



Report from Executive Director  
March 17, 2016

## I. Administrative Operations

- Form 700 – Web-based Filing System
  - Clerk of the Board has sent an email notice to all Commissioners with instructions on filing electronically by the April 1, 2016 deadline.
  
- Staffing Updates
  - Commission staff bid a fond farewell to Robin Godfrey, Director of Communications, Education and Development, and Kathy Rangel, Executive Assistant, who left F5VC in early March for new career pursuits.
  - Heather Hanna, who is now our Strategic Initiatives and Special Projects Manager, will be overseeing communications, education campaigns and resource development initiatives, many of which will be outsourced.
  - F5VC will be recruiting for a part-time office coordinator to support our team.
  
- Resource Development
  - Following a competitive bid process, Commission staff has selected Netzel Grigsby to assist us in developing a resource development plan.
    - Netzel Grigsby team will work with staff on conducting an in-depth assessment of current initiatives to identify new resource development strategies for maintaining services for young children in Ventura County.

## II. Commission Initiatives

- Neighborhoods for Learning (NfL)
  - Ojai NfL – Developmental Screenings
    - NfL now requires developmental screenings for children of families participating in their scholarship program.
      - 35 children have already been screened this year, using the ASQ-3 developmental screening tool.
  - Moorpark/Simi Valley NfL – Community Events
    - NfL has conducted over 24 community events, celebrations and family field trips, serving an aggregate total of over 1,060 adults and 1,205 children.
      - Through 6 Community Car Seat Fitting Station events, 87 car seats were inspected with 12 replaced.
      - Bi-monthly Produce Days, in collaboration with FoodSHARE, have provided fresh produce for 1,531 individuals, feeding 6,268 family members.

- Ventura NfL – Outdoor Classroom
  - Ventura NfL received 2 grants from Ventura Education Partnership to build a small garden and paint a mural in outdoor classroom area at Sheridan Way.
    - Mural was designed by a parent who attends the PACT classes.
    - Outdoor classroom has been visited by Ventura Chamber of Commerce Leadership Academy and a private preschool from Camarillo.
- Santa Clara Valley - Connecting Families to Benefits
  - Share the Harvest
    - In collaboration with FoodSHARE, approximately 470 families in Fillmore and Santa Paula received USDA commodities, with 1,060 families participating in Share the Harvest.
  - 28 families were assisted with their energy bill through the Energy Assistance Fund (funded through United Way of Los Angeles), for a total of \$2,098.
  - Approximately 87 families applied for the Home Energy Assistance Program through NfL's collaboration with Community Action of Ventura County.
  - Bicycle and Skateboard Rodeo hosted in collaboration with Fillmore Police Dept.
    - Children received free helmets, proper helmet fitment, safety instructions, and bicycle and skateboard safety inspections.
  - In partnership with Poder Popular, NfL continues to provide English as a second language instruction in a weekly session at their Santa Paula site.
- Rio NfL
  - Seven community wide food distributions held in second quarter, providing food to 1,223 families, representing 5,559 individuals.
    - NfL staff assisted Rio Real School in starting a monthly food distribution.
  - Linus Project, a group of volunteer quilters, makes infant receiving blankets to support new moms in the NfL's infant massage classes.
- Conejo NfL
  - In collaboration with Safe Kids and the Ventura County Fire Department, 81 cars were inspected with 104 car seats properly installed, from July to December.
- Results Based Accountability
  - F5VC Parent Survey
    - Annual parent survey administration will launch in April.
      - Social Policy Research Associates, F5VC evaluator, is preparing a revised survey based on learnings from the last evaluation report.
      - Two online webinar implementation trainings will be hosted for funded partners in March.
  - Online Persimmony Report Generation Training
    - Staff launched online webinar series for report generation to support funded partners' use of program data.
      - After each training webinar recordings are available on the First 5 website.
        - 17 funded partner representatives participated in first session.

- Countywide Strategies
  - Regional Health Professionals - Ventura County Public Health (VCPH)
    - Developmental Screenings (ASQ)
      - Trainings provided to Kids And Families Together to implement ASQ with foster care population and to MICOP promotoras, including hands-on support to promotoras providing screenings at NfLs.
      - VCPH partnered with Newbury Park Oaks Preschool to implement screening at their site, with training of 18 staff and administrators.
    - Parent Education Classes
      - 35 parent education classes, reaching 331 participants, provided on: child development and developmental milestones, staying healthy, temperament, child passenger safety, and nutrition.
      - New lunchtime class on child development piloted for working moms.
    - Distribution of Kit for New Parents
      - VCPH doubled kit distribution over first quarter levels and identified 15 new distribution partners for the Kit.
      - 2,650 kits were distributed through 44 partners, including: Community Memorial and VCMC Hospitals, Community Pediatric Medical Group, Kaiser Permanente, Gold Coast Health Plan, and Coastal Pediatric Medical Group.
  - Help Me Grow (Landon Pediatric Foundation)
    - Working with Gold Coast Health Plan on implementing Help Me Grow Quality Improvement (QI)/Maintenance of Certification (MOC) project as one of two Quality Improvement initiatives the health plan must implement each year.
      - Help Me Grow QI/MOC project is a chart-based audit project for primary care practices focused on implementing developmental surveillance and screening and linking children with concerns to available resources.
        - 18 month effort will focus on CMH clinics.
        - Project is one of only 6 efforts taking place across the country, including Alameda and Orange counties in California.
  - Fluoride Varnish, Medical Providers - Ventura County Public Health
    - Oral health outreach event hosted at the Thousand Oaks Free Clinic.
      - 102 fluoride varnish applications were done.
        - 10 volunteer BSN students applied fluoride varnish and educated clients and parents using the Building Healthy Smiles curriculum.
    - Currently 47 active medical clinics, with 5 Non CHDP clinics, are participating.
      - 20 new provider offices trained in first 6 months of fiscal year, representing 285 staff.
    - All CHDP clinics have been informed of the approved SB 75 amendment mandating medical providers to refer clients to a dental home starting at 1 year of age.

### III. County, Regional and National Updates

- Celebrity Reader Event “Take 5”
  - “Take 5” Celebrity Reader event scheduled for May 5, 2016
    - Over 40 prominent leaders have committed to promote the importance of reading early to young children by reading in a preschool classroom, library or mall site.
      - Kick-off event for readers will be hosted by Dr. Rush at CSU CI.
  - First 5 Ventura County is inviting major media partners in Ventura County to join a six month campaign focusing on early literacy.
  - Celebrity Reader event is a partnership between F5VC and the Ventura County Star to make early literacy the social norm in Ventura County.
  
- Prenatal Workgroup – Perinatal Portal
  - IDEA Engineering selected by F5VC as contractor to design an online portal for preconception, prenatal, and postpartum/inter-conception information resources linking to local services available through Ventura County 2-1-1 database.
    - Prenatal workgroup will provide input on content with focus groups and user testing; portal anticipated to be completed by June.
  
- Local Economic Justice Conference (see attached media)
  - Following presentation on the importance of early childhood development and the need for early learning opportunities, the vast majority of conference participants cited early learning as one of the two most important issues for addressing economic justice.
  
- IMPACT (First 5 CA)
  - First 5 Ventura County identified as the lead fiscal agent for the regional Hub (includes Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties) to coordinate and support QRIS systems.
    - Region is eligible to receive approximately \$210,704 annually, through 2020.
  
- California Healthcare, Research and Prevention Tobacco Tax Act of 2016 (see attached)
  - If passed, proposed ballot initiative would increase excise taxes on the distribution of cigarettes and other tobacco products, including e-cigarettes.
    - Revenues for funding of existing healthcare programs, such as an increase in Medi-Cal reimbursement rates, tobacco-related prevention and cessation programs, law enforcement, and medical research on tobacco related disease.
  - Proposed measure includes backfill for Prop 10.
  
- EC-LINC – Research to Action Grants
  - F5VC received \$60,000 in funding for proposal to identify and implement best practices for playgroups for children aged zero to three in collaboration with other EC-LINC partners from Alameda County, Boston and Orange County.
    - F5VC will also participate in other funded proposals for measuring the impact of early childhood systems and parent engagement.

### IV. Upcoming Events

- **SAVE THE DATE: Annual First 5 Funded and Community Partners Appreciation Event**, Friday, April 22, 2016, 1:00 – 4:00, Ventura County Community Foundation Community Room

## PROVIDER ANECDOTE

### Regional Health Professionals – Ventura County Public Health

In September, I received a referral from the Pleasant Valley NfL. The NfL Parent and Child Together (PACT) class teacher was very concerned about some behavior she was observing while the child was attending class. The teacher had shared her concerns with the mother of the child, but mother was not on the same page. I met with the family and completed an ASQ. The ASQ showed concerns in all the five developmental domains. My recommendations to the mother were to refer the child to Somis School District for a formal assessment, to share ASQ results with child's pediatrician, and a referral for Health Care for All to apply for Medi-Cal benefits for the child.

This meeting was very emotional for mother of the child. She is a single mother and wants the best for her son. As I was sharing my recommendations with mom, she shared that her son's doctor had expressed some developmental concerns at every visit, but she was not open for any referrals or any services for her child. When I asked mother why, she said that family and friends had told her that since she was undocumented in this country, immigration will be involved and she could lose her child. Mother decided to stop taking child to the doctor for his annual checkups, because she did not want to be pressured by the doctor to seek assistance for her son and she also cancelled her son's Medi-Cal benefits for the same reason. I assured mother that the information she was sharing with me was not going to be shared with immigration and the programs that I was referring her son, if she allowed me to, were not sharing anything with immigration either. Mother was hesitant, but agreed to my referrals because she wants to get her child some help.

I called the school psychologist at Somis School District and scheduled an appointment for an assessment. Mother of child missed the first appointment. She was not trusting the school 100% and decided not to take her son. The school psychologist contacted me and I called mother of child back and she said she was having a hard time understanding why the school will provide free assessment and free therapy. She believed that she had to pay out-of-pocket for those services. The school psychologist and I explained to mother that she did not have to pay anything for the therapies if her son was eligible.

I continued meeting mother of child once a month. I kept sharing milestone information and activities to do at home. In November, mother decided to take her son to the school district and also to Mandalay Bay Clinic to see a new doctor. The school psychologist and her team completed the assessment and, with the help of the physician from Mandalay Bay Clinic, child was diagnosed with a mild case of autism.

Child now has an IEP and will be receiving the therapy and services he needs. Mother of child is happy to know that her son will get the help she can't provide on her own. She realized that she was misinformed from friends and neighbors and now she knows that she will do her own research and seek information about the different programs available and their requirements. I also advised mother to apply for medical coverage for herself and in November she applied for the Self-Discount Program at Mandalay Bay Clinic for herself and she is now enrolled in the program.

This is a great story of assisting a mother and her child while addressing the protective factors of concrete supports in the time of need, social connections, knowledge of parenting and child development as well as parental resilience. It also represents significant collaboration and persistence in working with this family.

### **Moorpark/Simi Valley Nfl**

This past year we have had the opportunity to work with a family in a unique situation. The infant had been left with the grandmother and the mother never returned. The infant's mother was eventually placed into a rehabilitation facility under court order, leaving the child without either of his parents. The child's grandmother had recently moved back into her own home after being away for months while caring for her ex-husband who was diagnosed with cancer. Because of this she had not been working steadily.

She wound up at the Moorpark Family Resource Center while caring for her grandson, desperate for help and looking for services that could assist her and her grandson's situation. She had already been turned away by other agencies and did not know where else to go. The Moorpark Family Resource Center was able to register her grandson for counseling services, Parent and Me classes, and a developmental check. The FRC staff was able to connect the grandmother with kinship services where she was able to work on obtaining guardianship.

Next, she was also looking to secure child care for her grandson so she could go back to work, but found many of the child care centers out of her price range while trying to get back onto her feet. She had spent the past months relying on friends or neighbors that could watch him while she tried to work, but this always wasn't the best or most consistent care. The Moorpark Family Resource Center recommended the Scholarship Program and she was able to complete an emergency petition to receive a year of immediate funding.

Through this process we were also able to assess her child care needs and suggested that she try looking into home child care providers as opposed to preschool centers, since preschool centers typically charge high tuition rates for infant placement. We shared that given the situation and circumstance, her grandson could benefit from being in a homelike center with smaller ratios and one consistent care-giver. Also, as a benefit, home child care providers will typically work with families in financially challenging situations. She was able to enroll her grandson with a home child care provider here in Moorpark that was close to her home and who was willing to work with her variable work schedule in real estate.

With child care secured and our stipend to help ease the cost, she was able to enroll her grandson for 3 full days per week, which allowed her to work and get them on their feet again. She applied and was granted guardianship of her grandson. During this time the grandmother was also referred to CDR and placed on their waiting list. After several months in the Scholarship Program they notified us that her grandson had finally been funded by CDR.

She sent the staff a lovely card giving heartfelt thanks for all the help she received when she felt like nobody else was there for them. Her grandson is currently a happy thriving child who I feel is extremely fortunate to have a grandmother that was determined to find help for them in order to keep them together.



## First 5 Briefings January 2016

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### Association Meeting January 27, 2015

*Note: All Association Meeting handouts are available on the [First 5 Association intranet](#).*

Outgoing association President John Sims welcomed members to the meeting, including new member Gina Daleiden (Yolo). John also recognized and thanked outgoing Executive Committee members: Laurel Kloomok (San Francisco), Martha Hermosillo (Merced) and Kim Gallo (San Diego).

### Annual Elections of the Association Officers

The ballot was distributed and votes were tallied. The slate was unanimously approved.

#### 2016 Executive Committee

President: Sean Casey

Vice President: Janice LeRoux

Secretary/Treasurer: Janis Burger

Advocacy Chair: Christina Altmayer

Communications Chair: Ben Romo

### 2016 Policy Outlook and Governor's Block Grant Proposal

Presentation by Monique Ramos and John Benton with California Strategies, First 5 LA's lobbying firm.

John highlighted that more and more policy is being addressed in the budget. Budget trailer bills will provide more budget detail and should be available in February.

John also highlighted that the Governor has defended his anti-poverty record, both during the budget release and state of the state address. Governor Brown has highlighted several state investments in the area of health, education, EITC, etc. as anti-poverty efforts.

The Governor's priorities reflect several key messages: keep the promises that you've made and don't make commitments we can't keep long term, save for a rainy day and invest in routine

maintenance before expanding long term commitments.

Monique highlighted that the childcare and ECE block grant proposals are separate and not dependent. The block grant proposes to take all the money currently being spent on early 5's and 4's and repackage it as a \$1.6B block grant, allocated to LEAs directly.

- This is not an ADA-based program and does not grow Prop 98.
- The proposal also includes a hold harmless component.
- The Department of Finance will hold a formal stakeholder input process.

Cal Strat emphasized that the question is whether there is political will to make this (or another approach) happen. The Speaker-elect has background in Early Education and the Women's Caucus especially has been very vocal on early care and learning.

This may be an opportunity to have a productive conversation about an early learning system. First 5s should contribute to the conversation. We have a unique perspective on topics such as quality and can highlight key issues for consideration by the administration as they move forward in thinking about implementation.

On the 115B Waiver, John highlighted the Dental Transformation Initiative and the Prime proposal, which includes a perinatal requirement which may be an opportunity for home visiting and other investments.

### QRIS Conversation with Members

Attendees broke up into groups to discuss quality and QRIS investments. They were asked to address several questions concerning quality and our efforts to effectively communicate our work in this area to elected official and decision makers.

**Table Highlights:**

- Highlight the K-12 conversation: if older children deserve quality and significant investments in the K-12 system, so do younger children.
- Focus on the unique F5 role: continuing to be the “quality people” and conveners that pull the system together.
- Focus on the matrix and consider urge for investments to increase capacity, such as community college course on the matrix.
- Think about ways to explicitly demonstrate the changes that QRIS can have in a community.
- Available infrastructure has an impact on capacity to achieve quality.
- Need to sell the concept without being spread too thin – many First 5s have other priorities, but can still be a lead on this issue in their community.
- We are all at different places and understanding of the matrix varies.
- Is the QRIS sustainable? Can we all work toward a statewide QRIS?
- Need to also maintain 0-3 year olds in the conversation; the whole system goes beyond preschool.
- Many small counties are at the starting point on QRIS; so the First 5 is the driving force in their community; they are tasked with moving the discussion forward.

**Adoption of New Dues Schedule for 2016-17**

Moira walked through the dues proposal for 2016-2017. She highlighted the Association’s current revenue and projected shortfall. Efforts to make-up for the shortfall in the future include an increase in dues and the creation of the voluntary policy and communications fund.

The policy and communications fund is not based on county size or birthrate but on county ability to contribute to the Association’s core functions. Invoices will include an optional contribution opportunity so that counties can specify a contribution to the fund. For counties, who need a unique invoice, customized invoices are available. The fund goal is \$50-\$75K. The dues increase was unanimously approved.

**Association Advocacy Planning**

Alexis presented the 2016 Policy Agenda, noting that the agenda was developed over many months, with support from the Executive Committee, the Advocacy Committee, and conversations with Executive Directors. The Policy Agenda is a framework for our broad advocacy work. As we look at specific policy proposals, including legislative and administrative strategies, and consider whether to support, we will be asking whether the proposal fits within this framework.

We encourage feedback from county commissions – as you review the agenda, we want to hear if there are specific proposals you would make, based on what you are funding or learning at the local level.

Alexis highlighted some of the key opportunities in the year ahead:

- California Home Visiting Summit in August (with CDPH)
- Working with state leaders on the “poverty agenda” as it overlaps with our local family strengthening work
- Building on a recent report with Health Management Associates on engaging with managed care plans around developmental screening
- Showcasing Help Me Grow data
- State Oral Health Plan
- Board of Equalization licensing fee

Alexis also reviewed 2016 policy and advocacy materials – the materials that counties and stakeholders will have to share with policy makers on key areas as well as the Association website. All these materials will be available on the website and intranet.

**Advocacy Day – April 5, 2016**

Capitol Advocacy Day has been confirmed for Tuesday, April 5<sup>th</sup>

Alexis discussed current planning and highlighted opportunities for engagement leading up to Advocacy Day. We encourage you to invite your staffer/legislator to a lunchtime event focusing on early identification and intervention. We will be

releasing a short video on the topic and are looking for counties who have “star” families. There will also be a photo exhibit on the first floor capitol hallway. We are looking for counties that can contribute photos and clients quotes. First 5 CA would like to bring the Express Van to the Capitol. Former commissioners will be invited to participate in Advocacy Day.

### **Webinar on Ballot Measures**

A webinar focused on First 5’s and Ballot Measures is scheduled for Feb 2 from 10 to 11am. The webinar is open to First 5 staff, commissioners, and county counsel. If members are not able to attend they are encouraged to submit questions in advance of the webinar.

### **First 5 Indicators and Annual Data Project**

Maira presented the First 5 Indicators and Annual Data Project. The project is an effort to increase coordination of data collection in order to more effectively tell the First 5 statewide story. The project will include an annual report redux and the creation of statewide indicators. The key indicators portion of the project would happen regardless of annual report update, but because First 5 CA is very interested in pursuing both, we will be working together to complete the full scope of the proposal. Four keys areas of data will need to be harnessed to tell our story: population level indicators, systems level indicators, services data, and demographic data. Ideally, we’d like to see sub-proposals by mid-May in each of these four areas.

The Association will bring together a representative group of counties to provide input over the next few months. A consultant will provide overall project consulting and management. We will also bring in experts in each of the four areas to inform the decision making of the group.

The Executive Committee has committed to finding resources for the consultant. We may need additional resources to fund the experts. First 5 CA is also considering whether they can offer some financial support for the project.

The project kick-off meeting will take place on May 16/17 at F5 Santa Clara. This initial meeting is for

planning purposes, we are not yet in the implementation phase.

### **First 5 California Updates with Camille Maben**

Camille reported on tomorrow’s State Commission Meeting. Erin Gabel will provide a budget and legislative update from the First 5 CA perspective. The Commission will approve the annual report, discuss the Smoker Helpline, vote on the Trusted Messenger proposal, hear more about the Town Hall proposal, and will learn about the status of home visiting, nationally, across CA and at the local level. The Commission will also preview the TRS media campaign which includes “How Did I Get Here” Stories. This campaign will go further to include the trusted messenger component and integration of TRS into other state programs. The launch event will take place on Monday, 2/1 in Sacramento.

### **Regional Reports and Updates**

The Sacramento region is hosting a regional commissioners convening focused on systems change. The event will include a wide array of speakers who will help the region rethink the way that are engaging in systems change work.

The Bay Area, Northeast, Northwest and Central Valley regions all reported that IMPACT and hub planning has been a prominent topic during recent regional discussions.

The Central Valley is working on developing a partnership with Valley Children’s Hospital to spread Help Me Grow across the valley.

Given recent events, San Bernardino is addressing community trauma via a new campaign focused on community violence. The campaign will also address ACEs scores.

Sean Casey, new Association President, closed the meeting with a thanks for voting in favor of the dues increase. He highlighted how far we’ve gotten as an Association and how we will be able to continue this level of good work. He thanks John Sims for his leadership and Association staff for their work on behalf of members. Sean is looking forward to a great year ahead.

### State Commission Meeting January 28, 2016

*Note: All Commission Meeting handouts are available on the [First 5 CA website](#).*

Commission Chair George Halvorson made opening remarks regarding efforts to improve and increase impact on the communities we serve. He highlighted his recent visits to legislators and other state leaders. He also announced that he has a rewrite of his "Three Key Years" book, with a new addendum on the first three months. As he explained, "children who are hungry and fed, anxious and comforted build a different brain chemistry than children are hungry and **not** fed and anxious and **not** comforted."

Commissioner Collis reported on a new public campaign - [www.endchildpovertyca.org](http://www.endchildpovertyca.org) - to inform Californians about the dimensions of child poverty in California, noting that we have the highest percentage and number of children in poverty in the United States. The website highlights the proven interventions that support children in poverty. He noted that we are short 450,000 home visiting slots and 750,000 childcare slots in California, and "the work we are doing via First 5 is just scratching the surface."

### Executive Director's Report

Camille recognized the death of Patty Siegel at the end of last year. Patty was one of First 5 CA's first Commissioners and the founder of the California Resource and Referral Network. As Camille noted, Patty was "truly a force for children in California ... She was a remarkable woman and we all learned so much from her."

Camille also thanked John Sims for his leadership of the Association over the past two years, and acknowledged the election of Sean Casey, First 5 Contra Costa. She thanked John for his leadership and frequent good advice.

Camille provided an update on the IMPACT effort. Among the accomplishments in the last quarter are: certified reliability for 46 individuals on the ERS and statewide training for 93 assessors in CLASS.

The state is starting to think about the Dual Language Learner pilot, and have held two input meetings to convene a working group of experts to provide feedback on this work together. The next step will be a survey in early February to stakeholders to understand what's underway in the state.

She reported that the policy staff have spent the week in the Capitol with Commissioners Halvorson, Icenhower, and Iseri, talking to legislators. Finally, she updated Commissioners on the briefing for legislative staff on QRIS with county representatives.

### Association Report

Moira Kenney presented the Association Report, with an update on the key planned activities for 2016 in three areas:

- Policy Development
- Capacity Building and Peer Support
- Advocacy and Communications

#### Policy Development

- We are continuing our push to ensure every child 0-3 receives the developmental screenings mandated under the ACA. Building on last year's legislative support, we are continuing our work with the Department of Health Care Services, and expanding our work this winter to engage managed care organizations in the largest counties, to understand the barriers to incorporating screening in well-child visits.
- We are teasing out what, from our intensive QRIS efforts of the last decade, is sustainable in California. Our commissions are both visionary and pragmatic, and we seek to blend the visionary work of QRIS with the on-the-ground realities of school districts, mixed delivery systems, and an under-resourced workforce
- We are working with the California Home Visiting Program on their August Conference, and using this opportunity to deepen our work with CDPH, DSS and other partners on home visiting system building.
- We are participating in the state Oral Health Plan development, sharing our knowledge of

the access to care issues faced by children in every county.

**Capacity Building and Peer Support**

- Our counties are focused on the planning, proposals, and prospects for the IMPACT work ahead. Some of our counties are just getting started, while others are hitting their second decade. First 5 commissions are grappling with how to use this important work to build a coherent and sustainable system of quality programs for children in CA.
- We are continuing to expand the number of counties building Help me Grow systems. We are now hearing from Public Health Department that they also see HMG as a model for early intervention systems, and expect to add as many as five counties as Help Me Grow affiliates in 2016.
- We are beginning to look ahead to the conversations we will have with you about small county augmentations, to ensure the continued statewide-ness of our First 5 work.

**Advocacy and Communications**

- We are launching an effort to identify a core list of child outcome indicators that tell the First 5 story. Alongside this effort, we are beginning to explore the possibility of refining the Annual Report so that it more accurately reflects the investments being made at the local level.
- We are growing our capacity as an advocacy organization, providing support to county commissions as they connect with legislators. We are continuing our efforts to identify champions, within and alongside our First 5 commissions who can share in our work to elevate conversations about early childhood.
- We are planning for our third Advocacy Day – scheduled for April 5<sup>th</sup> here at the Capitol. We are working with counties on a photo exhibit, video on early intervention efforts, and reception with our commission/legislators. We extend a warm invite to all of you join us for a day of visits.
- We will continue to work with all of you to build the First 5 movement.

Commissioners had a number of comments on the Association report. Commissioner Collis encouraged the Association to highlight best practices across managed care organizations, explore recent efforts integrating oral health care into pediatric settings, and to consider using the Promise Neighborhood indicators. Commissioner Icenhower encouraged us to consider child AND families outcomes as we pursue the indicator project. Commissioner Davis and Commissioner Pak both commented on the importance of the oral health work, and the coordination with pediatric providers in particular.

**Policy Update**

Erin Gabel provided a number of policy updates, focusing on the Governor’s Budget Proposal. Her report can be accessed [here](#).

Commissioners Iseri and Halvorson both commented on their positive experience visiting legislators. Commissioners Iseri and Icenhower both expressed concern with the Governor’s proposal and the way it might disrupt the IMPACT effort. Erin Gabel emphasized that we need to be able to talk with one voice, with our partners, about the system we are trying to build. First 5 CA will promote increased access to preschool, and she said that the Governor’s proposal eliminates an entitlement, disrupts the systems, and other core tenets. Commissioner Collis encouraged staff to reach out beyond the usual Capitol leaders

**Committee Assignments**

Commissioners made no changes in the committee assignments.

**Annual Report**

Commissioners unanimously approved the Annual Report. Copies are being mailed to Commissions.

**California Smoker’s Helpline**

Sarah Neville-Morgan presented the request to renew the contract for the California’s Smoker’s Helpline – totaling \$5.6 million over four years.

Here are some highlights from her presentation:

#### Overview of Smoking Impacts on Young Children

- One in 11 California infants are exposed to tobacco prenatally
- Cigarette smoking during pregnancy causes pregnancy complications and increases the risk of health problems in newborns
- Exposure to low levels of tobacco particulates are associated with cognitive deficits and lower reading scores in children.
- Exposure to tobacco can have devastating effects on children's health, including asthma, low-birth weight, SIDS, and obesity.

#### Helpline Services

- Evidence-based tobacco cessation services are provided at no cost to smokers in six of the most prevalent languages spoken in California, seven days a week with a web-portal available 24 hours a day.
- Helpline callers complete an intake interview and then select a self-help kit or kit and counseling services.
- Eligible First 5 callers are offered nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) as an adjunct to counseling.
- Helpline outreach targets and trains pediatricians through the Clinical Effort Against Secondhand Smoke (CEASE) intervention.

#### Service Reach (July 2013-June 2015)

- Provided intake services for 13,181 pregnant smokers and tobacco using parents or caregivers of children ages 0 to 5
- Provided multi-session counseling to 7,670 First 5-targeted participants
- Provided CEASE training to 130 sites in southern and central California
- Filled 8,743 four-week patch kit orders

There was a great deal of discussion on the Smoker's Helpline proposal from numerous commissioners. Commissioner Davis recused himself from the item as he serves on the Advisory Committee for the CEASE component.

Commissioner Pak asked questions about the objectives of the program and whether the CA program is meeting those targets and whether these targets are on par with other states. Commissioner Halvorson also asked about the approaches used by the Helpline and whether they are appropriately talking about abstinence.

Helpline and CDPH representatives explained that calls to the Helpline increase dramatically when First 5 CA runs a media campaign targeting the danger of second hand smoke. Overall, however, the Helpline has always exceeded its targets.

Commissioners Iseri and Collis both asked questions about the changing research on e-cigarettes and whether the Helpline is accurately reflecting the current research. There was a robust discussion about the current research and the approaches the Helpline and CEASE programs take with e-cigarette users.

Moira Kenney made comments on the critical role of the Helpline for our families, the statutory requirements that the State Commission educate the public about the dangers of smoking, and the use of the Helpline as a resource by our commissions.

Other speakers reinforced the presentation on the power of the program. The contract was unanimously approved.

#### Trusted Messengers

Erin Gabel presented the proposal for a two-year, \$2 million Trusted Messengers campaign that will fund state-wide and/or national organizations to facilitate the delivery of the TRS message to specific parent audiences via individual trusted messengers who are members of these organizations and to focus on organizational change to incorporate early childhood into their organizational activities in an on-going way.

She emphasized that they will require state level organizations to coordinate their activities at the local level with First 5 commissions and will work with the Association to ensure this coordination happens in the RFA.

Applicants must be independent state or national membership organizations that represent a specific membership of individuals that have direct one-on-one interactions with the target population of parents and caregivers with children ages 0 to 5, with a priority for reaching low-income parents and caregivers. Among the targets for the campaign are organizations that represent:

- Medical professionals
- Child care providers and teachers
- Faith-based leaders
- Social services providers

Up to 10 organizations will be selected in Spring 2016. The proposal was approved.

### **Town Hall**

Erin Gabel also provided an update on the “First 5 Town Hall Toolkit” which is intended to aid interested First 5 county commissions in successfully engaging in local outreach, planning, and execution of First 5 town hall events, including:

- Development and dissemination of an online Toolkit that includes town hall issue papers and step-by-step instructions on how to execute a successful town hall event
- Technical assistance (TA) to aid in implementing the Toolkit and executing First 5 town hall events
- One-time funding offered to select county commissions to support the costs of related local public relations outreach efforts and execution of First 5 town hall events

The Toolkit and TA are intended to serve as a support for interested First 5 county commissions to engage with their local, state, and federal elected officials and build public will for the First 5 mission, efforts, and investments at the local level.

### **Home Visiting**

Presentations on National and State home visiting were made by: Giannina Perez (Children Now), Kristen Rogers (California Department of Public Health), Stacey Scarborough (Venice Family Clinic),

Molly DesBaillets (First 5 Mono), and Moira Kenney. The presentations are available [here](#). Moira’s slides are available on the [intranet](#). Moira also shared a Nurse Family Partnership video from First 5 Sonoma, which is available on [YouTube](#).

### **Talk Read Sing Update**

Diane Levin and Renee Fraser presented an overview on Phase 2 of the Talk, Read Sing campaign. The campaign’s new tag line is Talk, Read, Sing – It Changes Everything.

The campaign seeks to:

- Motivate parents while empowering them through story telling and sharing.
- Saturate the airwaves and online space with Talk. Read. Sing. conversation.
- Utilize new and innovative media outlets to disseminate messaging and reinforce positive behavior change.
- Synergistically offer tips and reminders on how to Talk. Read. Sing. through website and social media content.

### **Transitional Kindergarten Evaluation**

Researchers from the American Institutes for Research (AIR) will present [key findings](#) of the first impact report for the Transitional Kindergarten study. The study included more than 2,700 students in 20 California school districts.

Key findings show:

- Transitional Kindergarten has a significant impact on students’ pre-literacy and literacy skills.
- Students who attended Transitional Kindergarten outperformed their peers in mathematics at the beginning of kindergarten.
- Students who attended Transitional Kindergarten also have an edge in executive function, but no detectable advantage in teacher-rated social-emotional skills.

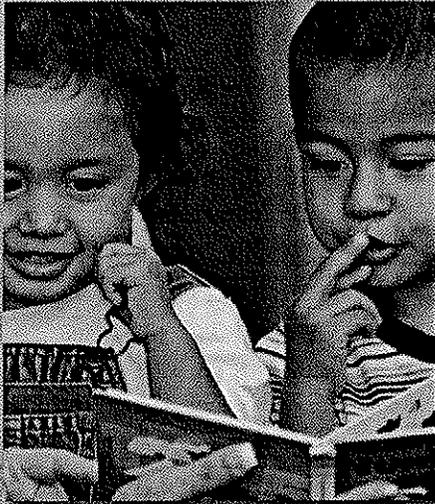
Future reports will examine whether effects persist throughout Kindergarten, impacts for different groups of students (such as English learners), and characteristics of Transitional Kindergarten that affect kindergarteners’ skills the most.











## INNOVATION OF NOTE

In Ventura County there are 11 **Neighborhoods for Learning (NFLs)** that operate as platforms for implementing community-based early learning, health and family strengthening services. Each NFL has its own governing board and lead contract agency, most often a school district.

Over the past 15 years, the initiative has primarily evolved through ever-expanding partnerships, integration of services in community-based settings and increasing parent participation. NFL resources may include early learning activities for children birth to age three, preschools or preschool scholarships and family resource centers. Through partnerships with the Ventura County Health Care Agency and other local organizations, First 5 Ventura County provides community-based access to health services, dental treatment, developmental check-ups, behavioral health and parent education. Parents access these resources through their local NFL, reducing barriers and increasing access to essential services.

### EARLY CHILDHOOD-LINC

An initiative of the Center for the Study of Social Policy, Early Childhood-LINC (Learning and Innovation Network for Communities) is developed by and for communities. Our mission is to support families and improve results for young children in communities across the country with a focus on accelerating the development of effective, integrated, local early childhood systems.

## MEASURES OF PROGRESS

### APPROACH

First 5 Ventura County's Results-Based Accountability framework incorporates desired outcomes, indicators used to measure progress and accountability frameworks to monitor programmatic investments. In FY 2014-15, the Commission implemented a point-in-time parent survey to assess the overall impact of First 5 Ventura County services, along with program improvement surveys to provide quality feedback to First 5 funded partners. Annual reports are issued by the Commission to ensure optimal allocation of public resources, continuous quality improvement, and to guide strategic decision-making.

### INDICATOR

A 2014-2015 point-in-time survey of parents receiving services found: Services are reaching those families who are most likely to benefit from services:

- 65% of children are birth to three
- 33% of the parents/caregivers reported having less than a high school education
- Only 17% had a Bachelor's degree or higher
- Almost half of families earned less than \$20,000 per year

In addition:

- 97% of families report having health insurance and a usual place of care
- 78% of families report having a regular dentist and having taken their child for a dental exam
- 71% of families report reading to their children 3-6 days per week, with parents who receive more services reporting higher reading rates
- 70% of children were school ready in all domains measured by the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP), exhibiting an overall 50% growth rate since entering preschool

## STRUCTURE & LEADERSHIP

First 5 Ventura County is governed by a nine-member Commission that includes a cross-section of public and private stakeholders. A strong committee structure is also in place to assure regular community input and to fully vet issues related to the Commission's administrative practices, investments in current programs and continuous identification of gap areas.

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

At the community level, each of the NFLs has its own governing board made up of community representatives, including a minimum of two parent members. First 5 Ventura County also invests in parent leadership training countywide to further build parent confidence and to prepare parents for leadership opportunities in their community. Close to 60 parents have been trained, with 16 having also participated in a "Train the Trainer" series.

## FINANCING

The bulk of First 5 Ventura County's funding comes from the state tobacco tax revenues created through Proposition 10. As anticipated, this has become a declining revenue source. Therefore, the Commission has augmented these resources through leveraged funding from state and federal grant sources (e.g., Race to the Top—Early Learning Challenge). The Commission's funded partners also utilize Prop 10 dollars to draw down additional federal and state funds, which contribute toward the program as matching funds. A small proportion of the total budget comes from private foundations for specific projects.