
SYSTEMS CHANGE

ACTION PLAN



TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
BACKGROUND	2
WHY CHANGE SYSTEMS?	3
PURPOSE OF THIS PLAN	4
RESULT 12: STRENGTHENED SYSTEMS	5
Desired Result.....	5
Potential Strategies	5
RESULT 13: EXPANDED SYSTEMS.....	6
Desired Result.....	6
Potential Strategies	6
RESULT 14: INTEGRATED SYSTEMS.....	7
Desired Result.....	7
Potential Strategies	7
RESULT 15: SUSTAINED SYSTEMS	8
Desired Result.....	8
Potential Strategies	8
NEXT STEPS	9
ATTACHMENT 1: EXAMPLE SYSTEMS CHANGE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.....	10
ATTACHMENT 2: EXAMPLE SYSTEMS CHANGE MEASUREMENT PLAN.....	12

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

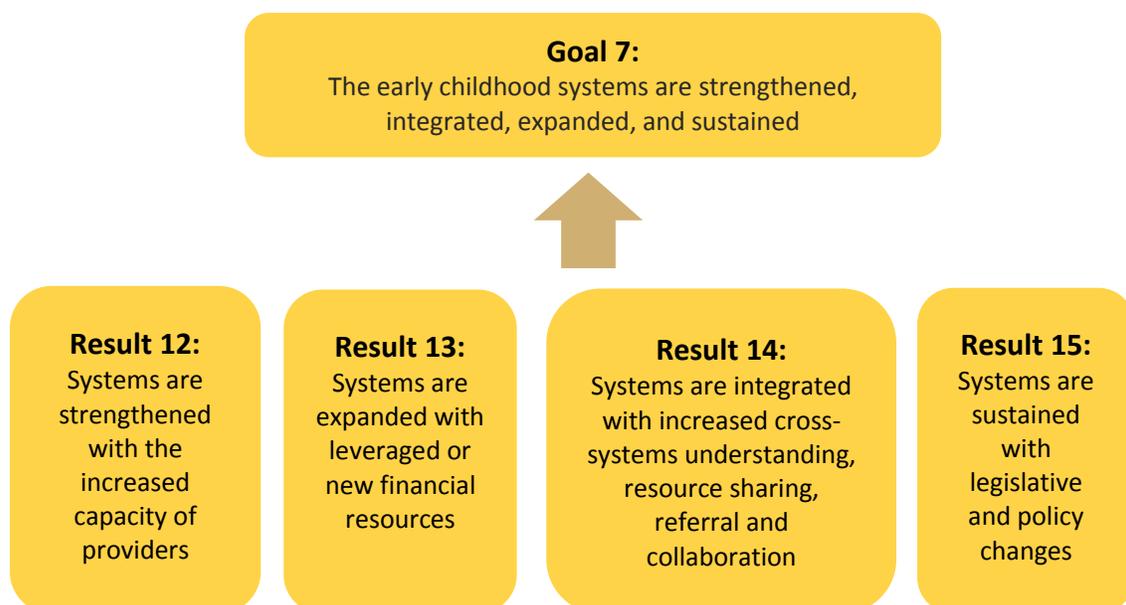
In December 2015, First 5 Solano approved a 2016 Strategic Plan Update to set the parameters for the investments to be made over the next five years. These investments are targeted at making an impact in four priority areas: *Health and Well-Being, Early Childhood Learning and Development, Family Support and Parent Education, and Systems Change.*

First 5 Solano's Systems Change priority area's stated goal is that early childhood systems are strengthened, integrated, expanded and sustained. This is in support of an effort to 1) reduce First 5 costs across the portfolio by seeking greater efficiencies in service delivery, cost sharing, and by leveraging with other systems, and 2) strengthen the early care systems in the county to better serve children aged 0-5 and their families.

Why is systems change crucial for First 5 Solano at this time? First 5 Solano's funding from tax revenue as well as spend-down on reserves mirror the statewide trends among First 5's in terms of gradual revenue reductions. Additionally, a 2016 study on foundation funding found that Solano County ranks last of all Bay Area counties when it comes to foundation funding: there is just \$3 spent per Solano resident compared to \$22 per Napa resident and \$320 per Alameda resident. However, while resources are constricted, demand for many early childhood services has *not* declined. This diminished supply and steady demand compels First 5 Solano to find new, more efficient ways to maintain high quality, accessible services with fewer resources. Secondly, beyond the reaches of First 5's portfolio, we strive to strengthen the broader early care systems in the county to promote better outcomes for all children aged 0-5 and their families.

First 5 Solano's goal is that early childhood systems are strengthened, integrated, expanded and sustained.

First 5 Solano's desired results are presented below:



BACKGROUND

This Systems Change Action Plan is the culmination of over 15 years of First 5 Solano’s work in the community in both direct services and at the system level. First 5 Solano has provided millions of dollars in prevention and early intervention programs to nonprofit and public agencies serving families with children aged 0-5 since 1999. However, the predictable decline in Proposition 10 tobacco tax funding and the intentional spend down of the Commission’s reserves have left the Commission in a position whereby they must reduce their funding to meet ongoing revenues. This decline of First 5 funding will leave a detrimental void in the community if there are no further efforts to sustain early childhood services that the Commission has been supporting.

An initial attempt at addressing the declining revenue was First 5 Futures. Adopted in 2011, First 5 Futures was a 5-year strategic priority aimed to sustain and expand the early childhood system using three approaches: secure foundation and government grants; obtain corporate grants and strengthen business relationships; pursue policy and legislative changes. This program was found to be too narrowly focused to make a significant impact, as the greater system requires more than a single stakeholder carrying out sustainability efforts to make systemic improvements. However, there were lessons learned and successful strategies that are incorporated throughout this new Systems Change Action Plan.

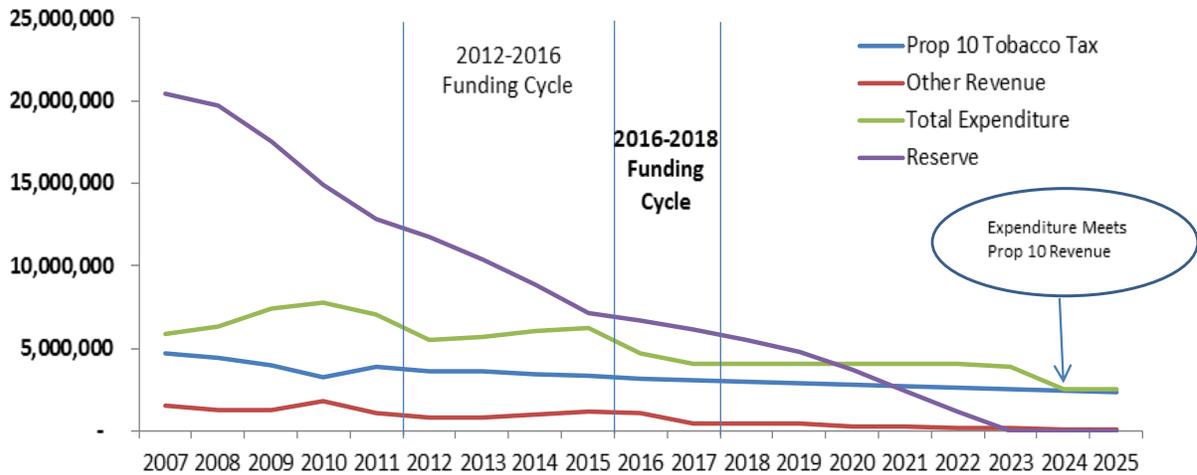
A more evolved pre-cursor to this Systems Change Action Plan is the Solano Kids Thrive Collective Impact initiative. In August 2014, the Commission funded a 3-year Collective Impact Initiative to create a common agenda, shared measures and mutually-reinforcing activities among early childhood providers aimed at strengthening the Solano early childhood system. This initiative is in its second year and has identified numerous activities whereby the resources already available in the community can be better coordinated and aligned to work toward achieving the same set of goals. This Collective Impact work is being incorporated into and cross-walked with the Systems Change Action Plan.



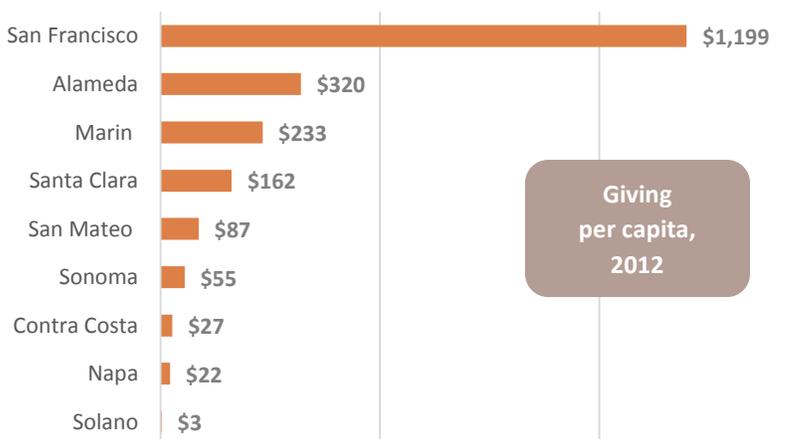
Joseph Tart/EHP

WHY CHANGE SYSTEMS?

First 5 funding across the state is gradually declining due to reductions in tobacco-related tax revenue. In 1998, when the Proposition 10 tobacco tax was initially passed, \$650 million in tax revenue were collected statewide, but this has now decreased to \$350 million. As seen in the figure below, First 5 Solano’s funding from tax revenue (blue line) as well as spend-down on reserves (purple line) mirror the statewide trends in terms of revenue declines.



Additionally, a 2016 study on foundation funding commissioned by the Solano County Board of Supervisors found that the county ranks last of all Bay Area counties when it comes to foundation funding: there is just \$3 spent per capita compared to \$22 per Napa resident, the closest comparable county, and yet that is still 7 times more than is invested in Solano.



Source: (2016) *Foundation Giving in the Bay Area: Where does the giving go?* Applied Survey Research.

In this climate where the supply of resources is constricted (declining First 5 revenue and stagnant foundation funding), demand for early childhood services has *not* declined. While the status of children has improved in the county in the last few years, many indicators of well-being in Solano County, such as child poverty and availability of child care, have not yet improved to pre-recession levels (US Census, 2007-2014; California Resource and Referral Network, 2005-2015).

In short, diminished supply and steady demand compels First 5 Solano to find new, more efficient new ways to provide the same level and reach of high quality services with fewer resources, through sharing or transitioning some program services to other public systems of care (health, social services, education), cost sharing and leveraging, raising new money, or some combination of the above. Secondly, First 5 Solano's funded services reach about 15% of children aged 0-5, which means the remaining 85% may be engaged with other agencies and systems. Therefore, beyond the reaches of First 5's portfolio, we strive to strengthen the broader early care systems in the county to promote better outcomes for all children aged 0-5 and their families.



PURPOSE OF THIS PLAN

In December 2015, First 5 Solano approved a 2016 Strategic Plan update to set the parameters for the investments of the Commission. These investments are targeted at making an impact in four priority areas: *Health and Well-Being, Early Childhood Learning and Development, Family Support and Parent Education, and Systems Change.*

In the 2016 Strategic Plan, the first three priority areas are further defined by community goals, desired results, strategies and metrics for tracking performance and outcomes. The fourth priority area, Systems Change, has been newly rearticulated based on the needs of the Solano County early childhood system. This priority area has a stated goal and four desired results, and the purpose of this plan is to further define and operationalize these into actionable strategies. Specifically, this plan describes:

- The rationale for system change
- The strategies and activities to strengthen our local early childhood systems
- The metrics to show we are effective in doing so
- Steps for implementing systems change

RESULT 1 2: STRENGTHENED SYSTEMS

Desired Result

Systems are strengthened with the increased capacity of providers.

Potential Strategies

- *Increase cultural and linguistic competency of providers.* The needs assessment conducted for the 2016 strategic plan found that families face linguistic barriers in accessing basic services. For instance, key informants noted a lack of mental health practitioners who speak Spanish. To address this problem, activities could include:
 - Help increase the number of *new* bilingual/bicultural staff in the county by encouraging local training institutions to recruit more bilingual/bicultural students and place them in the county (e.g., medical providers, mental health providers).
 - Help increase the competency of *existing* staff through strategies such as cultural competency training or encouraging providers to review their staffing models and re-assign staff that are competent to positions that have direct client contact.

- *Increase organizational capacity of local non-profits serving young children.* Non-profits are at the front-line of the community change. In order to sustain support to the community we share, First 5 Solano seeks to invest in the development of the non-profits in the county who serve young children and their families. Activities may include:
 - Identify the functions that non-profits feel most hinder their efficiency and effectiveness (e.g., bookkeeping, fundraising, staffing, and management).
 - Explore creating pool of shared resources that multiple non-profits can draw from, such as HR, bookkeeping, and information technology.
 - Seek resources to fill the prioritized needs, such as Strategies' sustainability coaching, The Oertel Group's organizational development training and coaching, CompassPoint, and/or Packard's Organizational Effectiveness grants.^{i,ii,iii}

- *Increase cross-training.* Across the various agencies working to meet the needs of young children and their families, there are common competencies that are needed, such as ability to provide trauma-informed care, or conduct child assessments, and yet the sharing of training resources is not formally organized.
 - Create a pool of trainers in topics relevant to several sectors (e.g., Desired Results Developmental Profile, Trauma).
 - Coordinate Train the Trainer sessions.
 - Create a shared training calendar to coordinate training needs across multiple sectors.

RESULT 1 3: EXPANDED SYSTEMS

Desired Result

Systems are expanded with leveraged or new financial resources.

Potential Strategies

- *Find new funding for services.* The 2016 study *Foundation Giving in the Bay Area: Who Wins and Who's Left Behind?* found that foundation funding to local non-profits had not increased since 2006, while funding in many other Bay Area counties had. Moreover, the rate of giving per capita in Solano was the lowest of all Bay Area counties. In short, Solano County does not appear to be bringing in enough new funding to support the needs of children and families. Potential activities to increase the amount of new money coming into the county include:
 - Increase grant-seeking activity of non-profits serving young children and their families (e.g., make better use of First 5 Solano's grant-writing fund, provide training on grant-writing).
 - Share the *Foundation Giving* report with Bay Area funders and learn what they feel it will take to make Solano a more competitive applicant for funding.
- *Find alternative ways to fund services.* There may be opportunities to find alternate, sustained sources of funding for services funded by First 5 Solano, particularly when those funding sources are connected to desired results that are similar to First 5 Solano's. For instance:
 - The Affordable Care Act may cover the cost of developmental screenings.
 - School district early education funding could possibly be accessed to help support the Commission's Priority of Early Childhood Learning and Development.
- *Promote more efficient use of existing resources.* Activities to more efficiently use existing resources could include working across systems or with individual agencies to create more streamlined work flow/business processes, hire and utilize the appropriate level of staff for the appropriate position, and implement more effective models that have a better return on investment (ROI).



RESULT 1 4: INTEGRATED SYSTEMS

Desired Result

Systems are integrated with increased cross-systems understanding, resource sharing, referral and collaboration.

Potential Strategies

- *Identify systemic “hot spots,” or places where there is the greatest fragmentation as families move between systems.* First 5 Solano could facilitate cross-sector meetings to identify areas of system fragmentation, such as when families receive a referral from one provider, but are unable to access treatment from the referred provider, and create “system walk-throughs” or “process maps” to target collaboration break-downs between providers.
- *Use Solano Kids Thrive Collective Impact initiative and Help Me Grow Solano to increase service integration.* First 5 Solano’s Solano Kids Thrive identifies critical services throughout the county for safety, support, education, and health outcomes, and promotes collaboration between these services. Likewise, Help Me Grow’s call center connects families to needed services across sectors.
- *Explore feasibility of a common intake form or intake questions* so providers know what services incoming clients are already engaged in. In addition, the use of common intake questions will make it possible to quantify the extent clients are served across multiple touchpoints in the system.
- *Promote communication between systems.* It is essential that child-serving agencies across systems are coordinated in their programming and policy efforts. For example, the as early care and education and the K-12 system must communicate about the transition of children between systems. Other arenas where increased cross system communication could be promoted is between non-profit and county agencies, hospitals and non-profits, or even between county departments. Similar to the system conversations around the fragmentation families feel, system conversations could be held where providers identify the need to strengthen communication.
- *Promote communication within systems.* Support system-specific forums in which providers of similar services come together and coordinate services and approaches that promote service quality. Examples include the Family Resource Center Network and the Solano Quality Early Learning Consortium.



RESULT 15: SUSTAINED SYSTEMS

Desired Result

Systems are sustained with legislative and policy changes.

Potential Strategies

To achieve the desired results above, First 5 Solano and its partners have identified the following potential strategies:

- *Update lawmakers with briefings about the most pressing needs of Solano children.* First 5 Solano and its partners have an acute, real-time understanding of the needs of children, and the factors contributing to those needs. First 5 Solano can inform lawmakers such as city councilpersons, county supervisors, state assemblypersons and congresspersons about the status of their child and family constituents and recommend ways in which lawmakers can support and invest in improving child and family outcomes.
- *Create and/or support coordinated policy agendas* with policy bodies such as the Children’s Alliance, various legislative committees and the First 5 Association.
- *Pursue Board of Supervisor’s adoption and use of Child Impact Statements.* Santa Clara County adopted the use of such statements in the last decade, and they help ensure that every action taken by the Board of Supervisors is done in recognition of the impact such actions may have on children.



NEXT STEPS

The next steps for rolling out this action plan are:

1. Meet with system and agency stakeholders to review the strategies identified, determine which strategies are of shared interest/priority and engage in the strategies.
2. Define a leadership structure through which First 5 Solano can oversee implementation of this plan.
3. Finalize the Systems Change Implementation Plan, including the priority strategies, necessary partners, activities and timelines. *(See example in Attachment 1).*
4. Finalize the Systems Change Measurement Plan, including process and outcome metrics for each prioritized strategy, data sources and responsible parties. *(See example in Attachment 2).*



ATTACHMENT 1: EXAMPLE SYSTEMS CHANGE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Desired Result / Strategy	Activity	Priority YEAR 1 or 2?	Responsible Party
Systems are strengthened with the increased capacity of providers			
Increase cultural and linguistic competency of providers			
Increase organizational capacity of local non-profits serving young children			
Increase cross-training			
Systems are expanded with leveraged or new financial resources			
Find new funding for services			
Find alternative ways to fund services			
Promote more efficient use of existing resources			
Systems are integrated with increased cross-systems understanding, resource sharing, referral and collaboration			
Identify systemic “hot spots,” or places where there is the greatest system fragmentation			
Use Collective Impact and Help Me Grow to increase service integration			
Explore feasibility of a common intake form or intake questions			
Promote communication <i>between</i> systems			
Promote communication <i>within</i> systems			
Systems are sustained with legislative			

and policy changes			
Update lawmakers with briefings about the most pressing needs			
Create and/or support coordinated policy agendas with other partners			
Pursue Board of Supervisor’s adoption and use of Child Impact Statements			

ATTACHMENT 2: EXAMPLE SYSTEMS CHANGE MEASUREMENT PLAN

Desired Result / Strategy	Process or Outcome Metric	Data Source	Progress
Systems are strengthened with the increased capacity of providers			
Increase cultural and linguistic competency of providers	– Number of service providers who are bilingual	– Agency survey	
Increase organizational capacity of local non-profits serving young children	– Number of organizations and staff who participate in capacity development workshops, by topic	– Training logs	
Increase cross-training	– Number of shared trainers identified – Number of trainings given and participants in each, by topic	– Agency survey – Training logs	
Systems are expanded with leveraged or new financial resources			
Find new funding for services	– Total amount of new grants received	– Budget data	
Find alternative ways to fund services	– Total amount of funds leveraged	– Budget data	
Promote more efficient use of existing resources	– Number of organizations using strategies known to increase ROI	– Agency survey	
Systems are integrated with increased cross-systems understanding, resource sharing, referral and collaboration			
Identify systemic “hot spots,” or places where there is the greatest system fragmentation	– Number of cross-agency referrals	– Agency referral logs – HMG data	
Use Collective Impact and Help Me Grow to increase service integration	– Number of families receiving linkages to needed services	– HMG data	

Explore feasibility of a common intake form or intake questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Number of providers using common intake form 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Agency survey 	
Promote communication <i>between</i> systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Number of cross-sector groups in existence – Number of meetings held between such groups, and attendees at each meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Scan of consortia in county – Meeting logs 	
Promote communication <i>within</i> systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Number of within-sector groups in existence – Number of meetings held, and attendees at each meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Scan of consortia in county – Meeting logs 	
Systems are sustained with legislative and policy changes			
Update lawmakers with briefings about the most pressing needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Number of presentations held – Number of presentation that had a policy outcome within 6 months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Meeting logs – Policy review 	
Create and/or support coordinated policy agendas with other partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Number of meetings held – Number of legislative and policy changes pursued 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Meeting logs – Policy review 	
Pursue Board of Supervisor’s adoption and use of Child Impact Statements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Date of presentation to Board – Board adoption (yes/no) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Meeting logs 	

ⁱ <http://theoertelgroup.org/>. (Patty Oertel)

ⁱⁱ <http://www.familyresourcecenters.net/> Strategies

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.packard.org/what-we-fund/organizational-effectiveness/>