First 5 California FOCUS

MARCH 2019

KIT FOR NEW PARENTS UPDATE: THE PARENT GUIDE HAS ARRIVED

First 5 California's *Kit for New Parents* has a new addition—the *Parent Guide*!

Written in collaboration with the University of California, Berkeley's Health Research for Action, the *Parent Guide* offers parents tips on keeping their children healthy, handling emotional and behavioral challenges, finding quality child care, and more. Parents also will find contact information for groups and agencies when they need extra help or support.

English- and Spanish-language *Kits* with the *Parent Guide* are available for order. Chinese-, Korean-, and Vietnamese-language *Kits* will be released later this year.

Camille's Corner

Camille Maben, Executive Director, First 5 California

The last time I wrote to you in the *First 5 California FOCUS*, we were dealing with wildfires across California. Now, as I write this article, the state is experiencing an exceptional amount of rain. As we go from one extreme to the other—from homes and buildings burning down to floods and mudslides—I'm reminded of the sense of community our partners, including First 5 county commissions, continue to bring by extending a helping hand and coordinating programs that provide services to families in need, whether it's during disasters or helping them navigate day-to-day life.

Speaking of a sense of community, 2019 has had an incredible start under a new leadership banner. The early childhood community has an opportunity to implement Governor Newsom's vision to better the lives of all Californians. The Governor has a comprehensive early childhood vision and budget that supports his proposals by including funding for expanding the early care and education (ECE) infrastructure, home visiting, and paid family leave. It is clear young children and their families are a priority.

The budget provides $500 million in one-time funding to expand child care facilities and provide training for the ECE workforce. The budget also provides funds to increase full-time State Preschool spaces and a commitment to move the state toward providing Universal Preschool to all low-income four-year-olds. These two proposals will expand the system to serve more of the state's 1.8 million eligible, but unserved children.

In addition to his supportive budget, Governor Newsom has brought on a great team to work with us, our partner agencies, and the field. His team is headed by Chief Deputy Ann O'Leary; Giannina Pérez, Senior Policy Advisor for Early Childhood; Kris Perry, Deputy Secretary of the California Health and Human Services Agency for Early Childhood Development and Senior

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In 1998, California voters passed Proposition10—the California Children and Families Act—and declared the importance of investing in a better future for California's youngest children. For the past 20 years, the California Children and Families Commission (First 5 California) has established quality standards and invested in the development of programs and services emphasizing improvement in early education, child care, social services, health care, research, and community awareness. The vision of First 5 California is for all of the state's children to receive the best possible start in life and thrive.

California Can Eliminate Deep Child Poverty With An Ambitious New Plan

Conway Collis and Jackie Thu-Houng Wong—GRACE
GRACE, (Gather, Respect, Advocate, Change, Engage) is an anti-poverty non-profit based in California, is dedicated to changing that.

With the election of Governor Gavin Newsom, California has continued to build momentum to tackle California's childhood poverty crisis. In our state, 450,000 children live in extreme poverty. Together, those children would make up California's eighth largest city—larger than Oakland or San Bernardino. This is a crisis that can't be ignored.

Governor Newsom's first budget produced phenomenal proposals in one-time funding and continuing support for young children, low-income families, and other aggrieved citizens. Californians enjoy a committed and knowledgeable Governor along with an equally committed and knowledgeable Legislature. With the release of the groundbreaking report from California's Lifting Children and Families Out of Poverty Task Force, End Child Poverty Plan, California now has a comprehensive roadmap to end deep child poverty within the state. Upon full enactment, the roadmap promises to eliminate deep child poverty while dramatically reducing overall child poverty and breaking the cycles of intergenerational poverty.

The expertise of Task Force members across issue areas affecting families, their commitment to community involvement, and data-driven metrics set this plan apart. The depth, breadth, and experience of Task Force members, which included First 5 California Executive Director Camille Maben and First 5 Los Angeles Vice President Kim Pattillo Brownson, ensured the needs of the youngest Californians were not overlooked.

The Task Force was established through SB 1520 (Burke) and signed into law by former Governor Brown. From the beginning, the Task Force focused on collaboration by bringing together issue areas such as early care and education, housing, health and human services, health care, juvenile justice, and workforce training.

The result is a plan that is comprehensive and achievable, a plan that gets at the root causes of child poverty rather than focusing on piecemeal solutions. Lawmakers are assembling a package of legislation representing the core recommendations of the End Child Poverty Plan, a blueprint for transformative, values-centered systems change. This window for dramatic institutional change is rare and we must rise to the importance of this moment.

As a state, California has the highest rate of child poverty in the nation. Deep poverty represents families living at or below 50 percent of the federal poverty line—less than $12,500 per year for a family of four. Unfortunately, due to the growing cost of living in California and deep economic systems stacked against the poor, which are rooted in institutional biases and income inequality, the disparity is growing. Here's what our "hot" economy looks like for most families:

- If parents can find an open child care slot, it often costs more than in-state college tuition and doesn't offer flexible hours for working parents.
- In several rural areas throughout California, close to one-third of children live in homes with food insecurity.
- Family homelessness is on the rise. For those who can afford it, some families hope to find recreational vehicles and trailers (with no running water) for shelter.
- Parents juggling multiple minimum wage jobs aren't given health care, reliable schedules, paid sick days, or maternity leave.

California has the chance to ensure that parents who are struggling the most have the comprehensive supports needed to help break the intergenerational cycle of poverty. The impact of the Task Force recommendations goes to the root causes that have kept families in poverty far too long. The comprehensive recommendations include:

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Building a Rate System that Makes Sense: The Blueprint for a Single Reimbursement Rate System for Early Learning in California

California has a robust mixed-delivery system that provides subsidized child care, preschool, and early learning services to approximately 400,000 of the state's youngest learners, and currently the state has two different and unaligned systems for reimbursing child care providers and state-contracted centers. This bifurcated rate system poses significant challenges to families; child care, preschool, and early learning providers; and the state as a whole.

A group of early learning stakeholders, representing all elements of the early learning system (the Standard Reimbursement Rate [SRR] system and the Regional Market Rate [RMR] system), came together to identify guiding principles and recommendations for bringing these two funding systems into alignment. The workgroup is chaired by Nina Buthee of EveryChild California, formerly known as the California Child Development Administrators Association, and Donna Sneeringer of the Child Care Resource Center, with convening and facilitation support provided by First 5 California and the Glen Price Group.

"The group's goal is to develop a single system of state reimbursement rates for child care, preschool, and early learning services that compensates all teachers and providers for the true cost of providing care by reimbursing them at rates that reflect the economic diversity of California and the true costs of meeting varying quality standards and regulations," said Ms. Buthee.

The workgroup developed a white paper to recommend crucial steps in moving toward a single system, which will need to be implemented over a number of years. Steps include regionalizing the SRR, revising the RMR-setting methodology, and incentivizing and compensating for quality.

To regionalize the SRR, California should:

- Hold all providers harmless, ensuring that no child care providers and state-contracted centers receive a lower reimbursement than their current rate.
- Revise the RMR survey methodology to redefine age groups so that age groups are aligned across program standards (Title 5, Title 22).
- Create a new county SRR that reimburses all programs at the current RMR ceiling of their county (Base Rate), incentivizes quality by providing additional funding (adjustment factors) for meeting higher quality standards and contracting burdens for Title 5 programs, and incentivizes full-day programs.
- Set annual targets to allocate investments to close the gap between the current SRR and the RMR in each county over a number of years.
- Close gaps between each county's current SRR and RMR at a consistent rate across counties each year through rate increases (in addition to a cost of living adjustment for all counties).
- Evaluate changes to the system and identify course corrections as needed.

To revise the RMR-setting methodology, California should:

- Ensure the next iteration of the RMR survey methodology supports efforts to bring together the two existing reimbursement systems by setting common age ranges and times of care.
- Incorporate a cost analysis in future iterations of the RMR survey methodology and move forward a more robust incorporation of true cost in future rate-setting methodologies.
- Refine the RMR survey and future rate-setting methodologies to address equity issues, and use California's reimbursement rate system to maximize access to early childhood learning opportunities for children in poverty and maximize public benefit.
- Ensure future iterations of the rate survey or alternative rate-setting process prioritize simplicity and use of real-time data.

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Camille's Corner
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Advisor to the Governor on Implementation of Early Childhood Development Initiatives; Dr. Nadine Burke Harris, California's first Surgeon General; and Dr. Linda Darling-Hammond, the new president of the State Board of Education.

First 5 California is looking forward to working with the Governor, his team, and legislative champions to improve the lives of California's youngest children and their families. I have no doubt there is a historic road ahead for the babies of our Golden State. ❊

California Can Elimindate Deep Child Poverty With An Ambitious New Plan
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1. A targeted child tax credit that will put more cash back into families' pockets to support the basic necessities of daily living like food and rent, without the ongoing threat of homelessness.
2. Guaranteed access to early care and education for children ages 0 to 8 living in poverty.
3. A simplified entry application for services like health care and food aid to cut bureaucratic red tape.
4. Expanded, voluntary home visiting programs to support families with young children.
5. Strengthened, connected, and coordinated workforce training programs for up-skilled jobs that can fundamentally support sustainable upward mobility.
6. Waiver of outstanding juvenile fees.
7. Expanded access to Medi-Cal for families at risk of poverty and increased access to community clinics.
8. Expansion of emergency child care for foster care families and access to housing for youth aging out of foster care.
9. Rental subsidies for homeless families and families living in poverty.
10. Eviction court representation for low-income families.

Our poorest families are working hard to survive, and our current system is working against them. That can change if we invest in improving and changing the way we support families. Otherwise, our children will continue to suffer from the cycles of poverty, racial disparity, and inequality.

To learn more, visit www.endchildpovertyca.org.

Editor's Note: Mr. Collis is a former First 5 California Commissioner. Mr. Collis serves as the co-chair of California's Lifting Children and Families Out of Poverty Task Force and is president and CEO of GRACE. Jackie Thu-Houng Wong is Vice President of Policy and Advocacy at GRACE. ❊

Building a Rate System that Makes Sense: The Blueprint for a Single Reimbursement Rate System for Early Learning in California
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To incentivize and compensate for quality, California should:

- Provide funding enhancements.
- Establish and adhere to consistent measures of quality.
- Clearly and transparently engage and communicate with parents and providers about quality.
- Build infrastructure for quality improvement and quality assessment that supports quality improvement efforts and quality assessment efforts at scale and avoids conflicts of interest by separating the functions of quality improvement and quality assessment to different entities.
- Ensure all providers and early childhood programs have access to quality improvement and quality assessment opportunities and infrastructure.
- Ensure raters are reliable, certified, and do not have conflicts of interest in order to promote inter-rater reliability and increase providers' trust in raters and in the reimbursement rate system.
- Build on Quality Counts California's (the state's quality rating and improvement system) progress and systems.
- Develop a sustainable and scalable statewide system.

The full white paper can be found here. ❊

Summary of January 23–24, 2019 State Commission Meetings

On January 23 and 24, 2019, the First 5 California (F5CA) Commission met in Sacramento. Highlights of the two-day meetings included the following:

January 23, 2019 (2019–2023 Strategic Planning Meeting)

The Commission heard from F5CA Chief Deputy Director and Counsel Frank Furtek and Jannelle Kubinec of WestEd on the framework and status of the Draft 2019 Strategic Plan. The draft plan was discussed with commissioners, F5CA staff, First 5 county commissions, the First 5 Association, and the public. The Commission will review the final draft plan for approval at its April 25, 2019, meeting.

January 24, 2019 (Regular Meeting)

General Business

The Commission welcomed Kris Perry, designee of the Secretary of the California Health and Human Services Agency, as the Ex-Officio Member to the Commission. Member Perry is a nationally-recognized early childhood advocate and was appointed by Governor Newsom as California Health and Human Services Agency Deputy Secretary for Early Childhood Development and Senior Advisor to the Governor on Implementation of Early Childhood Development Initiatives.

Executive Director Report

Camille Maben introduced Lisa Moreau as her new executive assistant, and provided the following updates:

- **Media and communications:** F5CA's *Talk. Read. Sing.*® campaign is airing commercials during sports broadcasts as well as partnering with ESPN Radio, the Los Angeles Dodgers, the Sacramento Kings, and pro football player Johnny Hekker, a first-time dad.
- **First 5 IMPACT:** F5CA and First 5 Association staff are engaging with local First 5 commissions on the design of F5CA's IMPACT 2.0 investment.
- **Data Visioning process:** F5CA and the California Department of Education are partnering on a data visioning project for early childhood programs and information as part of California's Preschool Development Grant process. This visioning will include the quality rating and improvement system, Registry data system, the parent portal for child care information, and the Early Childhood Integrated Data System that can support policy by linking available child and program data across multiple data systems.
- **Dual Language Learner Pilot Study:** The American Institutes for Research (AIR) launched F5CA's Dual Language Learner Pilot Study, selecting 16 counties, including the 6 largest counties with the most DLL children and 10 random regional counties to understand the kinds of program and strategies used within each study county.
- **California Health Interview Survey (CHIS):** UCLA researchers are developing a research policy brief related to parental reading and the *Talk. Read. Sing.*® campaign based on CHIS survey data.

State and Federal Budget and Legislative Update

Erin Gabel, Deputy Director of External and Governmental Affairs, provided an update on Governor Newsom's "California for All," $209 billion dollar Budget Proposal and F5CA sponsor bills for 2019:

Sponsor Bills

- **AB 125 (McCarty)** would establish a single regionalized state reimbursement rate system—called The Child Care Stabilization Formula—for childcare, preschool, and early learning services.
- **AB 324 (Aguiar-Curry)** would require the California Department of Education to develop guidelines around the AB 212 teacher stipend and retention program.
- **AB 1256 (Bonta)** would authorize a learning readiness tool for California.

Quality Counts California/First 5 IMPACT Evaluation Update

Camille Maben and Debi Silverman, Education Administrator of the Training and Continuous Quality Improvement Office, provided a summary of FY 2017–18 evaluation data, and future evaluation steps for First 5 IMPACT.

Financial Update

James Gillies, Director of Fiscal Services, provided a financial update of F5CA funds, including background on back-fill funding and funding volatility after the passage of Proposition 56.

Fiscal Year 2017–18 Annual Report

The commission heard from David Dodds, Deputy Director of Evaluation, about the revised Annual Report format, which was a collaborative effort of F5CA and the First 5 Association to provide more useful and detailed information in support of messaging the statewide contributions of First 5. The report was approved and is available on the First 5 California website.

Visit http://www.ccfc.ca.gov/about/2019_01_meeting_handouts.html for information on all January 2019 Commission meeting agenda items, handouts, and PowerPoint presentations. ❊

First 5 Local County Commissions Celebrate 20 Year Anniversary

First 5 county commissions from around the state marked their 20th anniversaries with local events, from town halls to family expos. Below are samples of the festivities that took place this fall.

First 5 San Mateo

First 5 San Mateo hosted a community event that included "High 5 Leadership Awards," a magic show by California State Senator Jerry Hill, a visit from the First 5 Express, face painting, giveaways, and other family activities.

First 5 San Mateo staff and kids

First 5 Madera

First 5 Madera held a 20th anniversary luncheon. The event included luminaries such as Mayor Andrew J. Medellin and Sara Bosse, director of the Madera County Department of Public Health, along with other partners, public officials, and the general public. Potter the Otter made a special guest appearance to promote *Talk. Read. Sing.*® and guests received Potter the Otter books to share with young children.

First 5 Madera staff with Potter the Otter

First 5 Placer

On November 6, First 5 Placer held a celebration and awards reception for community partners and stakeholders, including Placer County Chief Executive Officer Todd Leopold, members of the First 5 Placer County Commission, and First 5 California Executive Director Camille Maben.

First 5 Riverside

First 5 Riverside hosted a public 20th anniversary celebration on October 24 with elected officials, local experts, policymakers, and providers in attendance. The opening program included State Senator Jeff Stone, Riverside County Board of Supervisors Chairman Chuck Washington, First 5 California Executive Director Camille Maben, and First 5 Association of California Executive Director Moira Kenney, followed by presentations of First 5 Riverside-funded programs such as the Dental Pilot Project and the Help Me Grow Initiative, a public-private partnership with Loma Linda University Children's Health.

First 5 Riverside had a construction theme for its "Building the Future" event

Sutter County

Sutter County Children & Families Commission hosted a "Business After Hours" open house reception, in partnership with the Yuba-Sutter Chamber of Commerce, on November 1. In attendance was California State Assemblyman James Gallagher.

First 5 San Benito

On October 3, First 5 San Benito hosted a partner recognition luncheon following a presentation of its strategic plan and community impact report. The event included a partner walk-through of the San Benito County Children Youth and Families Impact Center.

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First 5 California Submits Comments in Opposition of Proposed "Public Charge" Rule

First 5 California recently joined over 200,000 organizations and individuals who submitted comments in opposition of the Trump Administration's proposed "public charge" rule that would allow immigration officials to deny a green card to an immigrant if the individual is receiving public benefits that are intended to help individuals and families meet basic living requirements. First 5 California urged the Administration to rescind the rule expansion arguing that it will have a devastating effect on California's most vulnerable children and families. Now that the comment period has closed, the United States Department of Homeland Security is legally required to review and assess all 200,000 comments before finalizing the rule, which will likely take several months. To view First 5 California's comments in full, please visit our website.

First 5 Local County Commissions Celebrate 20 Year Anniversary

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First 5 San Bernardino

One of several events to mark their 20th anniversary, First 5 San Bernardino hosted an open house reception at its office on November 6, and welcomed many community partners. County supervisors presented a resolution and participated in exercises highlighting how their work in the community intersects. This launch event was followed by several other family-friendly events in the community during November.

First 5 San Bernardino
Resolution, with Supervisor Josie Gonzales, County of San Bernardino—Fifth District (also a former and longtime Commissioner of First 5 San Bernardino)
Supervisor Robert A. Lovingood, County of San Bernardino—First District
Karen E. Scott—Executive Director, First 5 San Bernardino
Supervisor Curt Hagman, County of San Bernardino—Fourth District
Supervisor Janice Rutherford, County of San Bernardino—Second District

First 5 Los Angeles (First 5 LA)

First 5 LA hosted a reception on November 9, which included a panel discussion with local and state early childhood education leaders and was moderated by a local National Public Radio reporter. As part of the event, the commission featured a new video by Proposition 10 architect and former First 5 California Chairman, Rob Reiner.

Attendees watch the new Rob Reiner video on First 5

First 5 California Executive Director Camille Maben at celebration with Assemblymember Miguel Santiago