



For Immediate Release

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FIRST 5 Ventura County selects Interface Children & Family Services as new place-based service provider to support the county's nearly 60,000 children, prenatal to age five and their families.

Locally-based social service agency Interface Children & Family Services will support First 5 Ventura County's initiatives to improve children's health, early education, and family support.

First 5 Ventura County (F5VC) is pleased to announce its new strategic partnership with Interface Children & Family Services, to provide essential programs and services for Ventura County's nearly 60,000 children prenatal – 5 and their families. Families seeking resources and more information may visit www.first5ventura.org

"Since our inception nearly 20 years ago, First 5 Ventura County Neighborhoods for Learning (NfLs) have been a cornerstone in the community, providing early childhood education, health and family support services." said First 5 Ventura County Executive Director Petra Puls. "We are excited to partner with Interface Children & Family Services to ensure that families have the support they need to give their young children prenatal to age 5 a strong foundation for success in school and life."

Interface Children & Family Services was selected through a comprehensive review process to implement F5VC's redesigned place-based Neighborhood for Learning (NfL) initiative. The expanded partnership with Interface Children & Family Services allows F5VC to continue making a positive impact on the lives of Ventura County children and families through valuable programs, resources and community partnerships that support early childhood development.

Interface will be responsible for providing Parent and Child Together Classes and Family Support Services such as case management and Triple P Parent Education, throughout Ventura County. Interface plans to partner with the Mixteco Indigena Community Organizing Project (MICOP) to address the needs of Mixtec families and New Dawn for the Triple P Positive Parenting Program. "We're delighted to have First 5 Ventura's confidence to implement the redesigned place-based NfL model. We're looking forward to the partnership – we share an intense passion for improving futures for young families and their little ones. We are honored to partner with NfL's, to learn from their trusted and successful histories in their local communities, and to do our part to bring everyone together for the critical work of strengthening young children and families," said Interface Executive Director Erik Sternad.

First 5's primary revenue source is from California's Proposition 10 tobacco tax, which is distributed to county First 5 Commissions to fund early childhood programs. In light of revenues continuing to decrease annually with Californians smoking less, the F5VC Commission has carefully contemplated how to best utilize its limited funds. The redesigned Neighborhoods for Learning initiative gives F5VC the ability to implement a cost-efficient model that meets the needs of the local community, and relies on sustainable investments and innovative partnerships. "We recognize that we must work differently moving forward to achieve maximum impact with limited dollars," said Puls.

"The First 5 Ventura County Commission has the responsibility and honor of being a steward of Ventura County's Proposition 10 tobacco tax revenues. With this partnership we will be able to bring a systems approach to the delivery of early childhood education programs and services throughout the county that continues to honor the uniqueness of each neighborhood. We look forward to the opportunity to deepen our collaboration with Interface around 2-1-1 information and referral, parenting support, mental health services, and early learning support," said Barbara Marquez-O'Neill, First 5 Ventura County Commission Vice-Chair. "The Commission shares Interface's gratitude to the NfL's for successfully providing services to local communities for 20 years. Together we strive to accomplish our shared vision of a 'future where all Ventura County children thrive in healthy supported environments.'"

For additional information and to view the latest updates, please visit <http://www.first5ventura.org/updates> or email assistant@first5ventura.org

About Interface Children & Family Services

Interface Children & Family Services is Ventura County's most comprehensive non-profit social service agency offering 24 distinct programs with 10 evidence-based practices. Founded in 1973, Interface works to prevent and heal the effects of child abuse, neglect and abandonment; domestic violence; family conflict and mental health issues; and administers justice involved intervention and prevention services. Interface has pioneered several programs including ranking among the first to open a domestic violence shelter in California and launching the state's first 2-1-1 call center. Currently, the agency serves approximately 42,000 local individuals annually and connects 250,000 people to a vast network of health and human services in 19 counties through operation of the 2-1-1 information and referral system helpline.

This important work is sustained through donations and grants from individuals and organizations, as well as by the work of dedicated volunteers and staff. For more information please contact Interface Children & Family Services at 4001 Mission Oaks Blvd, Suite I, Camarillo, CA 93012 by telephone at 805.485.6114 or visit www.icfs.org.

About First 5 Ventura County

Research shows that a child's brain develops most dramatically in the first five years and what parents and caregivers do during these years to support their child's growth will have a

significant impact throughout life. Based on this research, California voters passed Proposition 10 in 1998, adding a 50 cents-per-pack tax on tobacco to support programs for expectant parents and children ages 0 to 5. First 5 Ventura County distributes more than \$10 million each year to programs and services that support children's health, learning and families, including the 11 community-based Neighborhoods for Learning (NfLs). More information at www.first5ventura.org. ###