

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

\$11.7 Million Put Towards Child Mental Health Needs

(JAN. 27, 2010) RIVERSIDE, CA — The Riverside County Children & Families Commission’s final decision of its term was to fund a \$11.7 million initiative aimed at increasing social-emotional development services for young children throughout Riverside County.

The Commission approved funding the Riverside County Department of Mental Health and Family Service Association of Western Riverside County equally through June 30, 2013. Implementation of the initiative is expected to increase social and emotional competence, while significantly decreasing disruptive behavior disorders in young children. To reach this goal, the two agencies will train clinicians on evidence-based models, provide early identification screenings and interventions, and ensure that children get the proper intervention needed.

About one in five children are affected by mental disorders, yet only a fifth of them receive the services they need, according to the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services.

To further the initiative, the Commission also approved a primary prevention educational program that would generate community awareness about these mental health services and how to access them.

“We’re happy to have the opportunity to allocate funds to these much needed services,” said Commissioner Susan Loew, who is also director of the Department of Public Social Services.

During today’s meeting Harry Freedman, executive director of First 5 Riverside, indicated that appropriate social-emotional development is critical to the overall development of young children and is linked to their future success in school. He expressed appreciation for Commission and staff efforts in bringing this initiative to fruition.

This is the final act for the current Commission. A new Commission is set to take seat in February.

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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.