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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **HOMEAID ORANGE COUNTY IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMISSION OF ORANGE COUNTY ASK FOR COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR “ESSENTIALS FOR YOUNG LIVES DRIVE”**

**IRVINE, Calif.** (March 2, 2009) – To honor and celebrate Mother’s Day, HomeAid Orange County in partnership with Children and Families Commission of Orange County is preparing to launch their second annual Essentials for Young Lives Drive on April 27-30, 2009 to benefit 16 non-profit organizations that serve homeless families and their children. They are asking corporate and community organizations to participate by conducting a drive within their organizations and/or be a public drop off site for community donations.

Following the core concept of HomeAid Orange County’s housing development program to work in partnership with volunteers, Essentials for Young Lives is a community-wide effort to collect much needed items for homeless infants and toddlers. HomeAid partners with businesses, community organizations and individuals to collect baby products such as diapers, baby wipes, and baby hygiene products. The items are then delivered to HomeAid’s service provider partners who provide services to homeless mothers and their children.

“As economic conditions worsen, the safety net for many of Orange County’s most vulnerable residents, homeless mothers and their young children, is stretched beyond anything we’ve seen in recent memory, said Maria E. Minon, M.D. and Chair of the Children and Families Commission of Orange County. “Ensuring that babies and toddlers have proper nutrition and basic necessities to be healthy and ready to succeed in life is one of the Commission’s core purposes.”

Launched for the first time in Orange County in 2008, more than 60 companies, schools and community organizations collected nearly 118,000 essential baby items. The goal now is to increase participation and donations to provide a six month supply of these essential items.

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“Annually, during the December holiday season most non-profit organizations receive bountiful contributions, but by the middle of the year their shelves are low, if not empty. Our vision is to collect enough essential baby items to last until winter,” said Essentials for Young Lives Committee Chair, Sonia Lister of Jackson, Demarco, Tidus and Peckenpaugh. “We are reaching out to the community to help us reach our goal.”

The need is great and recipient organizations greatly value the support. “All the donations from this drive will allow our shelter and all the other benefiting organizations to save the funds we would normally spend on these “essential” items and to use those funds for other programs to help our clients lead productive and self-sufficient lives for themselves and their children,” said Theresa Murphy, Precious Life Shelter Executive Director

To sign up to conduct an Essential for Young Lives Drive in your company, club, school or church or to become a public drop-off site email Carolyn Baker at [carolyn@homeaidoc.org](mailto:carolyn@homeaidoc.org) or call 949.553.9510.

### **About HomeAid Orange County**

HomeAid Orange County is the founding chapter of a national non-profit organization with the mission to build and maintain dignified housing where homeless families and individuals can rebuild their lives. Founded in 1989 by the Orange County Chapter of the Building Industry Association of Southern California, HomeAid acts as the housing developer and liaison between service providers, community volunteers, builders and specialty contractors. To date the organization has completed 44 housing developments that serve victims of domestic violence, pregnant homeless women, abused and abandoned children, homeless adults living with HIV/AIDS and homeless families. [www.homeaidoc.org](http://www.homeaidoc.org)

### **About Children and Families Commission of Orange County**

The Children and Families Commission of Orange County allocates funds from Proposition 10 that adds a 50-cent tax on tobacco products sold in California for education, health and child development programs for children from the prenatal stage to 5-years and their families. Programs supported include shelter projects and services for children and families because “children learn better when they have a home.” For additional information visit: [www.occhildrenandfamilies.com](http://www.occhildrenandfamilies.com).