

**POLICY AND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**March 24, 2021 3:30 pm to 5:00 pm**  
**3375 Sonoma Boulevard, Suite 30, Vallejo, CA 94590**

In furtherance of the direction from Governor Newsom (Executive Order N-25-20) and pursuant to the Executive Order issued by Governor Gavin Newsom (Executive Order N-29-20), **public access to the First 5 Solano Committee Meeting will be limited.**

Commissioners and public may attend via remote meeting using the following options:

**Join livestream via Zoom:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5922775330>

**Join via Phone:**

1-669-900-6833

Meeting ID: 592 277 5330

**Public Comments:**

Public Comment may be provided by: During the meeting via the phone/computer audio when the Chair calls for Public Comment on an item; or submitting written public comments to First 5 Solano via email at [cfcsolano@solanocounty.com](mailto:cfcsolano@solanocounty.com) by 12:00pm on the day of the meeting.

**CALL TO ORDER**

**I. Introductions, Public Comment, Commissioner Comment**

**II. Consent Calendar**

**Action**

- A. Approve the March 24, 2021 Policy and Oversight Committee Meeting Agenda
- B. Approve the February 10, 2021 Policy and Oversight Committee Meeting Minutes
- C. Receive the Commissioner Meeting Attendance Status Report

**III. Solano County H&SS Legislative Proposal**

**Information**

Receive a presentation on the Solano County H&SS legislative proposal for TANF Flexibility to Address Issues of Child Neglect  
*Lorraine Fernandez, Program Manager; Jerry Huber, Solano County Health & Social Services Director and First 5 Solano Commissioner*

**IV. Strategic Planning**

**Information**

Review Strategic Planning activities for April 2021 Commission meeting.  
*Michele Harris, Executive Director; Christina Branom, Applied Survey Research*

**V. FY2020/21 Mid-Year Report**

**Information/Discussion**

Receive the FY2020/21 Mid-Year Performance Report  
*Lorraine Fernandez, Program Manager*

**VI. Vallejo First 5 Center – Year 1 Report**

**Information/Discussion**

Receive a Year 1 Report on the Vallejo First 5 Center  
*Megan Richards, Deputy Director; Andrea Azurdia, Vallejo First 5 Center Director*

**VII. Strategic Plan Implementation Updates**

**Information/Discussion**

Receive updates on the following:

- A. Systems Change Implementation Plan Update
- B. Community Engagement Activities Update

*Megan Richards, Deputy Director; Juanita Morales, Program Manager; Lorraine Fernandez, Program Manager*

**VIII. First 5 Solano Staffing and Finance Update**

**Information**

Receive a report on First 5 Solano staffing and financials.

*Megan Richards, Deputy Director*

**IX. Future Agenda Items, Meeting Time/Date/Location**

**Information**

The Policy and Oversight Committee is scheduled to meet next on Monday, May 17, 2021, 3:30 pm to 5:00 pm, at 3375 Sonoma Boulevard, Suite 30, Vallejo, CA. Future agenda items include: Co-Sponsorships of Training and Conferences; Program Update, Strategic Planning, Systems Change Implementation Update; Community Engagement Update; and Staffing and Finance Update

**ADJOURN**

**Vision:** *All Solano County children are loved, healthy, confident, eager to learn, nurtured by their families, caregivers and communities.*

**Mission:** *First 5 Solano Children and Families Commission creates and fosters programs and partnerships with community entities to promote, support and improve the lives of young children, their families and their communities.*

The First 5 Solano Children and Families Commission does not discriminate against persons with disabilities. If you require a disability-related modification or accommodation in order to participate in the meeting, please call (707) 784-1332 at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting to make arrangements. Non-confidential materials related to an item on this Agenda submitted to the Commission are available for public inspection at the First 5 Solano business office, 3375 Sonoma Boulevard, Suite 30, Vallejo, CA, 94590 during normal business hours.

**First 5 Solano Children and Families Commission  
Policy & Oversight Committee (POC) Meeting**

February 10, 2021, 3:30 PM – 5:00 PM  
3375 Sonoma Blvd Ste 30, Vallejo, CA

**Minutes**

Commissioners present (remotely via Zoom video conference): Erin Hannigan, Jennifer Barton, Lisette Estrella-Henderson (arrived 3:40 PM)

Chair Hannigan called the meeting to order at 3:31 PM

**I. Introduction, Public Comment, Commissioner Comment**

There were no public or commissioner comments.

**II. Consent Calendar**

***Motion:***

- A. Approve the February 10, 2021 Policy and Oversight Committee Meeting Agenda
- B. Approve the November 18, 2020 Policy and Oversight Committee Meeting minutes
- C. Receive the Commissioner Meeting Attendance Status Report

**Moved by Commissioner Barton; Seconded by Commissioner Hannigan**

**Approved 2-0-0**

**Yea: Commissioners Barton, Hannigan**

**Nay: None**

**Abstain: None**

**III. Contract Updates**

Gene Ibe, First 5 Solano Program Manager, reported that Parents by Choice had met and exceeded all targets in the first two quarters of Fiscal Year 2020/21 and are no longer in a compliance action plan. Ms. Ibe commended the agency for their positive trajectory. Dottie Nicholson, Parents by Choice Program Manager, shared her excitement with being able to still grow their Triple P Program through the COVID-19 pandemic.

**IV. 2021 First 5 Solano Legislative Platform**

***Motion: Consider a recommendation to approve the 2021 First 5 Solano Legislative Platform***

Lorraine Fernandez, First 5 Solano Program Manager, presented proposed changes to the First 5 Solano legislative platform addressing the COVID-19 pandemic and adding language around ACEs awareness and trauma-informed care. Commissioner Hannigan appreciated the updates and shared that the County's legislative platform made similar changes around COVID-19.

**Moved by Commissioner Barton; Seconded by Commissioner Hannigan**

**Approved 2-0-0**

**Yea: Commissioners Barton, Hannigan**

**Nay: None**

**Abstain: None**

Commissioner Estrella-Henderson arrived.

Commissioner Barton suggested the Commission should initiate discussions with the City of Fairfield regarding the legislated proposal submitted by Assm Frazier to build a First 5 Center in Fairfield. Commissioners discussed ways to engage city officials and donors. Megan Richards, First 5 Solano Deputy Director, suggested an internal discussion that would be brought back to the Committee on how to do this.

## **V. First 5 Solano Strategic Planning Update**

Ms. Richards shared that staff would begin engaging the Commission in strategic planning starting in April. In advance of that meeting, staff from First 5 Solano and Applied Survey Research (ASR), the Commission's evaluator, plan to gather input from community providers at community meetings hosted or funded by First 5 Solano.

## **VI. Strategic Plan Implementation Updates**

### **A. Program:**

#### **1. First 5 Center Update**

Ms. Richards reported First 5 Center staff remained highly engaged with the community, despite in-person services being limited. Virtual sessions are well-attended, and Commissioners are welcome to schedule a guest appearance. Developmental screenings and resource appointments are occurring in person with one family at a time. Solano County Public Health has inquired about using the Center as a vaccination event site.

#### **2. Pre-Kindergarten Academies Update**

Ms. Richards reported that Solano County Office of Education (SCOE) did not receive the Reach for the Upside grant for Pre-K Academy redesign. However, staff identified some System Change funds which can be used toward research and redesigning of Pre-K Academies to work with COVID-19 guidelines for the summer of 2021.

### **B. Systems Change Implementation Plan Update**

Ms. Fernandez shared updates from the Solano County Equity Collaborative and the Bay Area Early Childhood Funders meeting. The Committee discussed the advocacy letter from First 5 California and the First 5 Association supporting prioritization of child care workers in vaccine distribution. Commissioner Hannigan shared that there are advocacy efforts for many groups to get vaccinations earlier and it is difficult to move priorities when there are not enough vaccines available.

## **C. Community Engagement Activities Update**

Juanita Morales, First 5 Solano Program Manager, updated the Committee on the work with a communications consultant. A marketing audit report is expected to be completed by the end of March. Ms. Morales announced the distribution of backpacks to transitional Kindergarten and Kindergarten students is under way throughout the county. Several Commissioners have volunteered at distribution events.

## **VII. First 5 Solano Staffing and Finance Update**

Ms. Richards iterated the information in the written report. The March Commission Meeting will feature the FY2021/22 proposed budget.

## **VIII. Future Agenda Items, Meeting Time/Date/Location**

The next Policy and Oversight Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, March 24, 3:30 pm to 5:00 pm, at 3375 Sonoma Boulevard, Suite 30, Vallejo, CA. Commissioner Hannigan asked if an update could be provided on classes available, and data on families served at the Vallejo First 5 Center, with a timeline of activities through the pandemic. Ms. Richards said these details could be incorporated into the Mid-Year report at the next Commission meeting. Future agenda items include: Co-Sponsorships of Training and Conferences; FY2020/21 Mid-Year Performance Report; Strategic Planning; Systems Change Implementation Update; Community Engagement Update; and Staffing and Finance Update.

## **Adjourn**

Chair Hannigan adjourned the meeting at 4:15 PM.

Luke Winders, Office Assistant III

Approved:

**DATE:** March 18, 2021

**TO:** Erin Hannigan, Policy and Oversight Committee (POC) Chair  
Jennifer Barton and Lisette Estrella Henderson, POC Members

**FROM:** Lorraine Fernandez, POC Staff

**CC:** Michele Harris, Executive Director

**SUBJ:** **Policy and Oversight Committee Meeting Staff Report**

**Agenda Item III: Solano County Health and Social Services Legislative Proposal**

Solano County Health and Social Services (H&SS) submitted a legislative proposal “*TANF Flexibility to Address Issues of Child Neglect*” to the Solano County Legislative Committee. The County’s Legislative Committee and the full Board of Supervisors approved the proposal to be shared with California legislators as a potential topic for future legislation. H&SS would like to expand their Family Stabilization Program to act as an alternative response to neglect referrals that are not egregious coming into Child Welfare Services. This approach would be implemented by the Family Stabilization Program team and would provide families facing concerns of neglect with assistance such as housing and wrap around services to address the lack of resources that are often the underlying issues. Jerry Huber, Solano County Health and Social Services Director and First 5 Solano Commissioner, will provide the Commission with information about this proposal. See Attachment B.

**Agenda Item IV: Strategic Planning**

As a launch to the strategic planning process, Applied Survey Research is presenting an activity to each of First 5 Solano’s collaborative groups and will demonstrate the activity for the Committee, which will also be conducted at the April Commission Meeting.

**Agenda Item V: FY2020/21 Mid-Year Report**

To ensure high-quality services, First 5 Solano tracks grantee service counts monthly and performance measures quarterly, based on agreed-upon Scopes of Work that are incorporated into grantee contracts and Memorandums of Understanding. The purpose of the mid-year report is to inform the Committee of grantees’ overall progress, any on-going challenges, and if applicable, recommendations for improvement. A more detailed report will be provided at the end of the fiscal year as part of the FY2020/21 Annual Report.

The report is included as Attachment C and is organized by First 5 Solano’s Priority Areas and funded initiatives. The report includes initial performance for the first 6 months of FY2020/21 and details any challenges to effective service provision.

Overall, grantees are meeting 72% of performance measures during the first half of FY2020/21. Some performance measures are annual targets that are not reported until the end of the Fiscal Year, which accounts for some of the unmet performance measures. Additionally, grantees that currently have unmet measures have been reminded of their targets and are working toward meeting their performance measures.

## **Agenda Item VI: Vallejo First 5 Center – Year 1 Report**

The Vallejo First 5 Center opened its doors on February 13, 2020. Since then, the Center has been providing a combination of in-person and virtual services to address the needs of children and families in Vallejo and throughout Solano County. In addition, with First 5 Solano support, the Center has shifted activities where needed to services related to the COVID-19 pandemic, such as supply distribution and connecting additional families to resources. The attached report (Attachment D) documents the activities that have occurred during the first year of services.

## **Agenda Item VII: Strategic Plan Implementation Updates**

### **A. Systems Change Implementation Plan Update**

**First 5 Association submitted an advocacy letter to California Senators:** The First 5 Association submitted a letter to Senators Feinstein and Padilla on March 3rd detailing support for key provisions of the American Rescue Plan that will provide the needed support for young children and families in California, including the critical need for the Fiscal Relief Funds to Local Governments. (See Attachment E.)

Key provisions included:

- \$40 billion allocation to the child care sector
- Significant expansion of the child tax credit
- A provision that allows states to extend Medicaid eligibility to women for 12 months postpartum
- \$150 million in emergency funding for (MIECHV)
- Extension of the 15% increase in SNAP benefit, and investment of \$3 billion in Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for WIC
- Expansion of employer tax credits to offer emergency paid leave and paid sick days
- \$65.1 billion in the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund

**First 5 Solano signed on to budget advocacy letter to state lawmakers:** On March 15<sup>th</sup>, First 5 Solano signed on to a letter to state lawmakers supporting a budget proposal to maintain continuous Medi-Cal coverage for children up to age 5, and eligibility for women up to 12 months postpartum. This budget proposal would preserve the continuous eligibility currently in place under the COVID Public Health Emergency (PHE) and continue it after the PHE ends. The letter was drafted by the First 5 Association of California, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists District IX, March of Dimes, Maternal and Child Health Access, and The Children's Partnership. (See Attachment F)

### **C. Community Engagement Activities Update**

The following are brief descriptions of recent notable Community Engagement activities:

First 5 Solano provides 25,000 calendars each year, by printing, packaging and direct mailing through PRIDE industries, a local non-profit that employs person with differing abilities. The First 5 Solano calendar is full of resources and activities and absolutely free for providers and families of children ages 0-5. Calendars are distributed to school sites, libraries, medical offices and local non-profits throughout Solano County. Although distribution has been especially challenging this year, as many school sites, libraries and lobbies have been closed to the public, calendars were added to the TK/K backpacks and distributed through school sites. To date, First 5 Solano has distributed over 23,000 calendars and will distribute much

of the remaining calendars through the First 5 CA Kit for New parents. Calendars are also still available to order through the First 5 Solano website.

### **Agenda Item VII: First 5 Solano Staffing and Finance Update**

**Staffing Update:** First 5 Solano is currently fully staffed.

**Finance Update:** With 66% of the year complete (through February 28, 2021), \$2,403,524 (56%) of the revenue (monthly disbursements, state match, interest, and other revenue) has been received. Additionally, \$696,673 (61%) of the salaries & benefits budget has been expended, \$198,497 (62%) of the services and supplies budget has been expended, and \$1,620,392 (50%) of the grants budget has been expended.

Overall, \$2,403,524 (56%) of revenues have been received, and \$2,522,628 (54%) of expenses have been incurred.

Attachment A: Commission Meeting Attendance Log

Attachment B: Solano County H&SS Legislative Proposal

Attachment C: FY2020/21 Mid-Year Report

Attachment D: Vallejo First 5 Center Year 1 Report

Attachment E: First 5 Association Advocacy Letter to Senators

Attachment F: First 5 Solano signs on to Advocacy Letter for Continuous Medi-Cal coverage



# 2021 COMMISSIONER MEETING ATTENDANCE LOG

COMMISSION MEETINGS												
1/12/21		FEB	3/2/21	4/6/21	MAY	6/8/21	JUL	8/18/21	SEP	10/20/21	NOV	12/15/21
ANDERSON	Absent	NO MEETING	Absent		NO MEETING		NO MEETING		NO MEETING		NO MEETING	
BARTON	Present		Present									
DIAZ	Absent		Absent									
ESTRELLA-HENDERSON	Present		Present									
HANNIGAN	Present		Present									
HUBER	Present		Absent									
NEFF	Present		Present									
STUART	Present		Present									
WANBERG	Present		Present									
POLICY & OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEETINGS												
JAN		2/10/21	3/24/21	APR	5/17/21	JUN	JUL	8/5/21	SEP	10/7/21	NOV	12/2/21
BARTON	NO MEETING	Present		NO MEETING		NO MEETING	NO MEETING		NO MEETING		NO MEETING	
HANNIGAN		Present										
ESTRELLA-HENDERSON		Present										

## FIRST 5 SOLANO CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMISSION MEETING ATTENDANCE POLICY

The Solano County Code (Chapter 7.3) and First 5 Commission Policy set forth the requirements of Commissioner meeting attendance. Per these documents, Commissioners cannot miss three Meetings in a row or more than 50% of Meetings in a calendar year, whereas "Meetings" are defined as meetings of the full Commission per the approved annual Commission Meeting Schedule. In addition, Commissioners serving on a standing Committee cannot miss more than 50% of Committee Meeting.

## ATTACHMENT B

### 2021 LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL

#### Solano County, Health & Social Services

**Title:** TANF Flexibility to Address Issues of Child Neglect

**Current (State and/or Federal) Law:** Currently in CA, the federal TANF program is largely focused on work requirements for those who are eligible. Child welfare also is responsible for referrals addressing parental neglect of child.

**Problem Statement:** Intervention with families largely depend on which “doors” they may enter. Over 40% of child welfare referrals relate to child(ren) neglect; often associated with poverty; lack of affordable housing and other issues. Related to lack of income/resources. A more consistent approach to families to address poverty will benefit both child welfare and eligibility programs and likely produce better outcomes for families.

**Proposed Solution:** Solano County H&SS would like to expand our Family Stabilization Program in E&E to act as an alternative response to neglect referrals that are not egregious coming into CWS. Family stabilization will be able to assist families with housing and wrap around services to address the lack of resources families facing concerns of neglect often deal with.

**Proposed Effective / Operative Date of Solution:** Discussions would need to occur first with state CDSS to determine any proposed legislation that may involve legislation. This process would begin early 2021.

**Justification:** As stated above it is believed that families will experience better outcomes with wrap around supports that allow an alternative response to neglect matters, regardless of the doors families enter our system of care.

**Implementation:** If approved both child welfare & employee and eligibility will be working together to determine how referrals coming through various programs can be streamlined to assure consistency of interventions across various H&SS programs.

**Fiscal Impact:**

**County:**

**State/Federal:** It is believed that housing an alternative approach to non-egregious neglect cases fits into state TANF allocations and likely reduces long term child welfare expenditures.

**Other States:** None at this time although, CWDA has been looking at similar initiative.  
*Attach Proposed Bill Language (if available)*



IT'S ALL ABOUT THE KIDS

## FY2020/21 Mid-Year Performance Measures Report

March 2021

### Introduction

The First 5 Solano FY2020/21 Mid-Year Performance Measures Report is a progress report of First 5 Solano grantees' service provision for contracted programs covering the period July 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020. The purpose of the report is to ensure that appropriate progress is being made toward meeting contractual goals for both services and outcomes and, where needed, to provide guidance to grantees and recommendations for changes in services to ensure annual targets are met for numbers served and outcome impact.

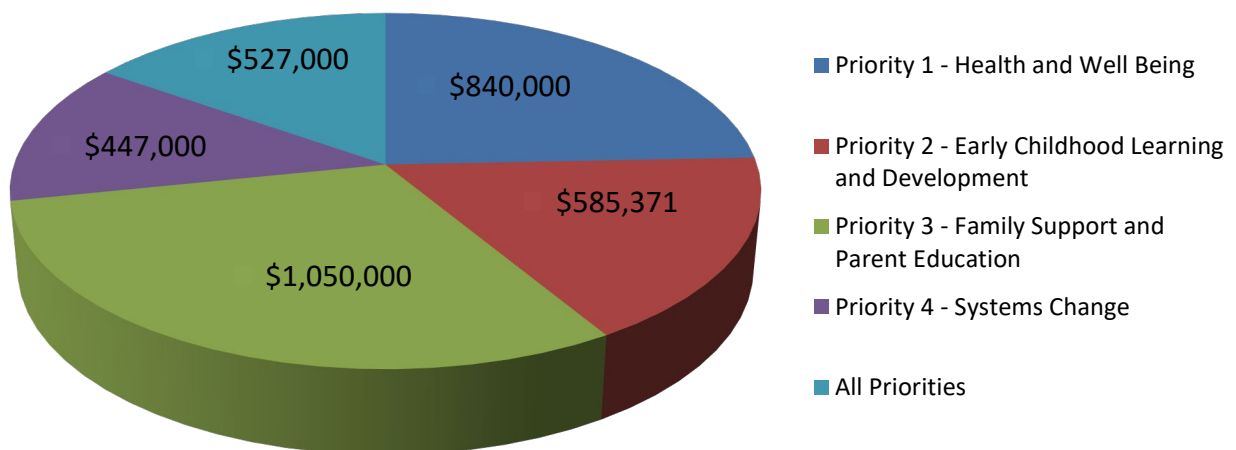
Overall, in this third year of a five-year funding cycle, grantees continue to provide a high level of services to the population even with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Any concerns that have come to the attention of staff are noted throughout the report. First 5 Solano staff work closely with grantees throughout the program year to ensure compliance and success of funded programs.

### Program Investments

The Commission funds within four Priority Areas: Health and Well-Being, Early Childhood Learning and Development, Family Support and Parent Education, and Systems Change.

### First 5 Solano Funds Budgeted FY2020/21



## **Priority 1: Health and Well Being**

### **Early Childhood Mental Health**

#### **H&SS (EPSDT) – Meeting 1 of 2 performance measures/50%**

The Early Periodic Screening Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) Program provides mental health treatment services for qualifying Medi-Cal eligible children and is a critical component of the overall children's mental health services system in the County. Mental health services were provided to 168 clients, and while 103 clients completed a 6-month period of service, only 68% of those clients showed improvement in at least one stated treatment goal. Shifting to telehealth services during the COVID-19 pandemic impacted clients' level of engagement and additional family stressors such as job loss, food insecurity, and fulfilling basic needs became more of a priority for parents of children ages 0-5 than focusing on mental health goals. First 5 Solano staff will work with our mental health partner to ensure access to existing basic needs supports in the county are made available to these families, in an effort to support positive outcomes.

#### **A Better Way – Meeting 6 of 12 performance measures/50%**

A Better Way offers Early Childhood Mental Health trainings to providers in Solano County. Training topics include: recognizing and healing trauma, intervening with behavior concerns, and trauma trainings targeted toward first responders. In this third and final year of their contract, A Better Way has completed 45 trainings which exceeds their goal for mid-year. The grantee, however, moved all trainings to an online format and experienced challenges in collecting evaluations from participants. Therefore, the grantee was unable to provide outcome data measuring increased knowledge after trainings were completed, which impacted half their performance goals. First 5 Solano staff has met with the grantee to address this and the grantee has committed to improving efforts to collect participant evaluations for the remainder of the contract period. These services are not being renewed after the end of this fiscal year.

## **Priority 2: Early Childhood Learning and Development**

### **Quality Child Care**

#### **Solano County Office of Education (SCOE) - IMPACT - Meeting 7 of 9 performance measures/77%**

IMPACT (Improve and Maximize Programs so All Children Thrive) is a First 5 California matching program that provides funding for a quality and improvement system (Quality Counts Solano) for early care and education sites. SCOE has enrolled 32 new sites for the year and provide support through coaching, professional development and technical supports, including site incentives. SCOE provided the 2020 Quality Counts Early Care and Education conference virtually with 105 participants in attendance and continues to offer professional development virtually which has been highly attended. The grantee also provided sites with Recovery and Quality Support Stipends to aid in the reopening of sites and/or support sites to remain open. The 2 measures that have not been met are related to early learning sites meeting identified goals. The sites generally set their goals at the beginning of the Fiscal Year and have throughout the year to meet their goals, so these are reported at the end of the program year.

### **Solano County Office of Education - Raising A Reader - meeting 3 out of 6 performance measures/ 50%**

Raising a Reader (RAR) is an evidence-based early literacy and family engagement program. Through this program caregivers engage in routine of book sharing with their children to foster healthy relationships, a love of reading, and the literacy skills critical for school success. This is the third year of implementation with a goal of adding 15 new implementors providing an additional 300 children with high-quality multi-cultural and bilingual books to enjoy this program year for a total of 55 implementors and 1000 children participating in the RAR program over the 3-year period. At mid-year, 19 additional implementors have been trained in the RAR program, including 9 family child care providers, exceeding this goal. Due to COVID-19 and early learning site closures as well as added guidance and changes to the book sharing program, there was a delay in book distribution. The grantee worked closely with RAR to implement modifications to the book rotation model and provide family literacy kits for teachers to implement in their distance learning curriculum. The grantee provided the RAR program to 175 children in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of the program year and is on schedule to serve 175 additional children in the Spring. The unmet measures are related to parent trainings which are currently being scheduled and include parent surveys to gauge increased literacy skills and strengthening family engagement which is assessed in the second half of the year. The grantee is on track to meet all measures by the end of the program year.

### **Pre-Kindergarten Academies**

A comprehensive report will be covering Pre-Kindergarten Academies is provided annually as a separate document.

### **Priority 3: Family Support and Parent Education**

#### **Rio Vista CARE - Meeting 9 of 9 performance measures/100%**

Rio Vista CARE provides neighborhood-based family resource center services in Rio Vista and surrounding rural areas. This grantee exceeded their target number of clients to be served by mid-year, and met all of their performance measures related to outcomes in the Family Development Matrix, and provision of basic needs support, financial budgeting tools, and pre-k activities for families with younger children. First 5 Solano staff will continue to work closely with this grantee to ensure progress is being made towards meeting all performance measures.

#### **Bay Area Community Resources (BACR) – Meeting 12 of 25 performance measures/48%**

The Vallejo First 5 Center opened and BACR began delivering direct services in February 2020. However, the Center was closed for in person services beginning March 2020. Since July 2020, the Center has been following COVID-19 guidelines for a combination of in-person and virtual services. In addition, in collaboration with First 5 Solano staff, BACR has shifted some services to be responsive to the needs of families during COVID-19, holding more than double the number of expected consultations with the Community Resource Specialist and hosting many supply distributions for basic needs, including food, diapers, books, and other resources.

Due to the shift in services to meet the needs of families during COVID-19, BACR has met approximately half of their performance measures for the first half of the fiscal year, including screening parents, providing community resource services, hosting multi-week parent/child class sessions and play groups, and hosting drop-in events and activities. Unmet performance measures include:

- Triple P Parent Education—staff finalized their training and accreditation in October 2020. BACR began workshops and groups in Quarter 2 and are ramping up Triple P services to meet these measures by the end of the fiscal year.
- Completion of parent surveys at the end multi-week sessions—the last session of the July/August classes were cancelled due to smoke from the LNU fire, so parent surveys did not get completed in class. The last session of Nov/Dec classes were transitioned to Zoom due to the state Stay at

Home orders, but not many families attended. In both cases, staff attempted to follow up with families to get the surveys, but not many families responded.

- Developmental screening—82 screenings out of a required 100 screenings were conducted nearly meeting this measure.
- Parent activities, such as Parent Leadership Committee, Parent Cafes, and parent support groups all started in Q2 once parent/child classes were up and running and will continue through Q3/Q4.

First 5 Solano staff will continue to work closely with this grantee to ensure progress is being made towards meeting all performance measures by the end of the FY.

### **Triple P Parent Education**

Triple P is in its third year of implementation in Solano County. In FY2020/21, Triple P expanded with two new providers, Bay Area Community Resources (through their First 5 Center contract—see above) and Catholic Charities Yolo-Solano. They joined eight other agency partners committed to providing parents with resources needed to become more confident and effective in their parenting skills. Twenty-seven new practitioners were trained across all levels of interventions and those practitioners pivoted to offering services virtually. First 5 Solano continued its role to coordinate services, provide parent materials, outreach, and convene regularly scheduled collaborative meetings for agencies to share best practices for serving Solano families. Below is a summary of grantee progress through mid-year:

#### **Catholic Charities Yolo-Solano - Meeting 3/7 performance measures/43%**

This grantee is a new Triple P provider this fiscal year, with their contract beginning in September 2020. In their first few months of start-up, their primary focus has been for staff to complete training and accreditation prior to providing services to parents. In December, this grantee began outreach and promotion of its services on their website and distributed informational materials to clients. The grantee anticipates that they will begin offering Triple P to parents beginning in early 2021.

#### **Child Haven - Meeting 6/6 performance measures/100%**

This grantee offers Level 4 Group and Level 4 Standard interventions to parents referred for services at their agency and to men's and women's parent groups at County detention facilities. The grantee is meeting and/or exceeding all performance measures.

#### **Child Start - Meeting 4/5 performance measures/80%**

This grantee offers Level 2 Seminars and Level 3 Primary in English and Spanish for parents who have a child enrolled at Child Start. Through mid-year, this grantee exceeded their target to provide Level 2 Seminars, and over the next two quarters, will shift to offering Level 3 Primary, as participation in this intervention is a natural progression for families upon introduction to Triple P.

#### **Fairfield-Suisun Adult School - Meeting 4/6 performance measures/67%**

This grantee offers Level 2 Seminars and Level 4 Group for parents participating in parent preschool. Thus far, they have met their target to complete three Seminars though mid-year, and while they did not offer Level 4 Groups until school began in January, the grantee is expected to complete their target number of Level 4 Groups by the end of the fiscal year. The grantee reports that Triple P is well received and that parents that intended to only participate in the Level 2 intervention have returned to participate in Level 4 Group as well.

#### **Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District (FSUSD) - Meeting 4/5 performance measures/80%**

This grantee offers Level 2 Seminars and met their target number of seminars to be completed, serving 34 parents. Although the grantee did not meet their target number of parents to complete Level 3 by mid-year, FSUSD anticipates that they will meet their goal by June 2021, as they have incorporated Triple P into case management activities. The grantee states that Triple P services have been well-received, with the majority of the participants being in their Spanish-speaking.

**Parents By Choice - Meeting 8/8 performance measures/100%**

This grantee offers all interventions and in the Fiscal Year has demonstrated their ability to exceed the targets outlined in their current contract. The Commission recently approved additional funding for the grantee to provide additional services through the end of the fiscal year.

**Rio Vista CARE - Meeting 4/4 performance measures/100%**

This grantee offers Level 3 to parents that seek family support services through their Family Resource Center. They are offering parenting education classes virtually or in-person, based on the needs of the families. The grantee is meeting and/or exceeding all performance measures.

**Solano County Office of Education (SCOE) - Meeting 4/4 performance measures/100%**

This grantee offers Level 2 Seminars to early learning professionals and child care providers and the families that they serve, and has been successful in delivering workshops in English and Spanish. The grantee is meeting and/or exceeding all performance measures.

**Solano Family and Children's Services (SFCS) - Meeting 4/4 performance measures/100%**

This grantee offers Level 3 directly to parents over the phone via the Help Me Grow Solano resource and referral line. Parents have been receptive to participating in this intervention as an interim resource while waiting to receive other services offered in the county. The grantee is meeting and/or exceeding all performance measures.

**Triple P Countywide Summary**

Overall, between all partners, the following services have been provided from July 2020-December 2020:

Triple P Intervention	Number Completed by Mid-Year	Families Served by Mid-Year
Level 2 Seminar	108	765
Level 3 Individual Brief Intervention	61	61
Level 3 Group	20	98
Level 4 Individual	51	51

Over the last three years, the Triple P model has been well-received and parents in Solano county are experiencing positive changes in relationships with their children. This is especially important as family interactions have become intensified throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. First 5 Solano will continue to support Triple P partners by providing materials and training, convening the collaborative and supporting outreach efforts to ensure partners are connected and services are coordinated.

**Priority 4: Systems Change****Solano County Office of Education - Solano Kids Thrive - Meeting 6/6 performance measures/100%**

Solano County Office of Education facilitates bi-monthly Solano Kids Thrive meetings and supports the county-wide collaborative to sustain and strengthen Solano's early childhood system. The main focus of the group's work through mid-year includes development of the Resilient Solano portal, a web-based hub for the Solano community to understand the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). The portal also provides a calendar of trainings/events where both parents and professionals can find resources for preventing and healing trauma. The Resilient Solano website is now live with trainings available on the calendar and can be found at: <https://www.acesconnection.com/g/resilient-solano>. This grantee is meeting all performance measures.

## **Across Priorities**

### **Solano Family and Children's Services – Help Me Grow Solano - Meeting 14/20 performance measures/70%**

Solano Family and Children's Services (SFCS) is in its fourth year of implementation of the Help Me Grow (HMG) Solano call line and referral system. As of mid-year, HMG Solano has received 871 calls and provided 714 referrals for basic needs, childcare supports and mental health concerns, and is on track to meet this measure for the overall program year. HMG Solano staff have successfully provided families with more than one high risk factor with family navigation and a family support plan to assist in accessing multiple services. HMG Solano continues to maintain the resource database and website as well as connect with HMG state and national efforts to ensure fidelity and report required data. HMG Solano staff also began to provide outreach and meet with medical providers virtually to promote the HMG Solano call line and system. HMG Solano continues to address challenges since the onset of the pandemic and office closure during the first quarter of the program year. Of the six measures still not met, four are related to conducting developmental screenings. In order to address these challenges, HMG Solano has hired a dedicated staff person to focus on developmental screenings and is working to schedule screening events in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter, in order to meet this measure. The other two measures are related to public service announcements to promote developmental screenings and convening of the HMG Solano steering committee. Staff has discussed other opportunities for public service announcements through social media and on-line radio, as well as convening meetings virtually. First 5 Solano staff will continue to monitor performance to support successful implementation of the HMG Solano call line and system.

### **Annual Grants**

First 5 Solano continued the Annual Grants Program in FY2020/21. The Commission allocated \$200,000 of funding for one-time projects to fill a community gap, pilot a new or innovative idea, and/or address a time-sensitive community need. From the Request for Applications, seven organizations were awarded the maximum grant award of \$20,000 for a total of \$140,000 in funding toward this effort.

Of the seven organizations that received funding, four (BIRTHFit, Immersive Learning Center, La Clinica De La Raza, Solano Office of Education) are on track to meet anticipated results by the end of the fiscal year. Staff is currently in discussion with the three organizations (Crumbbum Kids, Matrix Parent Network and Prek2C) who reported challenges with recruitment, staffing, and delivery of services due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These grantees have partially met their measures by mid-year and staff are working with them to provide strategies and support to help them meet their goals by the end of the Fiscal Year.

## **Fund Development (Internal Program)**

In addition to work performed by grantees, First 5 Solano implements a fund development program which includes preparing and submitting direct grant applications to support First 5 programs; assisting nonprofits and other agencies with preparing grant applications that are on behalf of their agencies; and, assisting nonprofits and other agencies with preparing collaborative grant applications. The following is a summary of fund development activity during this six-month period:



FUND DEVELOPMENT REPORT FOR JULY 1, 2020 – DECEMBER 31, 2020						
Date Submitted	Applicant	Funder/Program	First 5 Solano's Role	Application Amount	Funded Yes/No	Grant Amount
8/6/20	Solano Transportation Authority	California Air Resources Board	Letter of Support	299,997	Yes	299,997
8/25/20	First 5 Solano	Solano County CARES Funding	Applicant	1,204,694	Yes	1,204,694
9/30/20	Maternal Child Adolescent Health	California Department of Public Health	-Grant writing funds -Letter of Support -Partner	1,218,456	Yes	1,218,456
11/19/20	First 5 Solano	Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation	Applicant	500,000	Yes	500,000
		<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>3,223,147</b>		<b>3,223,147</b>

### **FY2020/21 Mid-Year Report Conclusion**

For the remainder of FY2020/21, grantees will continue to provide services to children and families and maintain efforts to meet performance goals. First 5 staff will remain available to support grantees and ensure progress is made to meet desired targets.

**Summary of FY2020/21 Mid-Year Performance Measures  
(July 1, 2020 – December 31, 2020)**

Grantee	Performance Measures		
	Total Number	Number Met/ Exceeded at Mid-Year	Number Unmet
<b>Early Childhood Mental Health</b>			
Solano County H&SS – EPSDT Mental Health Treatment	2	1	1
A Better Way – Early Childhood Mental Health Provider Training	12	6	6
<b>Early Learning &amp; Quality Child Care</b>			
Solano County Office of Education – IMPACT Quality Counts	9	7	2
Solano County Office of Education – Raising a Reader	6	3	3
<b>Family Support</b>			
Bay Area Community Resources	25	12	13
Rio Vista CARE	9	0	0
<b>Triple P Parent Education</b>			
Catholic Charities	7	3	4
Child Haven	6	6	0
Child Start	5	4	1
Fairfield-Suisun Adult School	6	4	2
Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District	5	4	1
Parents by Choice	8	8	0
Rio Vista CARE	4	4	0
Solano County Office of Education	4	4	0
Solano Family and Children’s Services	4	4	0
<b>Systems Change</b>			
Solano County Office of Education – Solano Kids Thrive	6	6	0
<b>Across Priorities</b>			
Solano Family & Children's Services – Help Me Grow	20	14	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>39</b>



## Year 1 Report February 2020 to January 2021



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*"Staff is very friendly, knowledgeable, and welcoming. The classes have been great for my daughters to learn and interact with others even if it is on the webcam, they look forward to each Zoom session. The resources have been helpful for me, I wish I would've known about First 5 when I was pregnant with my first child." - Erica*

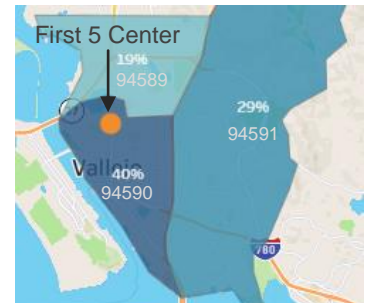
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# The First 5 Center Celebrates One Year of Serving Vallejo and Solano County!

The Vallejo First 5 Center opened on February 13th, 2020 with a grand opening celebration of nearly 400 community members, families, funders and policy makers. Despite closing one-month later due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Center has remained a community hub for families with young children. We are pleased to share what has been happening over the last year!

## FAMILY DEMOGRAPHICS

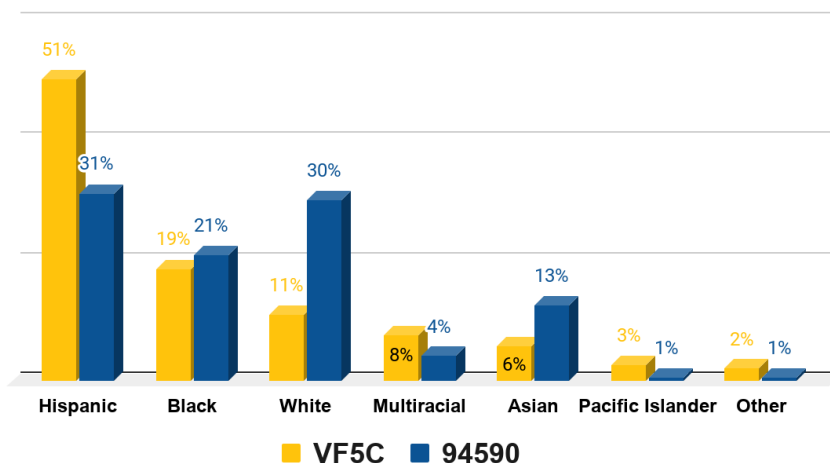
During the first year of operation 369 families enrolled in services for a total of 1,111 individuals. 88% of the families served by the Center live in Vallejo, with over 40% living in the local ZIP Code of 94590. Out of the remaining Vallejo families, 29% live in the 94591 ZIP Code and 19% live in the 94589 ZIP Code. 13% of Center families live outside of Vallejo or have unknown ZIP Codes.



Family participation by ZIP Code

The families served at the Center have represented the diversity of the County and specifically the 94590 ZIP Code. Just over half of the individuals served at the center over half were Hispanic. The second highest reported race/ethnicity was Black at 18% followed by White at 11%. In comparison to the target ZIP Code of 94590 the center served a higher proportion of Hispanic, multiracial, and Pacific Islander families and a lower proportion of Black, White, and Asian ethnicities in comparison to the 94590 ZIP Code.

## Race/Ethnicity Comparison



Of the families served, 19% reported Spanish as their primary language. The remaining families reported English as their primary language at 80% and other languages at 1%. It is important to note that this was reported primary language and many families spoke both English and Spanish.

In addition, staff represent both the race/ethnicity and language of Center participants. Half of the Center staff is bilingual and all outreach materials and Center publications are Spanish bilingual to be as inclusive as possible.

## CLASSES, ACTIVITIES, & SERVICES

A total of 55 six-week class series were offered in year one. Examples of classes included *Tinker Tots*, *Belly Babies*, *Messy Hands & Math*, *Wiggle & Scribble*, *Brickspace* and *Zumbini*. Drop in activities included workshops such as *Infant Massage* and *Kinder Here I Come*. Parent only classes, Triple P Positive Parenting, Parent Cafes, and Parent Advisory Council meetings were offered starting in the Fall.

The Center put on monthly events that included a mobile farm, dental screenings and varnishes, and a children's mask giveaway. Many partners were involved in events including Touro University and Solano County Public Health.

The Early Interventions Screening Facilitator and instructors completed developmental screenings for 45 children. The Community Resource Specialist had 297 consultations with families to connect them to community resources.

The Center was able to provide families with basic needs items such as car seats, strollers, pack n' plays, toiletries, towels, and diapers and wipes. In August 2020, the Center became a diaper bank site and provides 70 families with a monthly distribution of diapers and wipes.

100% of families who completed a class series and completed a post series survey demonstrated increased knowledge and awareness of healthy behaviors and activities such as:

- Increased awareness of healthy eating for kids
- Increased ability to implement age appropriate activities
- Increased ability to provide preschool and kindergarten readiness activities

In a satisfaction survey conducted February 2021, Center participants rated their satisfaction with the Center at 4.9 out of 5!



## YEAR ONE

FEBRUARY 2020 - JANUARY 2021

369  
FAMILIES



55  
SIX-WEEK  
SESSIONS

40  
DROP IN  
ACTIVITIES



8  
COMMUNITY  
EVENTS

297  
CONSULTATIONS



600  
FOLLOWERS



## EFFECTS OF COVID ON CENTER ACTIVITIES

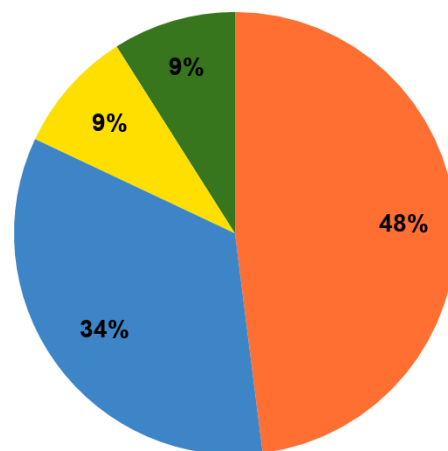
One month after the grand opening of the Center, Solano got the first shelter-at-home order. From March to June the Center provided various community resources to help alleviate the burden families were experiencing. Starting in July, the Center reopened on a limited basis and provided a mix of in-person outdoor classes and activities, as well as virtual classes and activities. Outdoor classes provided staff the opportunity to offer messy activities such as water play, painting with toes, and chalk art. In the fall, indoor classes resumed, but were reduced to accommodate social distancing standards and reconstructed to include easy to clean materials and take-home activities. The Center launched 100% virtual classes starting in January 2021 that included starter kits and an activity bag for each class due to the increase in COVID rates over the holidays.



## YEAR 1 FUNDING

During the first year of operation, the Center had four main funding sources. Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation, First 5 Solano, Kaiser, and Solano County Mental Health Services Act. Yocha Dehe and First 5 Solano provided funds for general operation. Kaiser Community Benefit provided funds for a nutrition education/obesity prevention education program and MHSA provided funds for a new developmental screening position. Some smaller donations were received in light of COVID, including \$4,110 from Ball Corporation to fund basic needs support.

## February 2020 - January 2021



## CONCLUSION

In the first year, the Vallejo First 5 Center transitioned from an intentional start-up phase to full implementation. This occurred in the midst of a global pandemic and local wildfires during which the Center worked closely with First 5 Solano staff to shift services where necessary to address local need. While Year 1 was nothing like what anyone imagined, the Center has already become a staple in the Vallejo community to meet the needs of young children and their families.

● Yocha Dehe: \$314,661
 ● First 5 Solano: \$220,124  
● Kaiser: \$60,053
 ● MHSA: \$55,161



March 3, 2021

The Honorable Diane Feinstein  
U.S. Senate  
Washington D.C. 20510

The Honorable Alex Padilla  
U.S. Senate  
Washington D.C. 20510

**RE: COVID-19 Relief Legislation – Support for Provisions Aiding Young Children and Families, Including Local Funding**

Dear Senators Feinstein and Padilla,

On behalf of the First 5 Association of California, representing the 58 First 5 county commissions, I am writing to convey our strong support for provisions of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, as recently passed by the House, that would provide young children and families with essential food, child care, health care, financial relief, and paid sick and emergency leave. As the Senate chamber prepares to consider this desperately needed recovery package, we urge you to vote in favor of this legislation.

As you know, the coronavirus pandemic continues to have devastating impacts on our counties and communities across California. Even as long-awaited vaccines are finally being administered and the overall rate of new COVID-19 cases declines, thousands of new infections still are reported daily and California recently surpassed 50,000 total fatalities. The impacts on our young children and families have been heartbreaking, and have exacerbated longstanding inequities in our communities around basic components of survival such as food, housing, health, and employment.

Given the harsh realities facing our state's children and families, **the First 5 Association urges your support for numerous provisions in the American Rescue Plan aimed to support children and families—as well as an essential, overarching provision for local funding to counties to ensure those closest to communities are equipped to serve their constituencies.** Specifically, First 5 strongly supports the following:

- **\$40 billion allocation to the child care sector**, in order to provide immediate relief to child care providers and the families they serve. California lost more than 33,000 child care slots between March 2020 and October 2020.<sup>1</sup> Providers have been unable to stay afloat due to having fewer children in their facilities and increased safety-related expenses, exacerbating a child care shortage that has been decades in the making. A byproduct of this child care crisis nationally is that 2.5 million women have left the workforce—an exodus that Vice President Harris aptly called a “National Emergency.”<sup>2</sup> All sectors of our economy benefit from and depend on

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<sup>1</sup> Data from the California Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing Division, provided to Senate Subcommittee Hearing on February 16, 2021: [https://sbud.senate.ca.gov/sites/sbud.senate.ca.gov/files/02.16.2021%20-%20Childcare%20Agenda%20\(002\).pdf](https://sbud.senate.ca.gov/sites/sbud.senate.ca.gov/files/02.16.2021%20-%20Childcare%20Agenda%20(002).pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Rogers, Katie, 2.5 Million Women Left the Work Force During the Pandemic. Harris Sees a ‘National Emergency.’ New York Times (February 18, 2021). <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/18/us/politics/women-pandemic-harris.html>

the availability of child care, and the next COVID-19 response stimulus package must highlight the essential nature of child care. Doing so will not only rebuild the economy, but will demonstrate support for these small businesses that are predominantly owned and staffed by women of color.<sup>3</sup>

- **Significant expansion of the child tax credit** to help working families cover the cost of basic needs and childcare, and thus significantly alleviate poverty. In April 2020, nearly one-quarter of the nation's children had at least one parent who was unemployed, and research indicates the child poverty rate has increased substantially during the pandemic. The child tax credit would move more than 4 million children out of poverty and cut in half the number of children in deep poverty.<sup>4</sup>
- **A provision that allows states to extend Medicaid eligibility to women for 12 months postpartum.** Approximately one-third of all maternal deaths occur one week to one year after pregnancy ends, and in some states that number is more than 50%.<sup>5</sup> As the single-largest payer of maternity care in the U.S., Medicaid plays a significant role in maternal health. In California, Medi-Cal covers 45% of all hospital births.<sup>6</sup> Passing this provision as part of the recovery package would be a significant first step toward a permanent federal postpartum Medicaid extension that could save thousands of lives a year.
- **\$150 million in emergency funding for the Maternal, Infant, Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program.** The COVID-19 pandemic and resulting recession have led to increased isolation and risks of child welfare involvement, and fewer families taking their children to the doctor. Evidence-based home visiting programs funded through MIECHV are especially important in our current moment to help families cope with the pandemic and its effects on their lives and livelihoods. Looking ahead, these programs will continue to be critical to increase take-up of vaccines and other well-child care, and reduce Adverse Childhood Experiences.
- **Extension of the 15% Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefit, and investment of \$3 billion in Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).** Nearly 1 in 4 California low-income households with children reported sometimes or often not having enough food to eat during the pandemic.<sup>7</sup> The most common causes of food insecurity in general are job loss, health crisis, and/or poverty<sup>8</sup>—all of which have increased during the pandemic. What's more, food prices have increased at least 3.4% during the pandemic, compared to a 2% annual increase in a typical year<sup>9</sup>.
- **Expansion of employer tax credits to offer emergency paid leave and paid sick days.** Paid emergency leave and paid sick days will help working Californians recover from illness without losing their jobs, and care for family members who are ill. Ensuring workers can access leave to care for children and loved ones will help address the inequities that the coronavirus has inflamed. In addition to being more likely to contract the virus, people of color are generally more harmed by it: 29% of Latinx and 31% of Black families with children face three or

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<sup>3</sup> U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2020, January 22). *Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey*. [www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat11.htm](http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat11.htm)

<sup>4</sup> Hendricks, Galen and Roque, Lorena, *An Expanded Child Tax Credit Would Lift Millions of Children Out of Poverty*, Center for American Progress. (February 23, 2021). [An Expanded Child Tax Credit Would Lift Millions of Children Out of Poverty - Center for American Progress](https://www.americanprogressaction.org/policy/research/publications/an-expanded-child-tax-credit-would-lift-millions-of-children-out-of-poverty/)

<sup>5</sup> Eckert, Emily. *It's Past Time to Provide Continuous Medicaid Coverage for One Year Postpartum*. Health Affairs (February 6, 2020). <https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/10.1377/hblog20200203.639479/full/>

<sup>6</sup> Joynt, Jen. *Maternity Care in California—2019 Edition*. California Health Care Foundation (November 25, 2019). <https://www.chcf.org/publication/2019-edition-maternity-care-in-california/>

<sup>7</sup> Ramos-Yamamoto, *Many California Children Do Not Have Enough to Eat During COVID-19*, California Budget & Policy Center (December 2020). <https://calbudgetcenter.org/resources/many-california-children-do-not-have-enough-to-eat-during-covid-19/>

<sup>8</sup> Gunderson, Craig and Ziliak, James P, *Childhood Food Insecurity in the U.S.: Trends, Causes and Policy Options*, The Future of Children (Fall, 2014). [www.jstor.org/stable/26304695](http://www.jstor.org/stable/26304695).

<sup>9</sup> De La Haye, Kayla. *Americans Aren't Getting Enough to Eat During the Covid Pandemic*. U.S. News and World Report. (Dec. 23, 2020). <https://www.usnews.com/news/cities/articles/2020-12-23/americans-arent-getting-enough-to-eat-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic-heres-whats-happening-in-los-angeles-county>



more health-related and economic hardships during the pandemic, compared to 16% of white households.<sup>10</sup>

**Finally, First 5 strongly supports the \$65.1 billion in the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund, recognizing that flexible funding to local government is essential to a responsive recovery that can reach the most vulnerable populations impacted by COVID-19, including young children and their families.** The immense scale of the pandemic and growing community needs are far outstripping local resources. While previous state and federal support and emergency program funding has aided counties in pandemic response efforts, public health and other safety-net program costs continue to mount as key local revenue sources remain severely constrained due to the persistent economic downturn. Affected programs included those that serve our most vulnerable young children and families in the areas of health, early learning, and overall family wellbeing. Indeed, in addition to meeting unprecedented demands in the area of public health, California's counties are responding to an increased demand for other essential safety-net services that California's children and families depend upon. The Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund is critically needed to effectively respond to the public health crisis, preserve the local safety-net delivered through cross-sector partnerships, and ultimately meet the increased demand for services that hold local communities together.

The First 5 Association of California respectfully requests your support for these provisions of the House COVID-19 relief bill, which are critical for families now and for our continued economic recovery ahead. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Melissa Stafford Jones", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Melissa Stafford Jones  
Executive Director,  
First 5 Association of California

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<sup>10</sup> Padilla, Christine and Thomson, Dana, *More than One in Four Latino and Black Households with Children Are Experiencing Three or More Hardships during COVID-19*, Child Trends (January 13, 2021). <https://www.childtrends.org/publications/more-than-one-in-four-latino-and-black-households-with-children-are-experiencing-three-or-more-hardships-during-covid-19>

***(First 5 Solano signed on to this advocacy letter on March 15, 2021)***

March 10, 2021

The Honorable Susan Talamantes Eggman, Chair  
Senate Budget Sub-Committee No. 1  
California State Senate  
State Capitol, Room 5019  
[SBUD.Committee@senate.ca.gov](mailto:SBUD.Committee@senate.ca.gov)

The Honorable Joaquin Arambula, Chair  
Assembly Budget Sub-Committee No. 3  
California State Assembly  
State Capitol, Room 6026  
[BudgetSub1@asm.ca.gov](mailto:BudgetSub1@asm.ca.gov)

RE: 12-month postpartum Medi-Cal eligibility and continuous Medi-Cal coverage  
for children up to age 5

Dear Senator Talamantes-Eggman and Assembly Member Arambula:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we write to you in strong support of the budget proposal to maintain continuous Medi-Cal coverage for children ages 0-5 years old and 12 months postpartum.

Under the federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act, Medi-Cal is required to provide temporary continuous enrollment to most all enrollees throughout the federal COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE). States are also required to develop a plan to unwind this federal PHE coverage protection to implement when the PHE ends. The Department of Health Care Services' budget assumes that the unwinding of the temporary continued coverage requirement will begin during the second half of the state budget year 2021-2022.

In order to protect essential continuity of care and to ensure a smooth transition from the existing PHE continuous coverage, a broad coalition of stakeholders urge you to adopt, with federal approval, permanent 12-month postpartum Medi-Cal eligibility and continuous Medi-Cal coverage for children up to age 5 after the end of the COVID-19 PHE.

Continuous health care coverage is essential to avoiding disruptions in care, especially during these critical phases in life when medical visits are so frequent and when care is especially important. Over 90% of a child's brain development occurs before a child turns age 5. One-third of all maternal deaths occur one week to one year after a pregnancy ends, and one in seven women experience symptoms of postpartum depression in the year after giving birth.

COVID-19 has underscored the need for extended coverage: Increased isolation and stress has taken a toll on maternal and child physical and mental wellbeing. In addition, children's preventive care, like well-child visits and immunizations, have plummeted below the already low preventive care rates in Medi-Cal.

Communities of color are experiencing the impacts of the pandemic disproportionately. Medi-Cal covers a greater share of families of color, and nearly half of all births annually in California; thus, by removing barriers to accessing care, Medi-Cal can play a unique role in addressing the structural racism that health disparities reveal and that COVID has exacerbated.

To mitigate unnecessary disruptions in care during the post-pandemic redetermination period,

California will need to prepare now, and adopt any necessary TBL for the budget year. By continuing coverage for postpartum individuals and the youngest Medi-Cal children during this PHE wind down period and beyond, Medi-Cal would:

- mitigate disruptions in the continuity of coverage for two of the most vulnerable populations;
- improve low Medi-Cal preventive care rates for children and maternal health outcomes; and
- contribute to an orderly and smooth redetermination process for all Medi-Cal enrollees.

We urge your inclusion of this continuous coverage proposal in the state budget for 2021-22 so that the Administration can secure a smooth plan for transition when the PHE ends.

Thank you for consideration of this request and for your commitment to improving the health of all women, infants, and children.

Respectfully,

Cc: The Honorable Nancy Skinner, Chair, Senate Budget Committee  
The Honorable Phil Ting, Chair, Assembly Budget Committee  
Members, Senate Budget Committee  
Members, Assembly Budget Committee  
Scott Ogus, Senate Budget Committee  
Andrea Margolis, Assembly Budget Committee  
Senate Republican Caucus  
Assembly Republican Caucus  
Tam Ma, Office of the Governor  
Department of Health Care Services