



ANGELINA JOLIE JOINED THE CHILDREN'S HEALTH FUND TO RAISE AWARENESS AND CALL FOR ACTION ON LONG-TERM HEALTH AND EDUCATIONAL CRISES AFFECTING MORE THAN 46,000 CHILDREN STILL DISPLACED FOLLOWING HURRICANE KATRINA

BRAD PITT JOINED JOLIE IN SUPPORT OF THE CHILDREN'S HEALTH FUND'S EFFORT

New Orleans, LA – (December 22, 2007) – The actress, mother, and humanitarian Angelina Jolie joined Irwin Redlener, MD, president of the Children's Health Fund and director of the National Center for Disaster Preparedness at Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health, to provide a set of prescriptions designed to ensure that the health, mental health and educational needs of some 46,000 to 64,000 children still displaced by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita are met as soon as possible.

The three prescriptions were addressed to government and non-government agencies, including FEMA and President George W. Bush. The prescriptions were developed after CHF convened a regional coalition of key stakeholders in housing, education and health care to develop a shared understanding of the current status and needs of children and families. Although many of the children who were displaced have returned to their home communities or home states, according to census and school enrollment data, they still face inadequate housing, unsafe communities, and inadequate access to comprehensive medical and mental health care. The prescriptions are:

- Demand a FEMA Case Management Protocol
- Create Relocation Options
- Ensure Support for Families Still Living in Temporary Housing

The prescriptions were issued following a December study, **"The Legacy of Katrina's Children: Estimating the Numbers of Hurricane-Related At-Risk Children in the Gulf Coast States of Louisiana & Mississippi,"** that found this displaced group at risk for a host of serious medical and mental health as well as educational problems, complicated by highly limited support services. More than **half of the 46,000 to 64,000 displaced children in Louisiana (55.4%) and nearly half in Mississippi (47.1%) have been estimated to exhibit one of three "risk factors" that can have a long term or permanent impacts on their lives:** a substantial drop in academic achievement, according to their parents; lost access to health care (either medical home or insurance coverage); or clinically-diagnosed depression, anxiety or behavior disorder.

Irwin Redlener, MD, president of the Children's Health Fund and director of the National Center for Disaster Preparedness at the Mailman School said, "The time is long overdue for President Bush to demand an appropriate and humane Case Management protocol from FEMA and other agencies that ensures access to schools, social support services and a medical home, and to call on all governors to provide relocation opportunities for the tens of thousands of families who still do not have adequate permanent housing." He continued, "It's been two and a half years since the Hurricanes devastated

the Gulf Coast region, and the level of uncertainty among families has manifested itself in the children, with a distressing rise of mental health and medical issues, as well as a drop in academic performance that can have painful and permanent consequences. In fact, these families would be officially recognized as 'Internally Displaced Persons' by international humanitarian organizations."

PRESCRIPTIONS	STRATEGY	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
<p>1. Demand a FEMA Case Management Protocol</p>	<p>FEMA, HUD and local officials should immediately develop a process, with specific protocols, to ensure that every relocated family is going into appropriate housing in safe neighborhoods. This "check-list" should be certified prior to evicting families with children from temporary housing and should contain the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure Access to School ▪ Ensure Community-Based Sources of Social Support ▪ Ensure Adequate Access to a Medical Home <p>FEMA should also increase the number of housing caseworkers and social service case managers to obtain a ratio of 1 case worker/manager per 25 families.</p>	<p>FEMA, American Red Cross, State and local officials</p>
<p>2. Create Relocation Options</p>	<p>Provide the resources and a process to allow families to relocate from the Gulf area to other locations in Louisiana or Mississippi with stable communities and adequate housing. President Bush should issue a call to all governors to provide relocation opportunities for still displaced families.</p>	<p>State Governments, U.S. President and other State governors</p>
<p>3. Ensure Support for Families Still Living in Temporary Housing</p>	<p>Until they are relocated, families with children should be assured access to appropriate schools and on-site health care and mental health services, in addition to mentoring and special education programs when needed. School-based health and mental health and social services, mobile clinical facilities and temporary clinics are among the modalities which should be available. This should be the responsibility of local government with state and federal resource support. All existing local initiatives which have been providing health, mental health, and social services should be expanded to accommodate needs of relocated families.</p>	<p>FEMA, State officials, relevant not for profit organizations</p>

The Children's Health Fund (CHF) (www.childrenshealthfund.org) Founded in 1987 by pediatrician/child advocate Irwin Redlener, MD, and singer/songwriter Paul Simon, CHF is a not-for-profit organization that works nationally to develop health care programs for the most medically underserved population – homeless and disadvantaged children. CHF's 21 pediatric programs have provided essential primary care services in more than one million patient visits. Soon after Hurricane Katrina devastated thousands of miles of the Gulf Coast, CHF responded to the urgent public health

-More-

needs by establishing Operation Assist, a collaboration with the National Center for Disaster Preparedness (NCDP) at the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University.

The only accredited school of public health in New York City, and among the first in the nation, **Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health** (www.mailman.hs.columbia.edu) provides instruction and research opportunities to more than 850 graduate students in pursuit of masters and doctoral degrees. Its students and nearly 250 multi-disciplinary faculty engage in research and service in the city, nation, and around the world, concentrating on biostatistics, environmental health sciences, epidemiology, health policy and management, population and family health, and socio-medical sciences.

#

STATEMENT BY ANGELINA JOLIE:

In my work as Co-Chair of the Education Partnership for Children of Conflict, I have seen how especially critical education is to those who have suffered some form of displacement – whether overseas or in our own backyard.

For these children, education is so important for healing, for providing them a safe place to grow and just to be children.

Yesterday, I had the privilege of visiting a couple of schools and meeting some amazing young students – from kindergarten to eighth grade – and some very dedicated educators from New Orleans who are working around the clock to make life better for them. These young people were resilient, dedicated, talented and optimistic.

Today, I am honored to be at the well-respected Martin Luther King Charter School in New Orleans to hear about the fine work of The Children's Health Fund and the 25 members of this Regional Coalition, and the greatly needed health and mental healthcare being provided through these mobile health clinics and through the work of these dedicated health professionals.

Through my work with the Education Partnership for Children of Conflict, I hope to be help more and more of the remarkable children I have met not only overseas but right here at home in New Orleans to get the quality education they deserve.

#