



Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Highlights

Amid challenges of the COVID-19 Pandemic, First 5 SLO County continued directing urgent-needs investments to our local Community Foundation Disaster Response Fund, offering support to a wide breadth of family-serving agencies across our county. Under our new Strategic Plan, we bolstered basic needs and mental health supports while propelling new programmatic ventures in early learning and resiliency; this included providing funding for the expansion of a bilingual, inclusive preschool as well as parent learning pods focused on giving families real-time experiences with their children, social networking and age-appropriate insight on growth and development. In collaboration with County of SLO Behavioral Health Department, our MHS-funded 3 by 3 Partnership with local pediatric clinics yielded nearly 340 hours of one-on-one health education and developmental screenings for families, with more than 1000 children screened and 181 children identified as needing early intervention services. To shine a brighter light on those efforts, we shifted the theme of our monthly “Hands-on Heroes” public awareness campaign to honor individuals working in the spirit of “Help Me Grow.” Our First 5 Health Access Training Project held provider-outreach events on topics ranging from COVID vaccine updates, rental assistance/housing and eviction prevention resources, child tax credit information and supports specific to Immigrant families. We went from advocacy to action with the rollout of the community-driven Family-Friendly Workplace Toolkit, an online resource designed to help employers assess their current business practices, explore the benefits of family-friendly workplaces policies and identify opportunities for change. Work also began to create an associated Family-Friendly Workplace “Accelerator” Program in partnership with the SLO Chamber of Commerce and County of SLO. Both of these projects were born from a “We Are the Care” Initiative to address local child care challenges.