



## Press Room

### **Legislators, HomeAid and Children and Families Commission Kick off Drive to Help Homeless Mothers and Their Children**

**SACRAMENTO, Calif.** – At the State Capitol, Assembly and Senate members will join representatives from HomeAid Sacramento and Orange County, and the First 5/Children and Families Commissions to kick off the Essentials for Young Lives campaign – a drive to collect baby items for homeless mothers and their infants.

The media conference, set for 11 a.m. April 26 in the Capitol press conference room (Room 1190), will include statements by Assemblyman Curt Hagman, Assemblyman Alyson Huber, Senator Lou Correa, Scott Larson – executive director of HomeAid Orange County, Kerrin West – board president of HomeAid Sacramento, and Christie Holderegger, VP/Chief Development and Communications Officer for Volunteers of America Greater Sacramento and Northern Nevada. Also slated to speak will be Shauniece Lockhart, a young mother who was helped by the drive as a client of Volunteers of America.

The Essentials program is a joint effort between HomeAid and First 5/Children and Families Commissions to collect essential items, such as diapers, baby wipes, baby food, shampoo, wash, etc. These items are then donated to qualified programs that serve homeless women and children through shelters and transitional facilities.

“During these tough economic times, families are struggling to make ends meet,” said Assemblyman Curt Hagman. “The Essentials for Young Lives program is about helping those who need it the most by getting homeless mothers the items their babies need.”

“Mothers and children are the fastest growing segment of the homeless population,” said Assemblywoman Alyson Huber. “We need to do what we can to help them out.”

This is the third year that HomeAid and Children and Families Commission of Orange County have partnered on the campaign that takes place before the Mother’s Day holiday. Since 2008 more than 250,000 essential baby items have been distributed to homeless mothers and their infants. Last year, HomeAid Sacramento in its inaugural drive supplied three months worth of baby products to nine area shelters.

This year, the 2010 campaign has expanded to include the State Capitol with the expectation that the state legislative offices will participate and collect items in their offices. All collected items will be distributed to programs supported by HomeAid Sacramento.

“I cannot think of a better way to honor mothers everywhere than by helping those who need it the most,” said Senator Lou Correa. “Items such as baby diapers, wipes and other essentials are needed.”

Starting today, folks visiting the Capitol can drop off items that will be given out to needy families at local homeless shelters. The public is invited to bring donations of diapers, baby wipes, baby food and baby hygiene products. Donations will be delivered to HomeAid’s service provider partners that give aid and shelter to homeless families. The families will receive the donations during Mother’s Day weekend.

“The Essential for Young Lives campaign is a partnership between the Children and Families Commission and HomeAid,” said Mike Ruane, Executive Director of Children and Families Commission of Orange County. “We have provided hundreds of thousands of items in the past, but the need is much greater this year.”

“During these tough economic times, our safety net has been stretched,” said Kerrin West, Board Chair for HomeAid Sacramento. “That is why we are calling on the public to open their hearts and give to needy families.”

The Essentials for Young Lives campaign at the Capitol will continue until Thursday May 6. Following the drive, items will be delivered to local homeless shelters including Volunteers of America Residential Family Center, Volunteers of America Residential Treatment Program for Parenting Women, Mission Solano, River Oak Center for Children, Roseville Home Start, Sacramento Area Emergency Housing, Sacramento Crisis Nursery, St. John’s Shelter for Women & Children, St. Vincent De Paul of Roseville, Waking the Village, and WEAVE.

Scott Larson, Executive Director of HomeAid Orange County said, “The homeless in our communities are not just individuals. They are children and their families,”

Similar drives are being held throughout the state. For more information or to locate campaigns in other communities please go to [www.homeaid.org/Chapters](http://www.homeaid.org/Chapters) to find a HomeAid office in your community.

### **About HomeAid**

HomeAid is a leading national non-profit provider of housing for homeless families and individuals. Through the generosity of builders, their trades and their suppliers HomeAid has completed 200 housing projects nationwide at a cost of more than \$160 million of which \$75 million has been donated by the building industry. HomeAid currently has 36 additional projects in development. HomeAid’s facilities offer 1,800,000 bed-nights annually through HomeAid’s network of 20 active chapters in 15 states.

### **About First 5/Children and Families Commissions**

The Children and Families Commissions oversee the allocation of funds from Proposition 10, which added a 50-cent tax on tobacco products sold in California. Funds help pay for education,

health care and child development programs for children from the prenatal stage to age five and their families. The Commission's goal is to ensure all children are healthy and ready to learn when they enter school. Programs supported by the Commission include shelter projects and services for children and families because children learn better when they have stable housing.

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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