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10,000th Baby Born at El Rio's Birth & Women's Health Center on International Midwives Day!

Tucson, Arizona - Anticipating their 10,000th birth (since opening in 1982), El Rio's Birth & Women's Health Center has been counting down for the past month, only to have TWO babies born simultaneously at 4:28 pm on Sunday, May 5th. Two of El Rio's certified nurse-midwives assisted at the births – one baby was born in the birth center's own free standing home-like facility and the other child was born in the hospital at Tucson Medical Center. "What a perfect way to celebrate International Midwives Day!" exclaimed several birth center Facebook fans. As the birth center exists to promote options for women seeking midwifery care in or out of hospital, fans and staff were delighted that the 10,000th birth was shared by two families in two different delivery settings.

Today (Nurses Day), Baby-Friendly USA notified El Rio's birth center team of their official designation as a "*Baby-Friendly*" birthing facility. The Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) is a global program that was launched by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in 1991 to encourage and recognize hospitals and birthing centers that offer an optimal level of care for infant feeding and mother/baby bonding. It recognizes and awards birthing facilities who successfully implement the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding.

Approximately 160 facilities in the United States are recognized as *Baby Friendly* sites. **El Rio's Birth & Women's Health Center is the first site in the state of Arizona to be designated as a *Baby Friendly* facility.** The nurses and midwives at the birth center have worked hard to demonstrate how effective birth center care is for promotion of breastfeeding. <http://www.babyfriendlyusa.org/about-us/baby-friendly-hospital-initiative>

El Rio Community Health Center is the largest provider of medical and dental services to uninsured and Medicaid populations in Pima County. With 17 sites in Tucson, El Rio serves the medical and dental needs of more than 79,000 patients annually. El Rio employs over 800 people with an annual budget of over \$90 million dollars. A national model of health care excellence, El Rio's mission is to "improve the health of our community through comprehensive, accessible, affordable, quality and compassionate care." For more information visit. www.elrio.org.

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