

The Great American Smokeout® November 19th



If you or someone you love needs help to quit smoking, call the California Smoker's Helpline at
(800) NO-BUTTS or
(800) 662-8887. 🌱

Notes & Niblets

- Sept 30** Contractor Gathering, 9-11 a.m.
Kern County Supt of Schools, 1300 17th Street, Bakersfield
- Oct 7** First 5 Kern Commission Meeting, 2 p.m.
Kern County Supt of Schools, 1300 17th Street, Bakersfield
- Oct 15** School Readiness Coordinators Meeting, 1-3 p.m.
First 5 Kern Office, 2724 L Street, Bakersfield
- Oct 19** Technical Advisory Committee Meeting, 10 a.m.
First 5 Kern Office, 2724 L Street, Bakersfield
- Nov 16** Technical Advisory Committee Meeting, 10 a.m.
First 5 Kern Office, 2724 L Street, Bakersfield
- Nov 19** School Readiness Coordinators Meeting, 1-3 p.m.
First 5 Kern Office, 2724 L Street, Bakersfield
- Dec 2** First 5 Kern Commission Meeting, 2 p.m.
Kern County Supt of Schools, 1300 17th Street, Bakersfield

For more information on these and other Commission activities and events, please log onto www.First5Kern.org.

Free children's immunizations are offered at various locations throughout Kern County. For more information, please call (661) 869-6740.

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Handprints
FIRST 5 KERN

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FIRST 5 KERN



FIRST 5 KERN Handprints

FALL 2009

Young Children Should Get Flu Vaccinations

With flu season fast approaching, health officials are recommending that children 6 months to 5 years old and pregnant women be among the first in line for flu shots.

Many parents aren't aware that medical experts recommend that children up to age 5 be routinely vaccinated. Children ages 2 to 5 have a higher rate of clinic and emergency room visits due to the flu than from other illnesses.

Regardless of age, children who have chronic conditions such as asthma or diabetes are advised to get a flu shot. Worries of "getting sick" from the vaccine are a persistent myth, doctors say.

The San Joaquin Community Hospital mobile immunization unit will offer free flu vaccines for children from age 6 months as soon as they become available in mid-October to early November.

For more information, please call 869-6740. 🌱



Read Early Read Aloud

Holding your baby while reading creates a loving bond. Your familiar voice has a calming effect and helps your baby make an association between reading and pleasure.

Reading with Babies

Reading with your baby is a valuable way to spend precious time together. Although your new baby will not understand the words you read, your voice and your cuddling are exactly what she needs. Begin sharing books with your baby as soon as you can safely hold the baby and the book at the same time. It is one of the most important things you can do to help your child learn language.

Let your baby explore soft cloth, vinyl or board books. A baby learns by exploring with her mouth – sometimes early reading looks like chewing.

Point to objects in the book and name them. Change your voice as you read aloud and make the sounds of the animals baby sees.

Ask your baby questions about what's happening on the page, such as, "Where is the duck?" Pause, point and answer for the baby, "Oh, look, there's the duck!"

Respond to your baby's interest. Imitate her responses.

Improvise! You don't need to read the words as they appear in the book. You can just talk about the pictures.

Relax and have fun! It's okay if your baby crawls or moves away – she will still hear and benefit from your voice.

What Babies Like in Books

- Board books with photos of babies
- Books with bold, clear pictures of familiar items in baby's world
- Books with rhythm and repetition
- Books with textures or touch and feel books
- Books with animal sounds
- Lullaby books 🌱



Books Are the Best Holiday Gifts

Start your holiday shopping with books for everyone on your gift list.

- Begin a newborn's library
- Build the toddler's collection
- Increase a youngster's reading skills
- Enhance a teen's free time
- And don't forget all the adults on your list

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Bridging Preschool to Kindergarten

More than 460 children crossed the bridge to kindergarten this summer through participation in Summer Bridge programs throughout Kern County funded by First 5 Kern.

Summer Bridge is a preschool program designed to ease a child's transition to kindergarten. This is an opportunity for children to have a school "practice time" by providing experiences very similar to kindergarten.

Teachers focus on developing beginning reading and writing skills, language development, and letter, word and number recognition. Children also learn to follow rules and routines, socialization skills and participating in a group.

Nine individual school districts – Arvin, Bakersfield City, Buttonwillow, Delano, Greenfield, McFarland, Mojave, Ridgecrest, and Richland, along with six others that



Children in the Arvin Summer Bridge program pose in their new school uniforms provided at the program completion. During Summer Bridge, they sharpened their school readiness skills and enjoyed activities involving music, dramatic play and field trips.

joined forces – Lamont/Vineland, Lost Hills/Semitropic and Taft/Maricopa – conducted valuable school readiness sessions

to acquaint children with important developmental learning tasks required for success in kindergarten and beyond. 🌱

First 5 Kern in a Flash



Community leaders prepare to speak at a news conference hosted by Garden Pathways Preschool to kick-off Purple Ribbon Month in recognition of Kaitlyn's Law, which makes it a citable offense to leave a child six years old and under in a car without supervision. Pictured L-R: Larry J. Rhoades, First 5 Kern Executive Director; Pat Cheadle, Director of Department of Human Services; Dr. Claudia Jonah, Public Health Officer; Sheriff Donny Youngblood; Police Chief Bill Rector; and California Highway Patrol Officer Robert Rodriguez.



The Shafter Healthy Start staff coordinated a clothing and school supplies drive to assist families with back-to-school needs. The community of Shafter donated 70 new backpacks and boxes full of brand new school supplies, new socks and underwear, gently used clothing and 10 gift cards for brand new shoes.



This teddy bear sitting safely in a car seat with a thermometer helped to demonstrate how dangerous it is to leave your child in a car. The temperature in this car went from cool air-conditioning to over 100 degrees in 15 minutes.



Children at the Bakersfield Homeless Center's Discovery Depot Childcare Center recently enjoyed a tea party with cookies and milk.



Charlene McNama, First 5 Kern Finance Specialist, explains to attendees how to use the proposal budget templates at the Bidders Conference.

Request for Proposals Process

In these tough financial times, First 5 Kern may be the light at the end of the tunnel for many organizations operating programs that serve children ages 0 through 5 and their families.

During the month of July, First 5 Kern accepted 77 proposals to fund programs in Kern County during the 2010-13 funding cycle. As expected, the nearly \$22 million in proposals (for the first year only) exceeds the approximate \$12 million in available funds.

In order to review and evaluate proposals for funding, First 5 Kern recruited community members to serve on one of three Independent Evaluation Committees (IEC). IECs are largely composed of persons with expertise or experience in the areas of health and wellness, early childcare and education, or parent education and support services and are familiar with the purpose of the Commission and its funding allocation process as described in the Strategic Plan. Each candidate was screened to ensure there is no conflict with any programs proposed, including



Larry J. Rhoades, First 5 Kern Executive Director, welcomes attendees at the Request for Proposals Bidders Conference. More than 135 people from 70 organizations attended one of three sessions to learn about the RFP for the 2010-13 funding cycle.

financial or economic interest, or any other relationship that would preclude them from reviewing the proposals in a fair and impartial manner.

The IECs will forward their recommendations to a Project Review

Committee who will review the recommended proposals and then make a recommendation to the First 5 Kern Commission. Awards are scheduled for final approval and public announcement at the December 2, 2009 Commission meeting. 🌱