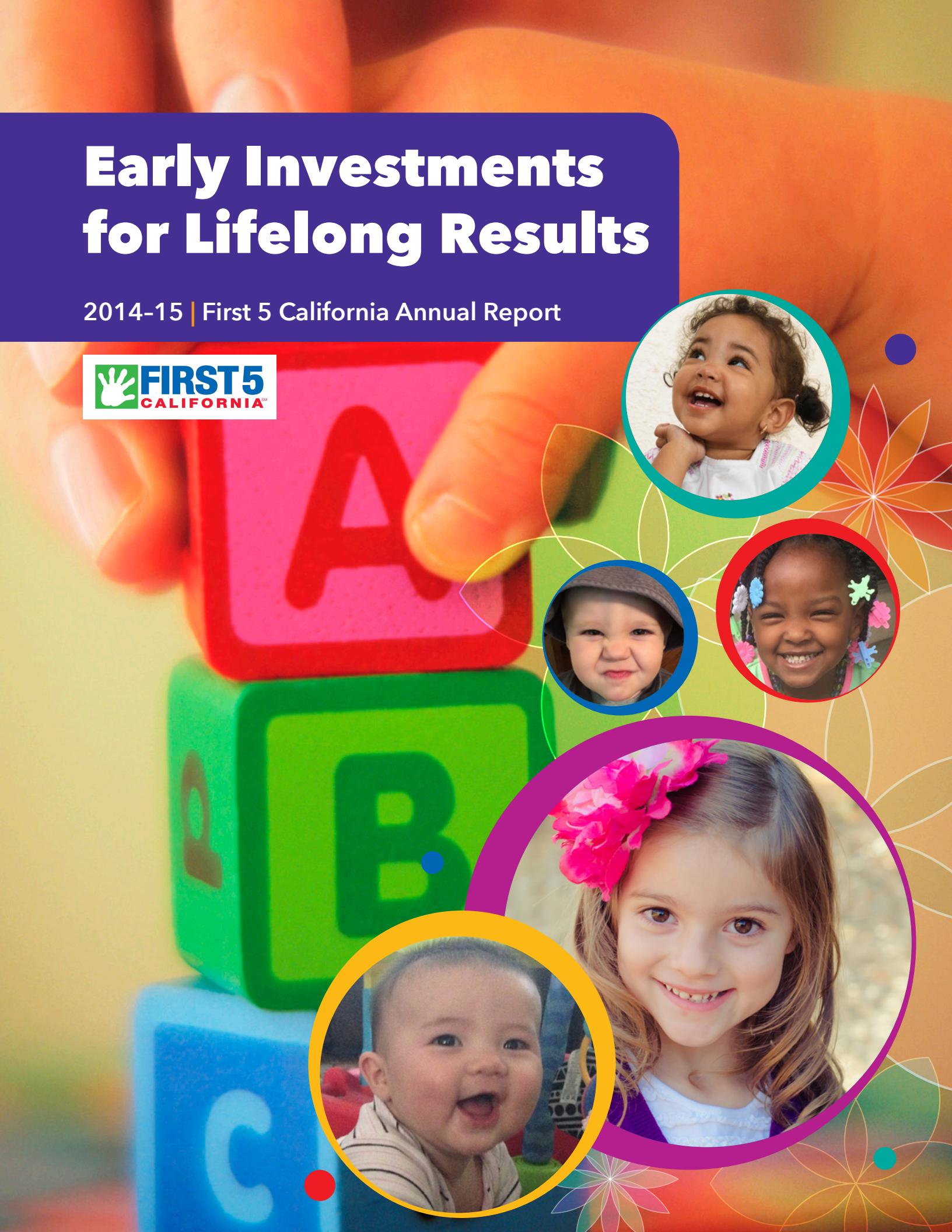
Early Investments for Lifelong Results

2014–15 | First 5 California Annual Report



Our Mission

Convene, partner in, support, and help lead the movement to create and implement a comprehensive, integrated, and coordinated system for california's children prenatal through 5 and their families. Promote, support, and optimize early childhood development.

Early Investments for Lifelong Results

2014–15 | First 5 California Annual Report

FIRST 5 CALIFORNIA COMMISSION MEMBERS

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Appointed by Governor

Joyce Iseri, Vice Chair
Appointed by Senate Rules Committee

Casey McKeever
Appointed by Senate Rules Committee

Conway Collis
Appointed by Speaker of the Assembly

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EX-OFFICIO MEMBER:

Diana Dooley
Secretary of the California Health and Human Services Agency

Jim Suennen, Designee

Message from the Executive Director

It has been another year of significant accomplishments in early learning and health for First 5 California as well as our First 5 county commission partners across the state. More and more parents, policymakers, legislators, and stakeholders have come to recognize the importance of supporting children in their earliest years. They understand the long-term payoff of these necessary investments. And by investments, I'm referring to a variety of ongoing efforts to advance our mission and vision. In addition to funding, there also are the investments of time, hard work, advocacy, outreach, dialogue, and partnerships—all with a focus on nurturing and enriching the earliest years in the lives of our youngest children to foster their success in school and beyond.

A few milestones from the past year deserve special recognition. In February 2015, First 5 California hosted its first annual Child Health, Education, and Care Summit in partnership with several California agencies: Department of Developmental Services, Department of Veterans Affairs, Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, Department of Education, Health and Human Services Agency, Department of Public Health, and Department of Social Services. This Summit welcomed nearly 1,000 attendees representing preschool, infant/toddler child care, social workers, foster care, military families, higher education, administrators, parents, advocates, philanthropists, and elected officials. Participants included county-level teams consisting of representatives from as many of these local groups as possible. The goal was for both county- and state-level networking to be enhanced, and for services to our common target audiences to become better focused and less duplicative.

Our *Talk. Read. Sing.*® public education and outreach campaign messages reached millions of Californians through television and radio ads, social media, and our Parent Website. The campaign, which highlights the importance of early brain development through linguistic interaction and engagement with babies and young children, will be enhanced with additional content and outreach efforts and will continue through the coming year and beyond.

On the program front, two of First 5 California's Signature Programs continued to demonstrate significant results, with the Comprehensive Approaches to Raising Educational Standards (CARES) Plus program

providing professional development for thousands of early educators, and the Child Signature Program (CSP) serving thousands of children statewide in quality early learning programs.

Perhaps our most significant accomplishment to date is the development of First 5 IMPACT (Improve and Maximize Programs so All Children Thrive). With CSP and CARES Plus scheduled to conclude on June 30, 2016, and to build upon their successes, the State Commission in April 2015 approved a five-year investment to support a network of local quality improvement systems to better coordinate, assess, and improve the quality of early learning settings. First 5 IMPACT is an innovative approach that forges partnerships between First 5 California and counties to achieve the goal of helping children ages 0 to 5 and their families thrive by increasing the number of high-quality early learning settings, including supporting and engaging families in the early learning process. Investing in more sites to achieve high-quality standards helps ensure more of California's children enter school with the skills, knowledge, and dispositions necessary to be successful. It provides families the information and support they need to promote and optimize their children's development and learning, both inside and outside the home.

None of this would be possible without the state and local partnerships we continue to develop. We look forward to our ongoing partnership with the 58 First 5 county commissions as we advance our commitment to investing in quality early learning and family resources—all with our collective goal of ensuring our youngest children receive the best start in life and thrive.

Camille Maben

CAMILLE MABEN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, FIRST 5 CALIFORNIA

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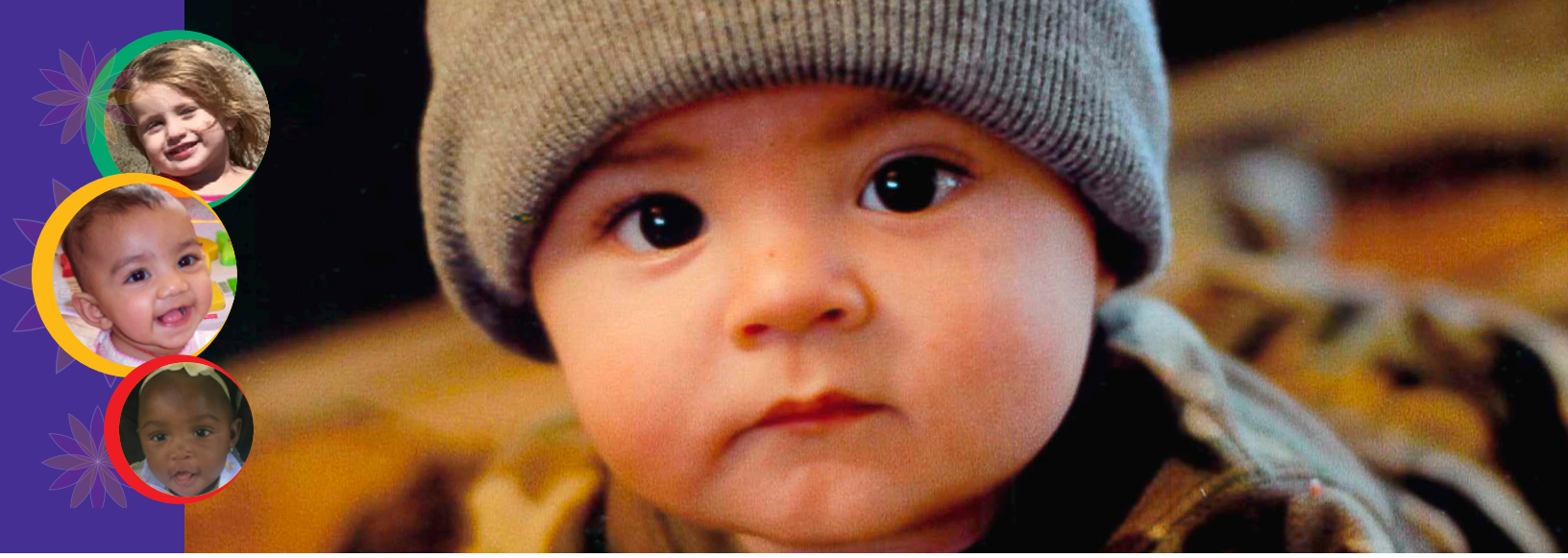


Supporting Healthy Development and School Readiness for Young Children

LEADERSHIP: FIRST 5 CALIFORNIA

In 1998, California voters passed Proposition 10—the California Children and Families Act (the Act)—and declared the importance of investing in a better future for California's youngest children. For the past 17 years, the California Children and Families Commission (First 5 California) has established standards of quality 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.

STRATEGIC PLAN

The State Commission approved a new Strategic Plan for First 5 California in January 2014. The Strategic Plan serves as an important compass for the Commission's deliberations to decide how best to plan future work, investments, and partnerships over the next five years. For more information about the Strategic Plan, please go to **http://www.ccfc.ca.gov/about/pdf/commission/resources/F5CA_Strategic_Plan.pdf.**

BUILDING PUBLIC WILL AND STATE INVESTMENT

In April 2015, First 5 California adopted its Children's State Policy Agenda to guide the agency's efforts to advocate before the state Legislature for a comprehensive, integrated, culturally competent, and coordinated system for California's youngest children. The Commission's Policy Agenda reflects First 5 California's commitment in its Strategic Plan to participate and lead in the area of civic engagement, and the recognition of the Commission's responsibility to the people of California to ensure the wise and effective use of public funds.

In its Strategic Plan, First 5 California commits to engage and lead in building public will and state investment to support the optimal wellbeing and development of children prenatal through age 5, their families, and communities. The Strategic Plan also recognizes that in order to advocate and influence policy change, we must engage in partnerships with First 5 county commissions, stakeholders, and other allies, from local to federal levels, in order to be successful in institutionalizing efforts to advance child-centered policies and increase these crucial investments.

First 5 California's 2015 Policy Agenda[1] focused on four areas the Commission identified as its top state policy priorities: child health, early learning, strong and engaged families and communities, and First 5 revenue. Within each priority area, the Policy Agenda identified targeted goals to achieve a seamless statewide system of integrated and comprehensive programs for children and families. First 5 California seeks to serve as a convener and partner in state policy conversations, working with First 5 county commissions, state agencies, stakeholders, and other advocates to convene, align, collaborate on, support, and strengthen statewide advocacy efforts to realize the following shared goals:

Child Health

- Promote coordination across the health care system to promote access for every pregnant mother and child age 0 to 5 with affordable and comprehensive health insurance coverage.
- Improve parents' and young children's knowledge about and access to healthy foods and physical activity, including support for state and/or local taxes on sweetened beverages and/or unhealthy foods.
- Support and promote universal developmental screenings, assessment, referral, and treatment.

Early Learning

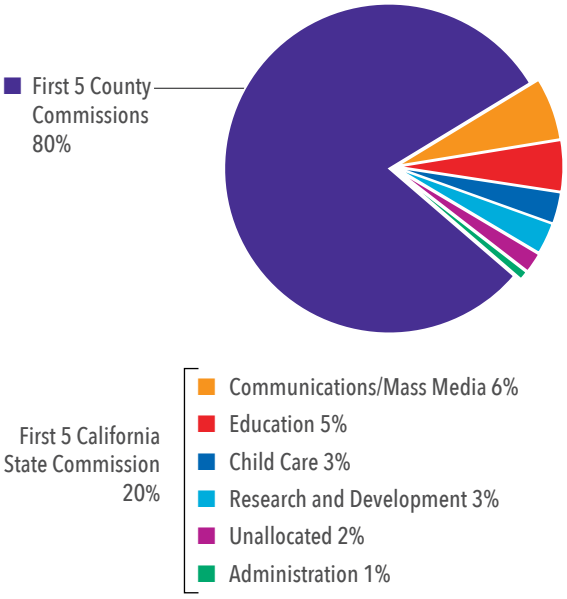
- Expand access to quality early care and education programs for children ages 0 to 3.
- Support implementation of high-quality universal preschool access for all low-income four-year-old children, and high-quality transitional kindergarten and kindergarten statewide.
- Support a high-quality early learning workforce through strengthened qualifications, compensation, stability, diversity, and robust professional development systems.
- Promote statewide access to and participation in successful Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS).

First 5 Revenue

- Promote inclusion of supports and services for children ages 0 to 5 and their families in existing and new revenue policy discussions.
- Promote regulation of tobacco-related products, including electronic cigarettes.

Through its advocacy efforts during the 2015 state legislative and budget session, First 5 California garnered significant state-level support for its Policy Agenda goals from policymakers, advocacy partners, and other stakeholders. In collaboration with its early childhood education and care advocacy partners, and leaders in the Legislature, First 5 California achieved historic wins for the state's youngest children and families through shared advocacy efforts on the state budget and legislation relevant to the Policy Agenda.[2] The

Exhibit 1: First 5 California Children and Families Commission Funds—Allocation of State Portion



Source: Health and Safety Code Section 130105

progress made through the final 2015–16 budget actions moves the agency closer to reaching its goals across the priority areas.[3]

The 2015 budget included improvements to child health policies, including the historic expansion of full-scope Medi-Cal coverage to Medi-Cal eligible children, regardless of immigration status, effective as early as mid-2016. The budget also eliminated a 10 percent rate reduction on Denti-Cal care providers, and prohibited insurance coverage from using copayments, coinsurance, deductibles, or any other form of cost sharing for the Prenatal Screening Program fee.

The state made a historic investment of over $400 million in the early learning and care system, representing investments in the three areas First 5 California and its advocacy partners supported: access, affordability, and quality improvement. This included 20,330 total new slots for children in early learning and child care programs: 6,800 new Alternative Payment Program vouchers with a priority for infant/toddler access; 7,030 new full-day, full-year State Preschool slots; and 6,500 part-day State Preschool slots, with 2,500 prioritized for students with disabilities. The budget invested $129 million in increased early learning program reimbursement rates, including a 5 percent increase for the Standard Reimbursement Rate (SRR), a 1 percent increase for part-day State Preschool, and the creation of a separate rate for full-day State Preschool; a 4.5 percent increase for the Regional Market Rate (RMR); and a 5 percent increase for License-Exempt rates. The state prioritized increasing the quality of infant/toddler programs through a one-time investment in an Infant/Toddler QRIS Block Grant, a new quality incentive program to support infant/toddler providers to attain a higher level of quality within their local QRIS.

The Legislature prioritized funds to engage and strengthen families and communities through the creation of a consumer education website, and statewide database to support parents' access to information about early learning and child care programs. The budget also made strides to reduce excessive draws on First 5 revenue. The Board of Equalization (BOE) must submit a report to the Legislature by early 2016 outlining options and timelines for reducing administrative costs associated with tobacco tax enforcement while maintaining program effectiveness.

First 5 California is committed to continuing the advocacy work achieved in 2015 by continuing to strengthen its partnerships with stakeholders and its efforts to build policymakers' knowledge base, will, and investment in shared priorities. In doing so, the agency will continue to build on this year's successes and continue working toward the underlying Strategic Plan goal to ensure all children prenatal through age 5 have the resources, foundation, and systems of support they need to thrive.

Strong And Engaged Families And Communities

- Support evidence-based parent education and engagement, including parent engagement on early brain development.
- Support sustainability of Family Resource Centers and other community hubs for integrated services for children and families.
- Increase supports for breastfeeding, family leave, and baby-friendly policies in all settings.
- Expand voluntary home visiting programs.

ACCOUNTABILITY: FUNDING AND AUDIT RESULTS

Under the Act, the State Board of Equalization collects an excise tax levied on all tobacco products and deposits the revenue into the California Children and Families Trust Fund, allocating 20 percent to First 5 California and 80 percent to county commissions. In FY 2014-15, First 5 California received $87.5 million and county commissions received 344.1 million.

The amount of funding allocated annually to each county commission is based on the annual number of births in the county relative to the total number in the state. Each county must prepare an annual independent audit subject to guidelines prepared by the State Controller's Office. The counties invest their dollars in locally designed programs, as well as in First 5 California's statewide Signature Programs as match funding. First 5 county commissions use their funds to support local programs in four result areas:

- Improved Family Functioning
- Improved Child Development
- Improved Child Health
- Improved Systems of Care

First 5 California's Administrative Services Division, Evaluation Office, Executive Office, Program Management Division, Communications Office, Fiscal and Contracts Division, and Information Technology Office provide staff support for the following functions, operations, and systems:

- Fiscal management of the California Children and Families Trust Fund
- Tax revenue disbursements to county commissions
- Audits and annual fiscal reports
- Local agreement and program disbursement management
- Public education and outreach
- Evaluation of First 5 California programs
- Procurement and contract management
- Workforce recruitment and development
- Information technology
- Business services

The administration of these and other programs is consistent with all applicable State and Federal laws, rules, and regulations. The State Controller's Office conducts an annual review of the 58 county commissions' independent audits. In October 2015, the Controller published its review of the counties' audits for FY 2013-14, summarizing several findings contained in the local audits, but did not deem any of them significant enough to withhold funding. The audit can be viewed on First 5 California's website at **http://www.ccfc.ca.gov/commission/commission_annual_report.html.**

Serving California's Young Children, Parents, and Teachers

FOUR KEY RESULT AREAS

First 5 California tracks progress in four key result areas to support evidence-based funding decisions, program planning, and policies:

1. Improved Family Functioning
2. Improved Child Development
3. Improved Child Health
4. Improved Systems of Care

These result areas comprise a framework for reporting and assessing early childhood outcome data. Appendix A and B include descriptions of the result areas and services for First 5 California and 57 county commissions.* This data reporting framework provides a statewide overview of the number, type, and costs of services provided to children and adults for a particular fiscal year.

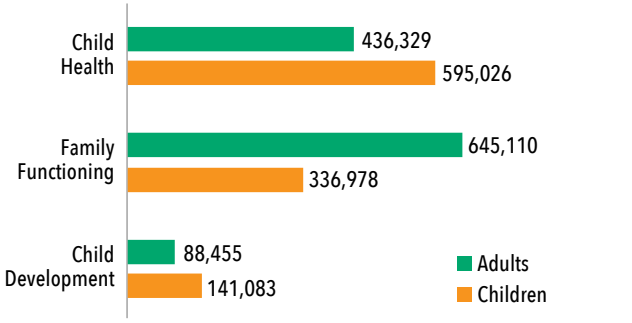
Stakeholders can use this information as one source to determine impact and resource allocation from First 5 statewide. Exhibit 2 contains the total numbers of services provided to children ages 0 to 5 and adults in FY 2014–15 for Improved Family Functioning, Improved Child Development, and Improved Child Health.

The distribution of total expenditures ($454,347,967) for children ages 0 to 5 and adults receiving services in 2014–15 is presented by result area in Exhibit 3.

*At the time of printing, Colusa County is not included.

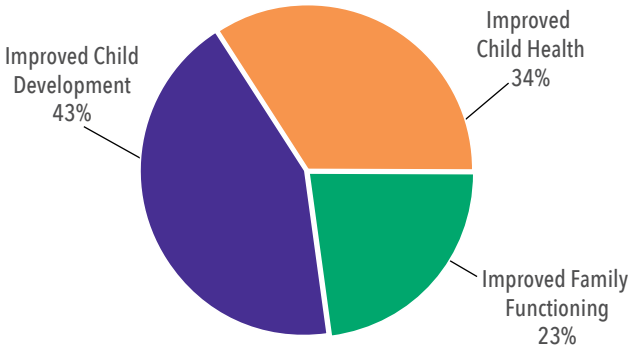
The result area, Improved Systems of Care ($105,326,568), differs from the others; it consists of programs and initiatives that support program providers in the other three result areas.

Exhibit 2: Total Numbers of Services Provided to Children Ages 0 to 5 and Adults in FY 2014-15 by Result Area



*Totals for Adults include both Adult and Provider counts

Exhibit 3: Total Expenditures for Children Ages 0 to 5 and Adults in FY 2014–15 by Result Area



Source: County Revenue and Expenditure Summary, November 2015

First 5 County Commission Program Result Areas

First 5 county commissions are required to report to First 5 California their annual expenditure and service data on their programs. In collaboration with the First 5 Association, First 5 California developed and adopted guidelines to standardize data collection. Counties report program service data under the four result areas. These data have been aggregated to the State level. Data reported are from programs that are funded by both local and State First 5 funds (Appendix A).

IMPROVED FAMILY FUNCTIONING

In FY 2014–15, county commissions invested $105 million to improve Family Functioning. Family Functioning services provide parents, families, and communities with timely, relevant, and culturally appropriate information, services, and support. Services include:

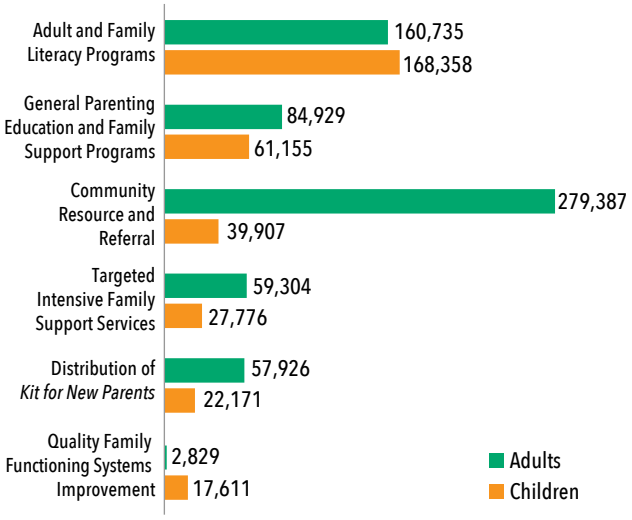
- Increasing parent education and literacy
- Providing referrals to community resources
- Supplying basic needs, such as food and clothing

In FY 2014–15, First 5 county commissions provided 336,978 services to improve family functioning to children ages 0 to 5, and 645,110 services to parents, guardians, primary caregivers, relatives, and providers. Exhibit 4 displays the numbers of services provided.

While children and adults from all ethnic groups received services, for those reporting an ethnicity, Latinos were the largest recipient group (47 percent). For children reporting a primary language, services were provided to Spanish speakers 61 percent of the time and English speakers 35 percent of the time.

Exhibit 5 shows the distribution of expenditures by service category. First 5 California provided support to schools and educational institutions, nonprofit community-based agencies, government agencies, and private institutions. First 5 county commissions provided services to children and adults in order to improve Family Functioning.

Exhibit 4: Family Functioning—Total Numbers of Services Provided to Children Ages 0 to 5 and Adults in FY 2014-15 by Service



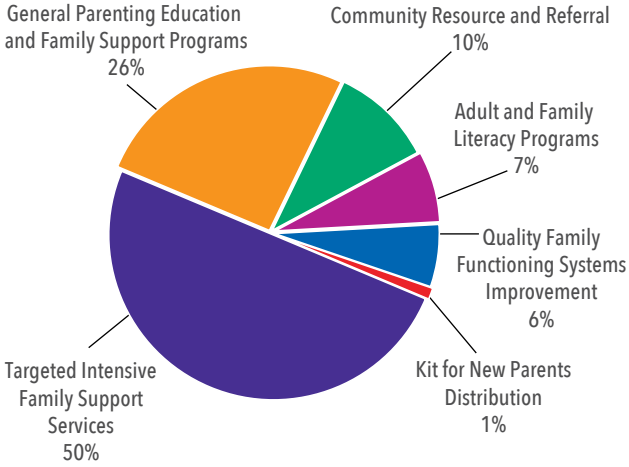
*Totals for Adults include both Adult and Provider counts

IMPROVED CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Child Development services are designed to increase access and quality of early education and learning. These services include free high-quality preschool, special needs assessment and intervention, and school readiness programs.

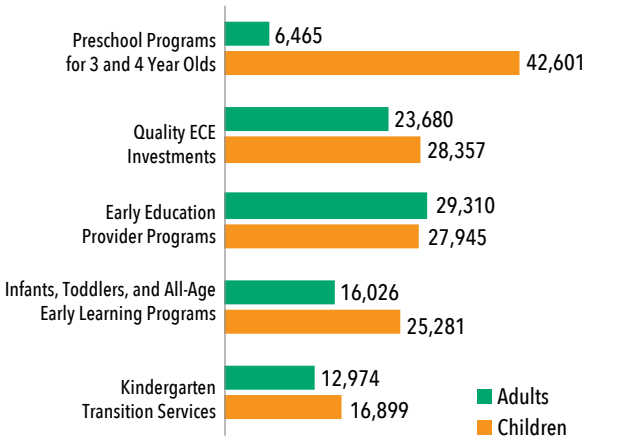
In FY 2014–15, First 5 delivered 141,083 child development services to children ages 0 to 5 and 88,455 services to parents, guardians, primary caregivers, relatives, and providers. Exhibit 6 displays the numbers of services provided.

Exhibit 5: Family Functioning—Distribution of Expenditures for Children Ages 0 to 5 and Adults in FY 2014–15 by Service



Source: County Revenue and Expenditure Summary, November 2015

Exhibit 6: Child Development—Total Numbers of Services Provided to Children Ages 0 to 5 and Adults in FY 2014-15 by Service



*Totals for Adults include both Adult and Provider counts

While children and adults from all ethnic groups received services, for those reporting an ethnicity, Latinos were the largest recipient group of services (63 percent). For children reporting a primary language, services were provided to Spanish speakers 47 percent of the time and English speakers 47 percent of the time.

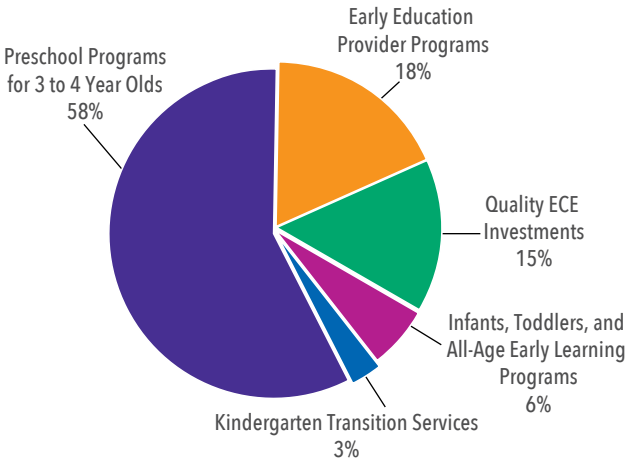
In FY 2014–15, county commissions expended $196 million to improve Child Development. Exhibit 7 shows the distribution of expenditures by service category.

IMPROVED CHILD HEALTH

First 5 county commissions fund Child Health services that promote health through identification, treatment, and elimination of risks that threaten health and cause developmental delays and disabilities. First 5 Child Health services are far- ranging and include prenatal care, oral health, nutrition and fitness, tobacco cessation support, and intervention for children with special needs.

In FY 2014–15, First 5 provided 595,026 services designed to improve Child Health to children ages 0 to 5, and 436,329 services to parents, guardians, primary caregivers, relatives, and providers. Exhibit 8 displays the numbers of services provided.

Exhibit 7: Child Development—Distribution of Expenditures for Children Ages 0 to 5 and Adults in FY 2014–15 by Service



Source: County Revenue and Expenditure Summary, November 2015

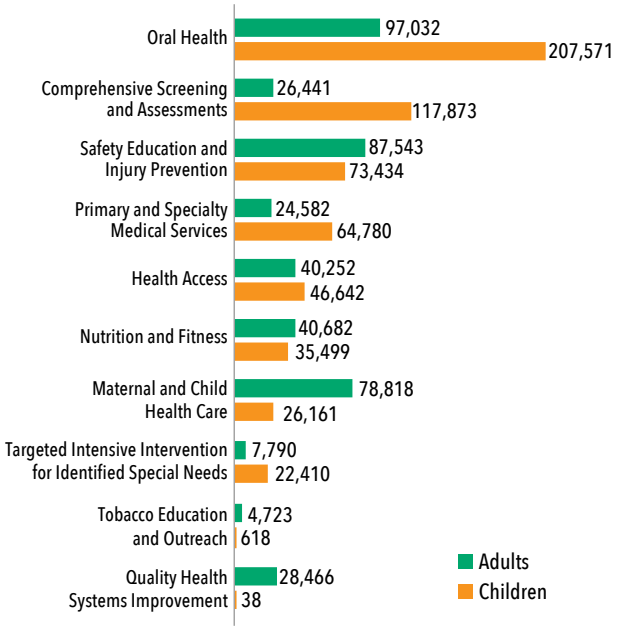
While children and adults from all ethnic groups received services, for those reporting an ethnicity, Latinos were the largest recipient group of services (61 percent). For children reporting a primary language, services were provided to English speakers 54 percent of the time and Spanish speakers 43 percent of the time.

In FY 2014–15, county commissions expended $153 million to improve Child Health. Exhibit 9 shows the distribution of expenditures by service category.

IMPROVED SYSTEMS OF CARE

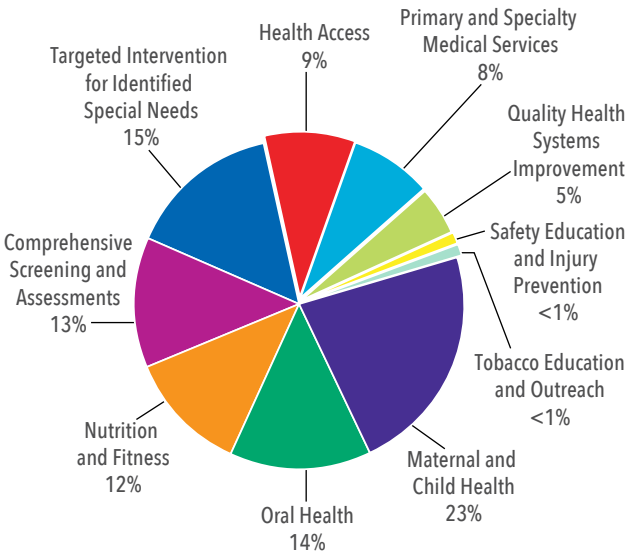
Systems of Care addresses system-wide structural supports as county commissions effectively work toward achievement in the result areas of Family Functioning, Child Health, and Child Development. For example, interagency collaboration allows coordinated wrap-around efforts from multiple organizations providing targeted services. Since this result area is at a systems level, counties do not report numbers of children and adults served. Expenditure data indicate that for FY 2014–15, county commissions expended $105 million to improve Systems of Care (Exhibit 10). In 2014–15, 8 percent of expenditures went toward Public Education and Information; 18 percent toward Policy and Broad Systems-Change Efforts; and 74 percent toward organizational support.

Exhibit 8: Child Health—Total Numbers of Services Provided to Children Ages 0 to 5 and Adults in FY 2014-15 by Service



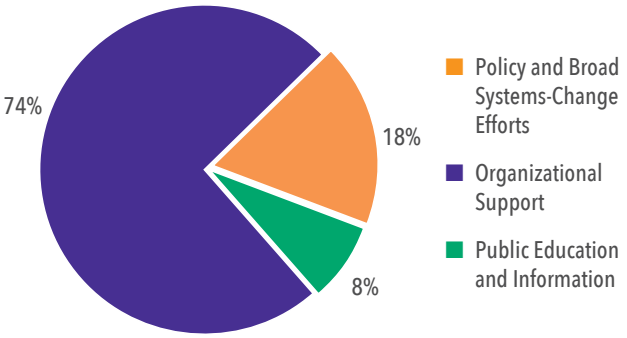
*Totals for Adults include both Adult and Provider counts

Exhibit 9: Child Health—Distribution of Expenditures for Children Ages 0 to 5 and Adults in FY 2014–15 by Service



NOTE: May not add to 100% due to rounding
Source: County Revenue and Expenditure Summary, November 2015

Exhibit 10: Systems of Care—Distribution of Expenditures by Service



Child Development Focus

One of the overarching purposes of First 5 California is to invest in quality early learning programs. National research indicates high-quality early learning programs have a significant, positive impact on early childhood outcomes and at-risk children in cognitive, language, and social development.[4,5] Decades of program evaluations show investments in high-quality early learning produce significantly greater rates of return. Effective early childhood programs generate benefits to society that far exceed program costs. Yet, nationally, many licensed facilities fail to meet or minimally meet the most basic guidelines for quality. Approximately 50 percent of California's disadvantaged and at-risk 3- and 4-year-old children do not attend preschool, and even fewer attend high-quality preschools.[6] High-quality early learning programs go beyond the basics to provide opportunities for evidence-based learning activities, along with the development of nurturing and supportive relationships with teachers and caregivers.

Scientific studies conclude high-quality early learning programs improve school readiness and lead to better academic achievement in elementary school.[7] Cost-benefit and return on investment analyses demonstrate investments in high-quality early learning programs generate substantial social and economic payoffs by reducing persistent social costs, such as crime and teen births.[8]

CHILD SIGNATURE PROGRAM

In October 2011, First 5 California launched the development of its Child Signature Program (CSP) as a consolidation of the State Commission's prior investments in early learning programs (i.e., Power of Preschool [PoP] program). The purpose of this strategic program investment has been to increase the quality of early learning and development programs across the state.

CSP works to invest in high-quality early learning elements designed to enhance the quality of care and education for young children. A growing body of research confirms the importance of quality early learning experiences to effectively prepare young children for school and for life.

The design of CSP integrates proven elements of other First 5 California-funded programs, selected core components of Educare (see page 18 for description of Educare), and continues to align with the California Department of Education Infant/Toddler and Preschool Learning Foundations and Frameworks. CSP was launched in three phases via three Requests for Application to First 5 county commissions.

CSP 1 and 3 were designed to increase the quality of early learning and development programs by implementing three research-based Program Elements:

- Instructional Strategies and Teacher-Child Interactions
- Social-Emotional Development
- Parent Involvement and Support

CSP 1 classrooms implementing Quality Enhancements in all three Program Elements are referred to as Quality Enhancement (QE) classrooms. Classrooms that did not implement CSP Quality Enhancements were referred to as Maintenance of Effort (MOE) Classrooms.

Launched in 2012, CSP 1 focused on supporting existing quality enhanced classrooms that initially participated in PoP, while CSP 2 focused on providing quality improvement support through training and technical assistance to centers and classrooms in an effort to bring them up to the quality levels of classrooms participating in CSP 1.

Professional development and coaching were key focus areas along with ongoing collaboration and support to each of the 34 counties that participated throughout the three-year program. As a result, the quality of early learning provided to children enrolled in CSP 2 classrooms was increased.

Launched in spring 2013, CSP 3 allowed CSP 2 counties not participating in CSP 1 to apply for two years of QE funding. The purpose of CSP 3 is similar to that of CSP 1 in terms of Quality Enhancements for qualifying classrooms. CSP was constantly evolving and improving with continuous support for staff, coordinated services for families and children, and strong local partnerships. Program data for FY 2013–14 show CSP 1 and 3 served children at risk of school failure, especially children of low-income families. Seventy-nine percent of CSP classrooms consisted of State Preschool or Head Start programs that enroll children based on income-eligibility requirements.

During FY 2014–15, CSP 1 and 3 included 1,350 classrooms serving over 23,500 children. These classrooms consisted of children with special needs (4 percent), infants and toddlers (4 percent), and dual language learners (58 percent).

Example Programs

CHILD SIGNATURE 1 EXAMPLE—LOS ANGELES COUNTY

First 5 Los Angeles's (LA) CSP 1 was implemented in over 200 centers and family child care homes across the county, reaching over 9,000 children and their families. Among its accomplishments, First 5 LA's CSP 1 strengthened families through QE efforts in over a dozen sites, improved sites' community outreach, disseminated findings at state and national conferences, and created legacy tools for CSP 1 providers to sustain their capacity to serve families.

Family Support Services. With the help of tools such as the Protective Factors Survey and Family Partnership Agreement, Family Support Specialists (FSS) engaged families in trusting relationships and provided critical support to families beginning early in the program year. Studies showed families made important growth in the areas of concrete support; family functioning/resiliency; and child development/knowledge of parenting, nurturing, and attachment.

Community Outreach. FSS staff helped their sites strengthen outreach efforts and partnerships with community organizations. Community outreach included attendance and active participation in First 5 LA Best Start Communities, which focuses on building supportive communities where children and families can thrive. First 5 LA worked in partnership with many networks to promote a common vision and provide collective will throughout each community to give kids the best start in life.

Dissemination of CSP Evaluation Findings. First 5 LA's Program Coordinator and Local Evaluator presented the work of the CSP team at four conferences across the country. They shared findings related to the program's positive impact on families at the California Association for the Education of Young Children, National Association for the Education of Young Children, McCormick Leadership Institute, and the Young Child Expo & Conference.

CSP's Footprint Project. To facilitate sustainability and ensure investments in their sites would endure, QE sites were provided hard copy and electronic resource binders containing information on resources in their communities, presentations on different workshops, flyers, and other educational materials.

Overall, LA CSP 1 has provided a comprehensive, multi-disciplinary approach to Early Childhood Education and has had a positive impact in the lives of LA families.

CHILD SIGNATURE PROGRAM 2 EXAMPLE—NAPA COUNTY

First 5 Napa County's CSP 2 was successful in maintaining participation of all 26 classrooms throughout the three-year program. The establishment of relationships played a key role in this noteworthy achievement, along with support and the provision or acquisition of relevant training.

Critical to the success of CSP 2 was the training CSP 2 and local staff received based on their individual Improvement Plan and the ongoing needs expressed by teachers. Napa County was able to partner with Solano County to provide trainings on topics such as Kindergarten Transition, Parent Engagement Strategies in the classroom and at home, and other areas of shared need.

The CSP 2 Early Learning Systems Specialist (ELSS) participated in recruitment of CARES Plus participants. CSP 2 teachers were specifically targeted and actively recruited into the CARES Plus program through several outreach events made possible through coordinated efforts by both programs.

First 5 Napa County's participation in CSP 2 laid the groundwork for programs and the Napa community at large to better understand and work with the tools and measures for quality improvement and to begin a dialogue with essential partners on future work.

CHILD SIGNATURE PROGRAM 3 EXAMPLE—SAN MATEO COUNTY

First 5 San Mateo County's CSP 3 is helping transform the Baden Infant Center into a model classroom that will showcase infant and toddler care and build capacity throughout San Mateo County.

Located on the Baden High School campus, the Baden Infant Center is part of the Teenage Parenting Program (TAPP) funded through Cal-SAFE and the South San Francisco Unified School District. TAPP provides expectant parents and parenting students with parenting skills, life skills, and information about valuable resources available in the community. The program enrolls eight infants, starting as young as six weeks and up to eighteen months, at any given time. Families receive comprehensive services that include child development, health and nutrition, and family support services.

Angel O. Barrios, Executive Director for the Institute for Human and Social Development, Inc. (IHSD), the Early Head Start grantee overseeing the Center, explains "When we originally applied for the funding, we weren't thinking of a model classroom. We were only thinking about enhancing program quality. The idea for a model classroom grew out of collaborative discussions between First 5 California, First 5 San Mateo, IHSD staff members, Early Education Effectiveness Exchange, and the Program for Infant Toddler Care Partners for Quality. These groups determined a model classroom others could use for observation and learning would be a perfect addition to the community. The classroom would provide quality early education and align with IHSD's mission to promote best practices for children, as well as increasing partnerships and collaboration in San Mateo County."

Parents are engaged in many ways at this site, including participating in training on a variety of topics such as how to support attachment and protective factors that nurture healthy development.

This project is an example of how multiple agencies joined forces to promote and build quality in early care in a community and a county.

EARLY EDUCATION EFFECTIVENESS EXCHANGE

First 5 California's Early Education Effectiveness Exchange (E4) serves as the primary statewide resource designed to facilitate quality improvement in early learning centers and classrooms participating in any of the three Child Signature Programs. The E4 was created to provide quality enhancement training and technical assistance to staff from CSP counties, sites, and classrooms to implement CSP requirements.

In its second year of implementation, E4 completed the development of 16 Professional Development to Go (PD2GO) packs. PD2GO is an innovative approach to early childhood professional development consisting of a collection of strategically organized professional development sessions designed for use with staff members in early childhood centers and family child care homes.

E4 provided training and technical assistance through Quarterly Regional Meetings, as well as the CSP Annual Meeting as part of the Pre-Summit to First 5 California's 2015 Child Health, Education, and Care Summit. On April 21, 2015, E4 conducted the First 5 California Policy Summit in Sacramento. This was an opportunity for county, state, and national program implementers, researchers, and policymakers to come together for a day of shared learning and priority setting with a common goal of improving child outcomes through aligned quality improvement efforts. The 2015 Quality Improvement Policy Summit Proceedings document with highlights from the Summit was distributed to stakeholders and policymakers. **(http://www.ccfc.ca.gov/pdf/programs/resources/F5CA%202015%20Quality%20Improvement%20Policy%20Summit%20Proceedings%20with%20Appendices.pdf)**

In addition, E4 continues an interactive website that includes a resource center, document library, calendar of events, CSP user community forum, partner information, and other resources. The website was designed to provide CSP participants and other early childhood educators the ability to engage in topic-specific discussion, network with others, access customized teaching and learning resources, and more importantly, improve classroom experiences for children.

EDUCARE

The Educare model promotes school readiness by reducing the achievement gap for disadvantaged children ages 0 to 5 who are less likely to attend high-quality preschool. Ongoing research demonstrates that poverty and toxic stress can threaten a child's cognitive development and ability to learn. California children from low-income families typically enter kindergarten 12 to 14 months behind the national average in pre-reading and language skills. Underscoring the importance of Educare, a study conducted by the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill indicates low-income children (including children with limited proficiency in English) who enroll in Educare as infants or toddlers enter kindergarten with the same skills as their middle-income peers.[9] The Educare model also strengthens the abilities of parents to support their children's learning when they enter school.

In 2010, the First 5 California State Commission voted to become a public funder in the public-private Educare Quality Early Learning Model and invest up to $6 million over three

years to support the development, operation, and evaluation of multiple Educare Centers in California, specifically in Santa Clara and Los Angeles counties.

In 2015, First 5 California funded First 5 Santa Clara to support the operation of California's first Educare site—Educare Silicon Valley—through targeted funding. This investment covers costs directly and uniquely attributable to the requirements of the Educare program that have been proven to increase the quality of early learning programs through improved teacher-child interactions.

Educare Silicon Valley held an official ribbon cutting ceremony and began serving children and families in fall 2015 following multiple years of planning, fundraising, and construction. Co-located with Santee Elementary School and in partnership with the Santa Clara County Early/Head Start and State Preschool programs and the East Side Union High School Child Development Program, the center provides support for families through its Family Resource Center; serves children in high-quality infant, toddler, and preschool programs; and creates a hub for professional development and research through its Teacher Professional Development Institute.[10]

Educare Long Beach, a public-private partnership supported by a multitude of business, non-profit, and education leaders, is currently in the planning, fundraising, and construction phase. The stand-alone facility located on the Barton Elementary School campus in the Long Beach Unified School District, anticipated to be opened in 2018.[11]

LOCAL DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENINGS AND SERVICES

Across California, significant developmental disparities exist among children ages 0 to 5. Such an early readiness gap threatens later learning, development, and health. The California Children and Families Act was intended to create programs that support disadvantaged children in California and help them overcome the socioeconomic barriers that limit their opportunities for success. Since 1998, First 5 California and county commissions have actively promoted screenings and assessments to help identify critical issues for children with special needs. When identified and addressed early, these issues are less likely to hinder children's chances for success in school and beyond. County commissions continue to make developmental screening a priority in their investments across the state.

During FY 2014–15, First 5 California continued its leadership role in the Statewide Screening Collaborative (SSC), a group consisting of multiple State agencies, including Public Health and Developmental Services, and stakeholder organizations such as the American Academy of Pediatrics and Kaiser Permanente.

In addition, through First 5 California's role in implementing the Race to the Top—Early Learning Challenge grant (RTT—ELC), support was provided to participating counties on screening and follow-up in early learning

settings, specifically around use of the "Ages and Stages Questionnaire," a valid and reliable screening tool for early childhood development.

RACE TO THE TOP–EARLY LEARNING CHALLENGE

RTT–ELC, a federal grant, has the ambitious goal of supporting the development and expansion of successful local quality improvement efforts focused on improved outcomes for children with high needs by implementing local Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS). Approximately 77 percent of the grant funding is spent at the local level to support a voluntary network of 17 Regional Leadership Consortia in 16 counties. Each consortium is led by an established organization that is already operating or was developing a QRIS or quality improvement system and allocating local resources to the efforts. In 2014, Consortia expanded services by bringing on 14 mentee counties to build a QRIS; mentoring activities included funding, training assessors, developing coaches, assisting with data practices, and supporting a continuous quality improvement approach. More than 2 million children under five in California (95 percent of the total in that age group) are represented by the 30 Consortia and mentee counties.

In addition, California is using a portion of the RTT–ELC grant funds to make several one-time investments in state capacity via 11

projects. These investments range from supporting the California Departments of Developmental Services' and Public Health's work on developmental screening to creating online training modules of core content and resources. Many of these additional projects target supporting the Consortia and providing additional resources for the state as a whole. The California Department of Education (CDE) is the RTT–ELC lead agency responsible for overall grant administration and project monitoring. Staff members from the CDE Early Education and Support Division (EESD) and First 5 California (F5CA) serve as the RTT–ELC State Implementation Team that provides Consortia and workgroup meeting planning and facilitation, technical assistance (TA) and support, and fiscal and programmatic oversight.

The Consortia, along with the State Implementation Team, continued its significant progress in refining and operationalizing California's Quality Continuum Framework (CA-QRIS Framework), including the Hybrid Matrix and Pathways Core Tools & Resources, through collective commitments from multiple stakeholders, aligning and leveraging quality improvement initiatives, and focusing coaching and continuous quality improvement practices to support the rated elements and Pathways.

One of the most exciting successes to date expressed by the Consortia is the unprecedented opportunity RTT–ELC provides to refocus existing public and private investments on evidence-based and promising practices. In essence, RTT–ELC created an umbrella for other quality improvement and funding efforts.

With the CA–QRIS Framework and the RTT–ELC goals and objectives, these independent projects have been aligned with the overarching program quality improvement system and are building upon each other. The key quality improvement tools, such as the Environment Rating Scales (ERS) and the Classroom Assessment Scoring System™ (CLASS), are integral to the adopted Matrix and serve as a common foundation to align the work of other existing quality improvement efforts. RTT–ELC provides opportunities to develop innovative service delivery models and develop focused partnerships that can later be taken to scale.

The RTT–ELC State Implementation Team contracted the American Institutes for Research for an evaluation of the QRIS. The researchers are working with a sample of consortia to study how successfully the Tiered QRIS measures early learning program quality, possible alternative rating approaches, and how Tiered QRIS ratings predict child learning and development outcomes. Additionally, this evaluation will inform policymakers on a link between quality improvement strategies and changes in program or workforce quality, and describe RTT–ELC implementation processes. Evaluation results are due in early 2016.

Parent Support Focus

A parent is a child's first teacher. The more information and support parents have to strengthen their own family's success and resilience, the more likely young children will learn the habits they need to be self-assured and life-long learners. First 5 California assists families by offering information, resources, guidance, and referrals through its Parent Signature Program.

The Parent Signature Program provides public education, information, and support to parents and families in both traditional and new ways, including print media, television and radio, social media, and other messaging in six languages, reflecting the rich diversity of California.

HANDS-ON HEALTH EXPRESS

Since 2006, First 5 California's mobile outreach van has traveled to every corner of the state, reaching out to families and caregivers of children ages 0 to 5. This interactive exhibit featured "Edutainers" who educate parents and entertain children, teaching families how to incorporate fresh foods and physical activity into their everyday lives. In FY 2014–15, the exhibit traveled to more than 145 schools, community festivals, county fairs, and other family-oriented events, making appearances in even the smallest rural communities and directly engaging with more than 96,332 people who walked away with helpful First 5 resources. At the end of 2014, First 5 California retired the Hands-On Health Express and prepared to launch the next iteration of the traveling exhibit in 2015, which engages families on the importance of talking, reading, singing to promote early brain development.

KIT FOR NEW PARENTS

First 5 California's award-winning *Kit for New Parents* is the flagship of its Parent Signature Program. The *Kit* targets hard-to-reach and low-income populations, providing information and tips for first-time parents, grandparents, and caregivers.

Since 2001, First 5 California has distributed the *Kit* free-of-charge to local hospitals, physicians, and community groups to reach new parents. The *Kits* are available in English, Spanish, Cantonese, Korean, Mandarin, and Vietnamese, and include a practical guide for

the first five years, a health handbook, an early brain development brochure and tip card, and other important information on literacy and learning, child safety, developmental milestones, finding quality child care, and more. First 5 county commissions are encouraged to add local references and resources to the *Kit* to help inform parents about services in their own communities.

To date, 4.8 million *Kits* have been distributed throughout California since 2001, with 287,309 distributed this fiscal year alone.

AWARD-WINNING MEDIA CAMPAIGN: *TALK. READ. SING.*®

Launched initially in spring 2014, the first phase of First 5 California's *Talk. Read. Sing.*® media campaign continued through 2015. The purpose of this wide-reaching public education and outreach campaign has been to emphasize the importance of linguistic engagement between parents/caregivers and young children during their first five years of life. Parents are encouraged to talk, read, and sing to babies from the day they are born to foster early brain development and the formation of critical neural connections. The campaign was delivered primarily through television and radio ads, digital and social media, and a dedicated First 5 California Parent Website with information and strategies for parents.

To evaluate the impact of the campaign, study data were collected via web survey of the target audience, which consisted of California parents and other caregivers of children ages 0 to 5. Approximately 1,000 interviews were completed between April and May 2015. The survey involved the use of both an opt-in panel combined with a population-based panel to increase the generalizability of the findings.

Key findings included:

- 60 percent of target audience members could recall a First 5 California *Talk. Read. Sing.*® campaign TV ad on an unaided basis or by recognition. A third could recall or recognize a radio ad. Almost two-thirds (64.9 percent) reported either unaided recall or recognition of a TV or radio ad.
- Nearly 40% of target audience members who reported ad recognition said they had engaged in interpersonal conversation about the issue. Nearly 60% reported talking with a family member about the issue, 40% reported talking with friends, and more than a quarter reported talking with a health care provider.
- Thirty-eight percent reported use of the First 5 California Parent Website to get additional information and assistance on the issue.
- Campaign exposure was associated with an increased propensity to engage in all three behaviors (talking, reading, and singing). This was after the study controlled for other potentially important influences on these behaviors.
- The findings provide positive evidence of behavioral effects, which is relatively unusual in the case of short-term social marketing campaigns.

PARENT WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

An outreach platform of the Parent Signature Program is First 5 California's Parent Website **(www.first5california.com/parents)**, which features practical advice for parents with a focus on accessible information based on early childhood best practices and research. Since its launch in 2009, the Parent Website received more than three million visits. While the site covers health, education, literacy, smoking cessation, and more, in 2014 the site expanded with an abundance of new information on early brain development. This provided visitors an interactive element to learn more about brain development and the benefits of talking, reading, and singing, all of which supported the ad campaign launched in spring 2014. The content and usefulness of the site are checked regularly to ensure the most engaging and useful information is available for families. Parents can download information and view videos, government public service announcements, and examples of brain development activities for parents and children.

The website also links to social media tools, including Facebook and Twitter. As of June 30, 2015, the First 5 California Facebook page has 213,782 followers and has received 213,524 page "likes." Its Twitter account has more than 18,280 followers who receive daily tweets of information about early childhood development and wellness that parents, care providers, and teachers can use to improve or inspire their relationship with young children. First 5 California launched a hashtag campaign (#talkreadsing) to accompany the ad campaign on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram generating over 372,516 impressions.

TOBACCO CESSATION

Through First 5 California's investment in the California Smokers' Helpline, parents and caregivers receive information and tools to help them quit smoking and using other tobacco products—especially around children or while pregnant. Parental smoking and secondhand smoke exposure have been linked to a range of ailments in babies and young children, including asthma, ear infections, pneumonia, bronchitis, and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). To reduce the incidence of these health problems and help smokers quit, in FY 2014–15 First 5 California supported the California Smokers' Helpline with $1.4 million for tobacco cessation services for parents and caregivers of young children, as well as for training child care providers, preschool teachers, pediatric health care providers, and parents.

The toll-free Helpline (1-800-NO-BUTTS) provides one-on-one telephone counseling, self-help materials, and referrals to local resources. Helpline counselors follow protocols that have been scientifically proven to double the rate of successful long-term smoking cessation. Counselors and callers work together to develop a plan to quit, and continue interaction during the quitting process to increase the likelihood of long-term success. These services are provided in English, Spanish, Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese), Korean, and Vietnamese. First 5

California participants also receive free nicotine patches, sent directly to their homes.

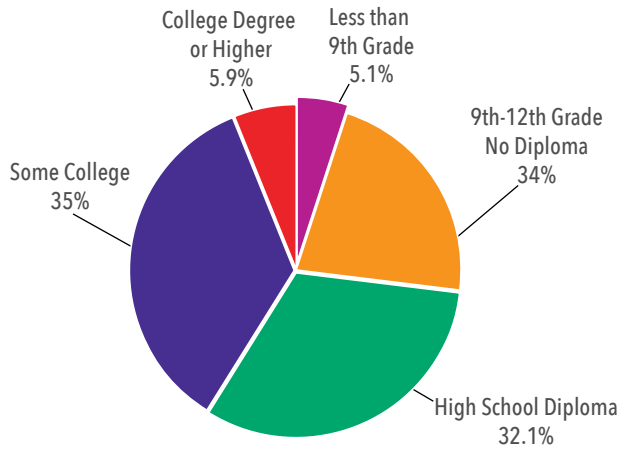
The Helpline has been so successful in assisting callers that they often receive testimonials from those who have quit. Recently, the Helpline received a call from a participant with a young child who initially contacted the Helpline in 2013 to tell them, "I quit when I found out I am pregnant but then I started smoking again when my mom passed away. I know that my family and my 2-year-old daughter need me, so I called 1-800-NO-BUTTS for help. I can freely play and chat with my daughter and be with her healthily now. Thank you for helping me quit smoking. I quit for 2 years now!" (Denise Marsicano, San Jose, who quit smoking on May 3, 2013.)

In FY 2014–15, First 5 California's investment provided Helpline services for a total of 6,650 participants, including 376 pregnant smokers and 6,397 tobacco-using parents or caregivers of children ages 0 to 5 (note: 123 were both pregnant and had a child 0 to 5). Tobacco users with less education or of ethnic minority background were well represented among Helpline callers. (See Exhibits 11 and 12 for breakdowns by education and race/ethnicity, respectively.)

The online tobacco training modules, "Kids and Smoke Don't Mix" and "Los Niños y el Humo no se Mezclan," continued to be used by First 5 California Signature Program participants. The preschool modules give child care providers, preschool teachers, and other classroom staff the knowledge and skills they need to encourage smoking parents and caregivers to quit. In FY 2014–15, a total of 2,683 individuals from 42 counties completed the online training.

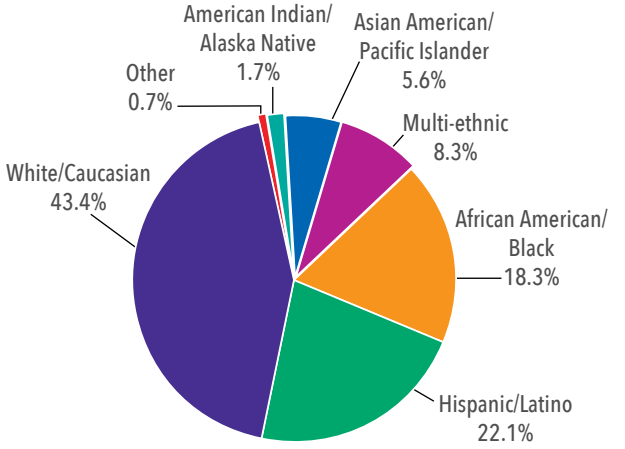
Also this year, the Clinical Effort Against Secondhand Smoke Exposure (CEASE) California project continued training pediatric care providers to screen patients for secondhand smoke exposure and help their smoking parents quit. In FY 2014–15, pediatric care providers at 35 clinic sites across the state were trained to identify and intervene with smoking parents, including prescribing quitting aids and referring to the Helpline.

Exhibit 11: California Smokers' Helpline—Education Level of Callers in FY 2014-15



Source: California Smoker's Helpline, September 2015
Total number of participants was 6,650, of whom 75 did not report their educational level

Exhibit 12: California Smokers' Helpline—Race/Ethnicity of Callers in FY 2014-15*



Source: California Smoker's Helpline, September 2015
Total number of participants was 6,650, of whom 58 did not report their race/ethnicity
*The percentages in this chart do not add to 100 due to rounding

Teacher Effectiveness Focus

Quality teacher-child interactions are a powerful contributor to children's learning and success. Children are supported and developed through rich teacher-child interactions with educators who have the knowledge and skills to identify and support the needs of specific groups of children, including dual language learners. Research shows early childhood educators with higher educational levels and specialized training have higher quality interactions with children and result in positive effects on learning.[12,13] Unfortunately, one study indicates only 13 percent of California's low-income children are in high-quality early learning programs that support advanced thinking skills and language development.[14]

Teacher quality is so critical that a growing number of state and federal programs have mandated early childhood educators attain more professional development and training in the field.

COMPREHENSIVE APPROACHES TO RAISING EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS (CARES) PLUS

The Comprehensive Approaches to Raising Educational Standards (CARES) Plus program is First 5 California's Teacher Signature Program. Launched in 2010, it is designed to increase the quality of early learning programs for children ages 0 to 5 by supporting the professional development of the early learning workforce. CARES Plus is an enhancement of First 5 California's original CARES program (2000–08) that gained national recognition during its tenure from Head Start, Zero to Three, and the Center for Law and Social Policy.

CARES Plus offers quality professional development opportunities in both English and Spanish for early childhood educators. Some support services are also provided in additional languages. These opportunities include access to online best practice learning sessions, a video library of exemplar teacher-child interactions, one-on-one coaching, and at least two sessions with a professional growth advisor. The goals of CARES Plus are to:

- Improve the effectiveness of the early learning workforce
- Positively impact the learning and developmental outcomes of young children
- Increase retention of the early learning workforce
- Offer support services and stipends to encourage professional development

Through CARES Plus, First 5 California has incorporated the use of the Classroom Assessment Scoring System® (CLASS®) tools. The following validated professional development tools and training, developed by the University of Virginia, are available to CARES Plus participants:

- The CLASS Observation Tool: An assessment that focuses on the effectiveness of classroom interactions among teachers and children, using a common language and lens to evaluate the quality and improvement of those interactions
- Introduction to the CLASS Tool: An online, two-hour interactive course to gain an understanding of the CLASS framework
- Looking at CLASSrooms: A self-paced directed study using exemplar videos to focus on identifying and analyzing effective teacher-child interactions
- MyTeachingPartner™ (MTP™): An evidence-based professional development tool focused on improving classroom interactions through intensive one-on-one coaching, classroom observation, and reflective analysis of teaching practice

CARES Plus participants are required to complete a one-hour online tobacco training module titled "Kids and Smoke Don't Mix: A Tobacco Training for Child Care Providers and Preschool Teachers." In addition to the professional development tools and activities listed above, participants may choose to engage in one or more of four professional development pathways:

- Evidenced-based training (Component A)
- Higher education courses (Component B)
- Serve as a CARES Plus advisor (Component C)
- MyTeachingPartner (Component D)

CARES Plus Evaluation Results

During 2014-15, 4,689 teachers completed CARES Plus training or coaching. Evaluation of the CARES Plus program indicates the program is highly valued by teachers who participated in different program components, and that training was associated with improved quality of teacher-child interactions. Among participants surveyed during FY 2014–15, 82 percent found the training to be very useful for their professional development, 78 percent felt the training very much helped them become better teachers, 94 percent thought the program would help them continue in early care and education field during the next five years, and 91 percent believed their CARES Plus experience would have a very positive effect on children in their care. Analysis of CLASS® observation data for FY 2012–13 and FY 2013–14 showed participation in evidence-based professional growth training was associated with improvements in mean scores in the CLASS domains of Emotional Support and Classroom Organization. Participation in one-on-one coaching (MyTeachingPartner™) was associated with improvements in all three CLASS domains (Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support).

CARES PLUS COUNTY EXAMPLE—SANTA CLARA

The Santa Clara County CARES Plus program set a record in FY 2014–15; 818 early educators successfully completed CARES Plus requirements and received a stipend. Participants had the option to complete evidenced-based training, college coursework, or MyTeachingPartner™ (MTP™).

MyTeachingPartner testimonials:

The following quotes are examples of how former MTP participants describe their MTP experience and express their appreciation for this unique training opportunity.

"I am a Family Child Care provider who entered this program with minimal education in child development. I became so impassioned by the learning process, I enrolled in an online BA program for Child Development."

"I feel a new level of self-respect. I am more intentional and effective as a teacher and have decided to enroll in a Master's in ECE program, taking my career to a whole new level!"

"I taught several DLL children who spoke little to no English at the beginning of the year. Many are now communicating regularly in English and forming four- to five- word sentences."

"My coach put in a lot of time to provide additional support to help me be successful. She translated everything into Chinese and was able to use both languages to guide me in learning the CLASS dimensions and how to apply the strategies in my daily practice."

"El programa MTP es muy organizado y claro. Muchas gracias por la ayuda y soporte de mi coach en esta clase. Aprendí mucho y doy gracias por la oportunidad que me dieron de tomar esta clase en mi idioma (español). Puedo decir que durante estos meses y con la ayuda de mi (Coach), aprendí a desarrollar interacciones eficaces, crecer profesionalmente en el campo de la Educación de Los Niños."

Translation: "The MTP program is very organized and clear. Many thanks to the support my coach gave in this class. I learned a lot and I am grateful for the opportunity this gave me to take the class in my native language, Spanish. I can say that during these months and with the help of my coach, I learned to develop open-ended and probing questions, and to grow professionally in the field of early care and education."

These educational pathways or options allow early educators at various stages in their careers to engage in professional development activities focused on enhancing their ability to provide high-quality care to children in Santa Clara County.

Last year alone, Santa Clara County CARES plus participants completed 3,329 higher education semester units and 9,790 hours of state-approved training.

Over 50 participants completed MTP and 209 new participants completed the CORE online trainings focused on teacher-child interactions and the dangers of second hand smoke.

Santa Clara's CARES Plus program is closely aligned with and integrated into major quality improvement initiatives in the county, including the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) and the Child Signature Program (CSP). The alignment of these initiatives maximizes funding efforts and provides a comprehensive approach to increasing the quality of care. As a result, 270 CARES Plus participants work in QRIS sites and 79 work in CSP classrooms.

In addition, QRIS staff used CARES Plus data to verify the educational qualifications, Child Development Permits, and professional development of lead teachers in QRIS programs. This data sharing significantly reduced the amount of time and expense needed to review individual transcripts and training records.

Santa Clara CARES Plus participants enroll using a sophisticated online application process. This online system allows participants to log in to the CARES Plus website all year long to:

- Access their professional development plans
- Check on their program status
- Access additional early education resources

This year, Santa Clara began using text messaging to remind participants of program requirements, important deadlines, and their program status. This successful approach resulted in a significant increase in retention of program participants.

First 5 County Commission Highlights

Alameda County

The goal of First 5 Alameda County is to provide a network of early childhood services, professional development, and community support to prepare children ages 0 to 5 for success in school and life, so they are ready for kindergarten and third grade success and are free from abuse and neglect.

During this past fiscal year, one of the most significant accomplishments of First 5 Alameda was the expansion of the Healthy Child Development Initiative. With an investment of $914,874, it provides increased opportunities for children to be identified early for developmental concerns, increased primary caregivers' engagement in their child's development, and improved the consistency in screening and referral practices by early childhood providers. Families of 1,945 children were helped by *Help Me Grow (HMG)* telephone Linkage Line staff. Over 70 percent of those helped were children ages 3 or younger. A successful combination of telephone support; in-person assistance to help families navigate community-based developmental services; technical assistance to pediatric and early care and education providers on screening and referral practices; a new website and searchable online resource directory; Connection Café networking sessions for providers; and a broad-based governance structure replete with a Family Advisory Committee and an Operations Committee formed a strong foundation for a comprehensive initiative. First 5 Alameda, with First 5 Contra Costa, was awarded a two-year, $5 million grant to expand *HMG* and related services to early care and education settings, and to advance developmental services for children with mild and moderate concerns.

Other highlights during FY 2014–15 included:

- The County Board of Supervisors adopted a set of Father-Friendly Principles developed by The Fathers Corps, a learning community of male service providers who take part in a training/networking series and who, in turn, advocate for and provide technical assistance on the integration of the principles in their home agencies.
- A poster session of the American Library Association conference held in San Francisco highlighted Lessons from Neighborhood Partnership Grants to city and county parks and recreation, and libraries to create child-friendly practices and spaces.

Alpine County

The goal of First 5 Alpine County is to implement comprehensive, integrated, and accessible programs that will work toward the vision of First 5 Alpine County: "All of Alpine's children will thrive from birth and are provided a foundation for life-long success."

During FY 2014–15, one of the most significant accomplishments of First 5 Alpine was the continued implementation of its center-based child development programs. First 5 Alpine partnered with the Alpine County Office of Education to help ensure school readiness. The Early Learning Center (ELC), under the auspices of the County Office of Education, is the largest grantee and service provider for First 5 Alpine. The ELC preschool program serves as the framework for meeting the strategic goals of the First 5 Alpine Commission. Following the standards set by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, highly qualified teachers implement developmentally appropriate activities throughout the day. The teachers in the preschool program complete ongoing developmental assessments while working with local kindergarten teachers to help provide successful kindergarten transitions. With the barriers that exist in Alpine County, accessibility is a challenge for its community members. Last year, local partners helped provide all children access to oral health and well-child examinations, immunization checks, developmental screenings, and the delivery of First 5 California's *Kit for New Parents*.

In Bear Valley, First 5 Alpine funded a license-exempt drop-in child development program for children ages 0 to 5. This ski resort/summer home village holds many challenges for the full-time residents who try to serve the varying population. This program has successfully served seasonal and year-round residents with a focus on all areas of social-emotional and cognitive development of early childhood. The program is staffed with professionals who emphasize cultural diversity throughout their curriculum. First 5 Alpine and the Bear Valley Parents Group continue to collaborate on sustainability of the program.

Other highlights during FY 2014–15 included:

- Participation and implementation of the First 5 California CARES Plus program and Child Signature Program with the collaboration of First 5

Inyo and Mono Counties
- High-quality parent education courses for families with young children
- Community outreach activities, health fairs, and playgroups

Amador County

Through its investments, the goal of First 5 Amador County is to establish strong systems which support children's health and school readiness. First 5 Amador continues to serve as a catalyst for change and progress by initiating conversations and developing forums to identify and address needs and opportunities, discuss and develop strategies, and implement programs to support children and families. First 5 Amador is a leader in bringing local partners together in an effort to encourage effective collaboration resulting in enhanced services, thereby improving systems and building the capacity of the community to promote and support protective factors and strengthen gateway assets for young children.

First 5 Amador spearheaded the launch of a two-county Perinatal Wellness Coalition to address Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders. A strong collaborative continues to work diligently in establishing a network of care from universal screenings to mental health services. To date, 60 individuals, ranging from home visitors to physicians, have received training on this important topic.

The Amador County Oral Health Task Force, coordinated by First 5 Amador, was successful in establishing a system to increase the number of young children who receive needed fluoride varnish treatments on an ongoing basis. Through this system change, a local pediatrician now provides the treatments for children at the pediatric clinic during well-child checkups. Due to the successful outcomes and enhanced health services for child patients, the pediatrician has shared this effective strategy with dozens of physicians throughout the region.

During FY 2014–15, First 5 Amador spearheaded a collaborative effort to produce a comprehensive community assessment that incorporated the Child Care Planning Council's mandate to document the availability, cost, and quality of child care. The Community Assessment includes information that addresses safety net services, employment, health care, transportation, and education. This document has proven to be a tremendous asset to the community from grant writing to program development. The inclusion of information related to early childhood provided an opportunity to educate the community on the importance of quality early childhood experiences, which in turn leads to a healthy and productive community.

In an effort to support family engagement in education, help community members of all ages enhance literacy skills, and improve access to a variety of reading materials, First 5 Amador brought a group of volunteers and partners together to launch "Read Across Amador," a coalition committed to increasing literacy opportunities throughout the community. One of the coalition's successes to date includes the expansion of the "Little Free Library Program," which is becoming an effective strategy for neighborhood book exchanges in the outlying areas of the county.

First 5 Amador's grantees and in-house programs–which include the "Baby Welcome Wagon," toddler playgroups, "Dad and Me," behavioral specialist, "Bridge to Kindergarten," "Imagination Library," and family resource centers–continue to provide valuable services to children and families throughout the county, meeting families where they live.

Butte County

First 5 Butte County dedicates its resources to improving the lives of children prenatal through age 5 to help them reach their greatest potential by strategically investing in three initiatives that focus on health, family strengthening, and systems strengthening.

During FY 2014–15, First 5 Butte partnered with the California Health Collaborative to convene stakeholders concerned about maternal mental health needs. Out of this gathering, a dedicated group of mothers and professionals began developing an action plan focused on addressing perinatal depression and providing anxiety services. An initial funding investment of $50,000 from First 5 Butte is enabling this group, now known as Mothers Strong, to move forward on its action plan, which includes:

- Offering a free weekly support group for mothers struggling with perinatal mood and anxiety in Chico and Paradise, with plans to add more groups in other communities
- Using the tag line *You are not alone*, developing a community awareness media campaign designed to educate the public about the prevalence of maternal depression and anxiety through magazine ads, articles, bus tails, and postcards
- Developing maternal mental health curriculum for use by providers in childbirth and infant education courses
- Collaborating with 2-1-1 to develop a webpage where all local perinatal mood and anxiety resources can be accessed
- Expanding the base of local resources by promoting and sponsoring educational opportunities for local professionals and parents

through Postpartum Support International, MotherWoman, 2020 Mom Project, etc.
- Conducting the annual Butte County Embracing Motherhood Summit
- Organizing "Champion Mom" events, which focus on growing a base of informed, proactive families who offer support to one another, and who will advocate for expanded maternal mental health screening and services
- Utilizing Facebook to promote maternal mental health awareness, inform local mothers about resources, and develop an online support community

Another highlight of the year was the *Jim Gill Music & Movement Tour*, a collaborative project between the Butte County Library and First 5 Butte. Jim Gill is a musician with six award-winning CDs. Rather than performing *for* children and parents, Jim has won acclaim for leading them to sing and play *together*. His materials are used by libraries nationwide.

Utilizing the Literacy Coach and partnering with the First 5 Butte Strengthening Families Network program, the Literacy Team reached 1,277 children and 173 caregivers, many of whom had not experienced the Literacy Coach or visited their local library. These visits introduced Jim's songs that promote meaningful interactions between children and caregivers in a playful atmosphere. This onsite program provided each child with their own book to take home. The Literacy Coach also gently shared the message that adults who may struggle to read with their children are able to find help at their library. The program culminated in Jim providing four family concerts that reached 676 residents and four provider/parent workshops with 50 attendees.

Calaveras County

First 5 Calaveras County facilitates partnerships and funds strategies that strengthen families and support them in raising healthy young children. First 5 Calaveras works toward ensuring all children enter school safe, healthy, and ready to learn.

During FY 2014–15, one of the most significant accomplishments was the "Kids Farmers Market and Safety and Prevention Education Program." With a funding investment of $50,000, this program provided first-rate nutrition education, hands-on cooking experiences, healthy recipes, and gave children the opportunity to choose their own vegetables and fruits. In addition, a 20-pound bag of fresh produce was sent home with each of the 182 preschoolers throughout the rural county. Personal safety and prevention skills were taught at 15 preschool sites by means of creative stories, puppets, and songs focusing on a variety of topics, including stranger danger, expression of feelings, and household, car, and gun safety. Parents attended their own prevention education training.

Other highlights during FY 2014–15 included:

- The "Children's Dental Program" provided screenings, cleanings, fluoride treatments, and oral health education in preschool classrooms as well as referrals and case management on an as-needed basis. A dental van delivered services to children in rural areas.
- Twice a month, the "Raising a Reader Home Visiting Program" reached out to 28 families. With a goal of using early literacy to build family resiliency, children and parents received various screenings, referrals, and resources in addition to participating in literacy activities.
- Continued outstanding collaboration with Behavioral Health Services and Mental Health Services Act funding provided parent and professional trainings with no-cost child care. Topics included understanding trauma, mindful parenting, brain development, gardens for healthy living, co-parenting, and nurturing skills for parents. A highlight was hosting Howard Glasser for a full-day presentation on *Awakening Greatness in Children: The Nurtured Heart Approach for Transforming Intensity to Immensity*. No-cost counseling services were provided to support parents with their children's emotional and behavioral development. Foster parents were provided with stipends and gas cards for attending parent trainings.

Continued successful collaboration with Prevent Child Abuse Calaveras brought partnerships with the hospital birthing center, social services agencies, and preschools to provide parents with information on the *Period of Purple Crying* and the prevention of abusive head trauma. The community was educated about designated safe surrender sites and child sexual abuse prevention. The council hosted the *Stand-Up for Children* art exhibit and reception, creating awareness and honoring the work of youth and adults affected by child abuse and neglect.

Mini-grant funding for libraries and non-profit agencies provided family strengthening events, which included story times, library special events, *Kids Day in the Garden, Children's Fair, Family Book Share, Kid's Day,* and community mentoring training.

Contra Costa County

First 5 Contra Costa County develops innovative programs and efficient systems to give all young children the foundation they need to be successful in school and life.

This past year, addressing children's developmental delays early and effectively was one of First 5 Contra Costa's most significant accomplishments. Since 2011, it has increased children's access to developmental screening, resulting in more children being identified with moderate delays or concerns that are not serious enough to qualify for state-funded intervention services.

Given that intervention is most effective in the early years, First 5 Contra Costa developed new playgroups to prevent these delays from getting worse and to provide

children with a boost in their development. Last year, 153 children participated in one of 24 playgroups, which consist of eight-week sessions with a curriculum focused on all areas of child development, including tips for parents to strengthen their child's development. When re-screened at the end of the playgroup, most children made substantial improvements in their development, had caught up on milestones, and no longer needed early intervention services. Children deemed "at-risk" for a delay or disability were referred for further developmental assessment.

Other highlights during FY 2014–15 included:

- Parents and advocates trained by First 5 Contra Costa assessed conditions at 75 parks in low-income communities, presented their findings to local city councils, and to date, have generated $1.3 million in city funding for park improvements.
- To engage fathers and help them become more involved in their babies' lives, First 5 Contra Costa funded male home visitors in two home visiting programs. Forty-three fathers participated, receiving information about parenting, employment resources, community services, and infant development.
- Over one hundred child care sites, including 35 family child care programs, Head Start, state preschool programs, and child care centers, participated in First 5 Contra Costa's pilot child care Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS). An intensive coaching system was established to help programs improve their ratings.

Del Norte County

FY 2014–15 focused on partnerships, sustainability, and advocacy as guiding principles. First 5 Del Norte took a leadership role in partnership with county policymakers to adopt a first-ever Children and Youth Bill of Rights, passed by the Board of Supervisors. A Children's Budget will be developed for FY 2015–16 and be part of the county budget going forward. First 5 Del Norte will advocate that other public entities follow suit. The goal is to enable community members and elected officials to understand what is spent on children of all ages and how much is spent on prevention, intervention, and high-risk services and programs.

In partnership with its school district, First 5 Del Norte contracted to produce and evaluate Parent Information Forms that were included in all kindergarten registration packets. The analysis of family economics, parent education levels, utilization of community resources, and children's participation in preschool or early enrichment activities helped create a rich sense of the conditions of families with young children.

The Community Food Council First 5 Del Norte Service Corps VISTA member produced comprehensive Harvest of the Month master copy binders and other special nutrition-related materials for distribution to all preschools, family daycare providers, nonprofits, and public agencies.

With support from the county, city, the county office of education, and Child Care Council, First 5 Del Norte expanded programs offered through the Wonder Bus, a mobile early literacy program for young children. The Wonder Bus traveled throughout the entire county, serving outlying isolated communities. It is the only countywide early literacy program in Del Norte.

First 5 Del Norte continued its long-term goal of building a comprehensive community-wide Resource and Referral Hub through its Family Resource Center (FRC) and increasing outreach efforts. It produced a two-page list of key resources related to ages 0 to 5, continued to update and share the Community Resource Guide, designed a new website, sent an e-newsletter to over 600 people every week, and produced publications on many topical issues (Stress Free Holidays, Why Immunize, and an Every Day Counts Toolkit relating to the importance of preschool attendance).

To sustain school readiness programs and reach working families, First 5 Del Norte made new efforts to target parents and families during the non-work hours. New programs include Family Game and Movie Nights, Family Fun and Safety Day, Father Appreciation BBQ, and Free Family Swim events. New Saturday enrichment programs were added focusing on movement and music, healthy nutrition, hands-on science, and story times. A special partnership includes "Lunch with the Law," a monthly conversation held at the FRC to bring local law enforcement together with community members in a safe, neutral place to discuss how to improve the safety of neighborhoods for children and youth. A new Children's Library was added to the FRC, and a comprehensive section is available to parents and caregivers with a wide range of information about special needs, emotional health, nutrition, and Ages and Stages materials in Spanish and English.

El Dorado County

The majority of children in El Dorado County are entering kindergarten ready. Of the 1,012 children in traditional kindergartens screened using the Kindergarten Student Entrance Profile, 81 percent were found to be ready, having scores of 33 or above.

The Commission invests in early literacy, high-quality child care, caregiving, developmental screens, health, and community strengthening to support parents as their child's first teacher in preparing them for school.

El Dorado Libraries are helping children, families, and providers to learn and grow: Approximately 27 percent of the children ages 0 to 5 were reached through the El Dorado County Library programs, the highest registration numbers since the program started. The library completed 750 programs with 2,304 children and 1,740 parents registered for *Ready to Read @ Your Library*. In addition to the early literacy

programming, the library has enrolled 36 licensed child care providers sharing the California Preschool Foundations and Frameworks for Language and Literacy through five curriculum modules.

***High 5 for Quality* is effectively engaging participants in quality improvement and building a system for change:** More than half (58 percent) of the county's licensed early care and education providers are engaged in *High 5 for Quality*. This includes providers from small and large family child care homes, child care centers, and programs that are both privately and publicly funded. At year-end, 45 percent of participating sites were rated as Tier 3 or above.

Children are receiving home visits and appropriate referrals: Home visits were provided to 1,227 adults with newborns. The majority of those surveyed (95 percent) reported improvements in confidence in caring for the child as a result of the visit.

Children are receiving developmental screenings and appropriate referrals: A total of 470 parents responded to the question about monitoring child's development in the client satisfaction survey, where 48 percent reported had monitored their child using a screening in the past 12 months.

The majority of children in El Dorado County are accessing well-child checks: Ninety-five percent of families surveyed reported their child received a well-child exam within the past 12 months. Rates of well-checks have remained relatively steady since the first implementation of the First 5 El Dorado surveys in 2007–08.

Community Strengthening Groups bridge key organizations toward shared goals for children, families, and communities: Three Community Strengthening Groups met and convened partners throughout the county, with an attendance of 250 unique individuals and 112 agencies represented. More than half of partners (54 percent) surveyed indicated they were better able to assist families with parenting as a result of their participation. More than two-thirds (68 percent) of community partners reported improvements in knowledge of early childhood community resources.

Fresno County

The goal of First 5 Fresno County is for all children to have a strong foundation to reach their full potential. Through its efforts, First 5 Fresno serves as a catalyst for creating an accessible and effective network of quality services promoting children's social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development. FY 2014–15 marked the second year of First 5 Fresno's seven-year strategic plan, which sets out a bold vision aimed at changing the odds for all children. Reaching third-grade reading proficiency rates is the primary, long range desired outcome and indicator of a successful birth to age 5 system of care.

During the last fiscal year, one of the most significant accomplishments of First 5 Fresno was the implementation of Birth through Third Grade (B3) Challenge grants at five school districts across the county. With a funding investment of $1,084,320, the B3 initiative aims to increase the number of children in Fresno County who are reading proficiently at third grade by developing effective systems of early learning and family support from prenatal to third grade. To this end, the five districts spent the year engaging with community partners to cross-educate, align efforts, refine systems, and provide direct services and supports to children and families. This work led to never-before seen efforts around early childhood education (ECE), including doubling the number of district preschools, forging new connections between kindergarten and local preschool teachers, data sharing between district and community agencies, allocating unprecedented Local Control Funding Formula dollars toward ECE, and school districts rising as ECE community leaders.

Other highlights during FY 2014–15:

- April 24, 2015, marked the grand opening of the Lighthouse for Children. The facility features a state-of-the-art child development center and community learning center, creating a hub of services for young children in Fresno County.
- Fresno County Early Stars, the county's first child care Quality Rating and Improvement System and a recipient of First 5 Fresno funding, completed its first full year of implementation. More than 100 classroom assessments were administered, and a total of 40 sites received a final star rating.
- Nearly five hundred parents were interviewed as part of the second year of First 5 Fresno's seven-year School Readiness Longitudinal Study. The study follows families receiving services (through their children's third-grade year) to evaluate the impact of funding. Year two highlights include an increase in the number of children read to every day and parents engaging in high-quality reading experiences (e.g., pointing out letters and talking about what happened in a book).

Glenn County

The goals of First 5 Glenn County are to improve: 1) Family Functioning: Strong Families; 2) Child Development: Children Learning and Ready for School; 3) Child Health: Healthy Children; and 4) System Functioning.

During this past fiscal year, one of the most significant accomplishments was increasing parents' skills and reducing numbers at post-testing for those who scored in the "high-risk" category. This was done through the "Nurturing Parenting Curriculum" facilitated by the "Little Learners and Parenting" programs. Almost all parents initially identified with high-risk behaviors had increased skills and knowledge as a result of program participation, and moved out of the high-risk category at the follow-up assessment. With a funding investment of $180,000, this program/initiative provides an environment that is more sensitive and educated about the early mental health needs of its children by increasing awareness and capabilities of children, parents, and the broader community.

Other highlights during FY 2014–15 included:

- A total of 76 Devereux Early Childhood Assessments (DECA) were conducted on Little Learners children (ages four weeks to four years) at the beginning of the program year.
- First 5 Glenn continued its partnership with the Mobile Dental Clinic, resulting in 168 children ages 0 to 5 having their oral health needs addressed.
- First 5 Glenn had nine AmeriCorps members during this program year, seven of whom provided literacy, numeracy, and social/emotional services. In addition, AmeriCorps also provided assistance with child welfare services, flu clinics, car seat clinics, the "Nurturing Parenting Program" (NPP), and provided facilitation for referred families and in-home visits. This resulted in approximately 15,300 hours of direct service to all Head Start, kindergarten, and transitional kindergarten programs.
- First 5 Glenn hosted a number of events, including a playgroup for Little Learners children ages 0 to 3, NPP classes with child engagement, events in the local parks and libraries in each community, and monthly family nights held in all communities (Willows, Hamilton City, and Orland).
- For the second year in a row, First 5 Glenn funded kindergarten and transitional kindergarten teachers to attend state transitional kindergarten training in Sacramento.
- First 5 Glenn improved system functioning by including the NPP and DECA during kindergarten roundups and registrations, the "Fathers as Teachers: Helping, Encouraging, Reading, Supporting" (FATHERS) program, and "Daddy's Tool Bag."

Humboldt County

The mission of First 5 Humboldt County, together with families and communities, is to promote comprehensive, integrated systems of services for early childhood development in order to foster secure, healthy, and loving children eager to learn and develop their full potential. Beginning with the initial First 5 Humboldt strategic planning process in 1999, parents and providers alike repeatedly expressed the desire for "safe and family-friendly" places in their communities that would enable families to get together for recreation, mutual support, and provide opportunities for early learning experiences for young children. First 5 Humboldt responded to this expressed need and made Parent and Family Support programs a priority for funding, including establishing playgroups that are accessible for as many families as possible throughout the county with many living in remote areas. Evaluations of the playgroups continue to show they have had a positive impact for young children and their families. In FY 2014–15, First 5 Humboldt began work on a Playgroup Initiative to be launched in FY 2015–16.

During FY 2014–15, a major accomplishment of First 5 Humboldt was providing 18 playgroups in virtually all areas of the county. There were 10,710 parent/caregiver playgroup visits, 8,632 playgroup visits by children ages 0 to 2, and 4,575 playgroup visits by children ages 3 to 5 at 1,013 playgroup events. According to surveys conducted annually (Participant Survey n=393 in 2014, Playgroup Survey n=216 in 2015), these low-cost groups (ranging in direct costs from less than $2,000 per year up to $14,000 per year for the largest groups) provide a place where parents feel they learn more about parenting, find social support, access needed help and services, and provide a place for children to learn new things, including important socialization skills. In addition, the 2014 Participant Survey showed a statistically significant positive correlation between frequency of playgroup attendance and the frequency with which parents read to their children. First 5 Humboldt also funds two specialists, certified in Infant Family and Early Childhood Mental Health, to provide support to playgroup parents and playgroup leaders, including referrals for early intervention services if needed.

In the last three years, the Humboldt County Office of Education's Kindergarten Screening Tool (KST) was used to screen 89 percent of all incoming kindergarteners. The KST measures children's readiness in four domains: Language/Literacy, Mathematics, Social Emotional, and Self-Portrait. In all three years, the average score for those who attended playgroups was

higher than for those not attending playgroups. The average countywide total score for those who attended playgroups was 77 percent in 2014, 80 percent in 2013, and 77 percent in 2012. For those children who did not attend playgroups, this figure was 72 percent in 2014, 72 percent in 2013, and 70 percent in 2012. In addition, Humboldt County Office of Education reported that in 2014, children who attended preschool had an average score of 77 percent. For children who attended both preschool and playgroups, the total score rose to 78 percent.

Imperial County

For FY 2014–15, First 5 Imperial County allocated approximately $2.3 million to fund a number of projects that worked to provide services targeting children ages 0 to 5 and their parents, guardians, and providers. Investments used to support these projects addressed strategic objectives by offering services that focused on health, family support, and early care and education. Investments used to support families with young children included case management for at-risk families, family resource fairs at low-performing school sites that included up to 36 distinct agencies, and advocacy for children under the custody of the juvenile court system. Investments in health included support to ensure expectant mothers receive prenatal education and programs designed to increase breastfeeding rates, intensive child asthma case management services, and nutrition and fitness activities. Investments in early care and education included story time activities at over 50 preschool centers with a book give-away program, intensive preschool home instruction services, or preschool slots for children that have a mild disability or are "at-risk" of developing a disability but do not qualify for special education services.

As a result of funding during FY 2014–15, the developmental screening partnership was established between First 5 Imperial, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), and a family resource center. First 5 Imperial awarded $203,264 to the early intervention program to offer developmental screening services for children ages 0 to 5 through its family resource center. CASA was awarded another $82,296 to provide advocacy and school readiness support for children ages 0 to 5 that are in the custody of the juvenile court dependency system. Through this partnership, 88 percent of children that are new CASA cases participated in developmental screening and surveillance services facilitated by Family Treehouse staff, where all children assessed with a developmental delay were supported with court-ordered follow-up referrals and evaluation. In addition, all CASA child cases that were closed resulted in placement in a permanent home where the majority of the children were reunited with their parents.

Other noteworthy accomplishments during FY 2014–15 included:

- Over 3,100 children from preschool centers were involved in multiple mobile library story time activities, with each child receiving three to five books for their home library.
- Over 1,400 children participated in fire/burn prevention activities at over 25 preschool centers, and 30 childcare providers were involved in hands-on fire safety training.
- The parents of 151 hundred children diagnosed with asthma or asthma symptoms participated in intensive case management; results showed an increased compliance in parental asthma control medication and 80 percent learned to identify asthma triggers.
- Nutrition and fitness were promoted through education, cooking classes, and active gardening at 15 preschool centers for 226 children.
- Over 70 children completed a model 30-week home instruction program; parental involvement increased significantly (78 percent) for first-time parents learning to work with their children.

Inyo County

The goal of First 5 Inyo County is to promote optimal early development, shaping the trajectory of a child's life to yield ongoing benefits and rewards by investing in the Five Protective Factors to improve child health, development, family strengths, and critical resources for children from before birth through age 5.

One of the most significant accomplishments of First 5 Inyo was the systems work the Commission embarked upon in order to take a more targeted Collective Impact approach to its five-year plan. By narrowing the goal focus (based on a year-long needs assessment process) to improve early child health and family strengthening programs county-wide, the Commission was able to pledge its funds toward helping establish a few high-quality evidence-based programs that will benefit early child health and education providers, as well as the families served, by creating a more diverse and sustainable network of support. Common goals related to family strengthening, universal screening, early language/literacy, and infant health are now being tackled by many community partners with coordinated focus.

Other highlights during FY 2014–15 included:

- Planning occurred for population-level training and limited pilot service delivery of the Positive Parenting Program (Triple P) parent education model.
- More than 70 at-risk families with children ages 0 to 5 were engaged in an average of six different support services, four of which were reoccurring on a weekly or monthly basis.
- Thirty-three incarcerated parents received five or more weeks of introductory parenting training.

- One-hundred fifty-eight expectant families received birth and breastfeeding planning support through the *Newborn Evaluation Support and Teaching (NEST) Program* co-sponsored with Northern Inyo Hospital, which won a California Breastfeeding Coalition Gold Nugget Award in January 2015.

Kern County

The goal of First 5 Kern County is to ensure all children are healthy, well-protected, and fully supported in early childhood growth toward kindergarten entry. In FY 2014–15, First 5 Kern continued funding 39 programs of early childhood services in the three result areas: Improved Child Health, Improved Child Development, and Improved Family Functioning.

One of the most significant accomplishments was national recognition of the Medically Vulnerable Care Coordination Project (MVCCP) as a Promising Practice by the Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs (AMCHP) in June 2015. With a funding investment of $51,000 from First 5 Kern, MVCCP leveraged additional funds from Lucile Packard Foundation for Children's Health ($4,000), Health Net ($1,000), Kaiser Permanente Kern County ($10,000), and matching Federal Financial Participation funds ($40,000). Since 2008, this project has organized biweekly meetings of key stakeholders to coordinate services for children ages 0 to 5 with special health care needs. The efforts have helped reduce unintended delays that could result in greater medical costs and worsen long-term results for children.

Positive changes during FY 2014–15 included:

- More expectant mothers received timely prenatal care in the first trimester, impacting 963 children in 15 programs.
- The rate of monthly prenatal care increased among expectant mothers across 13 programs.
- An increase in the percentage of full-term pregnancy occurred in 17 programs.
- The proportion of children with low birth weight dropped among 17 programs that provided services for a total of 1,610 children.
- More mothers breastfed their babies and the improvement was demonstrated across 18 programs that supported a total of 1,069 children.
- More parents maintained two or more reading activities with children each week in 11 programs that assisted 851 children.
- The proportion of children who never had a dental visit dropped from 35.41 percent to 27.29 percent across 17 programs.
- The percentage of children who did not have an annual health checkup decreased from 10.25 percent to 5.65 percent among 20 programs.
- Nine programs demonstrated an increase in the percentage of children with all immunization shots recommended by a doctor.
- The percentage of mothers smoking during pregnancy dropped from 17.73 percent to 8.73 percent across 11 programs.
- The rate of smoke exposure at home declined from 9.56 percent to 5.78 percent for 1,276 children in 18 programs.

Kings County

The goal of First 5 Kings County is to ensure all Kings County families receive access to the tools, knowledge, and quality care necessary to encourage each child to develop to their fullest potential. First 5 Kings, in partnership with the community, will strengthen families, communities, and systems of care for children prenatal through age 5 and their families.

During FY 2014–15, one of the most significant accomplishments was the First 5 Kings Family Resource Centers (FRC). With a funding investment of $704,726, the FRCs provided early childhood education, home visitation, developmental screening, parent education, and referral services. Almost 1200 children ages 0 to 5 and over 1,000 parents, siblings, and caregivers visited an FRC. The total number of services delivered by the five funded FRCs was over 28,000.

Other highlights during FY 2014–15 included:

- The 2015–20 Strategic and Fiscal Plan was developed.
- The Linkages 2 Learning project distributed 1,388 school readiness backpacks to incoming kindergarteners and facilitated kindergarten orientations prior to the first day of school at all 12 participating school sites, serving 834 incoming kindergarteners.
- The local CARES Plus program provided support, ranking, technical assistance, and materials to 46 preschool classrooms. In addition, it provided training and professional growth counseling to 93 professionals working in the early childhood education field.
- The United Cerebral Palsy Special Needs project provided 222 developmental assessments of children with or at risk of developing special needs, and 214 interventions and/or treatment plans were provided to children with or at risk of developing a special need.
- The United Cerebral Palsy Parent & Me project served 277 children ages 0 to 5 and 231 parents through weekly center-based early childhood activities.
- The Kettleman City Family Resource Center provided 279 home visits, serving 26 families.

Lake County

Through its investments, First 5 Lake County works to achieve its long-term goal, as stated in its 2014–19 strategic plan, to inspire and promote healthy, safe, happy, and family-centered experiences for children ages 0 to

5 through partnerships with local families and service providers.

During this past fiscal year, one of the most significant accomplishments through First 5 Lake funding was the opening of the Clearlake Early Learning Center (ELC) by Easter Seals of the Bay Area (ESBA). With a budgeted annual funding investment of $32,388, ESBA has the goal of increasing the availability of and access to community-based, age-appropriate, early learning opportunities that build the capacity of families to meet the developmental needs of their children. Parents come to the ELC with their children to spend time in a safe play environment; receive onsite consultation and tips to understand their child's development, including timely follow-up on the results of their child's Ages and Stages Questionnaires; receive useful information; and be connected to available community resources. Seven other agencies also have used the facility to meet with parents in this child-appropriate environment. A total of 230 children ages 0 to 5 and their parents participated in the ELC activities over this past year. A second center, located in Lakeport, is planned for next fiscal year.

Other highlights during FY 2014–15 included:

- Through its website, social media, and events, the Lake County Hero Project **(http://www.lakecountyheroproject.com/)** works to promote the strengths of families and inspire parents to be heroes to their children. Local families are highlighted to demonstrate how easy it is to be a child's hero. The program provides parenting information, monthly family challenges, social supports, and community connections to resources for families with children ages 0 to 5. Almost 1,300 parents were enrolled in the program. In January 2015, families accepted the challenge to "play together." Of the 87 families that accepted the challenge, there was a 62 percent completion rate, with 28 percent of parents reporting an increase in the number of times they engaged in focused play each week.
- The *Children's Oral Health Program* (operated by Lake County Public Health Dental Disease Prevention Program and funded by First 5 Lake) provided 766 children ages 0 to 5 with education, screening, and/or treatment. It included nutrition and oral health lessons, and dental screening at preschool/school sites with 40 percent of the children screened as cavity-free. This result has held steady for the last two years.
- North County Opportunities/Rural Communities Child Care Choice Program worked with 28 child care providers to increase opportunities for children to experience healthy nutrition and physical activity during the day and create written policies to inform parents of this effort. Eighty-six percent of the providers moved from serving fruit and vegetables two times per day to three times per day, and 95 percent offered at least 60 minutes per day of physical play time.

Lassen County

Through its investments, the goal of First 5 Lassen County is to fund programs aimed at ensuring all children enter school healthy and ready to learn. First 5 Lassen has two primary areas of focus—oral health and home visiting—both serving high risk populations. Two programs, the *Pathways to Child and Family Excellence* program (commonly referred to as *Pathways*) and *Children's Oral Health Program,* also known as *Smiles for Life,* have been important investments of First 5 Lassen.

During FY 2014–15, one of the most significant accomplishments of First 5 Lassen was its home visiting program implemented by *Pathways to Child & Family Excellence, Inc.* With a funding investment of $263,100, this program provides home visiting services to high-risk families. It is designed to improve family functioning, child development, health, and systems of care. The primary services include weekly parent education and child development lessons using the *Parents as Teachers (PAT)* curriculum. Screenings and assessments are completed on both children and parents to determine an individualized approach to addressing child, parent, and family needs. Each child is screened for developmental progress using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire®; simple *PAT* health screenings are used for hearing and vision. The Life Skills Progression Tool is used with each family to gauge the strengths of the family and the areas needing attention. Based on this tool and weekly communication with the family, the home visitor is able to make targeted referrals. The *Home Visiting Program* served 137 children ages 0 to 5 and 144 parents or caregivers. Another 32 children (siblings 6 years or older) participated in the program, increasing the total number of children served during the year to 169. In 2014–15, the number of service units was 2,037.

The First 5 Lassen *Children's Oral Health Program*—implemented in the community by *Smiles For Life, Inc.*—serves Lassen County via different service delivery strategies, including education, direct prevention, consultation services, assessment, health services, community health events, and resource and referral

activities. During FY 2014–15, 732 children received an oral health screening, and 570 children ages 0 to 5 received direct oral health services. Hospital-based oral health services for children, a local First 5-funded program started in 2003 and now sustained by Banner Lassen Hospital, continued to provide oral surgery services to children.

Los Angeles County

Since its creation by voters in 1998, First 5 Los Angeles County (First 5 LA) has invested more than $1 billion as it worked collaboratively across Los Angeles County to improve the health, safety, and school readiness of children prenatal to age 5.

Realizing it needs to live within its means, as well as be even more strategic in its investments, First 5 LA finalized development of its 2015–20 Strategic Plan during FY 2014–15 to lay out a clear path to maximize First 5 LA's impact to strengthen families and improve outcomes for the greatest number of children prenatal to age 5.

As part of its mission to ensure all children in Los Angeles County enter kindergarten ready to succeed in school and life, First 5 LA accomplished the following:

- Working with other First 5 commissions and a statewide network of early childhood education advocates, First 5 LA supported state lawmakers' $265 million commitment to rebuild California's early learning system through high-quality care with the addition of 7,000 preschool slots and 6,800 child care slots, rate increases to providers and teachers, and a one-time $24 million commitment to the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) for infants and toddlers.
- Working with community partnership members, First 5 LA staff is supporting an array of strategies and activities to produce outcomes that benefit children prenatal to age 5 through the Learning By Doing process—a process by which community members develop results-focused activities to strengthen children and families in their community–in all, 14 *Best Start* Communities.
- Supporting new parents, more than 9,100 women received home visits under First 5 LA's "Welcome Baby" program – which provides pregnant women and new moms with in-hospital and in-home information and support during pregnancy and throughout a baby's first nine months.

First 5 LA looks to the future, building upon existing work, experiences, and lessons learned from previous investments to maximize its impact to strengthen families and improve outcomes for the greatest number of children in Los Angeles County.

Madera County

The goal of First 5 Madera County is to ensure children are healthy, families are strong, and children are learning. It strives to serve the families of Madera County through the promotion of meaningful, lasting programs that greatly contribute to the betterment of the community.

During FY 2013–14, one of the most significant accomplishments of First 5 Madera was the *Oral Health Initiative*. With a funding investment of $40,000, this program provided oral health screenings and referrals in a school-friendly setting, using the tooth fairy concept to entice children and counter some hesitations that many children have for the dentist. The program screened 436 children. Of these, 33 percent (n=148) were referred for services. The findings demonstrated that 22 percent of the 148 referred (n=45) did not have a dental home. A total of 60 percent (n=89) of families that indicated their children had a dental home demonstrated the need for services. Further data regarding the intensity of the need and population served is being reviewed. First 5 Madera is using this information to determine future policy and programming.

Early identification is key to prevention and treatment. In FY 2014–15, 150 first-time parents received case management via the *First Parents Program*. The program performed 1,320 screenings, including Denver II, Ages and Stages Questionnaires®, Ages and Stages Questionnaires: Social-Emotional, and Life Skill Progression. Of the various screenings, two children were identified as having concerns.

In addition, 152 families received intensive multidisciplinary services via the Healthy Beginnings Program. Of the cases closed in 2014–15, none of the families had any recurrence of maltreatment.

Marin County

Through its investments, the goal of First 5 Marin County is to support a strong start in life for every child in every community through children's health, school readiness, and community support for families.

During FY 2014–15, one of the most significant accomplishments of First 5 Marin was a collaborative effort to fund affordable child care and preschool slots, dental services, and a public education campaign about the highest priority needs of young children in Marin County. First 5 Marin joined with the County of Marin and the Marin Community Foundation, with matching investments of $250,000 each, to fund these critical needs identified by the new Marin Strong Start Coalition. The Coalition and expenditures represent a critical first step toward a countywide commitment to invest in a strong start for all children in Marin. This particular

funding triad also is a significant partnership among three important funders in the county, and serves as an important precedent for ongoing cooperative efforts.

Other highlights that took place during FY 2014–15 included:

- **Advocacy and Investment:** First 5 Marin supports the work of *"MarinKids,"* an education and advocacy movement for the county's children (convened in 2008). *MarinKids*, in turn, is an active partner and staffs *"Marin Strong Start,"* a coalition working to establish an ongoing revenue stream for children in the county.
- **Thought Leadership:** First 5 Marin supports regular submission of opinion editorials on priority issues such as child care, preschool, children's health, and family support systems. Authors include commissioners, staff, and community partners.
- **Capacity Building:** As part of its efforts to expand the capacity of community partners to outreach, serve, and advocate for local children and families, First 5 Marin offers free monthly workshops (via the "Marin Communications Forum" and "Voces de Marin") with speakers, presentations, and training on media, public education, outreach, and advocacy skills (including workshops aimed at the Latino and Spanish-language community).
- **Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS):** By funding the assessments that were necessary for submission, First 5 Marin supported a successful QRIS grant request from a coalition lead by the Marin County Office of Education.

Mariposa County

During this past year, one of the most significant accomplishments of First 5 Mariposa County was the *School Readiness* program, funded with $149,040. It served three of the county's preschools (Catheys Valley, Greeley Hill, and Lake Don Pedro). The three preschools provide an outstanding play-based preschool program that prepares children for kindergarten. The facilities, curriculum, and activities are creative, educational, and focus on developmentally appropriate activities. This year, there was a focus on science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM).

Another highly successful program was the *Children's Dental Health Program,* funded with $55,000. This program provided dental education by a dental hygienist, dental services for children with severe dental problems, and dental screenings. Three local dentists provided reduced-cost services.

In addition, the CARES Plus program was funded with $10,000 from First 5 Mariposa and $20,000 from First 5 California. This program provided stipends for child care providers and preschool teachers. Many of the participants completed the CORE training and 21 units in Early Childhood Education. The CARES Plus program made it possible for four teachers to enroll in college course work—helping them to work toward a degree in Early Childhood Education.

An instructional aide was hired to work in the Mariposa Elementary School Transitional Kindergarten (TK) classroom. The instructional aide worked with the reading program/assessments, and provided extra assistance to children who were having difficulty. Having the aide in the classroom also provided time for the teacher to work with children on an individual basis. The class had 25 TK students who ranged from four to six years old. Having an aide made it possible for the students to work on enrichment projects and technology.

An additional instructional aide was hired to work in the Sierra Foothill Charter School TK classroom. The instructional aide worked closely with the teacher in providing support, extra assistance, and one-on-one instruction. She made a difference by providing opportunities for the students to be involved in extracurricular activities (e.g., working in the school's garden and on computers in the classroom).

Mendocino County

The goal of First 5 Mendocino County is to increase parenting skills and decrease substance abuse so children are happy, healthy, and ready for kindergarten.

During this past fiscal year, one of the most significant accomplishments of First 5 Mendocino was providing support for the Family Dependency Drug Court (FDDC) "Parent Mentor Program." With a funding investment of $35,000, the program is designed to offer support to parents and caregivers in recovery, to maintain their sober lifestyle, and provide safe and nurturing care to their children. First 5 Mendocino provides for at least three parent mentors to be available for support services. FDDC also refers its clients to participate in the *Recovery Positive Parenting Program (Triple P).* With an additional funding investment of $20,000, this program provides a 10-week parenting group that focuses on parents in recovery of substance abuse. *Recovery Triple P* is designed to empower parents to continue to make positive parenting decisions for their children and enables them to feel confident in those choices. It also helps to rebuild relationships that have been, or may have been, damaged during the period of time parents were abusing a substance.

Other highlights during FY 2014–15 included:

- For divorced parents, First 5 Mendocino provides Supervised Visitation and Parenting Apart workshops for the Mendocino County Superior Court. During these sessions, parents are strongly encouraged to sign up for a *Triple P* group to build on their parenting skills.
- More awareness was brought to the bilingual Raise and Shine "Warm Line," increasing the number of calls from 43 (FY 2013–14) to 143 (FY 2014–15) for an increase of 333 percent. It is available for parents,

caregivers, social workers, and others in related fields who work with children. This line offers a variety of resources, including referrals to outside agencies, scheduling support services for Regional Center and Early Start participants, and acts as the Inland Mendocino Early Start Family Resource Center mainline to provide support services to children in Early Start. It also acts as an access point for developmental screenings, one-on-one parent support, parenting class information, and other resources and services available in the community.

- The early literacy program, *Mendocino County Imagination Library,* has made many new community contacts this year, which helps First 5 Mendocino get closer to its goal that every child under the age of 5 in the county will have a home library of their own by the time they start kindergarten. With the help of community partners, enrollment has increased from 2,877 to 3,105 children. It's estimated that this number is over 50 percent of the eligible children in the county.

Merced County

Through its investments, the goal of First 5 Merced County is to:

- Improve parents' (especially new parents) nurturing and engaging relationships with their children
- Improve the quality of care provided in out-of-home settings (including center-based care, family child care, and non-licensed environments)
- Improve the system for early screening, referral, assessment, and services for children with developmental, health, social, emotional, behavioral, and other special needs
- Improve community-level awareness and acknowledgment of the critical need to prioritize and support structured action for change benefitting children ages 0 to 5
- Advocate for improvement and preservation of systems at the local and state levels

During FY 2014–15, one of the most significant accomplishments of First 5 Merced was the increased quality with identified Child Signature Programs 1 and 2. With a funding investment match of $525,125, the program maintained quality in identified Quality Enhancement classrooms and continued improvement across the Maintenance of Effort classrooms. Targets of family engagement and coaching for teachers were reached. Specialized training was offered for classroom and child-level work. A large number of reliable Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS) and Classroom Assessment Scoring System® (CLASS®) assessors were trained. Professional Development was offered with an emphasis on social, emotional, and developmental screening and individualized teaching strategies, which were offered to neighboring counties and partnering agencies.

Other highlights during FY 2014–15 included:

- Twelfth Annual Children's Summit, with 343 attending, featured Dr. Dayna Long (University of California San Francisco, Benioff Children's Hospital) as the keynote speaker to open a discussion regarding social determinants of health
- Engaged 150 providers in the Steve Spangler group training "Silly Slimy Science"
- Assisted the Department of Public Health in receiving the Partnerships in Community Health grant that started a Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative at the two local hospitals

Modoc County

Through its investments, the goal of First 5 Modoc County is to ensure every child in Modoc County is in an environment conducive to optimal development and that parents and families have the first option to be primary caregivers and teachers for their children ages 0 to 5.

During the last fiscal year, one of the most significant accomplishments of First 5 Modoc was its dedication to Improved Child Development. With a funding investment of $71,206, it funded three separate programs, providing a high-quality preschool experience for 18 children throughout Modoc County. The success of these programs is partly due to a strong collaborative relationship with the Modoc County Office of Education and the Surprise Valley Joint Unified School District. Funding supports either the full cost or a share of the cost to attend preschool. Families were provided additional support through a family support worker. Monthly parent meetings were held and information was provided on health, safety, nutrition, parenting skills, and the preschool learning foundations. Weekly child observation and results of Desired Result Developmental Profile assessments also were shared with parents. The family support worker helped ease the transition of the children to the next educational setting.

Other highlights during FY 2014–5 included:

- The parents of 122 children attended parenting classes to increase parenting skills and knowledge.
- Fifty families who did not have access to medical services now receive medical benefits.
- Ten licensed home care providers increased the quality of care they offer by participating in the Child Care Initiative Project (CCIP).
- Ten center-based providers increased teacher effectiveness by participating in the CARES Plus program.
- The parents of 42 children strengthened and improved positive parent-infant interactions, healthy infant development, and parental competencies through the "Healthy Beginnings" home visiting program.
- Eighteen children were able to access an enhanced transitional kindergarten classroom

due to the expansion of the classroom experience with STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) activities.

Mono County

Through its investments, the goal of First 5 Mono County is to enhance the network of support services for families with children ages 0 to 5. First 5 Mono invests in school readiness, family behavioral health, oral health, child safety, and quality child care.

During this past fiscal year, one of the most significant accomplishments of First 5 Mono County was service to families through its universal home visiting program, "Welcome Baby!" for families with children prenatal to age 1. One hundred and twenty children were served—84 percent of projected 2014 births. With a funding investment of approximately $86,000, this program provided families with prenatal education, breastfeeding support, developmental activities, and connections to playgroups, behavioral health services, special needs services, low-income housing, heating assistance, and multiple other community supports.

Other highlights that took place during FY 2014–15 included:

- County-wide health and safety fairs
- Topical fluoride varnish application provided to children in early learning settings
- Books to families from "Free First Book"
- County-wide playgroups

Monterey County

The mission of First 5 Monterey County is to serve as a catalyst to create sustainable change in systems, policies, and practices that enrich the development of children in their first five years. First 5 Monterey focuses on three vision areas: Parenting Development, Child Care Quality, and Mental and Physical Health.

Through its investment of $7.1 million in FY 2014–15, First 5 Monterey provided services to more than 41,000 young children, parents, and providers.

During the last fiscal year, one of the most significant accomplishments was the tenth offering of the "Summer Bridge" program as part of the Special Needs Initiative, which has served over 300 children. Summer Bridge originally evolved from the Special Needs Project that was partially funded by First 5 California. Through this project, incoming kindergarteners with or at risk of special needs can experience a high-quality summer preschool program.

The goal is to support children in transitioning to kindergarten with a sense of self-confidence in their expressive, social, and intellectual abilities. Observational assessments in summer 2015 show 70 percent of children showed improvements in their relationships and social interactions with adults after six weeks. Summer Bridge also serves as a training platform for early educators to build capacity. The program supports parents in understanding their child's behaviors and needs, and encourages participation in and advocating for the education of their child.

Some additional highlights from 2014–15 include:

- First 5 Monterey and the Monterey County Health Department co-chair the Early Childhood Development Initiative (ECDI). ECDI began implementing its strategic vision and road map to help children, from the prenatal stage through third grade, reach their full potential. Using a Collective Impact framework, five communities in Monterey County stepped forward to bring together multiple sectors working to improve early childhood.
- Analysis of over 3,000 outcome surveys over the past four years show statistically significant improvements across service areas of home visiting, playgroups, and group parenting classes. The greatest growth was in parents' knowledge of how their child and their child's brain is growing and developing, and what behavior is age-typical. Parents reported 81 percent improvement in this area. They also reported significant gains in their confidence (66 percent), abilities (58 percent), activities (66 percent), and connections with other families (58 percent). This translates to an overall 66 percent improvement across parenting practices.
- The Infant-Family and Early Childhood Mental Health training series continued to expand locally as more service providers are interested in improving their capacity to meet the needs of young children and their families.

Napa County

Through its investments, the goal of First 5 Napa County is to support a comprehensive system of services that ensures children ages 0 to 5 will enter school healthy and ready to learn.

During FY 2014–15, First 5 Napa County made a $65,500 investment in the local resource and referral agency to provide *Active Minds,* a bilingual, play-based school readiness program that serves children with low to no preschool experiences. As part of the program, parents are provided education, support, and role-modeling on how to support their preschoolers in home-based early learning experiences. A total of 36 children and 42 parents attended *Active Minds*.

Children were assessed using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire-3 (ASQ-3) at the start of the program and again at completion. Children demonstrated improvements, and upon completion of the program were developing typically as listed below:

- 100 percent of children in the *problem solving* domain
- 97 percent of children in the *communication* domain
- 91 percent of children in the *personal-social* domain
- 100 percent of children in the *gross motor* domain
- 83 percent of children in the *fine motor* domain

Upon completion of the program, parents had increased confidence in their ability to provide age-appropriate routines, play, and expectations of their child:

- 100 percent of parents report they read or share books with their child at least two times a week.
- 85 percent of parents report that when they read or share books with their child, they do so for at least 10 minutes.
- 92 percent of parents report they support expanded learning for their child through conversation at least once a week.
- 97 percent of parents report they provide early learning experiences around shapes and colors at home.

Nevada County

Through its investments, the goal of First 5 Nevada County is—in partnership with the community—to create, foster, and support programs that promote health, wellness, and child development for children ages 0 to 5 and their parents. First 5 Nevada works on behalf of all children prenatal to age 5 and their families, and focuses on those who face significant risks and challenges in achieving their maximum physical and socio-emotional health and learning potential. First 5 Nevada is engaged in four initiatives: early learning, family strengthening, communication and outreach, and capacity building and systems change.

During this last fiscal year, one of the most significant outcomes achieved with First 5 Nevada funding was attained by the PARTNERS Family Resource Centers (FRC), who implemented the evidence-based *Positive Parenting Program (Triple P)* curriculum, led by a Marriage and Family Therapist. Participating parents showed improved parenting practices, parenting knowledge, and communication with their partners, while children showed a drop in problem behavior. The PARTNERS FRCs received $161,907 in funding in FY 2014–15 with some of the funds supporting the *Triple P* classes. *Triple P* series were held six times with participants reporting high satisfaction with the curriculum, instructor, peer interaction, and their relationships with their children; 62 parents with 69 children ages 0 to 5 attended one or more sessions. These evening classes included dinner and childcare, removing barriers to participation. The class also was available in Spanish for the first time. "Parenting Ladder" retrospective surveys were given to all Triple P participants and showed an overall average increase of 1.62 points on a six-point Likert scale in the areas of parenting knowledge, communication with their partner about child issues, consistency of positive discipline, and awareness of community resources. "The Parenting Scale," a 30-item measure of dysfunctional discipline styles, which is scored on a seven-point Likert scale with lower scores indicating more effective parenting, showed participating parents improved from a pre-test average of 3.19 to a post-test average of 2.65, an improvement of 17 percent. Children's problem behavior also showed an improvement, going from an average of 1.97 to 1.31 on a 4-point Likert scale, for a 34 percent improvement. This data come from the Impact subscale of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire.

Other highlights during FY 2014–15 included:

- 28 child care homes and centers were rated for quality over a three-year period.
- 143 service providers participated in collaborative meetings in eastern Nevada County, and 294 attended collaborative meetings in western Nevada County.
- 27 children received intensive home visiting services in the Healthy Families America evidence-based model.
- 97 children and 91 parents who were not otherwise eligible for services received behavioral health care.

Orange County

First 5 Orange County is a convener, planner, and sponsor for the implementation of programs in four goal areas: healthy children, early learning, strong families, and capacity building. Through First 5 Orange investments, the vision is that all children are healthy and ready to learn.

During this past fiscal year, one of the most significant accomplishments was the completion of the community school readiness assessment using the Early Development Index (EDI), a population measure of school readiness. Since 2007, First 5 Orange has partnered with school districts to collect information about kindergarten-aged children in participating geographic areas, to create an overall snapshot of their developmental progress in five areas:

physical health and well-being, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive skills, and communication skills and general knowledge.

With a funding investment of approximately $200,000, this year marked the first year of 100 percent school participation. The EDI data were reported for over 34,000 children, representing 90 percent of the total kindergarten population served by public schools in the county. The EDI data is a catalyst for bringing together individuals, organizations, and community leaders to improve school readiness and create better environments for children. Furthermore, EDI provides valuable information to improve programs and supports, and better coordinate services to help children develop and learn before and during their school years.

Other highlights during FY 2014–15 included:

- **Bridges Maternal Child Health Network Sustainability Plan:** This successful prevention and early intervention program to ensure children have a healthy start received $250,000 in technical assistance awards to consider the feasibility of implementing a "Pay for Success" funding strategy for sustainability. The funding awards have created significant value in strengthening the Bridges Network evaluation and program model.
- **Pediatric Mobile Vision Program:** The partnership with the University of California Irvine Health (Gavin Herbert Eye Institute) and Children's Hospital of Orange County to collectively invest $3 million for the Pediatric Eye Mobile is providing early vision screening and follow-up care to preschool-aged children throughout the county. An additional $15,000 from the Lon V. Smith Foundation funds free glasses to disadvantaged children.
- **Children's Mental Health Initiative:** In response to the increasing demand for children's mental health services, a process began to improve an integrated health delivery system focused on optimizing young children's social-emotional health. The Commission's efforts will align with the broader mental health planning efforts in the county, and focus on the integration of parent and child mental health, and prevention services into the health systems.

Placer County

First 5 Placer County has three long-term goals: 1) Children are nurtured, healthy, safe, learning, and developmentally reaching their potential; 2) Families are strong and connected; 3) Communities are caring and responsive. To help achieve these goals, the county commission integrates a protective factor framework for family and community strengthening. Part of the commission's role in implementing the protective factor framework is to help support and build the capacity of its funded partners.

In FY 2014–15, First 5 Placer funded 25 major programs, including those focusing on child health and development, parent support, and connecting families to community resources. Each program has a logic model that aligns with the commissions' strategic plan, as well as an individual evaluation plan that outlines the programs' evaluation requirements. After the end of the fiscal year, each program participates in group learning conversations that aim to facilitate peer-to-peer learning exchanges and provide opportunities for networking and collaboration.

Through First 5 Placer-funded partners:

- Services are being coordinated and are more accessible to families in need.
- Children are being screened early to identify any developmental delays or special needs.
- Parents (including pregnant and parenting teens) receive counseling, case management, and parent education services.
- Children who are suspected victims of felony child abuse receive mental health advocacy services.
- Mothers who are experiencing perinatal depression receive therapy.
- Organizations are building collaborative linkages with service providers to develop an integrated system of support.

Plumas County

Through targeted investments, the goal of First 5 Plumas County is to promote healthy children, optimal child development, strong families, and integrated systems of care for children ages 0 to 5 and their families. First 5 Plumas funds intensive ongoing home visitation modeled after Healthy Families America and Behavioral Health/Mental Health services for children and their parents. The Home Visitation Program is implemented by four separate projects working together toward common shared outcomes.

During this last fiscal year, one of the most significant accomplishments of First 5 Plumas was funding a pilot program for a Behavioral Health Therapist to provide mental health services in the home. An Early Childhood Development Specialist also provided early childhood development services, with bonding and attachment services in the home, to infants and children who have experienced emotional trauma. With an initial investment of $27,000 for a six-month pilot project, the initiative provided therapeutic counseling, infant attachment/bonding, play therapy, and family therapy to parents and children ages 0 to 5. Based on the early success of the pilot project, the Plumas County Board of Supervisors invested $286,000 of Mental Health Services Act funding to have First 5 Plumas expand the program significantly in the upcoming program year.

Other highlights during FY 2014–15 include:

- Families participating in home visits experienced improved

access to health care and increased the frequency of family literacy activities with their children.
- Clients of the Behavioral Health Therapist showed marked improvement in their mental health status on a standardized screening tool–the Threshold Assessment Grid.

Riverside County

First 5 Riverside County has invested in a range of Early Learning and Health services with the goal of preparing children for success in school and life. First 5 Riverside investments include promotion of parent/caregiver education to assist early learning everyday practices, increased access to quality child care/preschool, special needs child care services, early care and education workforce development, improved quality healthcare services for asthma, breastfeeding support home visitation services, health access, nutrition and physical activity, oral health, behavioral health, and the University of California Riverside Pediatric Residency Program.

During FY 2014–15, one of the most significant accomplishments of First 5 Riverside was the accreditation of one of its home visitation-funded programs. El Sol Neighborhood Center attained PCHP (Parent-Child Home Program) and HIPPY (Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters) certification. With a funding investment of $2,142,399 for three years, this program provides evidence-based home visitation models integrated with the Promotoras, a promising-practice model, creating a unique approach in providing intensive home visitation services to children and families in Riverside County. Over 500 families have benefited from this program and parents reported an increase in parental knowledge regarding child development, parent-child engagement, the importance of early literacy practices, and increased participation in activities that foster early brain development. Formal evaluation of this program recently concluded, with findings to be available later in the year.

Other highlights during FY 2014–15 included:
- 951 children accessed quality child care services.
- Almost 1,700 children screened for asthma-related symptoms; 160 environmental assessments were completed in child care facilities.
- Breastfeeding support services were delivered to over 9,900 mothers through the Helpline and Home Visitation Services.
- 264 children were enrolled in health insurance.
- More than 6,200 children received mental health screenings and almost half of these children received treatment services.

Sacramento County

First 5 Sacramento County served approximately 60,122 children, parents, and providers through the work of 36 contractors. Highlights included:

Effective Parenting: The "Birth & Beyond" (B&B) program provided parent education, crisis intervention, and home visitation services through nine Family Resource Centers throughout Sacramento County. During FY 2014–15, the program served over 11,000 children and caregivers. During a four-year period (July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2014), the B&B evaluation included a cumulative study of referrals to Child Protective Services (CPS) for 2,512 families. The rates of CPS reporting pre-, during, and post-program declined for both the cohort of families with prior CPS history (50 percent, 1,256 families) and for families without any prior referrals to CPS (50 percent, 1,256 families). Altogether, 50 percent of families enrolled in B&B without any CPS history, and 81 percent of the participants had no referrals to CPS post-program. For the 50 percent of B&B families with CPS history, only 17 percent had new referrals post-program; the rate of substantiated dispositions with CPS declined from 8 percent pre-program to 4 percent post-program.

School Readiness: Project Screening, Outreach, and Referral Services provided developmental screenings, referrals, home visitations, and parent support to children living in transitional housing. During FY 2014–15, 462 parents and children were served. Home visits were provided to 425 parents and children, 247 children received the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) Developmental Screening, and 36 children received the ASQ:Social and Emotional Developmental Screening.

Oral Health: First 5 Sacramento continued to support five children's dental centers offering free or low-cost dental services. Combined, the five centers served 2,972 children. Sacramento also funded the Smile Keepers Mobile Dental Van, providing dental screenings and fluoride varnishes to 7,198 children at schools and community events. In addition, First 5 Sacramento provided leadership and staff support for the Sacramento County Medi-Cal Dental Advisory Committee (MCDAC), working to implement policy and systems change to improve dental care for children and families with Medi-Cal. MCDAC efforts involved working with local dentists, community partners, the California Department of Health Care Services, and legislators to identify and address issues for the more than 390,000 Medi-Cal recipients in Sacramento County.

Media Efforts: Social engagement efforts span across four platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Pinterest) with more than 8,750 followers. In partnership with the Dairy Council of California and child development agencies throughout California, First 5 Sacramento participated in quarterly Twitter Party Chats #Tips4Tots. The one-hour parties on various children's topics went viral nationwide. A three-month, multi-media campaign about the family resource centers, featuring the newest center, generated 1.5 million impressions from radio spots, digital ads, customized default text

reply, streaming ads, and pre-roll. In addition, First 5 Sacramento co-branded the Sugar Bites ads with the campaign creator, First 5 Contra Costa, for outdoor display ads that targeted high-need areas throughout Sacramento at 33 convenience stores and 25 bus transit shelters.

San Benito County

Through its investments, the goal of First 5 San Benito County is to ensure children thrive and reach their full potential at home, in school, in the community, and throughout life.

In FY 2014–15, First 5 San Benito funded the Fit for Kids program, which provides physical fitness and nutrition education to children in early education sites. Children participating in the program showed:

- Daily fruit/vegetable consumption increased overall from 63 percent to 93 percent.
- Daily water consumption increased overall from 68 percent to 95 percent. The greatest increase by site was 50 percent (from 50 percent to 100 percent).
- Daily soda/juice consumption decreased overall from 62 percent to 20 percent. The greatest decrease at a single site was 66 percent (from 81 percent to 15 percent).

First 5 San Benito enhanced the quality of its parent education program by adding *Positive Parenting Program (Triple P)* education to the Family Wellness network of ten school-based partners. Highlights from the *Triple P* Level Three Stepping Stones provided by Easter Seals include:

- Parents' perceptions of their parental efficacy improved between pre and post surveys in seven out of eight categories.
- Parents were satisfied with workshops. While most said they would use the parenting strategies taught, results varied by parenting topic.

As part of the commission's commitment to literacy, First 5 San Benito staff members provided weekly *Story Time* in Hollister and San Juan Bautista Public Libraries. Parent participants reported high rates of library card use and book checkouts, and strong agreement that *Story Time* provided benefits.

First 5 San Benito served more than 800 families in the *Raising A Reader* program. Participants showed the following:

- Increase from 49 percent to 62 percent of parents who reported having a routine for looking at books
- Increase in child enjoyment of reading and positive behaviors while reading books
- Increase in weekly library/bookmobile visits (from 6 percent to 20 percent)

San Bernardino County

First 5 San Bernardino County aims to promote, support, and enhance the health and early development of children prenatal through age 5. This is accomplished through investments in the areas of health, family support, and early education as well as support for systems improvement and capacity building efforts in the county of San Bernardino.

FY 2014–15 yielded many notable accomplishments and positive outcomes for San Bernardino County's youngest residents and their families. One of the most significant investments was 586 participants in a family literacy initiative, yielding an increase in parents' perceptions of their abilities to actively support and enhance their children's love for reading. Data from this initiative demonstrated that a significant number of parents who, prior to the program, rarely or never practiced important behaviors with their children such as reading together, following a reading routine (bedtime, etc.), practicing the alphabet, singing songs, and playing rhyming games, began to practice these behaviors regularly as assessed through a standardized evaluation tool.

Other highlights in FY 2014–15:

- A comprehensive year-round preschool experience for 984 children
- Asthma stabilization and education provided to 327 children and their caregivers
- Oral Health Screenings for 8,300 children and treatment provided to 1,300 children
- Successful Literacy, Water Safety, and Oral Health Campaigns
  - Oral Health: Distributed promotional material (toothbrushes) to all contracted oral health agencies.
  - Water Safety: Attended three water safety events in the Inland Empire, serviced more than 1,000 families at the annual water safety event, and distributed promotional materials (coloring books, water watch tags).
  - Literacy: Attended four literacy events, serviced over 2,000 families at the annual literacy events, and distributed promotional materials (books, book markers, growth charts, backpacks, crayons, glue sticks, scissors, and pencils) to the community and a variety of agencies.
- Developmental screenings provided to 4,392 through direct service contracts and thousands more through early intervention system support

San Diego County

The goal of First 5 San Diego is for all children ages 0 to 5 to be healthy, loved and nurtured, and enter school as active learners.

During the last fiscal year, one of the most significant accomplishments of First 5 San Diego was its home visiting initiative, *First 5 First Steps*. With an annual funding investment of $5,000,000, this initiative provides county-wide home visitation services to specific high-risk target populations, including pregnant and parenting teens, military personnel, refugees, immigrants, and low-income families using the Healthy Families America model and the Parents as Teachers curriculum. *First 5 First Steps* strengthens

child and family relationships by providing support, education, and guidance during home visits. The program promotes positive parenting, nurtures the development of healthy relationships between parent and child, enhances parent knowledge about the growth and development of their children, and provides community referrals for parents and their children, including connections to a medical provider. *First 5 First Steps* served over 600 families county-wide and provided approximately 12,000 home visits. First 5 San Diego was honored to be the recipient of the 2015 Achievement Award by the National Association of Counties in recognition of outstanding innovation for its *First 5 First Steps* home visiting initiative.

San Francisco County

The goal of First 5 San Francisco County is to ensure all children, birth to age 5, will be safe, healthy, and thrive in supportive, nurturing, and loving families and communities. This goal is supported by strategic investments within five initiatives representing more than 200 funded programs: Preschool for All, Early Childhood Education Quality, Family Resource Centers, Family Support Quality, and Early Childhood Health and Mental Health.

The biggest accomplishment of FY 2014–15 for the city and county of San Francisco was the passage of local legislation that will ensure high-quality, universal preschool for all four-year-olds for the next 25 years. This legislation, predicated on First 5 San Francisco's successful implementation of the city's Preschool for All Initiative since 2004, also represents a 30 percent increase in funding for San Francisco's children, and offers continued opportunity to leverage support for related child health and family strengthening initiatives.

Other highlights from FY 2014–15:

- Funded preschools continue to achieve high ratings in the quality of their environments (94 percent of sites meeting benchmark scores) and teacher/child interactions (96 percent of sites meeting benchmark scores). In addition, San Francisco's Quality Rating and Improvement System expanded its reach among funded preschool sites as well as to several family child care homes, with a total of 163 sites rated.
- Nearly 10,700 parents/caregivers and children were served by San Francisco's Family Resource Center (FRC) Initiative. Centers offered a wide array of prevention services, including 68 parent/child interactive playgroups promoting positive parent/child relationships for over 3,000 parents and young children. More targeted one-to-one services also are a core part of the family support model, with approximately 2,000 hours of intensive case management provided to 300 families referred from child welfare through Differential Response. An evaluation has demonstrated these families are less likely to have substantiated child welfare referrals following case management services at a funded FRC.
- As a result of funded health and mental health early identification and intervention initiatives, a total of 9,451 health and developmental screenings were conducted with children birth to age 5.

San Joaquin County

Since its inception, the First 5 San Joaquin Children and Families Commission (F5SJ) has brought critical services to tens of thousands of high-need parents, caregivers, and children in San Joaquin County. Today, F5SJ continues to invest in the community by funding high-quality programs and services to improve the lives of the county's youngest children and their families.

In FY 2014–15, with a funding investment of $1.06 million, First 5 San Joaquin administered the federal Race to the Top–Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant for early learning and development sites throughout San Joaquin County. The cohorts of 148 licensed programs participated in a Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS). Early learning providers are supported by coaching and mentoring, and have opportunities for scholarships, quality awards, training, and professional development as they advance through the QRIS tiers. RTT-ELC QRIS highlights during FY 2014–15 included:

- Early child care center and home-based providers received $618,000 in Quality Awards to support quality improvement activities.
- Scholarship awards of $16,875 helped teaching staff further their education in Early Childhood and Child Development coursework.
- The local *Lifestyles Magazine* featured a family child care provider with a QRIS score of 5.

In FY 2014–15, with a funding investment of $100,000, F5SJ administered the *Breastfeeding Initiative* to increase breastfeeding rates in the county by supporting hospitals to become "baby friendly." Through this project, San Joaquin County Public Health Services coordinates six local hospitals to select and implement the California Department of Public Health Breastfeeding Model Hospital Policy. Highlights included:

- Delta Health Care (Women, Infants, and Children [WIC]

agency), Lodi Memorial Hospital, and the Breastfeeding Coalition of San Joaquin County piloted an electric breast pump loan program.

- Lodi Memorial Hospital became the second hospital in San Joaquin County to receive the World Health Organization (WHO) designation of "baby-friendly."
- A third hospital is in the process of applying for this designation.

In FY 2014–15, with supplemental targeted revenue from San Joaquin County CalWORKs and the Lucile Packard Foundation for Children's Health of $190,365, F5SJ administered the *Help Me Grow* San Joaquin County project and supported the San Joaquin County California Community Care Coordination Collaborative (5Cs).

Highlights of these projects included:

- The *Help Me Grow* Call Center and Care Coordination staff responded to 984 inquiries for support, and provided referrals for 350 children whose parents participate in the county CalWORKs program.
- The San Joaquin County 5Cs supported the development of a county-wide team of health navigators to improve care coordination for children with special health care needs.

San Luis Obispo County

Through its investments, the goal of First 5 San Luis Obispo County is to ensure that our children thrive in nurturing, respectful environments and enter school healthy and ready to learn. It allocates funds and advocates for quality programs and services, supporting children prenatal to age 5, to ensure that every child is healthy and ready to learn in school.

During FY 2014–15, First 5 San Luis Obispo investments contributed to the success of many programs and services supporting children and families in its five initiative areas: Health, Oral Health, Perinatal Substance Abuse Prevention, School Readiness, and Special Needs.

Among many accomplishments this past year, one highlight has been the expansion of Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (SEFEL) trainings offered through the First 5-funded Early Learning for All Network. This professional development program provides educators and other providers with the knowledge, tools, and support they need to implement social and emotional learning in preschool, transitional kindergarten, and kindergarten classrooms. Support of the program begins with the commission's strong belief that social and emotional growth and development are critically important for the overall development and school readiness of children. The trainings this year included 32 graduates from a diverse mix of Early Childhood Education teachers, administrators, and college instructors, as well as a new focus on parent trainings. First 5 San Luis Obispo is proud to advance this vital component of child wellness in classrooms and homes throughout the county.

Other highlights of FY 2014–15 included the following:

- In partnership with the County Childcare Planning Council, Community Foundation, local nonprofits, and businesses, First 5 San Luis Obispo promoted April as "Month of the Child" and "Child Abuse Prevention Month" through a rich calendar of events, including the Thirty-seventh Annual San Luis Obispo Children's Day in the Plaza, and the Fifth Annual Dinner Honoring Hands-on Heroes and Champions of Youth. The awards were presented to individuals for their outstanding contributions that make a positive difference in the lives of children every day.
- As a member of the county Healthy Eating Active Living San Luis Obispo (HEALSLO) Coalition, First 5 San Luis Obispo helped sponsor a Drink Water Week "H2Only" media campaign encouraging families to replace sugary beverages with water.
- First 5 San Luis Obispo County participated in the development of the P5 Children's Advocacy Network (P5CAN), a new collective of agencies dedicated to serving and advocating for the county's youngest children.
- Through its quarterly partner meetings, First 5 San Luis Obispo educated its funded partners on the impact of adverse childhood experiences and toxic stress on brain development and overall health.
- As part of the local Post-Partum Depression Support Program, First 5 San Luis Obispo and the Center for Family Strengthening welcomed Walker Karraa, Ph.D., author of *Transformed by Postpartum Depression,* to San Luis Obispo County's annual Maternal Wellness Forum.
- First 5 San Luis Obispo hosted "Drop Everything and Read" book signings at two school readiness sites featuring Shalini Singh, author of *Lee the Bee, Turn Off That TV.*

San Mateo County

During FY 2014–15, First 5 San Mateo County maintained its multifaceted investments in programs supporting all aspects of a child's early years, including Early Learning; Child Health and Development; Family Engagement; and Policy, Advocacy, and Communications. Supported by $8.7 million in community investments, its funded partners provided over 20,000 services to children, parents, and providers, and distributed 2,352 *Kits for New Parents*.

During the past fiscal year, a key accomplishment of First 5 San Mateo was developing and beginning the implementation of its new strategic plan. An exciting aspect of this work was conducting collaborative community planning processes for two large-scale, complex initiatives. First 5 San Mateo is proud to work with its community partners to intentionally grow their capacity to

enhance connections among and across agencies and sectors, analyze gaps in the local service array, identify and tap into broad-based resources, and tackle systemic issues that compromise the quality and accessibility of services.

- Fifteen partner agencies are participating in the Watch Me Grow Special Needs Project, which includes service strategies such as developmental screening and assessment, care coordination embedded within communities and public health clinics, cross-disciplinary medical case management for complex cases, legal assistance, and work focused on systems improvement.
- Twenty partner agencies are involved in efforts toward Early Learning Quality Improvement & Expanded Access for Children with Special Needs, which includes service strategies such as support for early learning sites, including family child care homes, to participate in the local Quality Rating and Improvement System; professional development for current early learning providers, including coaching, mentoring, and professional learning communities; Early Childhood Education workforce development at the community colleges; enhanced referrals to quality child care for children with special needs; early childhood mental health consultation; and embedding transformational family engagement principles and practices within early learning settings.

Other highlights during FY 2014–15 included:

- Convening a Children's Policy Cabinet with director-level representation from multiple county agencies and community-based organizations. The purpose of this group is to allow for open conversation about the status and needs of young children, identify areas where policy change can have a meaningful impact on their well-being, and generate momentum by acting on these opportunities.
- Developing the Child Signature Program infant classroom into a model site for center-based infant care. A critical component of the model site has been the development of an observation room to support provider professional development as well as parent education and engagement. Office space in a building adjacent to the infant center is now equipped so a live video feed of the classroom can be streamed. This program will develop capacity through observation, coaching, and reflection. This unique resource will benefit the county as a whole by creating a place where ECE students from local community colleges, as well as other infant/toddler care providers, can come to observe best practices in teacher-child interactions, program design, environment, and parent engagement and support.

Santa Barbara

Through its investments, the goal of First 5 Santa Barbara County is to devote its funding and organizational capacity in the following two primary areas:

- Family Support
  - Parent education and support
  - Intensive case management, information, and referral/linkages to services with follow-up
  - Child and maternal health access
- Early Care and Education
  - Improving the quality of existing childcare and preschool services
  - Creating new quality childcare and preschool services and expanding access to them

FY 2014–15 was First 5 Santa Barbara's first fully operational year of the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), serving a total of 3,967 children. All 118 participating center and family child care sites developed plans and received assessments, coaching, training, grants, and ratings. First 5 Santa Barbara's QRIS is unique in that it requires accreditation for the top tier. To simplify the system for users, and show the cross-benefits of both, First 5 Santa Barbara worked with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) to develop a crosswalk and integrated verification system. Through this model, accreditation validators review sites looking at the criteria for both accreditation and the QRIS matrix (along with other local quality initiatives). The goal is that all sites will be validated this way when accredited and for QRIS ratings. With nearly 30 percent of all centers currently accredited (state/national average is 5 percent), and a growing number of family child care homes working toward accreditation, this model will continue to be the framework and will help sustain the local QRIS. The vision is an integrated QRIS and accreditation system that is streamlined for providers and adaptable as the system grows and changes, a model that can be used by other counties across the state.

Other highlights during FY 2014–15 included:

- Because of the QRIS system in Santa Barbara County, more child care programs are screening children for developmental delays. A total of 1,604 children are now receiving developmental screenings, using a valid and reliable screening tool, in programs that did not conduct screenings prior to QRIS. As providers and parents respond to concerns uncovered through this effort, children have a better chance for early interventions and being ready for kindergarten. There are now 3,191 children receiving developmental assessments through QRIS programs.
- Parents who had at least two assessments in the Family Development Matrix (FDM) showed improvements for

nearly all FDM indicators, with the largest gains seen in the areas of child health insurance, knowledge of community resources, clothing, employment, childcare, nutrition, and support system.

- The Welcome Every Baby program provided home visits by a registered nurse to 488 families; 18 of those families also received a second nurse visit. Most mothers (80 percent) were breastfeeding at the initial nurse visit, which occurred within two to seven days of hospital discharge. The nurse helped 85 percent of the mothers with breastfeeding and provided a referral for lactation support services as necessary.

Santa Clara County

Through First 5 Santa Clara County's partnership with Santa Clara Valley Health and Hospital System (SCVHHS) and Behavioral Health Services Department, it was able to leverage $11,483,121 from Medi-Cal and the Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment Program with the direct investment of $2,470,000 in the Universal Developmental Screening Initiative (UDS). This sustainable, leveraged investment ensures that developmental and behavioral screening, through the use of the standardized Ages and Stages Questionnaires (ASQ)-3 and ASQ: Social-Emotional (ASQ:SE) screening tools, is routinely conducted during well-baby/child visits in pediatric clinics and practices throughout Santa Clara County. Children whose screening results indicate potential developmental and/or behavioral health concerns are connected to prevention and early intervention services. As a result of the partnerships and investments made in UDS, the following are First 5 Santa Clara's key accomplishments:

- **Leadership and Governance Structure:** Provides strategic oversight of UDS implementation, systems and policy alignment and advocacy, professional development, clinical guidance, and evaluation.
- **Technological Innovation:** Made through the creation and piloting of the ASQ and ASQ:SE mobile application (App) for the Apple iPad. This App is being piloted in English and Spanish, contains audio and video enhancements, scores automatically, and prints wirelessly.
- **Sustainability Planning Efforts:** Through the collaboration with other First 5 counties and the First 5 Association, First 5 Santa Clara is participating in a pilot project to leverage and align with healthcare reform efforts involving managed health care organizations and other funding streams at the national, state, and local levels that prioritizes developmental screening, home visitation, and care coordination. Additionally, First 5 Santa Clara is proposing a pilot project to the Santa Clara Family Health Plan for the purpose of developing a cost model for universal developmental screening, and lastly, is partnering with Stanford University's Center on Longevity to study the impact of volunteering on county retirees. Through the partnership with SCVHHS, county retirees will have the opportunity to be trained and to volunteer as developmental screeners in pediatric clinic settings to enhance UDS sustainability.
- **Early and Comprehensive Health Screening Approach:** To ensure children receive comprehensive health screenings during their well-baby/child visits, First 5 Santa Clara is developing a pilot project to integrate vision and hearing screening with developmental and behavioral health screening. Furthermore, First 5 Santa Clara and its partners are developing a pilot project with obstetric clinics to conduct perinatal substance use and mental health screening with pregnant women using the 4Ps Plus (Parent, Partner, Pregnancy, Past) screening tool.

As a result of investments in UDS, there were 14,262 developmental and behavioral health screenings conducted between January 2013 and April 2015. Of the children screened, approximately 683 were referred to early assessment and intervention services, which significantly increased children's ability to interact positively with others, self-regulate their behavior, effectively communicate their feelings, and enter school prepared to learn. In addition, the parents/caregivers served were more confident in their parenting skills, more sensitive to their children's needs, more able to manage stress, and better prepared to support their children's ability to recuperate from trauma.

Santa Cruz County

First 5 Santa Cruz County's mission is to help children succeed in school and in life by investing in their health, early learning, and family support. Through these investments, First 5 Santa Cruz helps ensure all children enter school ready to achieve their greatest potential.

In FY 2014–15, First 5 Santa Cruz continued to lead implementation of the Newborn Enrollment Project known locally as Baby Gateway. Operating in all three local birthing hospitals (Watsonville Community Hospital, Dominican Hospital,

and Sutter Maternity and Surgery Center), the program provides enrollment assistance to mothers and their newborns, and helps link newborns to a medical home. The program conducted 2,706 newborn visits, reaching over 87 percent of all newborns and also distributed the First 5 California *Kit for New Parents*. In 2015, Santa Cruz added educational information to the *Kit* promoting timely vaccination and awareness of the ongoing risks of lead poisoning. Since the beginning of the program in FY 2009–10, Watsonville Community Hospital has seen a substantial decrease in Emergency Department visits by children less than one year old, from 2,315 in the year prior to the program's start, to 1,268 in 2014.

Other key accomplishments in the past year include:

- First 5 Santa Cruz commissioned a phone survey of the *Positive Parenting Program (Triple P)* participants to better understand the impact of the program. Participants reported high levels of satisfaction, use of program strategies, and continued interest in participating in *Triple P* services. The data also indicated that *Triple P* has a high success rate: 77 percent of participants reported a lot or some improvement related to their original concerns. On an average of 10 months after completing services, 95 percent of participants said they were still using strategies learned from *Triple P*.
- The *Santa Cruz Reading Corps* program grew to 14 tutors serving over 600 children in 16 classrooms. On one key emergent literacy skill, letter naming, the percentage of children at or near target for later reading success, grew from 31.7 percent to 71.1 percent by the end of the school year.
- Through braiding First 5 California Child Signature Program and Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Grant funding, First 5 Santa Cruz coordinated the continued implementation of a local Quality Rating and Improvement System. Of the 43 center-based sites receiving technical assistance, coaching, independent assessment and rating, 17 were designated Child Signature Program 2 sites. Quality was enhanced at these sites through ongoing Classroom Assessment Scoring System®, Ages and Stages Questionnaire, and Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale/Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale technical assistance and coaching. At the close of the fiscal year, 15 CSP 2 sites were rated at Tier 4 and two sites at Tier 3.

Shasta County

First 5 Shasta County's vision is that all Shasta County young children are ensured optimal early development and are ready to enter school. First 5 Shasta uses its adopted strategic framework "Pathway to Children Ready for School and Succeeding at Third Grade" (Pathway) and five selected Pathway Goals to guide its investment in early childhood. These goals include Healthy, Well-timed Births; Health and Development on Track; Supported and Supported Families; High-Quality Childcare and Early Education; and Continuity in Early Childhood Experiences.

During FY 2014–15, one of First 5 Shasta's most significant accomplishments was the development and implementation of First 5 Institute, a coordinated effort to provide education and training opportunities to parents and providers of services to children ages 0 to 5 on a wide variety of topics related to the Pathway. With an investment of only $23,000, First 5 Institute hosted 71 events serving 530 unduplicated participants. Professional development opportunities included topics such as Understanding Poverty, Mandated Reporting, Technology of Participation facilitation methods, Brown Act, and *Positive Parenting Program*. For parents, activities included a wide range of parent-child activities such as library story times and the creation and management of a calendar of parent-child activities in the community.

Other highlights during FY 2014–15 included:

- Literacy Efforts: First 5 Shasta provided a grant to the Shasta Early Literacy Project to support a wide range of literacy efforts in Shasta County, including the placement of Little Free Libraries across the county, of both *Reach Out and Read* and *Raising a Reader,* and a variety of parent and community literacy activities. In addition, First 5 Shasta distributed over 18,000 children's books through a wide range of community partners and at a variety of community events.
- *Cuddle-a-Reader:* First 5 Shasta partnered with the Mercy Foundation and the Mercy Volunteer Guild to provide each baby born at Mercy Medical Center (Shasta County's primary birthing hospital) with a tote bag of materials, including a board book, information on how and why to read to your baby, and a library card application.
- Week of the Young Child (WOYC): First 5 Shasta coordinated over 40 parent-

child events and community activities for children ages 0 to 5 during the annual WOYC. A total of 1,537 people attended with distribution of 13,000 calendars and over 1,300 children's books.

- Mercy Maternity Center: First 5 Shasta partnered with a local maternity clinic to provide online childbirth instruction, and prenatal education and support in order to address the high rate of patients with no childbirth preparation and to provide additional education and support about the importance of prenatal care and lifestyle management for a healthy pregnancy.

Sierra County

First 5 Sierra County continued its program, Provider Network, which encourages professional growth of childcare/preschool providers. Approximately $17,000 (7 percent of the total program budget) is used to subsidize college units in early childhood education and incentivize providers attaining educational milestones (licenses, degrees, etc.). The county is quite rural and access to college classes is difficult. Most of the providers have been with the county for many years and have "maxed out" on classes they could take, and therefore there has been a decline in program participation.

In FY 2014–15, First 5 Sierra contracted with a parent, who teaches in the Sonoma State Early Education program, to provide a series of workshops shaped directly by input from providers. The incentive structure was changed to include stipends for the county's own sponsored workshops. (Previous stipends required accredited college units.) The workshops have been well received and participation in the program has increased by 40 percent. Another workshop series is being planned for next year and the hope is to partner with the public schools to support teachers needing Early Childhood units to teach transitional kindergarten. First 5 Sierra is pleased the change of approach to better include participant input has resulted in more participation and enthusiasm for professional growth.

Siskiyou County

The goal of First 5 Siskiyou County is to work collaboratively with partners to provide education, support, and resources to families with children prenatal to age 5 to optimize every child's development and preparedness for academic, social, and life success. First 5 Siskiyou plays a key role in advocating and modeling increased partnerships to support the ultimate outcome for its youngest citizens.

One of the most significant accomplishments of First 5 Siskiyou was the investment in 10 Family Resource Centers (FRC). With a funding investment of over $250,000, this initiative provides essential services and support such as Cal Fresh and other application assistance programs, playgroups, parent support groups, early childhood resources, education, evidence-based parenting classes, case management services, tobacco use prevention, second- and third-hand smoke resources, an early literacy program, and more. In addition, the FRCs are a key partner in our *Read–Sing–Play Every Day!* Campaign and provide educational resources and presentation at local preschools, such as *Harvest of The Month* program. Investing in the 10 FRCs located throughout our frontier county creates the opportunity for families to access services, support, and educational resources within their community. Results from families participating in FRC programs show notable improvement in daily reading habits, parent-child interactions, social support, knowledge of child development, increased quality family time, and a decrease in isolation.

Other highlights during FY 2014–15 included:

- Oral Health Education and Screening Initiative
- Welcome Home BABY! Universal new parent home visitation program
- Siskiyou Reads! Early literacy Initiative to promote daily reading and increase the number of books in a child's home library; initiated partnerships to adopt the Reach Out and Read partnership through local clinics
- Collaborative investment in county-wide robust parenting education workshops and classes
- Eat Healthy—Stay Active Initiative: nutrition education and promotion in partnership with Siskiyou County Public Health and FRCs
- Collaborative investment in professional development trainings for those who work with families. These free in-county trainings provide quality education opportunities to build the capacity of medical providers, social workers, family support workers, educators, clinicians, etc. Topics included Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorder with Dr. Pec Indman.

Solano County

The mission of First 5 Solano County is to be a leader that fosters and sustains effective programs and partnerships with the community to promote, support, and improve the lives of young children, their families, and their community. Through its strategic framework, the First 5 Solano funds services in the Priority Areas of Health & Well Being; Early Learning & Development; Family Support and Parent Education; and First 5 Futures. First 5 Solano values the key criteria of evidence-based, focus on high risk/high need, coordination, collaboration, leveraging, and increasing access.

During FY 2014–15, one of the most significant accomplishments of First 5 Solano was the launch of the *Help Me Grow Solano* call center. *Help Me Grow Solano* became an affiliate in December 2013. The official call center was launched in October 2014 and received 1,141 calls and referrals within a 9-month

period. In addition, nearly 400 families with multiple needs were provided with family navigation to assist them in accessing resources. *Help Me Grow Solano* also is a leader in the county's Collective Impact effort for young children to strengthen and align the early childhood system.

Other highlights that took place during FY 2014–15 included:

- First 5 Solano received Healthy Families America Accreditation (evidence-based home visiting).
- The county commission conducted a poll of likely Solano voters showing support for a potential ballot initiative introducing a tax measure to support children and families.
- First 5 Solano hosted the sixth annual Solano Economic Development Corporation business breakfast with keynote speaker Dowell Myers (Sol Price School of Public Policy, University of Southern California) focusing on why investing in children is so critical for the economy. Over 100 business leaders and public officials attended.
- Nearly 600 children without prior preschool experience or who are considered high-risk attended Pre-Kindergarten Academies in summer 2014, an increase of 30 percent over 2013 attendance.
- Solano County Family Resource Centers provided 851 children and families basic needs, information and referrals, and case management.
- As part of the Family Strengthening Partnership, 246 children received screening from a Child Welfare Social Worker or Public Health Nurse. Ninety-nine percent of children receiving Child Welfare Services remained safely in the home or with the family unit.
- *Solano Kids Insurance Program (SKIP)* secured health insurance for 614 children ages 0 to 5, providing their families with access to preventive medical services, dental services, and risk assessments.
- Ninety-three families attended the Kindergarten Readiness Round-up. Each child completed an assessment of skills needed for success, and parents were provided information on helping their child to develop school readiness skills.

Sonoma County

First 5 Sonoma County has developed a three-year allocation plan to support continued investment in three major goal areas (Healthy Development, Family Support, and Early Care and Education), totaling $10.4 million. It's also supporting innovative systems change and community engagement efforts by making an additional $1.7 million investment over the next three years. The county commission has focused on leveraging resources by supporting collective impact efforts aligned with its strategic priorities, including Cradle to Career **(www.c2csonomacounty.org)**, *Upstream Investments* **(www.upstreaminvestments.org)**, and the *Sonoma County Funder's Circle* as strategies to develop sustainable funding sources for First 5 Sonoma programs. Systems change efforts include advancing Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and trauma awareness in the community, developing universal access to quality preschool, promoting developmental screening as a common practice in clinic settings, supporting a home visiting collaborative, working with school districts to develop preschool facilities on school campuses that maximize state and federal preschool funding, and developing pay-for-success investment models.

By joining with *Cradle to Career*, a cross-sector partnership connecting all segments of the educational continuum to improve educational attainment and career outcomes, First 5 Sonoma expanded its stakeholders beyond the 0 to 5 community. *Cradle to Career* identified four bold steps to accomplish goals in early childhood (with First 5 Sonoma providing backbone support): increase access to quality preschool; launch a community-wide literacy campaign to engage parents; promote professional development of early care providers in order to improve quality early care environments; and adopt a countywide, common kindergarten readiness assessment to promote greater articulation between pre-K and K-12 systems. A *Cradle to Career* workgroup conducted a preschool facilities needs assessment and identified critical space needs. Commissioners acted to create a Preschool Facilities Grant program and the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors provided matching funds for grants totaling $655,000. Two hundred sixty-four preschool slots were created or preserved as a result of this collective effort. First 5 Sonoma continues to address this need by developing partnerships with local school districts and guiding funding to open more preschools on school campuses.

First 5 Sonoma works closely with the *Upstream Investments Policy* initiative, promoting strategic investments in evidence-based and prevention-focused approaches that can help guide funders to support effective programs that improve community well-being. The connection between *Upstream Investments* and First 5 Sonoma's investment in evaluation and data collection has helped build grantee capacity to understand and report outcomes that can be presented to

local funders and, in turn, supports sustainability of programs outside of First 5 Sonoma funding. The *Funder's Circle* has come together under the *Upstream Initiative* goals to *"invest early, invest wisely, and invest together."* As part of investing early, the *Funder's Circle* has identified early childhood programs as a priority, with its members supporting First 5 Sonoma's investments in parent-child programs like AVANCE and *Pasitos* Playgroups. In 2015, Sonoma County was selected by the Institute for Child Success to receive technical assistance for developing a local pay-for-success model to attract investors to First 5-funded programs in early care and education and Nurse-Family Partnership.

Stanislaus County

Through its investments in family support, child safety, health, and early learning, the goal of First 5 Stanislaus County is to promote the development and well-being of children ages 0 to 5 and their families. During FY 2014–15, one of its most significant accomplishments was the operation of the Family Resource Center/Differential Response Program. With a funding investment of $2,059,357 from First 5 Stanislaus and the Stanislaus Community Services Agency, this program provided intensive family support and child protection services to families when child maltreatment reports are filed. Since the start of the program in 2005, the rate of recurrence of additional maltreatment reports, within six months of the first report, has remained below the rates existing prior to the program's initiation. In two quarters, the rate of recurrence of additional maltreatment reports within six months of the initial report has been below the national goal of 5.4 percent.

Other highlights during FY 2014–15 included:

- Parents of 10,809 children received family support services through countywide Family Resource Centers or other programs.
- Parents of 2,040 children received more intensive services focused on improving child abuse risk factors.
- 389 children experienced improvements in their family environments after being enrolled in respite childcare.
- 1,204 families increased the time spent reading with their children at home after receiving literacy services.
- Families of 6,790 children have increased knowledge and utilization of community resources.
- Proposition 10-funded programs brought in more than $7 million from other funding sources during FY 2014–15, increasing the level of services for children ages 0 to 5 and their families. Of that $7 million, $5 million came from funding sources outside of Stanislaus County.

Sutter County

First 5 Sutter County, together with its community partner, Tri-Counties Breastfeeding Alliance of Colusa, Sutter, and Yuba Counties, were awarded the California Breastfeeding Coalition's "Golden Nugget Award for Excellence in Reducing a Key Barrier to Breastfeeding." The award, one of seven statewide, was given in recognition of the collaborative efforts of First 5 Sutter, as well as the Geweke Caring for Women Foundation, for increasing the awareness of not only the health advantages and cost savings of breastmilk, but the preventive value of breastfeeding on breast cancer. First 5 Sutter Executive Director, Michele Blake, and the Tri-Counties Breastfeeding Alliance's chair, Tina Lavy, along with the support of Larry, Dale, and the Geweke Family, organized a campaign to promote and support breastfeeding at the 2014 Pink October Fashion Show, held in Yuba City during Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The Sutter County Commission distributed pink and gold pins, attached to a card that stated "a pink ribbon wrapped in a gold bow reminds us that breastfeeding reduces the risk of breast cancer," to guests as they arrived, encouraging them to wear the pin and recognize that breastfeeding helps reduce the risk for breast cancer. The award is on display at the First 5 Sutter County office.

Statewide data demonstrates low breastfeeding rates in Sutter County (ranks 48th out of 50 counties where data was collected), and the need for mothers to receive continued support to initiate and sustain breastfeeding. That support comes from the community – the community of mothers, grandmothers, and others. First 5 Sutter and the Tri-Counties Breastfeeding Alliance, along with many other local partners, such as Sutter County Women, Infants, and Children program, work continuously to promote and educate local health providers, businesses, and parents about the benefits of supporting breastfeeding mothers and infants, which is vitally important to improving the health of children and families to reduce the risk for breast cancer.

Tehama County

First 5 Tehama County focuses resources on ensuring children ages 0 to 5 are ready for school. Three funded programs work toward this goal. *The School Readiness Program,* a multi-faceted program, including home visits, playgroups, KinderCamp, developmental screenings, and "READY! for Kindergarten" classes, is implemented in four school districts in the county. The *Mobile Dental Clinic* provides oral health care to pregnant women and children, targeting the communities served by the School Readiness Program. The third program, the *Corning Family Resource Center,* serves low income, primarily Spanish-speaking families residing in Corning.

During FY 2014–15, with an investment of $329,129, the School Readiness Program:

- Provided over 1,600 home visits, 233 case management

services, screened 492 children for kindergarten readiness or developmental milestones, and identified 166 three- and four-year-old children in need of early care and education and referred them to programs
- Conducted 127 playgroups, 70 KinderCamp sessions, and three "READY! for Kindergarten" classes for parents
- Served children who are more likely to have access to health care and oral health care, and more likely to participate in formal early childhood education programs than children in school districts not served by the program

The *School Readiness Program* expanded into Red Bluff Elementary District schools with Local Control Accountability Plan funding from the Tehama County Department of Education and Small Population County Funding Augmentation dollars from First 5 California. The project leverages AmeriCorps funding by using AmeriCorps members as home visitors. A complementary county-wide public education campaign, "Read, Sing, and Play," encourages all parents to read, sing, and play with their children every day, and to take them to the doctor and dentist at recommended intervals.

First 5 Tehama spearheads the Early Intervention Partnership, which has become the prevention committee of the newly formed Blue Ribbon Commission and championed by the Juvenile Justice Court Judge. In the Partnership, administrators that have direct influence on organizational systems work in an integrated fashion to promote the best outcomes for children and families. Efforts include:
- The *School Readiness Program* as a safety net
- Expanding community agency involvement in *School Readiness Program* Path I referrals
- Utilizing the Strengthening Families Framework as a platform for collaboration

Trinity County

First 5 Trinity County continues to improve the lives of children ages 0 to 5 by maximizing strong community partnerships and resources. Through its investments, the goal of First 5 Trinity is to improve children's lives by providing opportunities for school readiness and healthy living.

During the past fiscal year, one of the most significant accomplishments of First 5 Trinity was the Trinity County Office of Education's *School Readiness Program*. With a funding investment of $62,500, this program provided the following outcomes:
- Kinder Camp at Hayfork was well attended by parents and children, with a total of 17 students and 25 adults over the last two summers.
- The *School Readiness Program* successfully served students and families in seven locations across the county, reaching the most frontier areas and providing early learning concepts to students and early learning strategies to their families.
- *School Readiness* providers received a total of 18 hours of professional development in the areas of early literacy, classroom management, art, science, and mathematics for pre-K students.

Other highlights that took place included:
- Funding a total of six projects: Children's Garden project, soccer program, swimming safety program, school readiness, Parent Nursery Preschool, and a Welcome Baby project
- A new Executive Director to assist the county commission in establishing goals and objectives for the upcoming five-year strategic plan
- Expanded outreach efforts by participating in more community events to highlight what First 5 Trinity offers the community

Tulare County

The goal of First 5 Tulare County is to promote early childhood development of children ages 0 to 5 in the areas of health and wellness, early care and education, parent education and support services, and integration of services. In FY 2014–15, First 5 Tulare invested $5,360,980, which supported services for 24,550 children and 17,830 caregivers.

During the past fiscal year, a significant accomplishment of First 5 Tulare was achieved by the Tulare Community Health Clinic Breastfeeding Pilot Project. With an investment of $80,000, this program promotes breastfeeding for new mothers prior to hospital discharge and during home visits. Project staff became Certified Lactation Educators, and together with an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant, trained clinic staff to support all aspects of breastfeeding. The Tulare Chamber of Commerce partnered with project staff to decorate the Chamber's storefront with breastfeeding promotional materials, building awareness and support for breastfeeding moms with employers and community residents.

Other highlights during FY 2014–15 included:
- Building awareness for those serving young children and their families by hosting a Hands-On Heroes awards banquet, which drew 200 attendees
- Developing core service provider agreements for the next three-year funding cycle to both continue and enhance services
- Funding $600,000 in capital projects for community organizations to better serve young children and their families in both urban and rural settings
- Building preschools' technology capacity for both classroom instruction and reporting by purchasing tablets and providing training for instructional staff

- Promoting learning and sharing among two hospitals and a community health center on breastfeeding, sharing best practices, and achieving "Baby-Friendly" designation

Tuolumne County

The goal of First 5 Tuolumne County is to enhance the healthy development of young children through direct services and by enhancing the capacity of the adults who care for them. The biggest investments were targeted for intensive services for families with the most entrenched barriers to success. The overall funding investment for grants and programs in FY 2014–15 was $502,253.

First 5 Tuolumne supported multi-year investments in five focus areas:

1) Children's oral health through education, screening, and fluoride treatments
2) Nurse home visiting for at-risk newborns and young children
3) Family learning and literacy to promote family stability and early learning
4) Parent education and support for parents at risk of child abuse and neglect
5) Social-emotional consultation to preschool teachers

In addition, First 5 Tuolumne partnered with First 5 California in CARES Plus and the Child Signature Program, supporting early childhood educators with coaching, professional development, and stipends.

Outcomes measured in FY 2014–15 included:

- Parents improved their parenting skills and knowledge, with those at highest risk making the most significant gains.
- Children improved early literacy skills, and parents supported early literacy by reading more to their children.
- Teachers learned how to incorporate curriculum and practices to support children's social-emotional development into early childhood classroom environments, and learned how to better communicate with parents about children's behavior.
- Fewer young children had cavities or dental disease.
- Children served in programs targeting high-risk families received a developmental screening.
- Linkages between community programs, services, and systems continued to contribute a more comprehensive approach to serving families.

Ventura County

First 5 Ventura County adopted a new strategic plan in June 2015 to guide its investments over the next five years. The plan builds on the significant accomplishments realized for young children and their families and addresses declining resources in future years. Moving forward, the county commission will actively identify and prioritize investments in systems and/or infrastructure development, funding direct services only when there is an inability of current services or resources to meet a demonstrated need and when there is a long-term plan for sustainability. Strategic investments will shift toward capacity-building efforts that promote parent engagement, build best practices and quality standards, engage partners in cross-system governance, and increase the alignment of resources for improved outcomes for young children.

Significant strides were made this year in Ventura County's *Help Me Grow* collaborative. With a focus on early learning settings, the collaborative-trained teachers conduct developmental screenings and launched a toolkit for early childhood educators that includes a strong set of protocols for proper screening, referral, and follow-up. Initiated as a pilot project, a strong partnership was built with 2-1-1 Ventura, demonstrating the role of 2-1-1 in asking callers with young children about developmental concerns and facilitating appropriate referral and follow-up. First 5 Ventura looks forward to expanding this pilot in FY 2015–16.

Several accomplishments were realized this year in the development of countywide systems initiatives in strengthening families, oral health, prenatal care, and promoting breastfeeding. Through these partnership-based collaboratives with county agencies, schools, and community organizations, common frameworks for addressing the needs of young children and their families were created and advanced. First 5 Ventura championed the Five Protective Factors framework to create a common language and approach to family needs, and built on that framework to align partners in trauma-informed care efforts and community implementation of *Positive Parenting Program* seminars. An oral health educational curriculum, designed by a countywide collaborative, has been rolled out to service providers working with children ages 0 to 5. A Perinatal Bill of Rights was drawn up to communicate the vision of many different partners for high-quality, accessible prenatal care. An ongoing convening of birthing hospitals has resulted in all six local hospitals either having achieved or actively working toward "Baby Friendly" status.

First 5 Ventura has championed access to quality preschool since its inception. Through the work of its implementation partner, the Ventura

County Office of Education, 116 sites are participating in the quality initiative, including 48 family child care homes. Largely due to technical assistance and trainings, 64 of the 89 sites rated in FY 2014–15 were in the highest quality tiers of 4 or 5. Over 1,400 children attended preschool as a result of First 5 Ventura funding. Close to 60 of these spaces were successfully converted to State Preschool, allowing First 5 Ventura County to invest these dollars in facilities, further expanding the number of available preschool slots.

Over the past 15 years, First 5 Ventura has made a significant countywide investment in its place-based *Neighborhoods for Learning (NfLs)* initiative. Through 11 *NfLs* initiatives, 25 family resource centers are now available throughout the county, bringing together early learning, health, and family support resources to families in their neighborhoods.

Yolo County

FY 2014–15 marked the third and final year of First 5 Yolo County's enhanced strategic plan. As a result of the restoration of Assembly Bill 99 funds in 2012, First 5 Yolo expanded its strategic plan to include stronger family support services through a place-based Family Resource Center model. This funding strategy enabled First 5 Yolo to address high needs of children ages 0 to 5 and their families, including:

- Resource and Referral: Helping families access services for which they are eligible
- Financial Literacy: Helping families maximize and manage their financial resources
- Early Childhood Education: Providing parents with interactive parent/child workshops to increase skills and confidence in their ability to be the child's first teacher
- Parent Education: Providing parents with education on a wide variety of parenting skills and nutrition
- Quality Food: Increasing access to fresh produce in communities throughout the county
- Developmental Screenings: Providing developmental/mental health assessments to children ages 0 to 5 and ensuring referral and access to appropriate levels of treatment

A total of $850,000 was allocated in FY 2014–15 to the *Expanded Family Resource Center (EFRC)* initiative. This year's accomplishments included:

- 985 eligible families were connected to needed services
- 180 families received services to increase financial management skills and to maximize their income through the Earned Income Tax Credit
- 286 parents received the knowledge, skills, and opportunities to engage in activities that support their child's social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development
- 671 families received fresh fruits and vegetables every week through free produce distribution at the family resource centers
- 552 children were screened for developmental issues and are accessing appropriate levels of treatment

In addition to the *EFRC* services, many activities continued through First 5 Yolo's programs funded under the *Integrated Family Support Initiative (IFSI)*, including oral health prevention and treatment for young children and pregnant women; early learning/child development programs for children in West Sacramento and rural Yolo County; family literacy programs; foster parent recruitment and retention efforts; home visiting using the Healthy Families American model; as well as health insurance outreach, enrollment, retention, and utilization. A total of $3.2 million was invested in support of First 5 Yolo's *IFSI*.

Outstanding achievements through *IFSI* investments included:

- 16 newly licensed foster homes, for a total of 84 countywide and a 98 percent retention rate
- 98 families received intensive case management and home visiting services as part of the Step by Step/Paso a Paso program
- Increased dental access funding allowed for over 827 pregnant women and 2,207 children ages 0 to 5 to have dental visits, with an additional 1,518 children reached through the Smile Savers program
- 860 children ages 0 to 5 obtained and used library cards with the support of family literacy programs

Yuba County

Through its investments, the goal of First 5 Yuba County is to devote its funding to local resources and services that exist in the community and proven to improve parenting, the health of children, and the quality of early education.

During the past fiscal year, one of the most significant accomplishments of First 5 Yuba was the expanded focus in the delivery of care for children with special needs. With a funding investment of $152,230, this provided more than 300 children with special needs services such as swimming, art, music, and sand therapy.

Other highlights during this past fiscal year included:

- Increased educational services for parents with children demonstrating behavioral and physical delays
- Increased car safety services for parents
- Improved access to pediatric dental care
- Instrumental in the development of a quality early education parent cooperative preschool
- Improved access to children's bereavement services
- Continued support for the professional development of early education providers

Appendix A: Number of Services and Expenditures by Result Area and Service Type, 2014-15

Result Area and Service Type	Children 0 to 5 Services	Parent Services	Provider Services	Total Adult and Provider Services	Total Number of Services	Percent of Services in Result Area	Total Expenditures for Services	Percent of Services in Result Area	Percent of Total Expenditures
Improved Family Functioning *									
Community Resource and Referral	39,907	278,991	396	279,387	319,294	33%	$10,766,693	10%	
Distribution of *Kit for New Parents*	22,171	57,891	35	57,926	80,097	8%	$613,455	1%	
Adult and Family Literacy Programs	168,358	158,845	1,890	160,735	329,093	34%	$7,067,335	7%	
Targeted Intensive Family Support Services	27,776	58,232	1,072	59,304	87,080	9%	$52,779,453	50%	
General Parenting Education and Family Support Programs	61,155	84,344	585	84,929	146,084	15%	$27,911,512	26%	
Quality Family Functioning Systems Improvement	17,611	773	2,056	2,829	20,440	2%	$5,944,754	6%	
Subtotal	336,978	639,076	6,034	645,110	982,088	100%	$105,083,202	100%	23%
Improved Child Development *									
Preschool Programs for 3- and 4-Year-Olds	42,601	5,698	767	6,465	49,066	21%	$113,111,298	58%	
Infants, Toddlers, and All-Age Early Learning Programs	25,281	15,808	218	16,026	41,307	18%	$11,746,787	6%	
Early Education Provider Programs	27,945	3,504	25,806	29,310	57,255	25%	$35,124,503	18%	
Kindergarten Transition Services	16,899	12,493	481	12,974	29,873	13%	$6,629,046	3%	
Quality ECE Investments	28,357	16,154	7,526	23,680	52,037	23%	$29,514,965	15%	
Subtotal	141,083	53,657	34,798	88,455	229,538	100%	$196,126,599	100%	43%
Improved Child Health *									
Nutrition and Fitness	35,499	37,348	3,334	40,682	76,181	7%	$18,642,475	12%	
Health Access	46,642	39,733	519	40,252	86,894	8%	$14,428,204	9%	
Maternal and Child Health Care	26,161	78,308	510	78,818	104,979	10%	$34,704,497	23%	
Oral Health	207,571	91,556	5,476	97,032	304,603	30%	$21,893,921	14%	
Primary and Specialty Medical Services	64,780	20,164	4,418	24,582	89,362	9%	$11,495,495	8%	
Comprehensive Screening and Assessments	117,873	24,278	2,163	26,441	144,314	14%	$20,481,316	13%	
Targeted Intensive Intervention for Identified Special Needs	22,410	5,889	1,901	7,790	30,200	3%	$22,530,038	15%	
Safety Education and Injury Prevention	73,434	87,297	246	87,543	160,977	16%	$936,064	<1%	
Tobacco Education and Outreach	618	2,968	1,755	4,723	5,341	1%	$517,077	<1%	
Quality Health Systems Improvement	38	19,069	9,397	28,466	28,504	3%	$7,509,079	5%	
Subtotal	595,026	406,610	29,719	436,329	1,031,355	100%	$153,138,166	100%	34%
Total	1,073,087	1,099,343	70,551	1,169,894	2,242,981		$454,347,967		100%
Improved Systems of Care **									
Policy and Broad Systems-Change Efforts	–	–	–	–	–		$19,369,819	18%	
Organizational Support	–	–	–	–	–		$77,899,759	74%	
Public Education and Information	–	–	–	–	–		$8,056,990	8%	
Total	–	–	–	–	–		$105,326,568	100%	
Grand Total	1,073,087	1,099,343	70,551	1,169,894	2,242,981		$559,674,535		

* Counts may include individuals in more than one Result Area or Service Type.
** Improved Systems of Care does not list counts of individuals served because it supports services in the other Result Areas.
Note: Services and expenditures are for 57 county commissions reporting in November 2015. Six county commissions provided financial data pending final audits.

Appendix B: First 5 California Result Areas and Services

Result 1: Improved Family Functioning

Providing parents, families, and communities with relevant, timely and culturally appropriate information, education, services and support.

Services

a. Community Resource and Referral
Programs providing referrals or service information about various community resources, such as medical facilities, counseling programs, family resource centers, and other supports for families with young children. This includes 2-1-1 services or other general helplines and services that are designed as a broad strategy for linking families with community services.

b. Distribution of *Kit for New Parents*
Programs providing and/or augmenting the First 5 California *Kit for New Parents* to new and expectant parents.

c. Adult and Family Literacy Programs
Programs designed to increase the amount of reading that parents do with their children, as well as educate parents about the benefits of reading or looking at books together (e.g., Even Start, Reach Out and Read, Raising a Reader). Family literacy may include adult education programs that provide English as a Second Language and literacy classes, and/or a General Equivalence Diploma.

d. Targeted Intensive Family Support Services
Programs providing intensive and/or clinical services by a paraprofessional and/or professional, as well as one-to-one services in family support settings. Programs are generally evidence-based, and are designed to support at-risk expectant parents and families with young children to increase knowledge and skills related to parenting and improved family functioning (e.g., home visiting, counseling, family therapy, parent-child interaction approaches, and long-term classes or groups). This category also includes comprehensive and/or intensive services to homeless populations.

e. General Parenting Education and Family Support Programs
Programs providing short-term, non-intensive instruction on general parenting topics, and/or support for basic family needs and related case management (e.g., meals, groceries, clothing, emergency funding or household goods acquisition assistance, and temporary or permanent housing acquisition assistance). Fatherhood programs are also included here. In general, these programs are designed to provide less intense and shorter term ("lighter touch") support services and classes for families by non-clinical staff (e.g., Family Resource Centers).

f. Quality Family Functioning Systems Improvement
Family functioning system efforts are designed to support the implementation and integration of services primarily in Result Area 1. This may include use of the Family Strengthening approach, Protective Factors planning or implementation, service outreach, planning and management, interagency collaboration, support services to diverse populations, database management and development, technical assistance, and provider capacity building. Provider loan forgiveness programs for which child or provider counts are not measured are included in this category.

Result 2: Improved Child Development

Increasing the quality of and access to early learning and education for young children.

Services

a. Preschool Programs for 3- and 4- Year-Olds
Programs providing preschool services, preschool spaces, and comprehensive preschool initiatives primarily targeting three and four year-olds. Child Signature Programs (CSP) 1 and 3 are included in this category, as well as county programs which mirror the quality and intensity of the CSP.

b. Infants, Toddlers, and All-Age Early Learning Programs
Programmatic investments in early learning programs for infants and toddlers, as well as all-age programs. Examples of all-age programs that may be included here are child related early literacy and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) programs; programs for homeless children; migrant programs; and similar investments.

c. Early Education Provider Programs
Programs providing training and educational services, supports, and funding to improve the quality of care. This includes Comprehensive Approaches to Raising Education Standards (CARES) Plus and workforce development programs.

d. Kindergarten Transition Services
Programs of all types (e.g., classes, home visits, summer bridge programs) that are designed to support the kindergarten transition for children and families.

e. Quality Early Childhood Education Investments
Improvement efforts designed to support the implementation and integration of services primarily in Result Area 2. This may include Race to the Top—Early Learning Challenge and other Quality Rating and Improvement System investments. This category includes early literacy and STEM systems-building projects. This also could include interagency collaboration, facility grants and supply grants to providers, support services to diverse populations, and database management and development. CSP 2 is reported in this category.

Result 3: Improved Child Health

Promoting optimal health through identification, treatment, and elimination of the risks that threaten children's health and lead to development delays and disabilities in young children.

Services

a. Nutrition and Fitness
Programs providing strategies to promote children's healthy development through nutrition and fitness, including programs to teach the facts about healthy weight, basic principles of healthy eating, safe food handling and preparation, and tools to help organizations incorporate physical activity and nutrition. Recognized strategies include "Let's Move" Campaign, MyPyramid for Preschoolers, and sugar-sweetened beverage initiatives.

b. Health Access
Programs designed to increase access to health/dental/vision insurance coverage and connection to services, such as health insurance enrollment and retention assistance, programs that ensure use of a health home, and investments in local "Children's Health Initiative" partnerships. Providers may be participating in Medi-Cal Administrative Activities to generate reimbursements.

c. Maternal and Child Health Care
Programs designed to improve the health and well-being of women to achieve healthy pregnancies and improve their child's life course. Voluntary strategies may include prenatal care/education to promote healthy pregnancies, breastfeeding assistance to ensure that the experience is positive, screening for maternal depression, and home visiting to promote and monitor the development of children from prenatal to two years of age. Providers may be participating in Medi-Cal Administrative Activities to generate reimbursements.

d. Oral Health
Programs providing an array of services that can include dental screening, assessment, cleaning and preventive care, treatment, fluoride varnish, and parent education on the importance of oral health care. This may include provider training and care coordination of services.

e. Primary and Specialty Medical Services
Programs designed to expand and enhance primary and specialty care in the community to ensure the capacity to serve children. Services include preventive, diagnostic, therapeutic, and specialty medical care provided by licensed healthcare professionals/organizations. Services may include immunizations, well child check-ups, care coordination, asthma services, vision services, services for autism/attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, other neurodevelopmental disorders, and other specialty care.

f. Comprehensive Screening and Assessments
Programs providing screening, assessment, and diagnostic services, including developmental, behavioral, mental health, physical health, body mass index, and vision. Screening may be performed in a medical, education, or community setting. These services determine the nature and extent of a problem and recommend a course of treatment and care. This may include strategies to connect children to services which promote health development, such as *Help Me Grow*.

g. Targeted Intensive Intervention for Identified Special Needs
Programs providing early intervention or intensive services to children with disabilities and other special needs, or at-risk for special needs. May include strategies targeting language and communication skills, social and emotional development, developmental delays, and related parent education. Mental Health Consultations in ECE settings are included in this category. "Special Needs" refers to those children who are between birth and five years of age and meet the definition of "Special Needs."

h. Safety Education and Injury Prevention
Programs disseminating information about child passenger and car safety; safe sleep; fire, water, home (childproofing) safety; and the dangers of shaking babies. Includes education on when and how to dial 9-1-1, domestic violence prevention, and intentional injury prevention. Referrals to community resources that specifically focus on these issues also may be included in this category.

i. Tobacco Education and Outreach
Education on tobacco-related issues and abstinence support for people using tobacco products. Includes providing information on reducing young children's exposure to tobacco smoke.

j. Quality Health Systems Improvement
Efforts designed to support the implementation and integration of services primarily in Result Area 3. This may include service outreach, planning and management (general planning and coordination activities, interagency collaboration, support services to diverse populations, database management and development, technical assistance and support, contracts administration, and oversight activities), and provider capacity building (provider training and support, contractor workshops, educational events, and large community conferences). Provider loan forgiveness programs for which child or provider counts are not measured are included here. Includes Baby Friendly Hospital investments, projects for cross-sector data integration, and designing a community-endorsed developmental screening framework.

Result 4: Improved Systems of Care

Implementing integrated, comprehensive, inclusive, and culturally and linguistically appropriate services to achieve improvements in one of more of the other Result Areas.

Services

a. Policy and Broad Systems–Change Efforts
Investments in broad systems-change efforts, including inter-agency collaboration, work with local and statewide stakeholders, policy development, and related efforts. This category includes county investment and work with The Children's Movement and/or on grassroots advocacy efforts.

b. Organizational Support
Training and support provided to organizations that does not apply to one of the three programmatic Result Areas, but instead has a more general impact. Other examples of organizational support include business planning, grant writing workshops, sustainability workshops, and assistance in planning and promoting large community conferences or forums. Database management and other cross-agency systems evaluation support, and general First 5 program staff time are included in this category.

c. Public Education and Information
Investments in community awareness and educational events on a specific early childhood topic that does not apply to one of the three programmatic Result Areas, or promoting broad awareness of the importance of early childhood development.

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