



Perris News

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Perris' First Day of the Child Event

About 1,000 people came to Perris' first-ever "Day of the Child" Saturday, a gathering to remember the tragedy of child abuse, find ways to prevent it and allow children and their parents to enjoy a great time in beautiful weather.

Foss Park filled with moms and dads and youngsters who participated in face-painting, bead-stringing, puppet shows, enjoyed musical selections from an on-site disc jockey and ate a free lunch provided by donations from Riverside County Prevent Child Abuse, the Perris Valley Chamber of Commerce, United Way and Rob Reiner Children and Family Development Center in Perris.

City workers handed out brochures and fliers touting Perris' popular "Homebuyers Assistance Program," which provides financial aid to worthy residents who want to purchase a home in town.

Perris Mayor Daryl Busch and City Councilwoman Joanne Evans headed up the official delegation, joining school district and Riverside County representatives determined to reduce child abuse through education, advocacy and support of intervention programs. The mayor's son, Barry Busch, represented Riverside County Supervisor Marion Ashley, who could not attend.



Mayor Daryl Busch and City Councilwoman Joanne Evans headed up the dignitaries from Perris. Standing left of the Mayor is his son, Barry Busch, who represented Riverside County Supervisor Marion Ashley.

"This is really gratifying," Daryl Busch said. "The turnout is tremendous. The City is very interested in supporting programs that will benefit our children and their families."

Susan Johnson, who works at the Rob Reiner site, said she began organizing the event three months ago and received solid support from the City. By the time the event took place, Johnson said organizations like the Girl Scouts, county Mental Health Department, other medical-related businesses and college came on board.

"This is all about the children," she said. "The City did a marvelous job."

A highlight of the day came when selected children released doves, a symbol Johnson said stands for "purity, peace and a new beginning." Event organizers hope the Day of the Child event ultimately will make child abuse a thing of the past.



Susan Johnson of the Rob Reiner Children and Family Development Center in Perris announces "The Day of the Child" while 1,000 gathered at Foss Field.



A child release a dove, symbol of purity and innocence, at Perris' "Day of the Child" event, which spotlighted the tragedy of child abuse.

Parent Dionne Barajas came to Foss Field with her daughter, Emily, 3, and son, Tony, 6. She thinks education is crucial to keeping children safe. Barajas volunteers at Rob Reiner, which holds workshops aimed keeping children safe. Those include car-seat safety, fire prevention in the home, first-aid, and for older children, gang-prevention efforts.

"Preventing child abuse is an extremely important issue to be involved in," she said. "This is a wonderful day. I commend the City of Perris for its involvement."

Perris resident Bob Turner, who came to the Day of the Child to promote his first-aid equipment business, credited the City with supporting programs aimed at improving life for people of all ages and backgrounds.

"Perris is one in a million," Turner said. "No other town does so much."