douglas J. Sawyer, President and CEO, United Way of San Diego County
More than 75 foster youth
Community volunteers

WHEN: Saturday, August 1, 2009
12 noon to 1 p.m.

WHERE: Mission Valley Target
1288 Camino Del Rio N
San Diego, CA 92108

WHY: It's a constant challenge and important priority for the San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency to place siblings in the same foster home. Unfortunately, this is not always possible. Camp Connect San Diego is a four-day bonding experience for siblings who have been placed apart in foster care. The camp provides them with an opportunity to spend quality time with their brothers and sisters in a fun, carefree atmosphere.

Research shows that siblings in foster care who remain connected have improved outcomes in school and in their placement, along with increased feelings of self worth, identity, confidence, and a decreased sense of loss and trauma. Camp Connect also offers quarterly activities for the siblings such as Padre games and outings to Sea World and Boomers.

The camp is made possible through a partnership between the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, United Way of San Diego and Promises2Kids. For more information regarding Camp Connect San Diego, please contact Margo Fudge, at (858) 694-5388.

VISUALS: More than 75 foster youth boarding the bus to camp, dozens of volunteers, balloons and a festive atmosphere for their camp send-off.

PLEASE NOTE: *Foster youth participating in the camp have court clearance to be photographed and there will be foster children available for on-camera interviews. You will also be able to get video and/or photos of the campers boarding the bus.*

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