



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Kimberly VandenBosch  
Communications Officer  
909.252.4283 (office)

[kimberly.vandenbosch@cfc.sbcounty.gov](mailto:kimberly.vandenbosch@cfc.sbcounty.gov)

## **First 5 San Bernardino Gives over 500 Backpacks, Kits to area Kindergarteners**

**SAN BERNARDINO – August 31, 2021** – The thermometer read 104 degrees and there wasn't a cloud in the sky, but even extreme heat wasn't enough to discourage people from coming out in search of free school supplies for their children.

On Saturday, August 28, from 10 am to 2 pm, First 5 San Bernardino hosted a drive-thru backpack and kinder kit event to provide basic school supplies for the County's littlest students – preschoolers and kindergarteners.

Cars, trucks and minivans wrapped around the block waiting to enter Ecclesia Christian Fellowship's parking lot on 1314 East Date Street in San Bernardino. When the line started moving, little faces could be seen peeking through the vehicle windows in anticipation.

"I really hope I get a blue one," said Vasni Duran, 5, of San Bernardino of the array of backpack color choices. "Blue is my favorite color," she explained. Her mother, Helen Duran, 30, stated "it's been a little bit hard lately," and added that she was thankful to receive supplies for her little kids.

"The turnout was tremendous, and I believe is a direct reflection of how great the need is right now specifically for parents with young children," said Karen E. Scott, executive director at First 5 San Bernardino. "We knew it was important to provide these much-needed school supplies to our local families so children could feel supported and have access to essentials as they start preschool and kindergarten," concluded Scott.

Over 535 backpacks and 600 Kinder Kits were given and included basic supplies such as scissors, crayons, pencils, glue sticks, large erasers, pencil boxes and a book. Sixteen community organizations were also present including SAC Health and IEHP who were on hand to administer Covid-19 vaccinations.

"People told us they had bills and rent and couldn't afford school supplies this year," stated First 5 San Bernardino's Community Engagement Specialist LuCretia Dowdy, who oversees the organization's outreach events. "Clearly, there is a great need, and it was an honor for us to help fill that gap for these young children," Dowdy added.

### **About First 5 San Bernardino**

First 5 San Bernardino funds organizations who directly help families achieve optimal health for their children ages 0-5, including referrals to quality early learning centers and a variety of family supports such as child health screenings, parent education and fatherhood engagement. For more information, visit [First5SanBernardino.org](http://First5SanBernardino.org).