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NEWS RELEASE

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LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT NURSING DIVISION TEAMS UP WITH LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO OBSERVE PRETEEN IMMUNIZATION WEEK

Los Angeles – The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) Nursing Division, in conjunction with the Los Angeles County Immunization Program, is observing Preteen Immunization Week by sponsoring an Immunization Clinic at John Muir Middle School. On January 28-29, LAUSD Nurses also will offer recommended and state-mandated immunizations to preteen (11-12 years-old) students.

Preteen Vaccine Week is an annual statewide awareness campaign designed to highlight the benefits of immunizations and regular doctor visits for preteens.

“As part of Preteen Immunization Week, LAUSD Nursing Services has teamed with the County Public Health Department to offer free immunizations at Muir Middle School,” said René Gonzalez, Assistant Superintendent of Student Health and Human Services. “Nursing Services is taking this opportunity to inform all LAUSD students and their parents about the importance of keeping current with immunizations that can prevent serious illnesses and diseases. Students and parents need to understand that good health care is an important factor in learning and school success.”

Preteen immunizations are recommended as a way of protecting children from serious diseases that, if contracted, can be devastating. Some of the vaccines are given to assure continued immunization against certain illnesses or diseases, and others are newly required immunizations for adolescents ages 11-18 years old.

Shots that are recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention include:

- Meningococcal vaccine (MCV4) to protect against certain types of bacterial meningitis and other related infections.
- Tdap booster to help prevent Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Whooping Cough.
- Hepatitis A vaccine to protect against the Hepatitis A Virus, which can be found in contaminated food and water. (series of shots within six months)
- Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine series (series of three shots in six months time) that can protect girls against cervical cancer in adulthood.
- An annual flu shot recommended (by the CDC) for all adolescents through age 18.

Immunizations will be offered in the John Muir Parent Center from 8 a.m. – 2:30 p.m., free of charge and available only to John Muir Middle School students. They will be administered by LAUSD school nurses to students with written permission from a parent or guardian.

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In addition, school-mandated vaccines will be offered. For a list of vaccines required by the LAUSD, parents/guardians should consult with their child's school nurse.

Beginning in November 2008, and continuing into January 2009, the Nursing Division of the LAUSD have been actively informing parents at John Muir Middle School meetings as well as students in health and leadership classes, about the importance of immunizations.

In a continuing effort to inform students at John Muir Middle School about immunizations, there will be student games during nutrition and lunch time with opportunities for giveaways on January 14 and 22. Some of the games will feature a vaccine wheel, a laptop game, and a disease picture game. Each participant will receive one orange wrist band, one pen, and a raffle ticket for an iPod shuttle drawing. Raffle winners will be announced the week of January 26.

The LAUSD District Nursing Division is committed to facilitating the delivery of quality health, mental health, and human services to all students in order to maximize their learning and academic success.

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