



Riverside County Children & Families Commission

A public entity funded from Proposition 10 tobacco tax funds

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Read Early, Read Aloud**

*First 5 Riverside Launches Annual Literacy Campaign for Families with Young Children*

**(OCTOBER 20, 2009) RIVERSIDE, CA** — Long before a child actually reads and writes, they are building skills to do so.

In celebration of Child Literacy Month First 5 Riverside, the Riverside County Children & Families Commission is launching “Read Early, Read Aloud,” a month-long public awareness campaign focused on the importance of early literacy. The campaign will kick-off Oct. 31 during a celebration, held from 11 a.m.- 2 p.m. at Barnes & Noble Bookstore near the Galleria at Tyler in Riverside.

This year, First 5 Riverside has teamed up with the Riverside County Library System, the Coachella Valley Literacy Network and Barnes & Noble in Riverside to encourage families with young children to help plant the seeds to literacy through games, library visits and other daily reading habits.

Approximately 40 percent of children in the U.S. have reading difficulties. Research shows that reading aloud to children from a very young age offers many benefits. Early literacy is a significant contributor to the creation of a strong foundation leading to success in school and is strongly supported by First 5 Riverside.

Throughout November families can visit any of the 33 participating libraries and two bookmobiles for a special early literacy display and the opportunity to enter a drawing for a chance to win an early literacy tool kit. The kit includes activities and materials to help foster a love of books and develop lifelong learning skills.

On Nov. 21, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., First 5 Riverside and its partners are hosting a Literacy Festival at the Coachella Library, 1538 7th Street, Coachella, CA 92236, featuring cultural entertainment, free resources and award winning author, Juan Felipe Herrera, a professor at the University of California Riverside.

This campaign is part of a regional effort including all Southern California First 5 Commissions, who will host a special event at 10 a.m. Nov. 5 at the Culver City Library with celebrity literacy advocate, Constance Marie Lopez.

Visit [www.rccfc.org](http://www.rccfc.org) in November for details on early literacy events, activities and resources.

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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](http://www.rccfc.org).*