

First 5 Commission of San Diego

April 16th, 2025

Executive Director Report

Updates Since Last Report

Health

- **Healthy Development Services (HDS) and KidSTART Center**
 - HDS providers have been working with AAPCA3 to develop regional specific plans to address the upcoming budget reductions for FY25-26. In anticipation of the budget reductions it is anticipated that key staff will be terminated and services will be limited and may vary across the regions.
 - KidSTART staff are planning for budget reductions which will impact the number of children served. In the efforts to avoid eliminating services, providers are being shared across other programs to support continued services to children and families.
- **Healthy Development Services (HDS) Countywide Coordinator: American Academy of Pediatrics – Chapter 3 (AAP-CA3)**
 - AAP-CA3 continues work on how to leverage Medi-Cal funding related to dyadic care benefits. They are currently developing a potential pilot using an existing provider that subcontracts with HDS.
 - AAP-CA3 applied for a grant to support building the Medi-Cal infrastructure within the HDS program. This grant was issued by the Commission for Behavioral Health and if awarded, would bring \$4M over 3.5 years, starting July 1, 2025.
- **Oral Health Initiative**
 - March 2025 will be the last month that Imperial Beach Community Clinic (IBCC) will participate in OHI.

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 focused on FFPSA (Family First Prevention Services Act). Funding will come from CFWB to support this pilot.
- **Learn Well Initiative (LWI)**
 - On March 7th and 8th, the San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) hosted the 22nd annual Early Years Conference centered around "Collaborating to Nurture the Whole Child." Through

interactive workshops and insightful keynote presentations, participants examined the importance of building strong, supportive environments where children can feel safe, seen, and empowered to reach their full potential. Key themes included culturally responsive practices; approaches to learning; mental health; and family and community engagement.

Community

- **Community Outreach and Engagement Events**

First 5 San Diego is proud to have sponsored or participated in the following **9** community outreach event(s):

- March 7, 2025 – Early Years Conference (Day 1)
- March 8, 2025 – Early Years Conference (Day 2)
- March 8, 2025 – Naval Base Coronado Military Baby Shower
- March 12, 2025 – Scripps Ranch Library 1,000 Books Before Kinder Event
- March 15, 2025 – Lemon Grove Multicultural Fair and Family Day
- March 23, 2025 – Friendship Walk & Fair San Diego
- March 29, 2025 – Grandparents Raising Grandchildren
- April 5, 2025 – Be my Neighbor Day (**Media Sponsored Event**)
- April 11, 2025 – Stars and Stripes Military Family Event (**Sponsored**)
- April 13, 2025 – All Inclusive Day of Play (**Sponsored**)

- **Kit for New Parents (KIT)**

The Kit for New Parents program stopped shipping KITs to individuals and organizations on June 28, 2024. As of 03/24/2025 KITs are still not shipping. First 5 California is in process of securing a new KIT distribution contract and a KIT shipping contract.

First 5 California, in conjunction with the First 5 Association are currently recruiting First 5 commissions and community partners throughout California to build a review team to discuss and plan for the future of the KIT program. San Diego County recommended staff from both UCSD Hospital and Sharp Mary Birch Hospital to represent the Southern California Regions. Those two organizations account for the largest distribution of KITs in San Diego County.

Administration

- **Finance Committee**

- The Committee met on April 1st, 2025 to review and approve the FY 25/26 Operating Budget and Financial Spending Plan for FY 2025-26. They also approved the Balance Sheet as of February 28, 2025.

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

- The Commission for Behavioral Health released an RFA to award \$18 million in available Mental Health Wellness Act (MHWA) funds for community-based organizations (CBOs) to create partnerships to improve the system of care for behavioral health and development needs of their local population. Only CBOs are eligible to apply but First 5s can be listed as collaborating county agencies. Two large county grants are available at \$4,000,000 over a 3 year period. The application deadline was March 28, 2025, and the notice of intent to award is April 24th, 2025.
- ED Arguilez is working with Behavioral Health Services team on a Board directed effort to create a Children, Youth, and TAY Optimal Care Pathway. Internal planning is underway, and the final report is due to the BoS in 2026.
- SD Foundation held a funders circle on April 7th to discuss the potential to leverage philanthropic funding to support Healthy Development Services in the coming year. This effort is pending follow up on the outcome of this discussion.
- First 5 Association Annual Advocacy Day was held on April 9th in Sacramento.
- ED Arguilez has been working with CFWB on the FFPSA funding pathway for FY24/25 to leverage administrative and training costs for F5SD staff assigned as well as all contractors. As well as for the incoming FY 25/26.
- ED Arguilez has been engaged in HV Business Process Reengineering work to help guide the new HV procurement and model implementation for FY 25/26.
- First 5 CA approved a Resilience Fund Initiative on 1/30/25 for \$18M. This would provide a \$15M in small population county funds and \$3M in stabilization funds to county commissions based on criteria to be determined. The slide deck that was presented is found in **Item 9-2** for reference. The next meeting is scheduled for 4/17/25.
- ED Arguilez reached out to F5CA ED, Jackie Wong to follow up on the discussion points that were elevated at the 3/25/25 Commission mtg.
- **Item 9-3**, letter to F5CA Commission dated 4/3/25 from Chair, Monica Montgomery-Steppe regarding concerns with Mass Media allocations of over \$100M when local commissions are faced with multi-millions in reductions that will impact direct services to children and families.
- 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.