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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ACT Today! (Autism Care and Treatment Today!) to Host 2nd Annual 5k/10k Run/Walk and Family Festival in San Diego, Benefiting Military Children with Autism

ACT Today! for Military Families 2nd Annual 5k/10k Run/Walk and Family Festival, held on Saturday, April 7, 2012 at Tecolote Shores in San Diego, is calling on San Diego and surrounding communities to help raise autism awareness and funds for military children with autism.

April 7, 2012 - SAN DIEGO, CA ACT Today! (Autism Care and Treatment Today!), a national non-profit organization based in Southern California, will host its 2nd annual **ACT Today! for Military Families (ATMF) 5k/10k Run/Walk and Family Festival** on **Saturday, April 7, 2012, at Tecolote Shores in San Diego, California**. The Run/Walk and free Family Festival will be held from **7:00 am – 11:00 am**, and hosted by actor/comedian Mark Christopher Lawrence (“Chuck”). The Run/Walk and free Family Festival will include autism resources, military service providers, food, specialty vendors, concert performances, a celebrity autograph station, kids activity stations, and other Spring activities including a Kids Fun Run followed by a Kids Egg Hunt. Proceeds from the Run/Walk will help provide resources and grants to military children with autism whose families cannot afford the necessary care and treatment their children need to reach their full potential.

“The need for effective and consistent treatment services and supports for children with autism is essential. This is especially important for the mobile military family who is often relocated and experience significant treatment gaps in care and supports. ATMF works to bridge that gap and provides direct assistance to help light the load military families carry,” says ATMF Campaign Director and Marine wife, Andrekka Lanier, whose son has autism. “The ATMF Run/Walk and free Family Festival will raise much needed funds for our family grant program, help to raise autism awareness, and provide the opportunity for the local San Diego community and military family supporters to show their support for these brave families.”

According to Department of Defense data, it is estimated that 1 in 88 military children have an autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Autism is a complex medical disorder. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates 1 in 110 children in America is diagnosed with ASD, making it more prevalent than pediatric cancer, juvenile diabetes and childhood AIDS combined.

“Research shows, in the treatment of autism, early intervention and intensive behavioral therapy are imperative to the success of the child’s development,” says ACT Today!’s Executive Director Nancy Alspaugh-Jackson. “We believe we are making a difference in the lives of children with autism. But in order to continue with this mission – we need the community of San Diego to join us in this race to help the families of those who serve and defend our freedoms.”

“Every military family makes special sacrifices...those families with children who have been diagnosed with autism have additional stresses as they cope with an extraordinarily complex bureaucracy to secure the support that these precious children deserve,” says retired Major General Mike Lehnert of the United States Marine Corps.

The 2011 inaugural ATMF Run/Walk and Family Festival, held in San Diego, had 1200 registered runners, an estimated 1500 attendees at the family festival, and raised nearly \$100,000. Last year's event, along with additional support throughout the year, allowed ATMF to help numerous military children access effective treatments and improve their quality of life, by distributing nearly \$130,000 in grants.

Fees to participate in the 2nd Annual ATMF 5k/10k Run/Walk range from \$15-\$30. For more information about the event, register, or volunteer, visit: www.acttodayformilitaryfamilies.kintera.org.

About ACT Today! for Military Families:

ACT Today! for Military Families (ATMF), is a national program of ACT Today! (Autism Care and Treatment Today!), a national non-profit 501 (c)(3) organization. It was launched in July 2010. ATMF works to improve awareness and delivery of effective autism services, and provides financial assistance to military families to help defray out-of-pocket costs associated with autism treatments, services, and other quality of life programs.

To view the national ATMF Public Service Announcement with actor Joe Mantegna, visit: <http://youtu.be/GTQEkGYJQjw>.

For more information about ACT Today! for Military Families, visit: www.acttodayformilitaryfamilies.org.

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