



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Fighting for a Breath of Freedom

Pacoima Original Play and Community Forum

Saturday, June 11, 2011 - 1pm

May 18, 2011 Pacoima, CA- The Unusual Suspects Theatre Company in conjunction with Friends of the Family and L.A. County's Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project present *Fighting for a Breath of Freedom*, an original play written and performed by Pacoima residents followed by an interactive community forum. The event will be presented in English and Spanish on Saturday June 11th at 1pm at David M. Gonzales Recreation Center in Pacoima. Admission is free and lunch will be provided.

Fighting for a Breath of Freedom is an interactive theatrical event and community forum centered around an original play written and performed by Pacoima residents. The play and post-show forum allow Pacoima residents to address such themes as human rights, discrimination, gender identity, immigration and the connection to safe and stable families and communities. The forum provides an opportunity to explore how these issues affect the community and strategize possible solutions.

The original play *Fighting for a Breath of Freedom* follows the story of Elena, a human rights activist who has been arrested during a protest. In order to verify her immigration status, she is sent off to be interrogated by an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agent. As the interview intensifies, Elena reflects on her journey to the United States and her troubled childhood filled with discrimination. Elena ultimately reveals much more than her immigration status, but the human life behind being illegal.

This unique community event is made possible by The Unusual Suspects Theatre Company, Friends of the Family, L.A. County's Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project, L.A. Education Partnership, Communities in Schools, El Nido Family Centers, Center for Civic Mediation, Youth Speak Collective, City of L.A. Department of Recreation and Parks, The City of Los Angeles, and Madres Unidas En Esperanza.

Fighting for a Breath of Freedom will take place on Saturday, June 11, 2011 at 1pm at David M. Gonzales Recreation Center located at 10943 Herrick Ave., Pacoima, CA 91331. To make a reservation or for more information please call 213-488-8488, x201 or email RSVP@theunusalsuspects.org.

The Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project (PIDP) is a one-year, \$5-million, countywide effort to demonstrate effective approaches to reducing child abuse and neglect. This partnership between the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and community-based organizations in the eight Service Planning Areas (SPAs) is designed to strengthen families while providing opportunities for government agencies and community residents to increase the safety and well-being of children, families, and the community. PIDP will inform DCFS' continued development of successful child abuse prevention measures that can be sustained and replicated across the County.

*Born out of the ashes of the 1992 L.A. Riots, **The Unusual Suspects Theatre Company** has grown into an award winning, model mentoring program using theatre arts to reach youth in underserved and at-risk environments, including kids in foster care, violence-plagued neighborhoods, gangs and juvenile corrections facilities. The Unusual Suspects offers two consecutive 10-week (60-80 hours) playwriting and performance workshops where youth develop self-esteem, tolerance, and the communication and coping skills needed to make positive life choices. For more information, visit The Unusual Suspects website at www.TheUnusualSuspects.org.*

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