



First 5 Ventura County FAQ

Q. I heard there are changes coming to First 5 Ventura County. Will it remain open?

A. Yes, First 5 Ventura County (F5VC) will remain open and will continue providing valuable programs, resources and community partnerships to support early childhood development. Voters made kids a priority in 1998 by passing Proposition 10, and since then F5VC has invested more than \$195 million locally to ensure our county's youngest children have the best start in life possible. We have piloted new programs and built comprehensive systems of care for children prenatal – 5 and their families in Ventura County.

Q. How is F5VC funded?

A. F5VC is largely funded through the California Children and Families Act (Proposition 10), a tobacco tax dedicated to developing locally managed resources and systems that improve health and education for children prenatal – 5. In addition to tobacco tax revenues, F5VC is funded through leveraged state and federal dollars, grants, and charitable donations.

Q. Why are budgets being reduced and what changes are happening to F5VC programs?

A. The Proposition 10 tax on tobacco products has been steadily declining as anticipated. For the last few years, the Commission (F5VC's governing body) has augmented Prop 10 revenues through a designated "sustainability fund." The Commission made the decision to spend the remainder of the sustainability fund to maintain current service levels for as many years as possible, rather than cutting program budgets every year. This sustainability fund will be exhausted by the end of FY 2018-19. These planned funding reductions will result in budgeted local investments changing from approximately \$11 million today to \$6.5 million in FY 2019-21 and to \$5.3 million in FY 2021-26.

Q. Will F5VC programs continue to be offered?

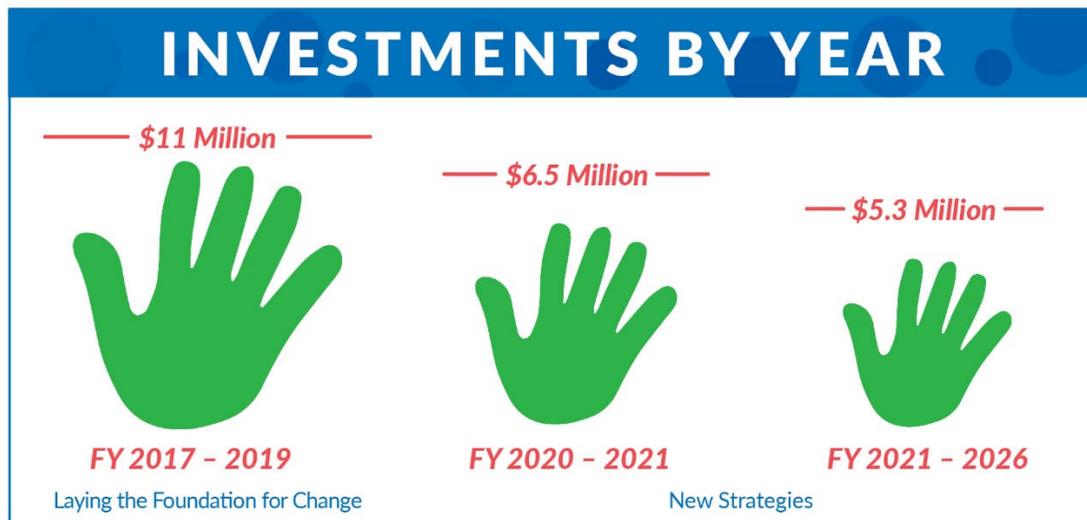
A. YES! Even with upcoming planned funding reductions, we will **continue to positively impact forever** the lives of Ventura County children. We are committed to keeping the innovation going with continued investments in: Parent and Child Together classes, family support services, early identification of developmental concerns, and preschool so that when children reach kindergarten they are ready to learn!



Q. Have F5VC funding levels beyond the 2019 fiscal year been determined?

A. Yes, after an in-depth review of current investments, innovative services, outcomes, and stakeholder input, the F5VC Commission **voted to adopt a new long-term financial plan** that will continue our significant investment in early childhood education:

- **\$6.5 million in Fiscal Years 2019-21**
- **\$5.3 million in Fiscal Years 2021-26.**



Q. How will future F5VC funding be invested?

A. The new long-term financial plan invests **\$2.9 million annually for Parent and Child 0-3 Together (PACT)** and Family Support Services for FY 2019-26. In addition, F5VC will maintain an annual investment of approximately **\$1 million in preschool in FY 2019-21**. The remainder of tobacco tax revenues will be invested in systems change, evaluation, program management, and administration.

F5VC is committed to expanding our partnerships with foundations, businesses, parents, and local leaders so together we continue to make sound, lasting investments in our children.

Q. Who makes decisions at F5VC and how are they made?

A. F5VC is an independent public entity governed by a nine member Commission. The Commission determines the overall vision and general direction for F5VC. Staff refines the details and manages day-to-day operations.

F5VC relies on our **Guiding Principles** for decision making.

- Focus on prevention and early intervention
- Prioritize prenatal – first three years
- Invest in services no one else funds
- Invest with sufficient intensity to achieve outcomes.
- Focus on those most likely to benefit.



Q. When will decisions be made?

A. We anticipate the Commission will select a program service model in June or July of 2018. Staff will work with community partners on the implementation details over the next year. No changes will take effect until July 1, 2019.

Q. Which F5VC programs will be impacted?

A. Based on our Guiding Principles, the Commission has renewed our commitment to offering programming for children ages 0 – 3, particularly through Parent and Child Together classes. In addition, we will invest \$1 million annually in preschool spaces for Fiscal Years 2019–20 and 2020-21.

Q. Have the final program models been selected?

A. No, a streamlined implementation model is expected to be selected by the Commission in June or July 2018. Staff will work with community partners on the implementation details over the next year.

Q. How will F5VC keep partners updated on the Commission’s decisions?

A. Keeping our partners, parents, and community members informed is very important to F5VC. For additional information and to view the latest updates, please visit <http://www.first5ventura.org/updates> or email assistant@first5ventura.org and ask to be placed on our mailing list. We will also post updates on our Facebook page – www.facebook.com/first5ventura

Q. Will F5VC continue to provide programs for children and families prenatal - 5?

A. Yes. Science tells us that 90% of a child’s brain is developed by age 5, and that children are affected by experiences from early on, even before birth. We believe ages prenatal - 3 are critical for a child’s development and we will continue to dedicate resources to this effort. We will continue to provide Parent and Child Together programs for children ages 0 – 3 and support families in the neighborhoods where they live.

Q. I work at an F5VC funded Neighborhood for Learning. How will this affect me?

A. First, we want to **thank you** for all the work you do on behalf of children 0-5 and their families. We realize how difficult change and not knowing what the future has in store can be. We will have a better idea of how place based services, such as NFLs, will be implemented in June or July when the Commission selects a model. **We value the current talent and capacity of all of our funded partners.** Retaining talent will be a top priority in whichever implementation model is selected. Please remember that these **changes will not go into effect until July 1, 2019.**

While we are working on the details of the new implementation models with our community partners, we will be in continuous contact through email, our website www.first5ventura.org/updates, and social media. Staff are also encouraged to join us at Coffee and Conversations on Friday mornings. Please email assistant@first5ventura.org for details.

Q. Will F5VC provide partners with materials to educate parents about changes?

A. Yes. F5VC is developing informational materials including FAQ's and information for parents and partners regarding any changes. Providing the best programs possible with the funding available will continue to be our top priority.

Q. Will there be supplemental programs or resources that promote children's school readiness?

A. Yes. F5VC will deepen its strategic investments in capacity building efforts to support and strengthen the overall early childhood system of services. We will continue and expand our role as advocates to build and support communities that prioritize the wellbeing of young children and families. In addition, we are reimagining our current service models to best achieve our mission of promoting school readiness.

Q. Will a F5VC representative be available to give a presentation to our parents and stakeholders?

A. Yes! F5VC is committed to supporting our partners, parents and the community during these program changes. We will schedule presentations in the fall and post information on Facebook. Please like our page www.facebook.com/first5ventura/ to stay informed.

Q. What are F5VC's primary goals to ensure children in our community enter school ready to learn?

A. Even with upcoming planned funding reductions, we will continue to positively impact forever the lives of Ventura County children and our local economy.

We will promote school readiness by following our **Guiding Principles**:

- Focus on prevention and early intervention
- Prioritize prenatal – first three years
- Invest in services no one else funds
- Invest with sufficient intensity to achieve outcomes.
- Focus on those most likely to benefit.

That's why F5VC will deliver our innovative and most successful programs for children during the earliest stages of their lives.

There are 60,000 children in Ventura County age 0-5, and what happens to them today will impact all of us tomorrow. Science tells us that 90% of a child's brain is developed by age 5, and that children are affected by experiences from early on, even before birth. We are continuing to lay the foundation for our community's social and economic future through investments in the youngest members of our community.

F5VC will deepen its strategic investments in capacity building efforts to support and strengthen the overall early childhood system of services and expand its role as advocates to build and support communities that prioritize the wellbeing of young children and families.

Q. Who can I contact if I have additional questions?

A. For additional questions please contact:

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