

'Solecitos' encourage Colorado children to get flu vaccinations

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

Colorado's Latino Influenza Vaccination and Education (LIVE) Project has created two children's videos about flu prevention featuring five Spanish-speaking characters known as the "Solecitos" or "Little Suns."

The Solecitos public service announcements ran locally on Univision last week. The announcements emphasize the importance of children getting vaccinated to avoid seasonal flu. Other preventive messages to stay healthy include covering coughs, washing hands frequently and visiting doctors regularly. To view one of the public service announcements, visit http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x38O0_gt6H0

Margaret Huffman, immunization nurse manager with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment's Immunization Program, a partner with the LIVE Project, said, "Our partnership with the Solecitos will help ensure entire families receive information about the importance of influenza vaccinations as a way to prevent seasonal flu. The videos also provide tips about healthy living choices."

Huffman said the LIVE Project, funded through a grant from the Colorado Health Foundation, began collaborating with Aurora Public Schools for the 2008-09 school year to provide influenza vaccine to students as a pilot project. In addition to media outreach through Spanish language outlets, the LIVE Project funds Spanish-language targeted vaccination efforts through the Aurora Public Schools.

Solecitos are part of a children's educational campaign based in Los Angeles and are featured regularly on the Univision television network around the country and in Puerto Rico. The five "little sun" characters have sold more than 300,000 CDs and DVDs nationwide.

For information on where to get a flu vaccination, call a health care provider or CO-HELP at 1-877-562-2911. A flu clinic locator also is available at www.immunizecolorado.com.