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**San Diego Fathers and their Children
Come Together for “Day at the Lake” Fishing and Picnic Event**

-First Annual Event Hosted by NHA Head Start Male Involvement Program-

San Diego- More than 100 fathers and children from the Neighborhood House Association’s (NHA) Head Start program came together Saturday for fishing, picnicking and quality bonding time when NHA hosted its First Annual *Fathers and Families Day at the Lake* at Chollas Lake in San Diego. The event is part of NHA Head Start’s Male Involvement initiative, designed to encourage fathers to become actively involved in the social and educational development of their children.

The objective of the Male Involvement program is to provide opportunities for fathers and significant male role models to enhance their relationship with their children through interaction in Head Start activities. Male Involvement activities include field trips to baseball games, planting a garden, sports parties and art and literacy projects, as well as other enriching activities that help Head Start children prepare for kindergarten. The program also provides resources and assistance to help Head Start parents achieve their personal and/or professional goals.

“The Male Involvement program provides fathers or male guardians with opportunities to bond with their children and give them the parenting skills and resources necessary to interact positively with their children.” said NHA President and CEO Rudolph A. Johnson, III. “Children are more likely to reach their full potential when they have a supportive family structure and positive parental role models.”

The Male Involvement initiative was created through NHA’s Head Start program based on research that a father figure’s influence can reduce crime and enhance cognitive skills, such as intelligence, reasoning and language development in children.

Head Start is a federally-funded child development program providing services to approximately 8,000 children annually at nearly 100 sites in San Diego County. The program is designed to help break the cycle of poverty by providing preschool children of low- income families with a comprehensive program to meet their emotional, social, health, nutritional and psychological needs.

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About Neighborhood House Association (“Committed to Excellence”)

NHA helps thousands of individuals and families improve their quality of life through a network of nine programs throughout San Diego County. Further information is available at www.neighborhoodhouse.org