

Key Impact:

EARLY IDENTIFICATION AND INTERVENTION



1 in 4 children ages zero to five are at risk for developmental, behavioral or social delay.

WHAT WE KNOW

When we neglect developmental or behavioral delays in children, we put them at risk for life-long problems in learning, behavior and health. Developmental or behavioral delays must be identified early to ensure effective intervention.

California's children are not getting the access they need to developmental screenings and intervention. Although developmental screenings are covered by the Affordable Care Act for both Medi-Cal and private insurance plans.

An effective early intervention system will ensure that every child in California is screened for developmental delays at least three times before their third birthday; children needing follow-up are referred to community-based services quickly and efficiently; and parents get the support they need to oversee their children's care.

As a first step, First 5 has invested in comprehensive and integrated local systems to promote early identification and referrals to services.

TO FULLY ACHIEVE EFFECTIVE EARLY INTERVENTION, CALIFORNIA NEEDS A MULTI-LEVEL APPROACH:

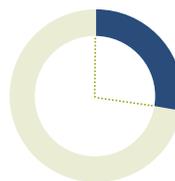
First: health providers must be educated and supported to identify and refer children at risk for delays.

Second: families must have access to a centralized intake and referral point, as well as information about early treatment and intervention.

Third: public systems must collect and analyze data on children screened, assessed and served in order to effectively track statewide progress in this area.



85% of brain development occurs in the first three years of life.



Only 28% of California's youngest children received developmental screens in 2013.



California is ranked 30th among states on the rate of infant and toddler developmental screenings

WE CAN DO BETTER: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

California can build a family-centered system that supports all children at risk of developmental and behavioral delay.

The First 5 Association of California recommends that policymakers take action to:

Ensure all children receive mandated developmental and behavioral screenings.

Invest in and improve coordination across systems of care to efficiently connect young children to early intervention.

Improve statewide data collection, sharing and reporting on key indicators of screening, assessment, referral and treatment.

First 5 leads the effort to build strong, effective and sustainable systems to serve young children in California. The First 5 Association of California is the membership organization for the 58 First 5 county commissions. In 1998, California voters passed Proposition 10 — The California Children and Families Act — creating First 5 commissions in every county. First 5 supports the healthy development of children from birth through five years of age.