

**First 5 – Placer
Children and Families Commission**

**STRATEGIC PLAN
2007 - 2010
2010 Review and Revision**



www.First5Placer.org

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Strategic Plan Update Participants

The 2010 revised version of the First 5 Placer 2007-2010 Strategic Plan was reviewed by the First 5 Placer Staff; Janice LeRoux, Executive Director, Nancy Baggett~Analyst, and Contessa Brown~Administrative Support. Additionally, review and discussion occurred at the meeting of the Commission's Advisory Committee, the Community Resource Committee which includes; Denise Coffelt, MaiLing Schummers, Denyse Cardoza, Holly Deme, Jane Tsai Weaver, Francine Nunes and Catherine Goins.

Many individual and agencies contributed to the creation of the 2007-2010 First 5 – Placer Strategic Plan:

Plan Writing Team This team reviewed input from community planning meetings and developed the draft plan:

Catherine Goins -Vice Chair, First 5 – Placer Commission, Executive Director Child Development Programs Placer County Office of Education

Bob McDonald - First 5 – Placer Commission, Placer County Sheriff Department (Retired)

Eden Rock - First 5 – Placer Community Resource Committee, Community Member

Susan Fernandes - First 5 – Placer Community Resource Committee, Program Manager Child Development Programs at Lake Tahoe Placer County Office of Education

Denyse Cardoza - First 5 – Placer Community Resource Committee, Executive Director Head Start/Early Head Start State Preschool

Darlene Jackson - Community Member, Associate Dean of Human Development & Family and Child Development Centers - Sierra College,

Don Ferretti, Director, First 5 – Placer

Nancy Baggett, Staff Services Analyst, First 5 – Placer

Heidi Kolbe, First 5 Placer Facilitator/Recorder Team

Judy Marston, First 5 Placer Facilitator/Recorder Team

Host Agencies for Community Planning Conversations

The following organizations hosted community-planning conversations where the public was invited to learn about the importance of the first 5 years of life and provide input to the plan:

WarmLine Family Resource Center
City of Rocklin
Kings Beach Family Resource Center
KidZone
Child Abuse Prevention Council of Placer County
Golden Sierra Life Skills – Men, Infants, and Children Program
Multi-Disciplinary Interview Center - Placer County
Child Development programs – Placer County Office of Education
Breastfeeding Coalition
Bobbie Brown – Music Talk
Placer Community Action Council – Head Start/Early Head start
Tahoe Truckee Unified School District
Lighthouse Family Resource Center
Placer Advocacy Resources and Choices
Safe Kids Coalition

First 5 – Placer Children and Families Commission

The Commission reviewed community input and current Placer County data regarding prenatal through 5 children and adopted the plan:

Dr. Sandra Naylor-Goodwin, Chair, Children Behavioral Health
Catherine Goins, Vice Chair, Early Childhood Development
Jim Holmes, Board of Supervisors, District 3
Richard J. Burton, M.D., M.P.H. Public Health Officer of Placer County
Elaine Rowen, Ph.D. Education Community
Bob McDonald, Children, Families at Risk
Kim Haswell, Consumer
Melanie M. Cleary, Lake Tahoe Region
Dayle Edgerton, RN, Children’s Health & Medical

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Our Vision

The First 5 Placer Children and Families Commission believes *all children are our children* therefore we shall create an environment that supports our children and their families in reaching their full potential.

Our Mission

In order to achieve our Vision we will focus on early childhood development and will support and build on existing collaborative efforts by bringing together diverse perspectives, communities, and resources to assure comprehensive integrated strategies and holistic family-centered sustainable approaches.

INTRODUCTION

What is First 5?

“There is hereby created a program in the state for the purposes of promoting, supporting and improving the early development of children from the prenatal stage to five years of age. These purposes shall be accomplished through the establishment, institution and coordination of appropriate standards, resources and integrated comprehensive programs emphasizing community awareness, education, nurturing, childcare, social services, health care, and research.

It is the intent of this act to facilitate the creation and implementation of an integrated, comprehensive, and collaborative system of information and services to enhance optimal early childhood development and to ensure that children are ready to enter school. This system should function as a network that promotes accessibility to all information and services from any entry point into the system. It is further the intent of this act to emphasize local decision making, to provide for greater local flexibility in designing delivery systems, and to eliminate duplicative administrative systems.

The programs authorized by this act shall be administered by the California Children and Families Commission and by County Children and Families Commissions. In administering this act, the state and county commissions shall use outcome-based accountability to determine future expenditures.”

From: The California Children & Families Act

Research in brain development clearly indicates that the emotional, physical and intellectual environment that a child is exposed to in the early years of life has a profound impact on how the brain is organized. The experiences a child has with respect to parents, caregivers and their environment significantly influences how a child will function in school and later in life. First 5 is designed to provide opportunities for all children prenatal through five years of age to have access to a comprehensive, integrated system of early childhood development services and experiences so that they will have a better chance to become the best citizens possible with a positive view of their world and themselves.

The First 5 initiative is to ensure that Proposition 10 (California Children and Families Act) funding decisions are made at the local level, calling for extensive

input from all segments of the community. The overall intent is that local commissions will engage service providers and consumers in an integrated countywide partner approach to achieve sustainable strategic results for children prenatal through 5 years and their families.

First 5 - Placer

Since its inception in 1999, the First 5 - Placer Commission recognized that it needed to intentionally and authentically engage the community in open learning environments where the community could think strategically and provide timely information. The input from these “Community Conversations” was used to create the original strategic plan adopted in 2000. Once the strategic plan was adopted, the Commission used a “Request for Results” application process as a vehicle to identify and fund results-oriented services through June 2004. These services were delivered through a Network of Partners.

When updating its strategic plan for the 2004-2007 time period the Commission decided to replicate its successful “Community Conversation” and “Request for Results” models to engage the community in providing input.

The First 5 - Placer Commission has continued to utilize this comprehensive approach to help ensure that the objectives of First 5 are met. Through this process the Commission is confident that the Strategic Plan for 2007-2010 represents the most effective use of Proposition 10 funds.

From 2001 through 2010 the Commission will have invested close to \$ 29.4 million dollars in outcomes for prenatal through 5 children in Placer County.

FIRST 5 PLACER'S APPROACH

Strategic Principles

Since the enactment of the California Children and Families Act, there has been a comprehensive grassroots effort to fully involve the public in deciding how young children's programs should be supported.

First 5 – Placer is committed to making the most of this unique opportunity and is guided by the following principles to achieve our outcomes:

- All children at all income levels prenatal through 5 are eligible for services funded by First 5 - Placer.
- First 5 - Placer will engage in holistic and culturally competent approaches that include positive comprehensive outcomes for young children, families and communities.
- Commission efforts will address a range of support, prevention, early intervention, and treatment for children prenatal through five and their families throughout Placer County regardless of population size.
- Comprehensive goals, approaches and processes will require cross-agency planning, assessments, trainings, integrated service delivery and outcome agreement among multiple providers, supporters and agencies.
- Partner strategies and outcomes will build on existing resources and create sustainable collaborative efforts to fill gaps.
- Planning and service delivery partners will be encouraged to embrace the big picture, encompassing all perspectives, rather than focus only on their area of specialization.
- Enrichment activity providers, parent networks, faith-based organizations and other partners who support the healthy development of children and families are recognized as vital partners.

- First 5 - Placer strategies will seek to partner with, build upon, strengthen, expand and help leverage existing and new initiatives while continuing to acknowledge lessons learned from over a decade of comprehensive service integration and multi-agency collaboration in Placer County.
- First 5 - Placer will not supplant existing services or relieve agencies of their current responsibilities in serving and reaching out to children and families.
- Evaluation will be regarded as a continuous learning opportunity that improves services, discovers new approaches and supports the sustainability of child, family and community outcomes.

Investment Principles

“Stewardship - The act of holding something in trust for another”

The Commission will use a variety of approaches to invest Proposition 10 funds to achieve desired outcomes. Regardless of which approach is used, the principles that will guide this investment process are:

- Results-based and genuine use of outcome data, evaluation and continuous improvement.
- Collaborative, inclusive and integrated system-wide approaches that demonstrate cultural competence, promising practices and quality services.
- Sustainable approaches that build social and financial capital.
- The Children and Families Trust Fund will be maintained in such a way as to allow future commissions to meet the needs of prenatal through 5 children.
- When appropriate local Proposition 10 dollars will be used to leverage other funds.

Eligible Partners

- Private Non-Profit 501 (c) 3 organizations
- Private For Profit organizations
- Public Agencies
- Non-incorporated individuals/groups/organizations that have a qualified entity as a fiscal sponsor
- Faith based organizations

Sustainability

Providing funding is not the sole focus of the Commission effort; the intention is to generate some level of self-sufficiency (sustainability) within the larger community to achieve and sustain results for children and families.

Defining Sustainability

It is clear that the Commission and its partners must focus on sustaining results if we are to produce long lasting changes for children, families and the community. Sustainability in this context is neither the funding/refunding of programs and/or organizations, nor is it simply leveraging external financial resources (grants) to continue programs funded by First 5 - Placer. Instead, it is the ability to continue to achieve outcomes beyond First 5 – Placer funding by mobilizing both social and financial capital.

Sustainability Strategies

The focus on sustainable results, not just programs or services, will require different strategies. The concepts of social and financial capital suggest three broad strategies that the Commission will undertake and join in partnerships to achieve sustainable results.

Social Capital Emphasis: What else does it take to achieve outcomes besides money? Social capital means the strengthening of community networks (i.e., relationships between and among families, communities, agencies, and organizations) to support efforts and sustain results that benefit children and their families. Social capital activities include working collaboratively by sharing resources, facilities, equipment, information and political contacts; involving community members as resources in developing services delivery practices and/or analyzing program outcome data; establishing and supporting informal community networks to support families and to spread the early childhood development message.

Financial Capital Emphasis: How will outcomes continue to be achieved when First 5 funds diminish or disappear? Financial strategies include encouraging partners to obtain other funding sources and to work together to leverage funds in the achievement of outcomes, not just rely on Proposition 10 investment.

Integrated Approach: How will social and financial capital be combined to achieve outcomes? An integrated or systemic approach to sustainability focuses on creating partnerships among organizations (both public and private), communities and families in order to share the responsibility for mobilizing both social and financial capital. Integrated approach strategies include development of a multi-agency plan to achieve results that cross over several organizational boundaries while sharing funding and community networks.

Whether at the organizational or consumer level, money alone cannot achieve the results that are envisioned by the First 5 movement. In order for sustainable results to be achieved, there is an equal need to put resources into creating and sustaining relationships. The Commission hopes to foster a culture that believes “business as usual”

is not good enough for our prenatal through 5 children. The Commission will encourage and practice values that are inclusive and respectful of the importance of relationships, collaborations and networks.

Evaluation and Learning from Outcome Data

Evaluation will be approached as a continuous learning opportunity to improve services and outcomes. This will be done in a partnership between the Commission and its Partner Network in order to discover the best approaches to achieving and sustaining comprehensive child, family and community outcomes, rather than as a means to control or coerce services delivery partners.

From the very beginning, the work of the Commission has been outcome focused. The evaluation process starts with goal-oriented, inclusive community planning strategies and continues with the provision of training, technical assistance and facilitation to help our partners articulate outcomes and define performance measures. Outcome data, both qualitative and quantitative, describes the extent to which activities are helping children and families achieve desired outcomes.

Strong networks need effective communication and feedback is central to communication and learning. Timely communications about achieved outcomes have been critically important to the successful implementation and evaluation of Proposition 10. A great deal of the success in Placer County has been realized through the effective use of feedback in the Commission's "learning conversation" model. The conversations follow a pattern that uses the Focused Conversation Method, a process to help a group of people with different perspectives understand the meaning of the data. The conversation is a journey of questions going from surface level and facts to in-depth learning and decisions. Highlights and learning that emerge from the conversations are recorded and sent electronically to the entire network.

The Commission also has an appreciation for the central role of relationships in the Partner Network that provides services to the prenatal through 5 populations. In this relationship-based evaluation model, the Commission supports learning conversations with each Partner to analyze and learn from the performance data that is collected by the Partner. These conversations reflect the Commission's principle of being outcome-oriented and using outcome data in making program, policy and funding decisions. The intent of these conversations is to provide time to share data that is used to determine whether the anticipated outcomes are being met, in the process of being met or not being met.

The Commission intends to continue this model of learning from outcome data and sharing that learning with the Partner Network and the community. The intent is to learn from performance measurement data and to use that learning to make funding, program and policy decisions.

Partners are expected to understand and embrace the following concepts: outcomes, sustainability, partnerships, learning conversations and evaluation. Ongoing trainings and technical assistance will be provided to support partners in achieving sustainable outcomes.

During the implementation of its 2007-2010 Plan, the Commission will contract with an independent evaluator to conduct on-going evaluation activities consisting of data collection, data analysis and interpretation of data, to help the Commission answer the following evaluation questions:

Individual Partner Evaluation - What Outcomes are each First 5 - Placer partner achieving and at what cost?

Strategic Result Area Evaluation - What Outcomes are First 5 - Placer achieving in each Strategic Result Area? This evaluation will

incorporate all of the individual partner evaluations into each Strategic Result Area and develop a summary report for that area.

First 5 - Placer Countywide Outcomes Evaluation - What Outcomes are First 5 - Placer contributing to achieving overall? This evaluation would incorporate all of the Strategic Result Area evaluations into one overall summary report.

Strategic Planning Process

Information from the following was reviewed and considered in updating this plan:

- Community Conversations
- Outcome Faire
- Online surveys from the public
- First 5 Partner surveys
- Demographic data prepared by Placer County Department of Health and Human Services Division of Community Health Epidemiology
- First 5 Staff, Strategic Plan Writing Team, and Commissioner Experience and Expertise

Since all prenatal through 5 children are eligible to receive the benefits of First 5 - Placer funded services, all persons involved with young children were viewed as potential resources to revise the plan. Extensive outreach was conducted by the First 5 – Placer Partner Network to encourage all interested community members to participate in the planning process.

The Community Conversations were held throughout the different geographic areas of the county (Auburn, Colfax, Foresthill, Granite Bay, Kings Beach, Lincoln, Meadow Vista, Rocklin, Roseville, Soda Springs, Truckee). The conversations served as a forum for educating the community about early brain development using the “Food for Thought” video. Additionally, these

conversations were conducted to gain insight from parents, caregivers and community members regarding priorities for funding in areas of services for children prenatal through 5. Input from the community conversations was used to update the strategic result areas listed in this plan. In developing and updating the strategic plans from 2001 through 2007, community conversations were successful in that they were well attended by the general public. In updating the strategic plan for 2007 through 2010, building on this successful public participation model did not generate the same level of attendance from the general public. In future years we will seek out additional methods of obtaining public participation. However, the community conversations were just one of six strategies used in obtaining public input for this strategic plan. Despite lower than anticipated attendance, the findings from the community conversations were consistent with the knowledge, experience and expertise of the Commission.

Strategic Result Areas

This section describes the Strategic Result Areas for the Commission's updated plan:

- Improved Family Functioning
- Improved Child Development
- Improved Child Health and Safety

In each area, desired outcomes and a summary of potential strategies are described. Definitions for the terms used in this section are as follows:

Strategic Result – A broad goal to be achieved throughout the county

Outcome – A condition and/or behavior that will exist or be enhanced as a result of activities or services funded or initiated through First 5

Potential Strategies – Broad activities to achieve the goals and outcomes

Some potential strategies that include the community voice are identified in this plan. The strategies are offered as guidelines. They are not meant to preclude

additional innovative and creative strategies offered by community partners or strategies that may emerge during the implementation phase of this plan.

STRATEGIC RESULT #1

IMPROVED FAMILY FUNCTIONING

Strong Families and Support for Families

Outcome: All families will have the opportunity to be supported in becoming more knowledgeable and competent in child nurturing, child interaction, child learning and parenting skills which promote positive child development.

Potential Strategies: Strategies to achieve this outcome could include and are not limited to:

- Providing families with awareness and knowledge through outreach, education and services.
- Promoting behavior change through positive parenting education.
- Promoting programs to increase the number of specialty providers including infant/early childhood relationship support specialists and bilingual/bicultural service providers.
- Promoting public meetings and activity spaces and forums that give families the opportunity to come together and build networks of support.
- Promoting extended families, family mentors and other family support networks.

STRATEGIC RESULT #2

IMPROVED CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Children Learning and Ready for School

Outcome: All children will have opportunities to achieve their optimal development and be socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually ready for school.

Potential Strategies: Strategies used to achieve this outcome could include and are not limited to:

- Promoting the value of intentional child development practices among parents, childcare providers and infant and preschool educators through education, informal networks, service linkages and targeted behavior change.
- Promoting innovation and creation of new approaches to childhood development and school readiness.
- Promoting reading, music, arts, play and innovative child development approaches among all children including children with special needs.
- Promoting affordable, quality childcare.
- Providing information to parents and the community about brain development during the first 5 years of life.

STRATEGIC RESULT #3

IMPROVED CHILD HEALTH AND SAFETY

All Children Are Healthy and Safe

Outcome: All children have access to and receive services ensuring their health care and safety needs are met.

Potential Strategies: Strategies used to achieve this outcome could include and are not limited to:

- Providing all children and their families with access to and knowledge of health services and information, such as mental health, dental, nutrition, fitness.

- Providing children and families with information regarding the consequences of unsafe and unhealthy living conditions and promoting programs that address those consequences, such as environmental, family violence, drug endangered children.
- Promoting access to affordable health care for all children.

Investment Strategies

From July 2007 to December 2010, the Commission will invest approximately \$10,824,099 to achieve outcomes and sustain results for the prenatal through 5 population utilizing the following strategies:

- The Commission will invite all interested and eligible potential partners to participate in a Request for Results application process within the three strategic result areas of Improved Family Functioning, Improved Child Development and Improved Child Health and Safety. The application process will encourage community building and collaboration over win/lose competition. Contracts will be awarded for up to three years, renewable annually, contingent upon partners achieving their outcome commitments. The Commission will set aside \$7,000,000 for this strategy.
- The Commission will provide ongoing funding opportunities up to \$5,000 for one time or pilot activities. Up to \$200,000 will be available for this purpose .
- The Commission will annually determine and allocate funds to support administrative, program, evaluation functions and emerging needs.
- The Commission will seek out sound investment and leveraging strategies to maximize the Children and Families Trust Fund.
- The Commission has set aside funding in the amount of \$704,054 over this period for a prenatal through 5 Children's Health Insurance Initiative (CHI). The Commission will provide representation on a local CHI collaborative and seek membership in the Sacramento Sierra Region's Healthy Kids Healthy Futures Collaborative.

- The Commission has set aside \$150,000 in fiscal year 2007-2008 to partner with the State First 5 Commission in its CARES matching funds initiative, which will provide stipends for childcare providers to continue their education and professional growth. An additional \$150,000 was set aside from January 1, 2010 through December 31, 2010, to continue funding a “CARES” type program.
- The Commission will continue to support its local Network of Care for Kids web site anticipated to be approximately \$81,300.

Going Forward

Ongoing First 5 - Placer Activities

The First 5 – Placer continues to engage in many parallel yet interconnected activities. This is necessary because children and families face many parallel, complex and interconnected life issues. As the Commission moves forward with the Request for Results, implementation and evaluation of this updated plan the Commission will also work in the following areas:

- The Commission will continue to engage the community to make the best use of time and funds to achieve the outcomes that matter.
- The Commission will continue to educate the community on the importance of brain development in the first years of life and the opportunities and challenges that knowledge presents for those interacting with our youngest children.
- The Commission will continue to build the organizational capacity within the Commission and the Partner Network to operate as sustainable results-oriented organizations in the years to come.
- The Commission will continue the practice of on-going evaluation/analysis of First 5 funded services using outcome data to measure progress and make program, policy and funding decisions.

- The Commission will continue to underwrite community education and resource awareness events that promote quality early childhood development so that First 5 - Placer can build and sustain family/community partnerships and environments.
- The Commission will continue its efforts to have Commission and community liaisons to develop strong working relationships with the State Commission and statewide associations that address early childhood development.
- The Commissions' intent is to complement, not duplicate, each other's strategies and protect the resources it has been entrusted with on behalf of children and their families into perpetuity.



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