



**AUGUST 19, 2020**

## **INFORMATION ITEM**

### **SUBJECT: HOME VISITING WORKFORCE STUDY: COVID-19 PRELIMINARY FINDINGS**

#### **Strategic Plan Priority Area: Family Functioning**

**Goal:** All families have the knowledge, skills, and resources to support their children's optimal development.

## **SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE**

In January 2020, Child Trends, Incorporated (Child Trends) was awarded the contract to carry out the Home Visiting Workforce Study. With the onset of COVID-19, Child Trends shifted the initial phase of data collection to focus first on understanding the impact of COVID-19 on home visiting workforce and delivery of services. The presentation will provide preliminary findings from this timely data collection effort.

## **BACKGROUND OF KEY ISSUES**

The First 5 California (F5CA) Home Visiting Workforce study aims to inform policy recommendations for California that support the state's efforts to build a coordinated infrastructure to prepare, support, and retain a well-qualified home visiting workforce. The study was designed in three phases: (1) conduct a scan of the current home visiting workforce that describes who home visitors and supervisors are (including demographic and well-being factors), their roles, as well as any organizational structures that support their work, and recruitment and retention efforts; (2) inventory the training, competencies, and workforce preparation infrastructure available to prepare the home visiting workforce; and (3) map the home visiting supply and demand across the state to identify gaps in home visiting services.

Soon after their contract was fully executed, Child Trends began working with F5CA and an advisory committee comprised of representatives from the First 5 Association, Departments of Social Services and Public Health, First 5 Los Angeles, state and national experts, and county implementation agencies to make sure the workforce study was responsive to the COVID-19 crisis. COVID-19 has drastically impacted the home visiting workforce as in-home visits are no longer offered and staff are providing services remotely. In response, Child Trends designed a preliminary study activity to take place before the full workforce scan. The purpose of this preliminary data collection

effort is to gather information that is relevant to how local programs are operating now during this transition to virtual visits. To accomplish this, the study team conducted a series of interviews to understand the implementation supports that are needed for virtual visits and gain knowledge about the COVID-19 related challenges and stressors impacting home visiting staff and the families they serve. The team has interviewed nearly 50 home visitors and program managers representing programs from multiple counties and home visiting models. Child Trends will present preliminary findings from this preliminary stage of data collection.

Child Trends is one of the nation's leading nonprofit research organization focused on improving the lives and prospects of children, youth, and families for over 40 years. Child Trends is internationally renowned for its research and policy acumen. In addition to their more than 20 years of experience supporting and researching home visiting in California and nationally, key evaluators conducting this research also serve on the leadership team at the Home Visiting Applied Research Collaborative and bring the latest science and tools to evaluate effective home visiting systems to this work.

### **SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND ACTION**

Home visiting information items were presented to the Commission in January 2016 and April 2019. In July 2019, the Commission approved up to \$2 million over a two-year period for a contracted evaluator to conduct a study of the current home visiting workforce, project future workforce needs, and recommend policy and infrastructure investments to address the workforce gap. In October 2019, the Commission approved up to \$24 million over a five-year period for to coordinate across home visiting implementing agencies and embed home visiting into other child development and family support systems to serve more families.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

A. First 5 California Home Visiting Workforce Study