



For Immediate Release
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First 5 California's Talk. Read. Sing.® Campaign Proves Effective With California Families

Sacramento – A new study and health policy brief from the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research (CHPR), affirmed the reach and impact of First 5 California's Talk. Read. Sing. social marketing campaign. The UCLA CHPR is one of the nation's leading health policy research centers and the premier source of health policy information for California.

The health policy brief, titled "*Parental Reading and Singing to California's Young Children – Trends, Predictors, and Association with the Talk. Read. Sing. Campaign*" indicates nearly 90 percent of parents read and sing to their children three times or more per week. The health policy brief also reports 87 percent of parents of children birth through 5 years of age recognize the messages of the Talk. Read. Sing. campaign.

"Parents are getting the message: talking, reading, and singing with their babies is critical for the babies' future learning," said Camille Maben, Executive Director of First 5 California. "Beyond bonding with their babies and building their social and emotional well-being, these activities, long-term, are associated with children who are better prepared for school and life."

Launched in 2014, the Talk. Read. Sing. campaign promotes and encourages the engagement of parents and caregivers to talk, read, and sing with their babies from birth. Brain science confirms babies learn from day one and build billions of neural connections by stimulating their brains through experiences, such as talking, reading, and singing with them. These simple and free activities build and promote these connections, increasing brain capacity in children. By age 5, a child's brain achieves approximately 90 percent of its lifetime growth.

"The data show that the Talk. Read. Sing. campaign has achieved a high degree of recognition by most California families with children ages 0 to 5," said the study's lead researcher, Suzanne Ryan-Ibarra, PhD, MPH, adding, "The research also revealed that foreign-born families, or those who are Spanish-speaking, are less likely to read or sing to their children."

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“First 5 California will continue to promote and encourage the joy and benefits of parents talking, reading, and singing to their babies,” said Ms. Maben. “While this study demonstrates the success of our campaign, we will use the research to better focus additional outreach to underrepresented communities as all children deserve a chance to thrive,” added Ms. Maben.

The study was developed using 2005–2016 data from the California Health Interview Survey (CHIS) www.chis.ucla.edu for children ages 0 to 5. First 5 California is a funder of the CHIS.

The health policy brief is available at the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research website at www.healthpolicy.ucla.edu.

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About First 5 California

First 5 California was established in 1998 when voters passed Proposition 10, which taxes tobacco products to fund services for children ages 0 to 5 and their families. First 5 California programs and resources are designed to educate and support teachers, parents, and caregivers in the critical role they play during a child's first five years – to help California kids receive the best possible start in life and thrive. For more information, please visit www.cfc.ca.gov.