

First 5 Relationship with County Services

Current partnerships between First 5 and County agencies include:

Tehama County Health Services Agency

- Perinatal Substance Abuse Program
- DADS program for fathers with substance abuse issues
- Mobile dental unit coordination
- Tehama County Health Partnership

Shasta County Office of Education

- Partners for Quality Child Care

Tehama County Department of Education

- Comprehensive Approaches to Raising Educational Standards (CARES) for early care and education providers
- School Readiness program reaching the Gerber, Los Molinos and Corning school districts
- First Steps Family Resource Center in Los Molinos
- Annual child care provider recognition event

Programs funded by First 5 also interact regularly with other County agencies. Two of the many examples of such interactions are:

- The Family Resource Centers in Red Bluff, Corning and Los Molinos work regularly with Tehama County Child Welfare Services in assisting families that have been the subject of a report of child abuse or neglect.
- The Perinatal Substance Abuse Program and DADS program provide counseling and parenting education to men and women on probation or parole, and receive referrals from the Probation Department, parole and court system, Department of Social Services and other county agencies.

Impact on County Services

Although the First 5 Tehama budget may seem small in comparison to some County department budgets, the

strategic use of First 5 resources makes a significant impact on County services in a number of ways.

- ▶ **Flexible funding to address service gaps.** First 5 funds are not categorical and can be used for any type of service and income group, unlike most other funding. This has allowed several important programs and services to be established or continued that could not be sustained with County funding alone. For example:
 - ✓ Support for parents with substance abuse issues is an important part of the Child Welfare Redesign but could not be sustained through County funding so First 5 filled this critical gap.
 - ✓ First 5 funds family resource developers at the schools so children are now caught up on their immunizations, dental exams and other health care needs when they reach school. This helps the kindergarten teachers and improves school attendance, leading to more revenue for the schools.
 - ✓ In 2008, the Tehama County Health Partnership identified parenting classes as a countywide gap. First 5 Tehama filled this gap by convening and coordinating interested parties, accessing funding, and providing the research-based Nurturing Parenting Program along with training for staff in several County departments on the Nurturing Parenting model. Tehama County continues to hold parenting classes open to the public in the evening at each of the Family Resource Centers countywide.
 - ✓ The Families And Schools Together (FAST) program is being sustained by First 5 School Readiness funds, helping isolated families and incoming kindergarten students without any formal preschool experience.
 - ✓ When a funding gap occurred for the coordinator position of the Tehama County Health Partnership, First 5 filled the gap to retain this position.

- ▶ **Fiscal leveraging.** An extra \$1.5 million in funding has been brought into the county over the past four years by leveraging First 5 funds. Among other things, this has allowed School Readiness programs to be expanded to additional elementary schools.
- ▶ **Coordination of services.** First 5 has been striving to create an integrated system of care for children age 0-5 and their families. Joint case management now occurs when the same family is being served by multiple agencies, making services both more efficient and more effective. The Community Coordination and Capacity Workgroup of the Tehama County Health Partnership was developed with First 5 support and brings many County agencies and other local partners together to promote collaboration, maximize resources and identify and fill service gaps. At the Gerber, Los Molinos and Corning Elementary Schools, transition planning teams identified all of the partners who work with children before they enter school and have convened these partners to improve communication and collaboration. This has led to improved transitions of children into kindergarten through new activities for children and their parents to meet teachers and spend time in the classroom. Also, better communication now occurs between kindergarten and preschool teachers to discuss the strengths and needs of incoming kindergarten students.
- ▶ **Access to materials.** First 5 provides a Kit for New Parents and a Resource Guide used by many County programs to help inform families about resources in the county that can address a wide range of needs.

Long-Term County Impact

There are significant social impacts from investing in early childhood development and family support through healthier children, better academic performance in schools, strong families free from child abuse and neglect, and other factors. However, there are also major economic impacts that add up to a healthy return on investments in early childhood development.

- ▶ On average, it costs Californians \$7,000 each time an uninsured child goes to the hospital for a preventable ailment. First 5 enrolls children in public health insurance programs and connects children to medical care, reducing unnecessary hospital visits.
- ▶ Children who receive early treatment for developmental delays are more likely to graduate from high school, hold jobs, and avoid teen pregnancy and crime. These improvements in life

outcomes save society \$30,000 to \$100,000 per child. Put another way, for every \$1 we spend on early intervention, society saves \$13. First 5 programs are a primary resource for developmental screening of children age 0-5 and referral for treatment when needed.

- ▶ Quality early care and education (ECE) programs have strong economic benefits to the community. Multiple long-term studies have found that high quality preschool programs saved taxpayers between \$2.69 and \$7.14 for every dollar invested by reducing special education, law enforcement and other costs. First 5 is the largest source of flexible funding for training and other assistance to improve the quality of ECE programs – covering both licensed and license-exempt (family, friend and neighbor) providers – and to retain qualified teachers.
- ▶ Research by UC Santa Barbara has shown that the cost of child abuse and neglect prevention is much lower than the cost of abuse treatment. For every dollar invested in prevention, there is a cost savings of four dollars to public agencies later on.

These are just a few of the many ways that First 5 investments and, more broadly, County investments in early childhood development can reap short- and long-term results.

For More Information



For more information about First 5 or any of our activities, please contact us at:
 First 5 Tehama
 1135 Lincoln Street • P. O. Box 8580
 Red Bluff, CA 96080
 Phone: (530) 528-1395
 Web: www.first5tehama.com

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