



This newsletter comes to you from [First 5 California](#), the California Children and Families Commission, which provides services and support to ensure that children in California are born healthy and reach their full potential. eNewsline provides updates about the **Child, Parent and Teacher Signature Programs**, and more.

NEW STAFF JOINS FIRST 5 CALIFORNIA

We are working to build our internal capacity and are happy to announce the following additions to the First 5 California family:

Mike Fuller, who spearheaded this year's Annual Conference, is now filling in as Fiscal Administrator. He previously worked as an Education Administrator in First 5 California's Program Management Division.

Debi Silverman is the new Administrator for First 5 California's Program Management Division. She joins First 5 California from First 5 Contra Costa where she was the Early Childhood Education Program Officer for more than 11 years.

Lance Vayder joined the Results and Evaluation team as a Research Program Specialist. Lance returns to the Commission from the

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Welcome to the first edition of First 5 California's eNewsline. We are excited to share information, highlight the work of our county partners, and provide updates on our Signature programs.

I first want to thank you all for the warm welcome to First 5 California. These past 5 months have been a great opportunity for me to learn about our programs and expand our partnerships with First 5 Counties, and the larger early education and care field.

Part of that ongoing effort is to embark on creating a new strategic plan to guide us in the coming years. I look forward to working with our partners in its development and encourage you to participate in the process.

I also want to thank everyone for their time and willingness to meet and share their own local programs with me. Over the next year, I hope to visit every county to learn about the challenges and highlights of our programs and how we can further partner to maximize our effectiveness for young children and their families. I look forward to working with all of you and building stakeholder and legislative partnerships to ensure our youngest residents have a voice when decisions are made on their behalf.

The last five months have been full of change. Personally, my family welcomed our third grandchild, Liam on May 1st. My daughter received her new parent kit and I have to admit, I paid more attention to its contents this time around.

Thank you for your continued dedication and good work on behalf of California's youngest citizens.

Camille Maben

COMMISSION MEETING UPDATE

The State Commission met on April 25th to discuss items relevant to the vitality of First 5 California programs and the overall well-being of children in California. We thank them for their thoughtful discussions and decisions on the following action items:

Department of Health Care Services where he worked on Medi-Cal reimbursement rates for long term care.

Gretchen Williams joined the Results and Evaluation team as a Research Program Specialist. She is returning to First 5 California from the Child Development Division at the California Department of Education where she was involved in developing the Race to the Top--Early Learning Challenge application and its evaluation requirements.

Vanessa Wiseman joined the Communications Unit as a Public Information Officer. She previously worked in the State Assembly and Schwarzenegger Administration.

Jaime Hastings joined the Commission as a Staff Services Manager serving the executive team. She also comes from the California Department of Education's Child Development Division where she worked extensively on the Race to the Top--Early Learning Challenge Grant.

Randall Ortiz joined the IT Unit as a Senior Programmer Analyst and will be programming several upcoming data programs for the Commission. He comes to First 5 California from the Air Resources Board where he worked on numerous web-based applications to support their business processes.

Kathy Ellis joins the Administrative Services Division as an Associate Governmental Program Analyst. She joins First 5 California from the Department of Education where she prepared and maintained contracts and acted as a personnel liaison.

- The transfer of \$15 million of the \$40 million to the Department of Developmental Services to fund new Early Start services for children ages 0-2
- The renewal of the contract and funding necessary to providing tobacco cessation services through the California Smokers' Helpline through 2016, and training modules for Signature Program participants
- Joining the Children's Movement, an online convening of people and organizations uniting to make children's health and education a top priority in California

FIRST 5 CALIFORNIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Thank you to all our partners and to the Advancement Project for another great Annual Conference. We had over 400 attendees from a wide range of stakeholder groups.

Day one began with pre-conference workshops for county staff who are implementing either CARES Plus or the Child Signature Program.

Attendees learned how to implement successful programs, and learned from experts around the country on the importance of brain development and the effectiveness of high-quality programs. We hope that you take this information back to help inform your program decisions.



Attendees also had the opportunity to weigh in on the State Plan on Early Education regarding the future of early childhood education.

The conference also featured great speakers, including Kim Belshé, Executive Director of First 5 Los Angeles; Delaine Eastin, former State Superintendent of Public Instruction; Karen Ponder, former President of Smart Start and the North Carolina Partners for Children; and Dr. Mariale Hardiman from Johns Hopkins University, School of Education.

Carol Chen also joins the Administrative Services Division as an Associate Governmental Program Analyst. She previously worked as an Accounting Officer with the California Secretary of State's Office.

EVENTS for MAY & JUNE

Follow us on Facebook to keep up-to-date on where our Hands-On Health Express van will show up next!

When planning events, outreach and communications for May and June, consider some of the following:

May: Foster Care Month
May: National Physical Fitness and Sports Month
May: National Fitness Month
May: American Bike Month
May: Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month
May: Asian Pacific American Heritage Month
May 30: Memorial Day

June: National Children's Awareness Month
June: National Fruit and Veggie Month
June: National Sun Safety Month
June: Great Outdoor Month
June 1: Stand for Children Day
June 5: Author and illustrator Richard Scarry's birthday
June 8: Best Friends Day
June 14: Flag Day
June 16: Father's Day
June 19: Juneteenth

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Bills that First 5 California is watching this session include:

SB 192 (Liu) Early Learning and Educational Support Services

SIGNATURE PROGRAM UPDATES

We recently announced two new Requests for Applications for two of our Signature Programs:

CARES Plus-Round 2 RFA was [posted](#) on March 7, 2013. Applications for Round 2 are due on May 10th. The Awards to Lead Agencies will be posted on June 17th with implementation to begin on July 1st. The continuation of the CARES Plus program will 1) allow First 5 California to build on the organizational infrastructure and momentum already created by the current CARES Plus programs throughout the state; 2) provide more counties an opportunity to participate; and 3) potentially leverage additional federal and local funds.

The Child Signature Program (CSP) posted the third and final [RFA](#) in the CSP series on April 17, 2013. This RFA is for counties that did NOT participate in the Power of Preschool program, but that have classrooms that meet the criteria to become a "quality enhanced" classroom with funding from CSP. Applications are due on May 20th and awards are scheduled to be posted on June 7th. The program will begin its two-year implementation on July 1st.

NATIONAL FITNESS MONTH

May is National Fitness Month and a great time to spread the word about the benefits of physical activity—for children and adults alike.

Even though young children are a bundle of endless energy, a lot of that energy often goes to waste in front of the TV or computer screen. Combine inactivity with poor diet, and it is no surprise that nearly one in three children in America is now overweight or obese. The numbers are even higher in African American and Hispanic communities, where nearly 40 percent of children are overweight or obese.



Children need 60 minutes of play with moderate to vigorous activity every day, but it doesn't have to occur at once. It all adds up! Adults can help put the children in their lives on the path to a healthy future with these simple ideas:

[SB 768](#) (De León) California Tobacco Tax Act of 2014

[AB 273](#) (Rendon) Child care and development services: California Partnership for Infants and Toddlers Act of 2013

[ACR 45](#) (Weber) Early Care and Education

[AJR 16](#) (Bonilla) State Preschool Programs: Early Learning

On May 6, 2013, **Diane Levin**, Chief Deputy Director at First 5 California, spoke at an informational hearing of the **Senate Committee on Business, Professions & Economic Development**. The purpose of the hearing was to: examine the economic impact of the early care and education (ECE) workforce sector; the relationship between investing in the ECE workforce and California's economic competitiveness; and, identifying the opportunities and challenges of professionalizing the ECE workforce.

COMMISSION MEMBERS

Jennifer Kent, Chair
Patrick Duterte, Vice Chair
Magdalena Carrasco
Conway Collis
Kathryn Icenhower
Joyce Iseri
Casey McKeever
Ex officio: Diana Dooley
[Click here for bios.](#)

DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that music plays an important part in children's lives on many levels? Not only does it provide the opportunity to get up and dance, but it also serves as a fun way to learn fundamentals such as the ABCs, how to follow

- Set a positive example by leading an active lifestyle yourself. Actions speak louder than words. Children are more affected by what they see their parents do than what their parents say.
- Give children balls, kites and jump ropes to encourage outdoor physical activity.
- Incorporate more dancing, walking and cycling into your daily routine. Even simple activities like skipping, jumping and running all develop muscular strength and work on your little one's gross motor skill development.
- Spend active time with your child. Instead of watching television, encourage your child to be active by walking, playing catch or riding tricycles or bikes.
- Take young people to places where they can be active, such as public parks, community baseball fields or basketball courts.
- Involve your child in daily chores around the house, such as gardening, washing the car and cleaning.
- Use tummy time to build the core muscles needed for sitting, crawling and walking by putting toys just out of your baby's reach.
- Use music to get your toddler moving and learning about their body parts with songs like "Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes."
- Try using the idea of a scavenger hunt to get kids outside and moving. You can hunt for hidden letters in the alphabet, for certain colors in nature or even bugs.
- Think of activity as the family's "medicine." If you had to take a pill each day to keep yourself healthy, you would make it a priority to remember to do so. Fitness takes a few more minutes of the day than swallowing a pill, but it is just as important.

COUNTY FOCUS: PLACER COUNTY

April was Child Abuse Prevention month, a time to raise awareness around the critical issue of child abuse and neglect and to educate the public on prevention. Placer County has been at the forefront of promoting the social and emotional well-being of the children and families in their county, developing a county-wide system of coordination around child abuse prevention. First 5 Placer has shifted from a focus on **what services would be funded** (health, education, parent support, etc.) to **how services are delivered**, developing the agency's capacity to serve families holistically and to address issues of concern in Placer County.

Maternal mental health and child welfare have been two areas of particular concern for the County. The Placer Maternal Depression Task Force--in partnership with Strategies Northern California Region--developed a series of regional trainings and webinars for direct services staff, home visitors, clinicians and nurses on perinatal mood and anxiety disorders. Also in partnership with Strategies and the Office of Child Abuse Prevention, First 5 Placer supported events over three days on early childhood trauma and resiliency. Parents, early childhood educators, CASA volunteers, social workers, and probation officers were among the 200 people who attended trainings by Dr. Mark Katz on insights from those who have overcome childhood risks and adversity.

directions, how to count, and it helps spark imagination.

Studies on music and brain development suggest that early exposure to music increases a child's language development and math skills, and increases memory function.



We at First 5 California are happy to announce the launch of our new Pandora music station for kids!

www.pandora.com/kidsstation

Please join us in getting the word out to parents about the benefits of listening to music and engaging in learning while we listen.

Our station features dozens of songs geared at early learning and play to encourage physical activity and brain development.

The culminating event, the February 8th Childhood Trauma Conference, was attended by 115 leaders from 15 counties and state agencies. It included speakers with first-hand experience on early childhood trauma; psychiatrists and experts on reach and treatment related to early trauma; and showcased The Children's Place (Kansas City) and its holistic approach to treatment of abuse, neglect, and other childhood trauma. At the end of the day, participants engaged in a lively discussion regarding coordinated regional approach to early childhood trauma care.

First 5 Placer is now focused on working with other regional leaders and community groups to establish a center of excellence for the treatment of early trauma in the Sacramento region. Such efforts are vital in increasing awareness of child abuse and neglect, boosting public support, and educating the community on its prevention.