

First 5 Commission of San Diego

February 18, 2025

Executive Director Report

Updates Since Last Report

Health

- **Healthy Development Services (HDS) and KidSTART Center**
 - Providers are preparing for upcoming budget reductions by preparing proposals for staffing levels and program changes. Providers are anticipating a significant reduction in staffing and seeking assistance in reassigning staff within and outside their agency.
 - KidSTART has effectively implemented new strategies to shorten the wait times for children who have been referred for developmental and behavioral services.
- **Healthy Development Services (HDS) Countywide Coordinator: American Academy of Pediatrics – Chapter 3 (AAP-CA3)**
 - AAP-CA3 is working with contractors on preparing a proposal for the upcoming year on what HDS program will have capacity to serve given the reduction in funding.
 - AAP-CA3 continues to connect with Medical Care Services on leveraging Medi-Cal funding related to dyadic care benefits.

Family

- **First 5 First Steps (F5FS)**
 - First 5 First steps contractors have begun receiving referrals from the Family Connection Hub (Hub) for FFPSA eligible families. As of Jan 13th, six referrals have been made to First Steps sites since the Hub's launch on December 9th.

Learning

- **Mi Escuelita**
 - SBCS has agreed to a one-year pilot program with CFWB for the FFPSA funding (Family First Prevention Services Act). Funding will be for one classroom serving 24 children.
- **Learn Well Initiative (LWI)**
 - Effective December 31, 2024, San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) officially ended the Healthy Eating and Active Living (HEAL) subcontract with the YMCA of San Diego County. HEAL offered direct site-level support services to all Learn Well participants, in-person and virtually, in the inclusion and promotion of healthy eating and active living practices. Due to anticipated funding reductions and the inability to maintain staffing, both agencies determined it was best to mutually end the contract. The Learn Well team will repurpose those funds to support the upcoming Early Years Conference in March 2025.
 - On January 22nd, SDCOE hosted the San Diego Quality Preschool Initiative (SDQPI) Director's Meeting. Providers received a presentation from the Department of Defense on the military fee assistance program known as Military Child Care in Your Neighborhood (MCCYN). The expanded

version MCCYN-PLUS allows providers participating in SDQPI for at least 12 months with an assigned coach to participate in the program to offer more quality child care options for military families and receive up to \$1800 per month per child. Background materials have been provided for your reference. **See Item 8-2.**

Community

• **Community Outreach and Engagement Events**

First 5 San Diego is proud to have sponsored or participated in the following **1** community outreach event:

- February 1-28, 2025
 - Starting January 27, 2025, San Diegans can pick up a Museum Month pass at any San Diego Public Library. Patrons can present those passes for half price admission for up to four people at 70+ museums around San Diego County throughout the month of February. (Starting February 1, 2025 – a downloadable version of the pass will be available as well.)

• **Kit for New Parents**

The Kit for New Parents program stopped shipping KITs to individuals and organizations on June 28, 2024. As of 1/24/2025 KITs are still not shipping. First 5 California is in process of securing a new KIT distribution contract and a KIT shipping contract. During this time, First 5 San Diego has continued to allow San Diegan's to request the KIT, per First 5 California. First 5 California stated, during the week of January 21, 2025, KITs are expected to resume shipping "very soon". First 5 San Diego expects countywide reach for the KIT program to be lower than prior years because of the ongoing delays at the state level.

Administration

• **Finance Committee**

- The Committee met on January 16th, 2025 and discussed and approved the Balance Sheet and Statement of Revenues and Expenditures including the 2nd Quarter Budget Projection for the quarter ending December 31, 2024.

• **First 5 Advocacy & Networking / Administrative Updates / Professional Development**

- First 5 Association Summit was held in San Diego on February 10-12, 2025 at the Kona Kai. All First 5 Commissions came together for 3 days of networking and professional development opportunities for our program staff that will be in attendance. First 5 San Diego staff supported the Association with in-kind support for registration and session moderation.
- First 5 CA create a resource for commissions titled: *Sustainability, Diversification & Capacity Building: A Playbook for Local First 5 Commissions*, and its accompanying funding matrices. In response to declining Proposition 10 revenue, First 5 California created this resource that was designed to share promising practices that local commissions have undertaken around the state, as well as newer and upcoming opportunities, with action steps to put these practices into play locally. **See Items 8-3 and 8-4.**
- Harder + Company Community Research completed their evaluation of the San Diego County Doula Pilot Program that was implemented March 2023- September 2024. In partnership with the County, First 5 San Diego launched a Doula Pilot Program aimed at expanding access to doula

services for BIPOC families and training for additional Doulas to address disparities in childbirth outcomes. Through the pilot, For The Village was able to serve 170 birthing people and provide training to 52 Doulas. **See item 8-5.**

- Executive Director Arguilez continues to represent First 5 San Diego in the following community stakeholder engagement efforts:
 - Child and Family Strengthening Advisory Board
 - SDSU College of Education Deans Advisory Board
 - Children's First Collective San Diego
 - First 5 Association Public Policy Committee Chair
 - Department of Defense Military Childcare Statewide Workgroup
 - Catalyst San Diego Early Education Funders Group

Background on First 5 San Diego Commission's Current Projects

2-1-1 INFORMATION AND REFERRAL

2-1-1 San Diego is a free 24-hour phone service and online database that connects people with community resources. 2-1-1 also operates a First 5 San Diego Warm Line (1-800 5FIRST5) that assists parents of children ages zero through five with locating services and resources for their families.

CHILDHOOD INJURY PREVENTION PROGRAM

The Childhood Injury Prevention Program educates parents, caregivers, and early childhood education staff about childhood injury prevention strategies to make homes, automobiles, and communities safer for children ages zero through five.

FIRST 5 FIRST STEPS (F5FS)

F5FS provides countywide home visitation services to specific high-risk target populations including pregnant and parenting teens, military, refugee/immigrant, and low-income families using the Healthy Families America (HFA) model and Baby TALK curriculum.

HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES (HDS)

HDS is an array of services for early identification and treatment of children with mild to moderate developmental delays. Services include assessment and treatment for behavioral and developmental concerns (including speech and language, occupational and physical therapies), parent education and care coordination to all families receiving HDS services.

KIDSTART

KidSTART is an integrated program within First 5 San Diego and the Health and Human Services Agency's Behavioral Health Services to support children with complex developmental, socio-emotional/behavioral health, medical, and family needs. The KidSTART Center performs screening, triage, assessment, referrals and treatment for children with multiple, complex delays, and needs. The KidSTART Clinic, funded by Behavioral Health Services, provides comprehensive behavioral and social-emotional clinical treatment (First 5 San Diego funding supports the Center only).

KIT FOR NEW PARENTS

The Kit for New Parents is a free, comprehensive resource from First 5 California for new and expectant parents emphasizing the importance of a child's early years. Kits are distributed countywide and are available in English, Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese, and Chinese.

MATERNITY HOUSING PROGRAM (MHP)

The MHP provides safe, secure and supportive housing with comprehensive home-based family-focused supportive services and intensive case management services for pregnant and parenting young women between 18 and 24 years old, and their dependent children. MHP assists these young women who are homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless, develop the skills necessary to live independently while providing a safe and stable home for them and their children.

MI ESCUELITA THERAPEUTIC PRESCHOOL

Mi Escuelita provides a therapeutic preschool experience for young children 3-5 years old who have been traumatized by family violence. The goal of this program is to help children enter kindergarten as active learners by working with the family emotionally, socially, and developmentally.

ORAL HEALTH INITIATIVE (OHI)

OHI provides oral health services, care coordination and preventative education to children ages birth through five with the goal of improving oral health and promoting positive oral health practices.

LEARN WELL INITIATIVE

The Learn Well Initiative supports sustainable development of quality early learning and care programs and aims to support providers in the form of technical assistance, instructional support, coaching and ongoing professional development.