

**MEDIA ALERT**

**Tuesday, September 30, at 9 a.m.**

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## **First 5 San Bernardino Hosts Birthday Party at Chino Youth Museum To Encourage Parents to 'Gift a Kid a Book'**

*Birthday party for Potter the Otter also celebrates 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of popular place for children's birthday parties*

**WHAT:** [First 5 San Bernardino](#), in partnership with the [Chino Youth Museum](#), is celebrating Potter the Otter's birthday with free books and interactive play for children. The *Gift a Kid a Book* event encourages parents to consider giving books for special occasions, and also celebrates the 25th anniversary of the Chino Youth Museum, a popular place where families host birthday parties.

The event will include story time with Potter the Otter, interactive songs, exploration of the museum's interactive kid-sized exhibits, and a festive birthday party complete with cake, crafts and every child receiving a wrapped book. Families will also receive swag bags with an additional book to give for another birthday party!

**WHY:** San Bernardino County [literacy rates in young children have declined](#) since the pandemic. First 5 San Bernardino is in its third year of [Gift a Kid a Book](#), a campaign that promotes the importance of reading to young children, provides reading resources, community events and free books to San Bernardino County families with children under 5 years old.

Science tells us 90 percent of a child's brain develops in the first five years of their life. Reading plays a crucial role in brain development and the way children view learning is shaped very early on. The *Gift a Kid a Book* campaign encourages families to give books to children ages 0-5 for birthdays and special occasions, emphasizing reading as a tool to build strong brains, calm nervous systems and nurture meaningful family connections.

**WHEN:** Tuesday, September 30, 2025  
Birthday party program: 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

**WHERE:** Chino Youth Museum  
13191 6th Street, Chino, CA

**INTERVIEWEES (Spanish and English):**

- Scott McGrath, Deputy Director, First 5 San Bernardino
- Maria Torres, Spanish-language Spokesperson, First 5 San Bernardino
- Dane D'Antuono, Coordinator, Chino Youth Museum
- Children from the Chino Tiny Tots program

**VISUALS:**

- Potter the Otter character celebrating with the children
- Children participating in singalongs and story time
- Birthday party for Potter the Otter with cake, balloons, crafts and wrapped book gifts
- Children and Potter the Otter exploring kid size interactive exhibits at the Chino Youth Museum

**About First 5 San Bernardino**

First 5 San Bernardino's distinct purpose is to improve the lives of young children and their families by giving them the best possible start in life. For more than 25 years, First 5 San Bernardino has been working dynamically through strategic partnerships to promote, support and enhance the health and early development of children prenatal through age 5, their families and communities. Funded through the 1998 voter-approved initiative, California Children and Families Act (Proposition 10 tobacco tax revenues), First 5 San Bernardino has evolved into a system where stakeholders and services are integrated, coordinated and sustainable, and one that families experience as accessible, inclusive and equitable. For more information, visit [First5SanBernardino.org](http://First5SanBernardino.org).

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