



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION:
August 14, 2008

CONTACT: José A. Álvarez
(619) 515-6635

TWO WHOOPING COUGH CASES REPORTED TO COUNTY ***Vaccines Urged for Children and Adults***

The County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) has confirmed two cases of pertussis or whooping cough, a highly contagious disease that causes severe coughing. The children had not been immunized against the disease, possibly exposing children and adults at two camps in San Diego County.

"It extremely important for parents to ensure that they and their children are protected against vaccine preventable diseases," said Dean Sidelinger, M.D., M.S.Ed., County Deputy Public Health Officer. "Whooping cough is a concern because it can be passed to infants, who are at highest risk of complications and too young to be fully vaccinated with pertussis vaccine."

A child, 9 years of age, and a sibling, age 6, began treatment for the disease on August 9. Whooping cough is treatable with antibiotics.

The two children were out of school but attended some activities while contagious, potentially exposing individuals with whom they had close contact. Staff members from the two locations where the children spent a prolonged time are fully cooperating with HHSA staff to notify attendees of their potential exposure to pertussis. There is no current risk for pertussis exposure at these locations. The locations are:

- **August 4-8, 2008:** The 9 year-old attended music and drama camp at Village Church in Rancho Santa Fe. There were more than 100 children and staff in attendance. The church has notified families and staff about the potential exposures and symptoms of whooping cough.
- **July 28-Aug. 1, 2008:** Both children attended the KidsGames (outdoor activities) at the North Coast Calvary Chapel. The church sent out 30 notifications - to parents and staff - of the potential exposure.

"KidsGames is San Diego's Church Sport Camp with 11 sites throughout the county. As soon as we received word about the children with pertussis at one of the sites, we immediately notified all children that could have been in contact with the children that have pertussis," said Debbie Walton, Director of KidsGames of North Coast Calvary Chapel. "We will continue to serve all of the children who are part of this great ministry in San Diego," she added.

(more)



NEWS RELEASE

Named for the "whoop" sound sick people sometimes make during or after a severe coughing spell, whooping cough usually starts with flu-like symptoms, such as runny nose, sneezing, fever, and a mild cough. Symptoms can last up to two weeks and may be followed by severe coughing fits and vomiting. Whooping cough can occur at any age, but infants and young children are at highest risk of life threatening complications, such as pneumonia, brain damage, and death. Anyone who is not immunized is at a higher risk for severe whooping cough. Individuals with symptoms of pertussis should call their health care provider.

The incubation period for pertussis is commonly 7–10 days, with a range of 4–21 days. It is recommended that children get five doses of DTaP vaccine, one dose at 2 mo., 4 mo., 6 mo., 15-18 mo., and 4-6 years of age. However, older people also need protection. It is recommended that people 11- 64 years of age receive a single dose of Tdap, given in place of a "tetanus booster" (Td).

In 2007, there were 50 cases of pertussis reported in the county. There have been 28 cases of pertussis in San Diego County to date this year, including these two cases. For more information about whooping cough, please call the HHSA Immunization Branch at (619) 692-8661, or visit the Web site at www.sdiz.org.

###