

FIRST 5 SAN DIEGO

ACTION PLAN

2025-2030

First 5 San Diego



REFLECTING ON TODAY, PREPARING FOR TOMORROW

INTRODUCTION

In support of moving First 5 San Diego's work into the future, staff led a coordinated and collaborative effort to develop a robust, practical Action Plan based upon the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan.

The plan detailed on the following pages reflects concrete actions for each strategy reflected within the Strategic Plan. It is a part of the broader implementation process as it provides a "step-by-step" guide to advance goals and achieve the organization's vision for those it serves. In practice, this Action Plan will support staff with implementation throughout the year and will help to facilitate reporting to the Commission.

We appreciate the following workgroup members who participated in the action planning process (January – June 2026) including staff and partners:



OVERARCHING GOAL
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HEALTH
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Lily Valmidiano; American Academy of Pediatrics
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LEARNING
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YMCA Child Resource Service
Rita Palet and Eunice Munro; San Diego County Office of Education
Sarina Lynn; Education Enrichment Systems, Inc.



FAMILY
Juanita Garcia; First 5 San Diego
Dr. Pradeep Gidwani; American Academy of Pediatrics, CA3
Dale Fleming; San Diego Foundation
Sarah Glass; County of San Diego-Child and Family Well-Being
Angi Mitchell and Mariana Badal; County of San Diego-Office of Nurse Excellence
Luis Lechuga; American Academy of Pediatrics
Kim Flowers; Neighborhood House Association



COMMUNITY
Hunter Watson; First 5 San Diego
Aaron Menz; First 5 San Diego
Jaclyn Walian; MIG, Inc.
Cassie Saunders; County of San Diego-HHSA Communications

GOAL 1: OVERARCHING GOAL

BUILD STRONG, INTEGRATED SYSTEMS THROUGH DEEP COLLABORATION, POLICY ADVOCACY, AND INNOVATIVE FUNDING APPROACHES TO BETTER SERVE OUR CHILDREN 0 THROUGH 5 AND THEIR FAMILIES.

Strategy 1a | Equity - Focus

Prioritize families with the greatest needs to identify and fill gaps in the system and address disparities.

Action Steps		Lead	Partner (if applicable)	Resources Needed	Start Date	End Date
1.	Use a targeted universalism approach to determine which programs funded by First 5 San Diego should be more targeted than others.	First 5 San Diego (F5SD) - Alethea Arguilez		Staff time	Sept 2026	Ongoing
2.	Align the FFPSA eligibility criteria to guide targeted population for home visiting and the early prevention and early intervention programs.	F5SD - Alethea Arguilez	Child and Family Well Being	Staff time	Sept 2026	Ongoing
3.	For early learning goal area – use the child care desert tool to guide outreach and engagement of child care providers.	F5SD - Alethea Arguilez	San Diego County Office of Education	Staff time	Sept 2026	Ongoing

Strategy 1b | System Coordination and Integration

Promote system coordination and integration across partner organizations to leverage the unique strengths of each partner to provide a more streamlined, efficient, and navigable experience for families needing services.

Action Steps		Lead	Partners	Resources Needed	Start Date	End Date
1.	Collaborate with CFWB to create the centralized intake system to support a "no wrong door" referral pathway for families, with a focus on the home visiting program.	F5SD - Alethea Arguilez	American Academy of Pediatrics CA3 (AAP), Child and Family Well Being (CFWB), Public Health Services	Staff time	Sept 2026	June 2027
2.	Launch the Integrated Prevention and Early intervention (IPEI) services through an RFP that prioritizes children known to CFWB, promotes continuity of care, and incorporates new modalities, including dyadic care.	F5SD - Alethea Arguilez	American Academy of Pediatrics CA3 (AAP), Child and Family Well Being (CFWB)	Staff time	June 2027	Ongoing
3.	Work with Behavioral Health Services (BHS), PHS and CFWB to support the coordination and integration across all programs that are serving pregnant individuals and children 0 through 5 years of age, to support a "no wrong door" referral pathway for families.	F5SD - Alethea Arguilez	Behavioral Health Services (BHS) Child and Family Well Being (CFWB), Public Health Services (PHS)	Staff time	Sept 2026	Ongoing

Strategy 1c | Sustained Funding

Leverage new and existing funding sources from across sectors to ensure the long-term sustainability of operations.

Action Steps		Lead	Partner (if applicable)	Resources Needed	Start Date	End Date
1.	Access FFPSA funds to support the home visiting program.	F5SD - Alethea Arguilez	HHSA, Child and Family Well Being (CFWB)	Staff time	Sept 2026	Ongoing
2.	Connect contracted partners that lead HV program to implement the CARES database to access service-related funding for FFPSA.	F5SD - Alethea Arguilez	HHSA, Child and Family Well Being (CFWB)	Staff time	Sept 2026	Ongoing
3.	Continue implementation of the CalWORKs HV program.	F5SD - Alethea Arguilez	Self Sufficiency Services (SSS)	Staff time	Sept 2026	Ongoing
4.	Partner with Medi-Cal managed care plans operating in San Diego to leverage health plan funding for direct services for young children and families, including, but not limited to home visiting and Healthy Development Services (HDS).	F5SD - Alethea Arguilez	Managed Care Plans (MCPs)	Staff time	December 2026	Ongoing
5.	Pursue capacity-building opportunities through the new IPEI program to strengthen and sustain the early childhood system.	Alethea Arguilez	Managed Care Plans (MCPs)	Staff time	December 2026	Ongoing

Strategy 1d | Policy Advocacy

Advocate for policies that prioritize families of young children, expanding resources and services for the youngest children and their families.

Action Steps		Lead	Partners	Resources Needed	Start Date	End Date
1.	Advance statewide early childhood policy priorities in FY 2026–27 and inform the gubernatorial transition with San Diego data and family perspectives.	F5SD - Alethea Arguilez	SoCal Region of First 5s, First 5 Association	Staff time	Sept 2026	Ongoing
2.	Advance local early childhood development priorities and investments, including addressing the child care crisis and supporting healthy development.	F5SD - Alethea Arguilez	Children First San Diego Collaborative	Staff time	Sept 2026	Ongoing
3.	Provide policy input, data, and feedback to CalHHS regarding the impacts of HR 1, immigration policy changes and attacks, and other federal early childhood policy changes on the well-being of children 0 through 5 years, pregnant individuals and families.	F5SD - Alethea Arguilez	SoCal First 5 Region, Children First San Diego Collaborative, The Children's Partnership	Staff time	Sept 2026	Ongoing

GOAL 2: HEALTH

PROMOTE EACH CHILD'S HEALTHY PHYSICAL, SOCIAL, AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

Strategy 2a | Early Identification and Treatment

Promote overall mental health and well-being of young children through partnerships that provide developmental early identification and treatment services.

Action Steps		Lead	Partners	Resources Needed	Start Date	End Date
1.	Build on local efforts designed to improve awareness of the importance of early childhood mental health and development. Begin by compiling an inventory of local efforts, starting with the following: First 5 California, the San Diego Early Childhood Mental Health Committee (ECMH), the San Diego Child Care Blueprint, and the San Diego Strategic Behavioral Health Initiative (SBHI).	First 5 San Diego (F5SD)-Alicia Castro	American Academy of Pediatrics, California Chapter 3 (AAPCA3), Children's First Collective (CFC)	Staff time	Sept 2026	Ongoing
2.	Explore the feasibility of sustaining Early Childhood Mental Health Consultations through partnerships and other funding mechanisms (see Community Strategy 5c.2 and 3).	F5SD-Alicia Castro	Episcopal Community Services (ECS), Rady Children's Health/ Chadwick Center for Children and Families, San Diego State University/Healthy Early Years Clinic (HEY), San Diego Foundation, San Ysidro Health, YMCA Child Care Resource Services (YMCA CRS)	Staff time	Sept 2026	Ongoing
3.	Develop and implement the Integrated Prevention and Early Intervention Services program—a high-quality continuum of care that supports the healthy development of the County's most vulnerable children ages 0 to 5 years, as well as their families and caregivers. Leverage existing resources and services to create the continuum.	F5SD-Alicia Castro	AAPCA3, County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA)/Child and Family Well-Being Department (CFWB), Early Childhood Education (ECE) providers, Health Care providers), San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE), San Diego County Public Health Services/Maternal, Child, and Family Health Services (PHS/MCFHS)	Diverse funding, new program design	July 2026	Ongoing

Strategy 2b | Collaboration with Health Plan Partners

Collaborate with local managed care plans to develop robust, child- and family-centered systems of care through the implementation of Medi-Cal Transformation.

Action Steps		Lead	Partners	Resources Needed	Start Date	End Date
1.	Finalize the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with local Managed Care Plans (MCPs).* **All Medi-Cal Managed Care Plans (MCPs) must enter into a binding MOU with their respective First 5 County Commission to coordinate prenatal-to-five services and ensure whole-system, person-centered care for Medi-Cal members*	Clinical and Safety Net Coordination Division (HHSA/CSC)	F5SD and MCPs	Staff time	July 2026	8/2026
2.	Finalize systems of care policies and procedures with MCPs.	HHSA/CSC	F5SD and MCPs	Staff time	July 2026	12/2026

GOAL 3: LEARNING

STRENGTHEN THE SYSTEM TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION.

Strategy 3a | Quality Enhancement of Early Education

Provide parent and provider engagement and targeted provider supports to increase the quality of early care and education.

Action Steps		Lead	Partners	Resources Needed	Start Date	End Date
1.	Support parent awareness of quality child care and preparation for care through First 5's public education campaign, using media platforms and community engagement events (see Community Strategy 5a.1 through 3).	F5SD-Lenette Javier	SDCOE-Local Child Care and Development Planning Council (LPC), YMCA CRS	Approved communications budget, Supporting Families Guidebook, Child Care Checklist handout	March 2026	Ongoing
2.	Utilize the existing F5SD website to expand provider access to resources (see Community Strategy 5a.5).	MIG, Inc. (MIG)	SDCOE, San Diego Quality Preschool Initiative (SDQPI), YMCA CRS	Approved communications budget, links to existing programs and resources	July 2026	ongoing
3.	Collaborate with contracted providers to engage in child care readiness discussions with families.	F5SD -Lenette Javier	AAPCA3	Links to resources, Child Care Checklist handouts from YMCA CRS and SQQPI	July 2026	Ongoing
4.	Use existing communications channels to inform providers of collaborative efforts to support enrollment.	F5SD -Lenette Javier	SDCOE	Existing communications channels: newsletters (F5SD, SDQPI, and YMCA CRS), website & social media posts, SDQPI Director Meetings	April 2026	Ongoing

GOAL 4: FAMILY

BUILD ON EACH FAMILY'S STRENGTHS IN PROVIDING SAFE, NURTURING AND STABLE ENVIRONMENTS.

Strategy 4a | Care Coordination

Ensure all families that are referred are connected to the services and resources they need through trusted care coordination support and the centralized intake system.

Action Steps		Lead	Partners	Resources Needed	Start Date	End Date
1.	Families are connected through care coordination in the community via Healthy Development Services (Integrated Prevention and Early Intervention Services program that is slated for Summer 2027).	F5SD – Alicia Castro	AAPCA3 F5FS Contractors	Staff time	June 2026	Ongoing
2.	Support planning and implementation of the centralized intake system by collaborating with F5 and F5FS contractors to ensure process aligns with model and fosters ongoing close communication with intake staff and providers.	F5SD-Juanita Garcia, CFWB/ Office of Child and Family Strengthening (OCFS)	AAPCA3 F5FS Contractors	Staff time	June 2026	Ongoing

Strategy 4b | Maternal and Caregiver Mental Health

Promote early screening and services for maternal and caregiver mental health through partnerships with health care and home visiting providers.

Action Steps		Lead	Partners	Resources Needed	Start Date	End Date
1.	Identify gaps for families and caregivers in accessing mental health supports and facilitate linkages to providers.	AAPCA3, F5SD-Juanita Garcia	Current HDS Contractors and future IPEI Contractor	Staff time	Sept 2026	August 2027
2.	Implement the dyadic care benefit in new Integrated Prevention and Early Intervention Services program (see Health Strategy 2a.3).	AAPCA3, F5SD-Juanita Garcia	IPEI Contractor	Staff time	July 2027	August 2027

Strategy 4c | Home Visitation Support

Provide targeted home visitation to support family strengthening through care coordination, direct services, and parent education.

Action Steps		Lead	Partners	Resources Needed	Start Date	End Date
1.	Implement the new joint Home Visiting model with County of San Diego Public Health Services (PHS).	F5SD-Juanita Garcia, PHS, HHSA/CFWB	AAPCA3	Staff time	January 2027	Ongoing
2.	Bring resources directly to enrolled families by establishing a referral pathway that intentionally connects F5FS contractors to County resources (i.e., Live Well on Wheels (LWOW) for Medi-Cal, CalFresh, other needs, etc.). (see Community Strategy 5a.2, 5a.5, and 5a.6)	HHSA, HSSA/ CFWB/ OCFS	F5SD	Staff time, LWOW team support	Sept 2026	Ongoing







GOAL 5: COMMUNITY

PARTNER WITH COMMUNITIES TO GROW THEIR CAPACITY TO SUPPORT FAMILIES AND CHILDREN.

Strategy 5a | Public Education

Provide broad-based education about the critical importance of the first five years of life and the lifelong benefits of early childhood development.

Action Steps		Lead	Partners	Resources Needed	Start Date	End Date
1.	Develop messaging for First 5's public education campaign, which will be designed to engage families through San Diego County (see Learning Strategy 3a.1). Messaging will be used in campaign communications, such as PSA's, social media posts, etc.	F5SD-Hunter Watson	MIG	Approved communications budget	Sept 2026	Ongoing
2.	Create and place out-of-home, radio, bus/transit and social media advertisements in targeted communities throughout San Diego County to promote awareness (see Learning Strategy 3a.1 and Family Strategy 4c.2).	F5SD-Hunter Watson	ARK Media, MIG	Approved communications budget	Dec 2026	Ongoing
3.	Increase awareness and strengthen the reputation of First 5 San Diego by positioning the Executive Director (ED) as a trusted expert on early childhood issues. Use timely news and emerging issues as opportunities to provide expert commentary and connect parents and caregivers with valuable resources (see Learning Strategy 3a.1).	F5SD-Hunter Watson	ARK Media, F5SD ED, MIG	Information on trends affecting children and caregivers	Continuous	
4.	Promote the importance of Talk, Read and Sing activities through community events and sponsorships.	F5SD-Hunter Watson	F5SD Communications, MIG	Approved communications budget	Continuous	

Strategy 5a | Public Education, cont.

Action Steps		Lead	Partners	Resources Needed	Start Date	End Date
5.	Draft and produce multilingual marketing materials (e.g., a newsletter with eblast, website blog posts, etc.) to educate parents and caregivers on trending topics for pregnant women, caregivers and children (see Learning Strategy 3a.2 and Family Strategy 4c.2).	F5SD-Hunter Watson	MIG	Approved communications budget	Continuous	
6.	Partner with the County of San Diego HHSA Communications Team to create (see Community Strategy 5a.1) and disseminate messaging through multiple channels to reach as many San Diegan's as possible.	F5SD-Hunter Watson	F5SD and HHSA Communications, MIG	Staff time, approved communications budget	Continuous	

Strategy 5b | Parents and Caregivers Education

Equip parents and caregivers with the knowledge and resources they need to support their children's early development through community-based partnerships and culturally relevant materials.

Action Steps		Lead	Partners	Resources Needed	Start Date	End Date
1.	Strengthen the Early Learning Network by working with community partners to establish a process for rapidly sharing information, resources, and updates.	MIG	AAPCA3, CFC. ECE providers, LPC, SDCOE, YMCA CRS	Approved communication budget for 1 and 2	July 2026	Ongoing
2.	Strengthen existing partnerships (e.g., Natural History Museum, Dr. Seuss Foundation, Museum Council, etc.) to increase outreach to families throughout San Diego County.	F5SD-Hunter Watson, MIG		Approved communication budget for 1 and 2	July 2026	Ongoing
3.	Attend outreach events to provide information, such as the Kit for New Parents, early learning books and activities, brochures, etc.) to families and caregivers.	MIG		Resources to distribute at events	July 2026	Ongoing

Strategy 5c | Decision-makers Education

Build partnerships and enhance collaboration with local leaders and policymakers to raise awareness of the challenges and available resources within the child care system.

Action Steps		Lead	Partners	Resources Needed	Start Date	End Date
1.	Partner with Children First Collective in local engagement, advocacy, and communications with leaders and policymakers.	CFC	F5SD		July 2026	Ongoing
2.	Launch and manage a First 5 San Diego LinkedIn page to direct message leaders and potential early childhood funders (see Health Strategy 2a.2).	MIG	F5SD		July 2026	Ongoing
3.	Curate videos for local leaders and policy makers that build the case for early childhood investment and highlight program successes (see Health Strategy 2a.2).	MIG	AAPCA3		July 2026	Ongoing




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