NBC's 'Law & Order SVU' to Reference UC Conclusions on Lead and Criminality in March 10 Episode

The popular NBC program 'Law & Order SVU' will air on March 10 with a storyline partially referencing a study on the dangers of lead exposure published by UC researchers last spring.

Date: 3/9/2009 12:00:00 AM
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The traditional tag line attached to the NBC series “Law & Order” has been “ripped from the headlines,” and that will be the case, with a local spin, when the Tuesday, March 10 episode of “Law & Order: Special Victims Unit” airs at 10 p.m. EST.

The episode is titled “Lead” and will at least partially involve in its storyline material from a research study released by University of Cincinnati faculty last spring. That study, published in the journal PLoS Medicine, showed for the first time a direct link between childhood lead exposure and an increased risk for adult criminal behavior.

The writer for Tuesday's episode contacted UC Professor of Environmental Health Kim Dietrich and consulted with him about aspects of the study, which was conducted in cooperation with a number of UC co-authors, including John Wright, an associate professor of criminal justice who studies factors like genetics, psychology and biology on criminal behavior.

The episode synopsis provided by NBC for Tuesday's episode reads:

“Pediatrician Gilbert Kepppler (Guest Star Lawrence Arancio) is found guilty of sexually assaulting four of his male patients. Soon after his trial, his attorney Lionel Granger (Guest Star David Thornton) informs the detectives that Kepppler will be suing the NYPD and the Denslow Medical Center on the grounds that they knew he was sexually abusing patients long before they took any action to stop him. Detectives Elliot Stabler (Chris Meloni) and Olivia Benson (Mariska Hargitay) decide to go directly to Kepppler for questioning only to find him murdered in his apartment. To the detectives’ surprise, ADA Alexandra Cabot (guest star Stephanie March) shows up at the crime scene, after three years in the witness protection program. Attorney Lorna Scarry (Guest Star Mariette Hartley) reminds Cabot how tough solving a case can be. The SVU team must put the past and lost time behind them in order to solve the case.”

The episode will air locally on NBC affiliate WLWT-TV, Channel 5 in Cincinnati.

For more information on UC’s lead/criminality study from last spring, go to: news release on UC study