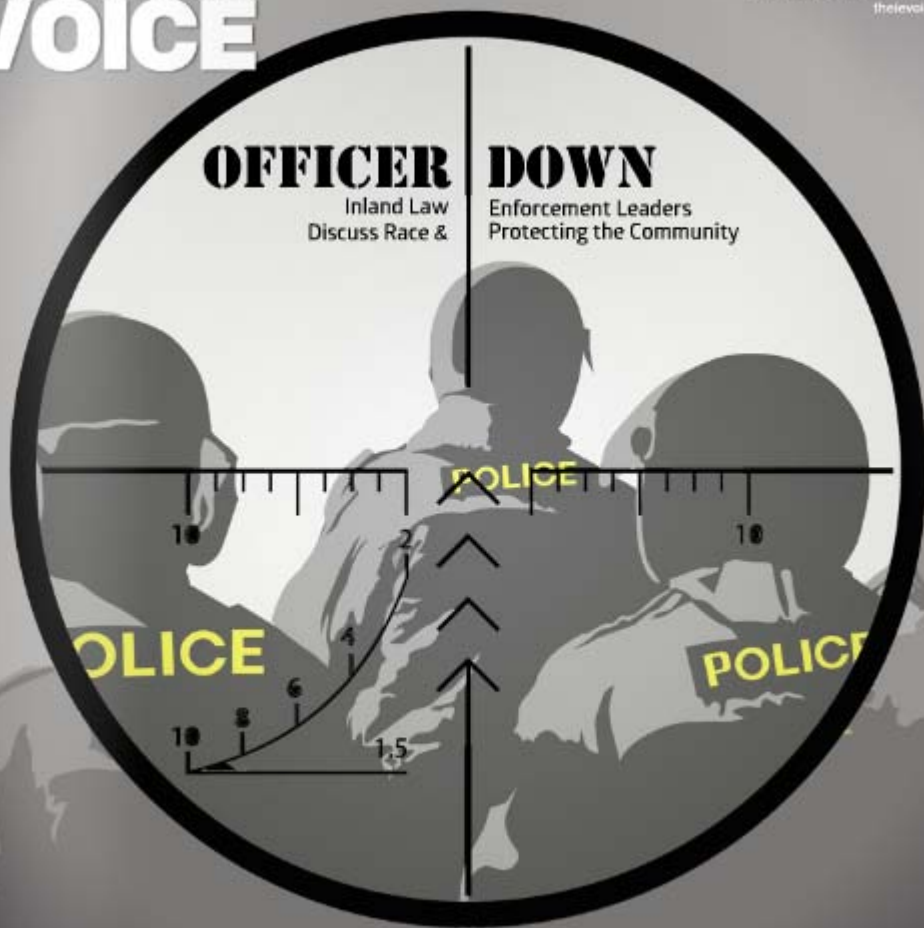


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HCP Keeps Inland Empire Community Focused on Summer Health and Safety

Riverside

While it's easy to focus on summer fun, it's imperative to keep healthy and safety in mind as readers enjoy outdoor activities this season. Southern California's Health Center Partners (HCP) has compiled several easy tips to help members of the Inland Empire community maintain that focus.

While a little Vitamin D is good for you, if you plan to spend extended time in the sun, it is important to protect yourself and your family. To do this, make sure to wear a hat if possible and clothing that is light and breathable and also protects your face and reflects UV rays. Additionally, use long-lasting and waterproof sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher—be sure to reapply it every few hours to maintain efficacy. Also remember UV rays are strongest between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., so seek shade during midday hours.

Bugs, including bees, wasps, ticks and mosquitos can certainly be a nuisance this time of year. Readers can lower their risk of bites and discomfort by using repellent sprays, especially

when you are outside during dawn and dusk when these insects are most active.

A number of Inland residents will seek to beat the summer heat with a dip in the pool this season. It is important to make sure pools and beaches are attended by a lifeguard. In addition, swimmers should always be aware of their surroundings and swim with a buddy—even experienced swimmers. Readers are also reminded that air-filled swimming aids like "floaties" are not a safe replacement for a life jacket or life preserver.

HCP also wanted to remind readers the chances of catching a foodborne illness are increased in the summer due to the warmer weather. When planning picnics, barbeques or beach day cookouts, food should be properly handled and prepared. Hands should be washed before and after handling food, and cooked food should never be put back on the same plate that previously held raw food. Bring plenty of ice too to ensure food is kept at a constant cold temperature.

Finally, staying hydrated is essential as severe

dehydration has serious health consequences. It is recommended that you hydrate early in the day by drinking a glass of water before leaving the house in the morning. You should also take time for water breaks during the day. If you find yourself feeling a bit fatigued, drinking a glass of cold water can help you feel more alert. It is also suggested that you avoid drinks with added sugar or caffeine as they can worsen dehydration.

For additional health tips and/or for a check-up or physical in the Inland Empire area visit hcpsocal.org/health-centers/. Readers can also find additional summer health and travel safety tips at cdc.gov/media/subtopic/matte/pdf/cdcsummersafety.pdf.

HCP health centers see nearly 385,000 Riverside patients each year. These clinics include Borrego Community Health Foundation, Clinicas de Salud del Pueblo, Community Health Systems, Inc., Neighborhood Healthcare, North County Health Services, Vista Community Clinic and Planned Parenthood of the Pacific Southwest.

