

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Riverside County is no Exception to a Leading Cause of Death Among Kids

(July 20, 2010) RIVERSIDE, CA — Three Riverside County children under age 5 have drowned in backyard swimming pools this summer contributing to the deaths of a total of five young children this year.

On July 13, a 16-month-old Palm Desert girl was missing for 10-15 minutes, according to authorities, before her family found her in the backyard pool.

On July 5, Riverside Police responded to an emergency call, where a 1-year-old boy drowned in a residential pool. Reports show that water toys were scattered in the pool.

On June 12, a 2-year-old boy was being cared for by grandparents and aunts in Romoland, but slipped through a back sliding door and drowned in the pool.

On April 17, authorities responded to a drowning in Lake Elsinore. A 19-month-old boy had wandered into the backyard and drowned in the pool during a family gathering.

On April 10, Temecula parents told police that they had lost track of their toddler boy for a “few minutes” before finding him lifeless in the backyard hot tub.

Drowning is one of the leading causes of death among children age 5 and under, but there are ways to help keep children safe from the start. [First 5 Riverside, the Riverside County Children & Families Commission](#), has teamed up with partners across the county, including 2-1-1 Riverside County and Riverside County Injury Prevention Services, to promote the *ABC's of Water Safety*:

A-Active Adult Supervision: To date, there have been 29 submersion incidents involving Riverside County children this year. For 90 percent of the cases, there was a breakdown of adult supervision. Assign an adult to supervise children at all times, especially when there are numerous adults present such as during a family event or party. Maintain constant eye-to-eye supervision with children in and around swimming pools and spa. Remove children from the swimming pool and spa area for any distraction such as a telephone call or the need to use the restroom.

B-Barriers: Not just one, but multiple barriers are necessary to keep children out of the water. This includes fencing, gates, latches, alarms or pool safety nets and covers. All chairs, tables, large toys or other objects that would allow a child to climb up to reach the gate latch or enable the child to climb over the barrier fence should be removed.

C-Classes & Preparation: Thirty seconds is all it takes for a child to lose consciousness and drown without splashing, screaming or crying. For those precious lifesaving moments, families can take CPR, swim or safety classes. Call 2-1-1 or visit www.first5safety.com for more information.

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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.