



A public entity funded from Proposition 10 tobacco tax funds

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Governor's Budget Proposal Threatens Young Children

(JAN. 14, 2010) RIVERSIDE, CA — Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's latest budget proposal threatens critical early childhood developmental services by diverting \$550 million in Proposition 10 funding to the state general fund.

Thousands of children in First 5 programs, including those funded by the Riverside County Children & Families Commission, could lose access to life-altering services in areas such as health, child care and early education by such an action.

In Riverside County, this includes the provision of child care and preschool services, access to medical, dental and mental health services, and referrals and interventions for children with special needs or at high-risk.

"This move would be devastating to local children," said Harry Freedman, executive director of First 5 Riverside. "It makes little sense to leave Riverside County children and their families out in the cold at a time when their need is so great."

Last year, nearly 100,000 Riverside County children were served through First 5 Riverside-funded programs.

First 5 Riverside has allocated more than \$33 million for fiscal year 2009-2010 for services for children through age 5 and their families, including those that address increased needs created by current economic conditions. This includes funding for emergency needs grants, community response grants, expansions in current health, education and child care programs and child care scholarships.

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First 5 Riverside, the Riverside County Children & Families Commission, is a public entity funded by Proposition 10 tobacco tax revenues and established by the County Board of Supervisors in 1999. First 5 Riverside provides funding of early education, health and child care services that help children through age 5 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 951-248-0014 or Toll Free 800-266-3880 or visit www.rccfc.org.