



Four Teens Do Not Return From Dayhike.

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La Quinta
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By Phil Thompson

Four young boys, two 13 year olds and two 14 year olds had started a hiking trip originating at the top of La Quinta canyon and coming out near the restaurant in Pinyon Crest 18 miles later. They had started hiking on Saturday morning and had made arrangements with one of the parents to be picked up in the late afternoon at Pinyon Crest. When the boys had not shown up and darkness had fallen, the parent called 911 to report the boys missing.

The weather was cold and raining that afternoon with the rain continuing most of the night and the temperature dropping even further as the sunset. Desert Search and Rescue sent in one team to start going up the trail and another team coming down the trail about nine PM that night. When the Sheriff's Dept had heard nothing from Desert Search and Rescue all-night RMRU was called out Sunday morning to take over the operation.

Shortly after arriving on site RMRU procured two helicopters one CHP and one Sheriff's.

Although we could not raise the Desert Search and Rescue teams on the radio, we knew that they had dispatched the two teams the night before and should have reached the boys already. We assumed that the boys must have gotten off trail. With this information we started putting numerous teams on local peaks using the helicopters to quickly get them there.

We found out later the reason that Desert Search and Rescue had missed the boys is that the boys during the night had gotten totally soaking wet from the rain and with the strong winds, they knew they were in big trouble and had to find shelter. They found a cave to huddle in out of the rain until morning. When the morning finally came they started hiking up the trail again. Although it had stopped raining it was still cold and windy.

Because of the huge area that the boys could have been had they gone off trail and the time involved I ordered 100 additional rescue people to come to our site. We did not want those boys to spend another night out there. I also requested the assistance of the Idyllwild community patrol to assist with the logistics of handling

all those people. We had the Red Cross onsite to help with food and other personal needs of the Rescue workers.

We received a call from the Pinyon fire station of a report of an illegal campfire and asked for one of our helicopters to check it out for them. We sent the CHP ship to investigate the fire and on the way to the fire they spotted the four boys. They were picked up and flown back to base, where we had one of our team members

Dr. Hussey checks the boys out. Three of the boys were very wet and very cold but we were able to get them warmed up with blankets and warm drinks. The fourth boy was transported to the hospital for additional treatment but was later released and doing well.

RMRU is a volunteer search and rescue team that covers Riverside County and assists other teams with search and rescue efforts in other counties. Each member purchases their own equipment and takes time off work, without compensation, to participate in search and rescue missions. Team equipment is purchased from contributions from the community. We are a non-profit organization and are funded by [donations](#) from people like you.