



# First 5 California Early Literacy Program

May 9, 2022



# Current Opportunity

## The Need:

- The pandemic has exacerbated and created a collective trauma that has led to a national child and youth mental health crisis
- According to USA Reads, 61% of low-income families have no books at all in their homes (2020)

## The Opportunity:

- Governor's proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2022–23
- Ability to leverage other literacy efforts for a holistic and statewide approach
- Work toward achieving the North Star by encouraging parent/child bonding, promoting resiliency, and providing positive mitigation against adverse childhood experiences



# Funding Request

- Recommendation of a First 5 California investment of \$15 million over three years in an Early Literacy Program
- Potential match for \$10 million in the Governor's proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2022–23 for early literacy programming for early childhood
- Opportunity to strengthen existing efforts that support early literacy, child development, and family functioning in partnership with the California Department of Public Health and other state level partners
- Two-pronged approach to provide books and family engagement to high-promise children and families and support local innovations





## Benefits of Books

- Develop early literacy skills
- Encourage bonding
- Promote resilience

## Research-based Strategy

- Language and literacy development is a major indicator for school success
- Books in the home increase vocabulary
- Critical for low-income, immigrant, and dual language learner families



# Partnership Opportunities

## California State Departments:

- Public Health
- Education
- Social Services

## Target Populations:

- Children in Home Visiting Programs
- Children experiencing homelessness
- Children in foster care
- Multilingual learners



# Early Literacy Program Approach

Partner with existing programs serving the target populations to:

- Expand access to books through book distribution programs
- Engage families around early literacy through training for service providers and family-centered literacy materials

Partners may include:

- Black Infant Health Program
- California Home Visiting Program
- CalWORKs Home Visiting Program
- Child Welfare programs
- Programs serving children experiencing homelessness
- WIC
- Migrant Education programs
- Other programs serving multilingual learners



# Early Literacy Program Approach

Issue competitive grants to First 5 county commissions to strengthen existing literacy efforts and expand innovative strategies.

Local grant implementation would:

- Incorporate evidence-based strategies or promising practices
- Include findings from F5CA's Dual Language Learner Pilot
- Implement strategies targeting parent-child shared reading, access to books, the quality of adult-child interactions during literacy activities, and/or parental knowledge and use of early literacy strategies



# Early Literacy Program Objectives

The Early Literacy Program will include an evaluation to assess efficacy and identify promising strategies.

Possible objectives include:

- Reach 65% of identified priority populations of children with book distribution programs
- Build capacity and establish and/or expand needed infrastructure that emphasizes family and community involvement
- Develop guidance documents and resources to support direct service providers and families of children birth to age five
- Increase family and workforce understanding and use of early literacy strategies



# Early Literacy Program Funding

Funding Category	Estimated Cost
Book Distribution (208,065x \$25)	\$10,403,250
Training/Materials Development	\$1,000,000
Local Grants	\$2,500,000
Evaluation	\$1,096,750
<b>Total program cost</b>	<b>\$15,000,000</b>

# Questions?



# Thank you!

