



Annual Report AR-3

San Diego County Evaluation Summary and Highlights

July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023

County Evaluation Summary

Evaluation Activities Completed, Findings, and Policy Impact

First 5 San Diego utilizes a standardized evaluation design for five major initiatives that includes quantitative process and outcome data and qualitative data (e.g., interviews, focus groups and client and provider testimonials). Each initiative tracks client demographic data and the following: 1. Oral Health Initiative (OHI): tracks screenings, examinations, and treatment for children; care coordination services and oral health education for parents/pregnant women. 2. Healthy Development Services (HDS): tracks services for children identified with mild to moderate developmental and/or social emotional needs and families receiving care coordination support and screenings, assessments and/or treatment for behavior, development, and speech/language concerns. 3. Learn Well Initiative (LWI): tracks the percentage of children ages 0 through 5 enrolled in quality early learning and care environments with a highly qualified workforce; parents' and caregivers' knowledge and capacity to promote the healthy development of children ages 0 through 5; and parents' and caregivers' access to needed services for their children. 4. KidSTART: KidSTART Center tracks gains measured for children with multiple, complex needs. 5. First 5 First Steps (F5FS): home visiting program tracks services for children and pregnant women. It measures parenting skills, overall safety and developmental appropriateness of the home environment, and each child's health and well-being. There are 197,646 children ages 0-5 in San Diego County. First 5 San Diego programs intensively served 33,714 children, 9,078 parents/caregivers, and 2,936 providers (unduplicated counts). Hispanic/Latino children (60.0%) and parents/caregivers (49.9%) were the most prominent group intensively served, followed by White non-Hispanics children and parents/caregivers (17.0% and 17.7% respectively). Through OHI, 9,405 children received oral health screenings and 8,564 dental exams. 99.9% of high-risk children with dental disease received treatment. HDS provided developmental and/or behavioral screenings, assessments, and/or treatment to 7,189 children. 5,744 caregivers participated in developmental and/or behavioral classes, consultations, or therapy. LWI provided 16,637 children with quality early learning and care experience. 559 early learning and care sites participated in LWI. Of those, 506 worked with experienced coaches to develop site-specific Quality Improvement Plans. KidSTART served 211 children with complex needs via assessments and/or treatment or were connected to treatment services for multiple behavioral and/or developmental concerns. F5FS served 525 caregivers/pregnant women and 488 children. 51.2% of mothers receiving F5FS services reported breastfeeding their children when they were 6 months. At 12 months of age, 95.9% of children were up to date with their Well Baby Checks and 87% were up to date with their immunizations. First 5 San Diego publishes its evaluation report annually and shares it with the Commission, First 5 San Diego contractors, other government agencies, community organizations and the public. The report is posted on the First 5 San Diego website and report findings are presented to the Commission for review and approval. The evaluation results are reviewed with contractors and used to identify successful practices and to implement strategies for continuous improvement. Data is used by the First 5 staff to support strategic planning, funding priorities, partner engagement/collaboration and is accessible to others.

County Highlights

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First 5 San Diego providers continued to offer both in-person and virtual services during FY22-23, a practice that developed out of necessity during the COVID pandemic. First 5 San Diego providers value the ongoing flexibility to meet families where they are at by connecting with them via office visits, home visits, phone calls, text messages and video appointments. Providers also started seeing a higher volume and higher level of need in the children and families that come to them. Services continue to be family-centered but approaches have shifted to prioritize safety while addressing family preferences for service delivery. Virtual and in-person options are available based on appropriateness and family choice and family engagement services are being enhanced. First 5 San Diego invests in public education campaigns to educate parents, caregivers and the San Diego community on the importance of the first five years of a child's life. The FY22-23 Talk, Read, Sing campaign promoted early childhood literacy and positive parenting practices that support healthy, social-emotional development of children ages zero through five. Campaign messaging which achieved more than 95 million gross impressions was broadcasted via television, radio, digital media and outdoor advertisements. Over the past few years First 5 San Diego providers have been challenged by stagnant funding levels, increased costs, and staffing and workforce recruitment and retention issues. First 5 San Diego is strategic about our future investments by taking systems change focus. To continue to support long term positive outcomes for our children and their families, the early care and education system will require strong collaboration and continued advocacy for long term sustainable funding. Over the last 5 years, First 5 San Diego has been very intentional about diversifying its revenue portfolio that includes receiving funding from various county departments and First 5 CA.

