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Contact: Kimberly VandenBosch
Communications Officer
909.386.7706
kimberly.vandenbosch@cfc.sbcounty.gov

**'Gift a Kid a Book' Brings Free Books to Upland Preschoolers
At Pop-up Lemonade Stand to Help Prepare Them for School**

First 5 San Bernardino Gifts Books to Preschoolers at the Upland YMCA Early Childhood Development Center to Encourage Reading at a Young Age

UPLAND, Calif. (August 1, 2024) – [Gift a Kid a Book](#), a literacy campaign from First 5 San Bernardino, gifted every preschooler at [Upland YMCA Early Childhood Development Center](#) a book, cookie and drink at a pop-up lemonade stand today.

[First 5 San Bernardino](#), an organization that supports families with children prenatal through five years old in San Bernardino County, presented 40 preschoolers "If You Give a Mouse a Cookie" as part of the Gift a Kid a Book campaign. The message behind the event is to encourage parents and caregivers to give their children a book -- instead of toys or sweets -- for life's special occasions, like going back to school.

"Our book giveaway is a reminder to San Bernardino County families that you can gift a kid a book for any of a child's milestones, like tying their shoes, for their birthday, or to get them excited for school," said First 5 San Bernardino Deputy Director, Systems and Impact Scott McGrath. "There is no better gift you can give to your child than the gift of learning, and by incorporating books into your routine, getting your little one ready for school will be even easier. Our lemonade-stand book giveaway today just lit-up the faces of these preschoolers!"

Science data shares that 90% 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. Taking time to read to a child is also critical to developing social-emotional learning skills because the time together reinforces the importance of attentiveness and learning that will benefit them as they start school.

Helping lead the fun at the Upland YMCA was San Bernardino County entertainer Markus Law, who did a book reading and sing along with the preschoolers. First 5 San Bernardino mascot Potter the Otter was on hand to greet the kids and be part of the festivities.

More than 10,000 books have been gifted to San Bernardino County children through First 5 San Bernardino's annual Gift a Kid a Book campaign. Visit first5sanbernardino.org/reading for a list of book recommendations by age, a free downloadable bookmark and more important reading resources.

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 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.

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