Mets and Tuesday's Children Announce 2011 Partnership

Kick Off to Mets Related Events with City Agencies Leading Up to 10th Anniversary of September 11

FLUSHING, N.Y., June 21, 2011 - The New York Mets and Tuesday's Children today announced that the Mets will help fund The First Responder Alliance Mentoring Program, a new mentoring program for the First Responders from the September 11 attacks. It's the third program the Mets have helped fund for Tuesday's Children, a non-profit family organization that has made a long-term commitment to every individual impacted by the events of September 11, 2001 and more recently those who have been impacted by terrorist incidents worldwide.

Since 2001, Tuesday's Children has promoted healing and recovery by strengthening family resilience, providing individual coping and life management skills and creating community through programs, mental health support and family engagement opportunities.

The team also announced that for the 10th straight year the Mets will host Meet and Greets for the families of Tuesday's Children. Mets players will be on hand to talk, sign autographs and take photos with the families during a pre-game reception. The first reception of the 2011 season will take place later today.

"A decade has passed since September 11 and there are families still in need," said Jeff Wilpon, Mets Chief Operating Officer. "The Mets are honored to have worked with Tuesday's Children since its inception and are proud to expand our association with this program."

The new First Responder Alliance Mentoring Program will provide dedicated and trained mentors for children whose parents – men and women -- died as a result of an illness attributed to their time at Ground Zero or Fresh Kills. That number is estimated to be at more than 800 and includes uniformed personnel, construction workers, volunteers and others. Mentoring matches will be created throughout the tri-state area. In addition to this new program, The Tuesday's Children First Responder Alliance program provides a wide range of services to approximately 2,000 children. According to published reports, the illness rate among September 11 Responders was as high as 70%, and one-in-eight of nearly 30,000 September 11 Responders develops Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

"Tuesday's Children celebrates the partnerships with the Mets organization and extends our deepest gratitude for their 10 years of support," said Terry Sears, Executive Director of Tuesday's Children. "The Mets have been unwavering in their steadfast commitment to Tuesday's Children, our families and brave first responders. The children we serve have been blessed by the friendship the Mets have so generously offered. This is something they will never forget."

Representing the first responders and the Tuesday's Children First Responder Alliance is Joseph Zadroga, father of New York Police detective, James Zadroga, who died from respiratory disease attributed to his work at Ground Zero. In January, President Obama signed the Zadroga Bill into law, creating a $4.3 billion commitment to help ailing 9/11 responders.

In addition, Don and Deirdre Imus will host a group of kids from Tuesday's Children for a week at the Imus Ranch in Ribera, New Mexico. The Imus Ranch, which provides the experience of the great American cowboy to children in need, is covering all the costs for the kids to enjoy the full program at the ranch.

Don and Deirdre Imus said: "We are pleased to partner with Tuesday's Children on coordinating the selection of children who lost a parent on 9/11 and the children of first responders that we will host at The Imus Ranch in late August, just before the 10th anniversary of 9/11. We're proud that the experience at the Ranch encourages a sense of achievement, responsibility and self-esteem and are grateful to be a part of honoring the heroes of 9/11."

Also attending Tuesday's press conference will be FDNY Chief of Department, Ed Kilduff, who is the highest ranking uniformed member of the FDNY, First Deputy Commissioner Calvin Drayton from the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) and First Deputy Rafael Pineiro, the highest ranking Hispanic member of the NYPD.

The Mets will continue to visit FDNY Fire Houses and make visits to NYPD Police Precincts leading up to the anniversary. In addition, the Mets will also host and schedule additional events to recognize the New York Police and Fire Departments, the Port Authority Police Department, the Office of Emergency Management and other agencies that suffered losses on September 11 during the second half of the season.

Tuesday's Children is a non-profit family service organization that has made a long term commitment to every individual impacted by the events of September 11, 2001 and more recently those who have been impacted by terrorist incidents worldwide. Since 2001, Tuesday's Children has promoted healing and recovery by strengthening family resilience, providing individual coping and life management skills and creating community through programs, mental health support and family engagement opportunities.

Imus Ranch for Kids with Cancer is an authentic working cattle ranch near Ribera, New Mexico and was conceived and designed with the purpose of providing the experience of the great American cowboy to children suffering from cancer or serious blood disorders, and children who've lost brothers and sisters to Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. The objectives are to encourage in them a sense of achievement, responsibility and self-esteem, and to instill pride and restore their dignity as they become aware of just how much they are able to accomplish. Many have become convinced that because they are sick they are not normal. At Imus Ranch they quickly discover that they can do anything any other kid can do. Our experience has shown that when children suffering from these frightening illnesses are exposed to programs such as those offered by Imus Ranch it often actually contributes to their healing and recovery.