

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Introducing Books Early Benefits Children Beyond Young Years**

### *First 5 Riverside Encourages Families and Caregivers to Start Literacy Activities Early*

(OCT. 24, 2011) RIVERSIDE, CA — Have you ever taken an adventure without leaving town? Or maybe received a treat without the calories of a sweet? These are just some of the pleasures of reading.

Introducing books early and reading aloud to children, even before they are born, also helps build language skills, strengthen family bonds and prepare children for school success.

First 5 Riverside is hosting Books-R-Treats events for families with children ages 5 and under to encourage early learning experiences and kick-off a month-long celebration of child literacy. The Books-R-Treats events will be held Saturday, Oct. 29 at all Barnes & Noble Bookstores in Riverside County. This includes Riverside, Corona, Temecula and Palm Desert. Families and caregivers can stop by anytime between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. for special story times, costume parades, free resources and related giveaways.

“We hope parents will be inspired to start reading and participating in literacy activities with their children,” said Harry Freedman, executive director of First 5 Riverside. “These factors can contribute to their lifelong success.”

Throughout November, First 5 Riverside will provide posters and special door hangers to parents, caregivers, child care centers and early educators on the importance of early literacy. All participants will receive free books while supplies last. Families can also visit [www.ReadEarlyReadAloud.org](http://www.ReadEarlyReadAloud.org) or their local library or bookstore for more information on early literacy events, activities and resources.

This campaign is part of a regional effort including all Southern California First 5 Commissions.

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*First 5 Riverside, the Riverside County Children & Families Commission, is a division of the Riverside County Department of Public Social Services. It is funded by Proposition 10 tobacco tax revenues. Established by the County Board of Supervisors in 1999, First 5 Riverside supports early childhood development through educational outreach, partnerships and funding for early education, health and child care services that benefit children, from prenatal to age 5, and their families. Research shows that support helps children develop a strong foundation for success in school and throughout their lives. For more information about First 5 Riverside programs and other funded services, call 800-266-3880 or visit [www.rccfc.org](http://www.rccfc.org).*