

'Buckle Up for Life' Safety Program Strives to Save Lives of Hispanic Families

May 02, 2011

May 2, 2011 – LOS ANGELES, Calif. – Children's Hospital Los Angeles (CHLA), this past weekend co-hosted a "Celebration of Safety" in conjunction with the '*Buckle Up for Life*' program, at an event held at Our Lady of Guadalupe church in East Los Angeles, California.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Hispanic children are three times more likely to die in a vehicle crash than Caucasian children. To address this health disparity, '*Buckle Up For Life*,' or "Abróchate a la Vida," was created by medical trauma specialists at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, and funded through a grant from Toyota. The program is designed to educate Hispanic families on the importance of keeping their families safe while driving.

"We were seeing a disproportionate number of Hispanic children coming into the hospital with severe crash-related injuries and we knew we had to do something about it," said Dr. Rebecca L. Brown, Associate Director, Trauma Services at Cincinnati Children's.

"Safety is a priority for Toyota," said Pat Pineda, Toyota's group vice president of national philanthropy. "In addition to designing and manufacturing some of the safest vehicles on the road today, we are dedicated to supporting education programs that help drivers and passengers develop responsible habits to protect them on the road at every stage of life."

'*Buckle Up for Life*' meets Hispanics in their communities, delivering information in a faith-based setting. To date, Toyota, Cincinnati Children's and Children's Hospital Los Angeles has joined together with four local churches to deliver safety and prevention education to program participants. Planning for the expansion of the program to other US cities is currently underway.

"What we saw when we began '*Buckle Up for Life*' in Greater Cincinnati was that, after participating in the program, the number of adults and children using seat belts and car seats had more than doubled. When we saw those results, we knew we had found a successful and sustainable model that was meeting the pressing needs of the community," added Pineda. "Toyota is funding the program's expansion to Los Angeles to build on this tremendous success."

The congregations of the four participating churches have devoted weeks of Sunday school classes and sermons to learning about critical safety behaviors. At the closing events, such as the one held last weekend, participants learned about vehicle safety and injury prevention through free car seat inspections, safety demonstrations and informational booths. Families who did not previously own a child car safety seat were given one, compliments of the program. Festivities also included live music, food and arts and crafts for the children.

"Injury and death due to vehicle-related injuries is preventable," said Dr. Jeffery S. Upperman, Director of Trauma at Children's Hospital Los Angeles. "If we can save just one child's life, all of our efforts have been worth it."

About Children's Hospital Los Angeles

Founded in 1901, Children's Hospital Los Angeles is one of the nation's leading children's hospitals and is acknowledged worldwide for its leadership in pediatric and adolescent health. Children's Hospital Los Angeles is one of only seven children's hospitals in the nation – and the only children's hospital on the West Coast – ranked for two consecutive years in all 10 pediatric specialties in the U.S. News & World Report rankings and named to the magazine's "Honor Roll" of children's hospitals.

The Saban Research Institute at Children's Hospital Los Angeles is among the largest and most productive pediatric research facilities in the United States, with 100 investigators at work on 186 laboratory studies, clinical trials and community-based research and health services. The Saban Research Institute is ranked eighth

in National Institutes of Health funding among children's hospitals in the United States.

Children's Hospital Los Angeles is a premier teaching hospital and has been affiliated with the Keck School of Medicine of the University of Southern California since 1932.

About Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center

Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center is one of just eight children's hospitals named to the Honor Roll in U.S. News and World Report's 2010-11 Best Children's Hospitals. It is ranked #1 for digestive disorders and highly ranked for its expertise in pulmonology, cancer, neonatology, heart and heart surgery, neurology and neurosurgery, diabetes and endocrinology, orthopedics, kidney disorders and urology. Cincinnati Children's is one of the top two recipients of pediatric research grants from the National Institutes of Health. It is internationally recognized for quality and transformation work by Leapfrog, The Joint Commission, the Institute for Healthcare Improvement, the federal Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, and by hospitals and health organizations it works with globally. Additional information can be found at www.cincinnatichildrens.org.

About Toyota

Toyota (NYSE: TM) established operations in the United States in 1957 and currently operates 10 manufacturing plants, including one under construction. Toyota directly employs nearly 30,000 in the U.S. and its investment here is currently valued at more than \$18 billion, including sales and manufacturing operations, research and development, financial services and design.

Toyota is committed to being a good corporate citizen in the communities where it does business and believes in supporting programs with long-term sustainable results. Toyota supports numerous organizations across the country, focusing on education, the environment and safety. Since 1991, Toyota has contributed more than \$500 million to philanthropic programs in the U.S.

For more information on Toyota's commitment to improving communities nationwide, visit <http://www.toyota.com/philanthropy>.