



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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YOUTH PHOTOVOICE EXHIBIT FOCUSES ON FOOD AND PLAY ENVIRONMENTS IN LOCAL COUNTY NEIGHBORHOODS.

Ventura, Calif. (June 2, 2011) – The *Network for a Healthy California—Children’s Power Play! Campaign* in partnership with the Museum of Ventura County today hosted an opening reception to highlight the *Power Play! Photovoice Project*, which features photographs taken by local area youth, with a focus on access and barriers to food and play environments. The Photovoice Project will be exhibited at the museum for two weeks, from June 1, through June 13, 2011.

The *Power Play! Photovoice Project* is a child-led empowerment project to identify opportunities and barriers to healthy food and play in the community and then seek opportunities for change and growth. The goal of this project is to increase nutritional and physical activity awareness as well as reflect on the opportunities and obstacles for food access and physical activity in the young people’s community.

The students received 15 lessons taught by the community youth organization leaders and took photos during three Photo Walk field trips. “This was a kids-led project, where they used photography as a tool for exploring the opportunities and obstacles for healthy food access and physical activity in their community” said Carolina Ugarte, *Power Play!* Coordinator. “The goal was to empower young people in their ability to make change in their community.”

“Having the kids learn about growing their own vegetable garden helped them make the connection between unhealthy foods and healthy home grown vegetables. When the kids put work into the garden, they are more eager to try something they have not tried before; the fruits of their labor” said Ivonne Cardenas, Project Access Coordinator. “One of the participants said he learned that growing your own garden saves money and improves your eating habits.”

Local organizations participating in the *Power Play! Photovoice Project* includes the After-school programs at Bard, Larsen and Rose Avenue in Oxnard, as well as Project Access Family Resource Center in Oxnard.

About the Network for a Healthy California—Children’s Power Play! Campaign

The *Network for a Healthy California—Children’s Power Play! Campaign* motivates and empowers California’s low-income 9- to 11-year-old children to eat more fruits and vegetables and get at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day. This statewide social marketing initiative is led by the California Department of Public Health’s *Network for a Healthy California* to improve children’s short-term health and reduce their long-term risk of obesity and other serious health problems like type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke and certain types of cancer. Funding is from the USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly the Food Stamp Program). For food stamp information, call 877-847-3663. For important nutrition information visit www.cachampionsforchange.net.

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