



ANNUAL EVALUATION REPORT

JULY 2021 - JUNE 2022



ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report describes high-level themes across the work of First 5 San Luis Obispo County's staff and partners during the 2021-22 fiscal year and the contributions of this work to building a healthy community for all children to thrive. It is designed to support First 5 staff and Commissioners as they:

1. reflect on the full picture of the organization's work and how that work has influenced change in the community, and
2. consider ways in which the findings shape First 5's strategies moving forward.

To develop this report, First 5's evaluation team, Carsel Consulting Group, synthesized information from interviews with key stakeholders, staff, and partner organizations as well as data collected from funded partners on a twice-yearly basis.



REPORT CONTENT

About this Report

Background and context

Major Themes of 2021-2022

Expanded and leveraged partnerships
Continued influence of COVID-19

Theory of Change Lens

Developing a Theory of Change
Applying the Theory of Change: 2021-2022

Highlights

Family Advocates strategy highlight
Child care advocacy highlight
Ongoing impact highlight

Appendices

Table of projects
Evaluation methods



Prepared by Carsel Consulting Group, January 2023

ABOUT THIS REPORT

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The Evolving Roles of First 5

For more than two decades, First 5 San Luis Obispo County has invested in local organizations that serve families and young children. These investments have made possible many essential health, early learning, and family support services. First 5 has also been expanding its role of bringing together stakeholders to imagine and implement new responses to enduring challenges. This role creates opportunities to make impacts at a policy and systems change level, improving the quality of life for far more young children and families than can be reached through program investments alone. First 5 staff continue to build this role, supporting policy, advocacy and systems change work by convening cross-sector partners, facilitating conversations on emerging issues and gaps, leveraging relationships to advance coalition building, and using strategic communications and policymaker education to highlight critical issues and ways to address them.

Selection of Funded Partners

First 5 San Luis Obispo County enters into contracts with partner agencies based on priorities identified in the strategic plan and emerging community needs. New partners are added as issues arise that require an immediate response; projects are sunsetted when they are no longer core to the strategic plan, the need has declined, other funding is secured, or the project is completed. Partners are chosen based on well-established, documented success in the local community, with larger projects bidding in an RFP process. The majority of contracts are funded on a

reimbursement basis, based on actual time spent on the project. Some contracts are funded at a flat rate to allow partners to maintain staffing levels through fluctuating community needs.

Currently, most of First 5's 21 funded projects provide direct services to address gaps. There are also several projects that address policy and advocacy goals, work to expand system capacity, or are a combination of these and direct services.

Reimagining Evaluation & Learning

This year, First 5 San Luis Obispo County began adjusting evaluation practices with the aim of understanding the entire agency's progress and impact more holistically. This included:

- Generating a Theory of Change that illustrates how First 5's current and future efforts contribute to proposed outcomes (see page 7). The Theory of Change ensures common understanding of the work across stakeholders, supports planning, and provides a foundation for more in-depth evaluation work.
- Creating a new format for the annual evaluation report that focuses on the year's key themes across the work of First 5's staff and partners and the contributions of this work to large-scale outcomes.
- Developing case studies that allow staff, Commissioners, and other stakeholders to reflect more deeply on specific components of First 5's strategy.
- Adjusting templates used by funded partners to simplify reporting to First 5 and align it with the new evaluation lens.

MAJOR THEMES OF 2021-2022

EXPANDED AND LEVERAGED PARTNERSHIPS

Across First 5 San Luis Obispo County's initiatives there was a great deal of momentum in expanding and deepening partnerships. Several factors contributed to this including First 5's growing focus on network-building, advocacy, and policy and systems change as well as increased opportunities to meet in-person and focus on relationship-building as COVID-19 restrictions eased. In addition, at many organizations, people had more bandwidth to once again take on activities other than pandemic response.

First 5 continued to support expansion and activation of community and cross-sector coalitions, with a focus on child care through We Are the Care and a focus on immigrant families through UndocuSupport. Through the We Are the Care coalition, multiple partners also came together to support local policy change by asking the County and many cities within the county to allocate federal pandemic relief funds to support children and families (see Highlights section for more details).

First 5's funded partners also established new partnerships and enhanced existing partnerships through the funding they received. These partnerships strengthened local programs and services in a variety of ways including expanding reach, providing resources and meeting space, and creating cross-sector alignment.

New relationships among funded partners

South County Youth Coalition formed a new relationship with Arroyo Grande Parks and Recreation and Nipomo Library, which they leveraged to find space to conduct their classes.

Health Access Trainers established new relationships with school districts. As a result, they were able to train school staff on mental health and family support resources for their youngest students.

Help Me Grow established a new partnership with the San Luis Coastal Unified School District Parent Participation. SLO Coastal Parent Participation is now presenting Help Me Grow's resources and information during their classes.



MAJOR THEMES OF 2021-2022

CONTINUED INFLUENCE OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

As in 2020-21, COVID-19 shaped First 5 San Luis Obispo County's projects and partners in 2021-22 in both positive and negative ways. On the positive side, many agencies used virtual tools to expand access to programs and services. The pandemic also continued to shine a light on systemic issues in the community (e.g., lack of child care and mental health services), making it easier, at times, to get resources allocated to addressing those issues and to build buy-in for more systemic and long-term responses.

The pandemic's challenges persisted as well. Numerous agencies had trouble hiring and retaining staff as well as staying staffed up during COVID-19 surges. Many people were still hesitant to gather in person, which slowed relationship building, limited avenues for outreach and recruitment, and made it more difficult to deliver services, particularly those that required face-to-

face contact (e.g., vision screenings). In addition, providers had to treat more severe health issues (e.g., tooth decay) because people had not been screened and treated for several years.

The estimated number of encounters with children 0-5* over the last few years reflects this year's trend of improvement and continued challenges after pandemic shutdowns. Estimated encounters doubled between this year (2021-22) and last year (2020-21), increasing from about 2,500 to about 5,000. However, the number of estimated encounters this year was still only about half of what it was before the pandemic (2018-19). Some of this can be attributed to changes in First 5's focus and funding, but numerous COVID-related factors (described above) also played a part.

*For estimated encounters, each funded program reports an unduplicated number of children reached, but children may be counted twice if they accessed services at multiple agencies.



THEORY OF CHANGE LENS

DEVELOPING A THEORY OF CHANGE

In 2021 and 2022, First 5 San Luis Obispo County worked with the evaluation team to draft a Theory of Change, which is a planning tool to better understand how First 5's capacities and strategies contribute to outcomes and set priorities.

First 5's cross-sector work in and with communities strengthens the health and development of children and lays the groundwork for positive long-term outcomes. The Theory of Change explores how First 5's capacities – including staff's time, expertise, community leadership, convening and coalition building – support three core strategies:

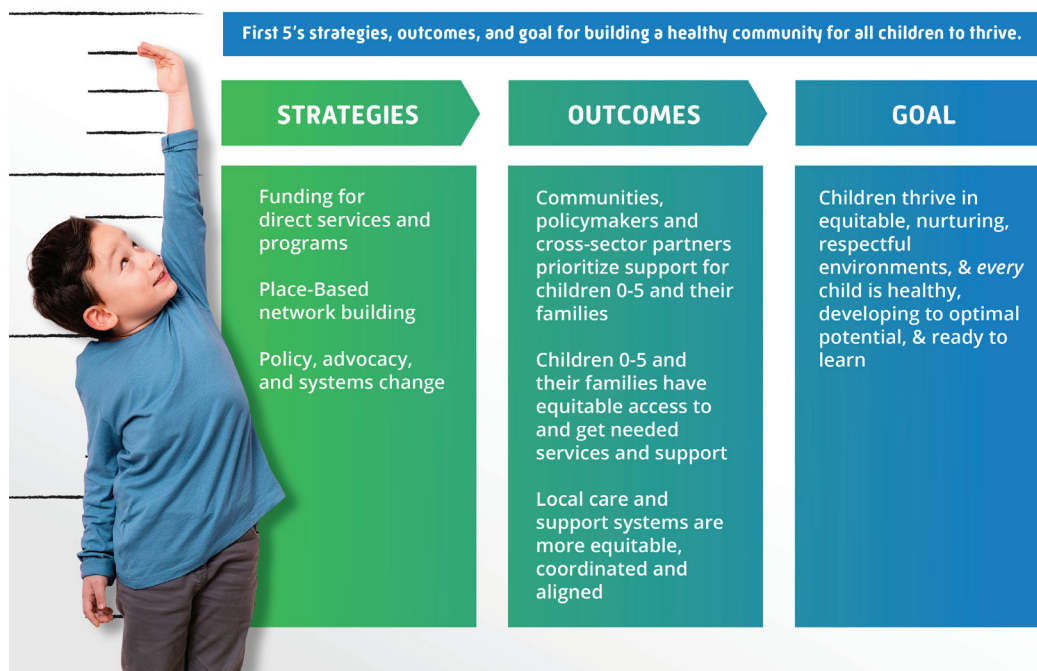
- **Funding for direct services and programs** including investing in innovative programs and expanding existing resources in order to equitably meet the needs of children and families

- **Place-based network building** including cross-sector efforts that engage community members and partners to address issues by forging relationships that can be leveraged over time
- **Policy, advocacy and systems change** to contribute to long-term outcomes through advocacy with local, regional, and statewide partners for the policies and systems that children and families need

These strategies help to achieve targeted short, medium, and longer term outcomes needed for children to thrive. The Theory of Change is designed to be a living document. As First 5 monitors community needs and learns more about what works, strategies may change and new outcomes may be identified. The Theory of Change will also guide First 5's ongoing evaluation work.



THEORY OF CHANGE - OVERVIEW



The diagram to the left gives a high-level orientation to the Theory of Change. The next page provides more detail and includes specific short, medium, and longer-term outcomes.

THEORY OF CHANGE LENS



THEORY OF CHANGE-DETAIL

First 5's work supports positive long-term outcomes for our community that we can plan on and build on.

CAPACITIES	STRATEGIES	SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES	MEDIUM-TERM OUTCOMES	LONGER-TERM OUTCOMES	GOAL
STAFF TIME, EXPERTISE & COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP: including direct engagement in convening, coordination, coalition building & strategic communications.	<p>Funding for direct services and programs</p> <p>Place-Based network building</p> <p>Policy, advocacy, and systems change</p>	<p>Stronger evidence base for needs, gaps, and solutions exists, and best practices are translated for the County in collaboration with partners and the community</p> <p>Proven programs deliver needed services to children 0-5 and their families equitably</p> <p>Emerging or under-addressed issues are identified, including those that emerge from crises</p> <p>Increased media coverage of priority needs, gaps and solutions leads to greater awareness among the community and cross-sector partners</p> <p>New partners are identified, existing partners are activated, and champions and influencers highlighted</p>	<p>Increased cross-sector alignment and awareness on needs and gaps</p> <p>Increased public will to call for action on priority issues</p> <p>Increased political will to take action on priority issues</p> <p>Changes in business practices support 0-5 children and their families</p> <p>Collectively the community and cross-sector partners are able to address emerging or under-addressed issues and crises</p> <p>Policy changes increasingly reflect community-wide 0-5 and their families</p> <p>Needed programs are sustainably supported by public or partner investment</p>	<p>Families' basic needs are met and fewer families face financial insecurity</p> <p>Local care and support systems are more equitable, coordinated and aligned on core functions, and able to provide improved support</p> <p>Equitable, stable, affordable, high-quality supports like child care are available</p> <p>Strong and empowered place-based cross-sector networks that prioritize children 0-5 and their families exist</p> <p>Community and cross-sector partners collectively prioritize and expect support for children 0-5 and their families (norms change)</p> <p>Children 0-5 experience less trauma and improved early education outcomes</p> <p>All employers offer comprehensive family friendly practices that support a healthy work life balance</p>	<p>Children thrive in equitable, nurturing, respectful environments, & every child is healthy, developing to optimal potential, & ready to learn</p> <p>LONG-TERM IMPACT</p> <p>Healthier communities, a more competitive workforce, lower healthcare costs, stronger economic growth and greater equality of opportunity</p>



THEORY OF CHANGE LENS

APPLYING THE THEORY OF CHANGE: 2021-2022

This year, the evaluation team used the Theory of Change to provide a higher-level view of the collective contributions made by internal and external projects – both those supported through direct funding and those supported through policy, advocacy and systems change strategies – to advance short and medium-term outcomes (see pages 9-10). Some projects employ multiple strategies and support multiple types of impact.

In 2021-22, direct funding as a strategy was used to support mostly shorter-term outcomes: providing needed services through proven programs, identifying emerging issues, and leveraging new partnerships to expand reach and capacity. Place-based networking as a strategy was used across projects like We Are the Care and UndocuSupport, to activate new partners and to increase the public and political will needed to take action on First 5 priority issues. First 5 staff and partners also used policy, advocacy and systems change strategies to increase cross-sector alignment, support changes in business practices, and allocate new funding to support child care options.

The next two pages show how First 5's work over the last year contributed to specific short and medium-term outcomes. Descriptions of impact include both the results of funded programs, as well as the policy, advocacy, systems change and network building work by First 5 staff and partners. They demonstrate how multiple strategies can build on each other to help achieve greater impact.



THEORY OF CHANGE LENS

		SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES				
		Proven programs deliver needed services to children 0-5 and their families equitably	Emerging or under-addressed issues are identified, including those that emerge from crises	New partners are identified, existing partners are activated, and champions and influencers highlighted	Stronger evidence base for needs, gaps and solutions exists	Increased media coverage of priority needs, gaps, solutions leads to greater awareness, etc.
STRATEGIES	Funding for direct services and programs	More children 0-5 and their families accessed preschool programs, developmental screenings and supports, parenting classes, breastfeeding support, dental and vision screening, treatment, and education, mental health counseling, and other basic goods and services (e.g., rental assistance, food, diapers, healthcare).	Post-COVID emerging needs identified and addressed including the impact of inflation and financial crisis on families due to illness and work closures, and increased health issues requiring treatment because of skipped doctor visits and screenings	Partnerships expanded this year, which strengthened programs and services in a variety of ways including expanding reach, providing resources and meeting space, and creating cross-sector alignment.		
	Place-based network building			Broad-based community and cross-sector coalitions activated in support of child care and immigrant families (e.g. We Are the Care and UndocuSupport)		
	Policy, advocacy and systems change			Family Friendly Workplace champions and their policies highlighted; physician champions for integrating developmental screenings identified and activated	Benefits and challenges of expanding developmental screenings identified; feasibility of broad spectrum of child care options identified and assessed; gaps in equitable supports for immigrant families identified	Earned media coverage of Family Friendly workplace issues garnered by partners

THEORY OF CHANGE LENS

		MEDIUM-TERM OUTCOMES				
		Children and families are healthier, more resilient, and more prepared for school success as a result of access to proven programs	Increased public and political will to call for action on priority issues	Needed programs are sustainably supported by public or partner investment	Increased cross-sector alignment on needs and gaps	Changes in business practices support 0-5 children and their families
STRATEGIES	Funding for direct services and programs	More children are better prepared for school; more developmental delays and vision problems have been identified and addressed; more families have healthier teeth; more parents are better equipped to parent; more mothers extended breastfeeding				
	Place-based network building		Multiple cross-sector partners and families mobilized as part of broad based coalition on child care to educate policymakers (e.g. We Are the Care regularly attended local policymaking meetings to elevate child care as an issue)	More and more diverse financial support for immigrant families and their needs received (e.g. The Community Foundation San Luis Obispo County now serves as a fiscal sponsor for UndocuSupport and houses their Program Manager)		
	Policy, advocacy and systems change		Policy makers were educated by and responded to recommendations by the public and cross-sector coalitions by taking action on child care as an issue	Multiple local jurisdictions acted on recommendations from First 5 and core partners to allocate funds to 0-5 supports and child care, and some are considering commitments to maintain new funding	Providers who participated in funded programs are more aware of the need to integrate developmental screenings into their core practice to close gaps and support early intervention (e.g. 3X3)	More local businesses explored and some implemented Family Friendly Workplace policies

THEORY OF CHANGE LENS

3 by 3 Developmental Screening Partnership

The 3 by 3 Developmental Screening Partnership is an example of how First 5 San Luis Obispo County is strategically changing its approach, reducing silos both between funded programs and the work of internal staff and between direct services and policy, advocacy and systems change work.

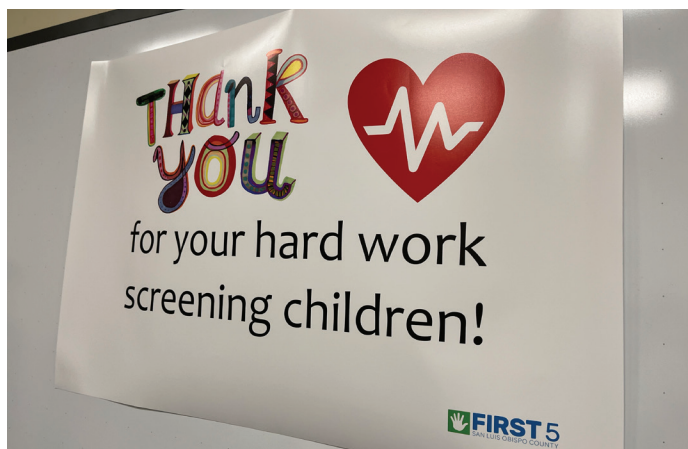
The 3 by 3 program was a pilot project funded by a grant from the San Luis Obispo County Behavioral Health Department. In large part, the project focused on direct services. First 5 hired a project director and funded pediatric providers to increase developmental screenings of young children in their practices. (For more details related to the project structure and outcomes, click [here](#).)

The funding also served as a platform for First 5 staff to do far more than test methods for screening children. The internal intent behind the application was one of systems change – to find ways to dramatically increase the number of pediatricians

conducting developmental screenings. This required changing local pediatric norms around the use of validated instruments to screen young children for developmental delays. To support this aim, First 5 staff built partnerships, launched a campaign around the topic, and became recognized as experts on developmental screening needs.

As the project progressed, pediatric providers within the funded partner practices also became champions for change, working with First 5 staff to engage their own and other practices in screening expansions. Now, CenCal Health is engaging First 5 staff and pediatric partners on how to increase screening rates for all Medi-Cal children. First 5 staff and partners are also planning a second Pediatric Town Hall convening that will include educating pediatric providers on the importance of developmental screening.

While the pilot project has ended, both First 5 staff and newly-engaged pediatric providers continue to advocate for expanded screening using policy, systems change, and network building strategies.



HIGHLIGHTS

FAMILY ADVOCATES STRATEGY HIGHLIGHT

Theory of Change outcomes supported

- Proven programs deliver needed services to children 0-5 and their families equitably
- Emerging or under-addressed issues are identified, including those that emerge from crises
- Children and families are healthier, more resilient, and more prepared for school success as a result of access to proven programs

Each year, the evaluation will highlight different services and programs that First 5 San Luis Obispo County funds. This year, the evaluation team looked more closely at Family Advocates. Also known as Family Resource Specialists and Community Resource Specialists, First 5 sees Family Advocates as a critical part of a strong support system for families with young children and funds them at three partner agencies: Community Action Partnership of San Luis Obispo County, Inc. (CAPSLO), The Link Family Resource Center, and Parents Helping Parents.

Family Advocates connect families to information and resources to address immediate and longer-term challenges, and they provide comfort and emotional support to families throughout the process. The main goal of a Family Advocate is to empower families by teaching them to navigate services and supports that address socio-economic

challenges, developmental delays, and other difficulties that can destabilize families.

Research indicates that this type of family strengthening work can increase parental resilience and knowledge of parenting and child development, improve parents' ability to get support in times of need, expand families' social connections, and improve children's social and emotional competence, all of which are protective factors that reduce child abuse and neglect and promote optimal child and youth development.* (To learn more about Family Advocates and ways funders and other agencies can support their work, click [here](#).)

A story of family support

A CAPSLO Family Advocate supported a family who was unable to work due to the risk of COVID-19 for their medically fragile infant. The Family Advocate connected them to housing resources and ongoing monthly support. They provided the family with basic needs items such as diapers, wipes, food, and clothes; connected the family to First 5 0-5 funds to purchase gas, food, and propane for their trailer; and obtained a car seat. Together, the Family Advocate and the parents created a support system and a plan for improving their situation. The family's stress levels were reduced, and they are working toward a more stable future.

HIGHLIGHTS

CHILD CARE ADVOCACY HIGHLIGHT

Theory of Change outcomes supported

- Increased public and political will to take action on priority issues
- Needed programs are sustainably supported by public and partner investment
- Increased cross-sector alignment on needs and gaps
- Stronger evidence base for needs, gaps and solutions exists

In 2021, First 5 San Luis Obispo County and a core group of partners - both new and established - came together to advocate for allocating 5% of local American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to support the 5% of San Luis Obispo County that is made up of children ages 0-6 – “5% for the 5%.” This concerted effort built on previous legwork that was carried out to make the case for improving child care in the county, which included:

- Building the evidence base through a landmark child care feasibility study that engaged core partners including The Child Care Planning Council, San Luis Coastal Unified School District, Cal Poly, City of San Luis Obispo, and the County of San Luis Obispo.
- Supporting place-based networks of concerned families, local organizations, and businesses through We Are the Care and Help Me Grow, and

- Convening cross-sector partners to align on options and solutions and then educating policymakers on those options.

The \$1.9 trillion federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), designed to support economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, included \$350 billion in emergency funding for state, local, territorial and tribal governments. SLO County received \$54 million in ARPA funds and cities in the county are expected to receive more than \$30 million. To help persuade local governments to spend at least 5% of ARPA allocation on supports for children 0-6 and their families, First 5 staff and core partners produced white papers recommending practical pathways to increase and improve child care options. Ten partners including county-wide agencies signed on to these recommendations, further credentialing the ask for local governments to meet community needs. Members of the We Are the Care coalition appeared regularly at city council meetings to highlight community needs through stories of specific families. First 5 and We Are the Care partners also brought credibility and strong partnerships to support implementing funding distribution so that cities would not have to start from scratch to build internal expertise and vet new programs.

To date, four local jurisdictions have voted to allocate funding to child care that benefits children 0-6 and their families (for details, see table below). Local leaders noted how critical child care is to their communities when announcing their funding decisions. They also commented in interviews with the First 5 evaluation team that in spaces where child care was not a typical local government issue, First 5, We Are the Care and their partners were able to highlight an unseen need and link it to the

HIGHLIGHTS

path for economic recovery. Coalition partners effectively made the case that an infusion of funds could expand services and support ways to sustain the child care workforce by supporting licensure programs. Having that additional capacity for child care would in turn support recruitment and retention for local businesses. Pismo Beach City manager Jim Lewis was quoted in a press release saying that “oftentimes the high cost of child care

can be a barrier for employees returning to work,” (joint press release: South County Chambers of Commerce and City of Pismo Beach), and Grover Beach Mayor Jeff Lee similarly noted, “throughout the pandemic, we have seen families struggle to find adequate child care, which is fundamental to economic prosperity.” This advocacy initiative was part of First 5’s broader work advancing child care.

City/ Jurisdiction	Funds allocated*	Description	Core implementation partners
City of Arroyo Grande	\$100,000	The “Arroyo Grande Child Care Assistance Grant Program” will provide monetary grants to eligible child care providers and support increasing the overall number of providers through a licensure process.	First 5, We are the Care Initiative, Child Care Planning Council, South County Chambers of Commerce
City of Grover Beach	\$50,000	In-home child care providers and small, public daycare providers located in Grover Beach can use funds for operational expenses, expansion of child care programs, renovation of child care space, and technology upgrades	South County Chambers of Commerce
City of Pismo Beach	\$50,000	Scholarships for supporting child care payments and a grant program to pay the costs of certifications, regulatory requirements, or other physical improvements to reopen or expand child care centers.	South County Chambers of Commerce
County of San Luis Obispo	\$3,000,000	Direct financial assistance to currently-licensed/active child care providers, competitive grants to expand existing programs or start new programs, subsidies for training individuals interested in entering the child care profession, and upskilling existing child care professionals to increase wages, compensation and professional development.	San Luis Obispo County Office of Education, Child Care Planning Council, Child Care Resource Connection

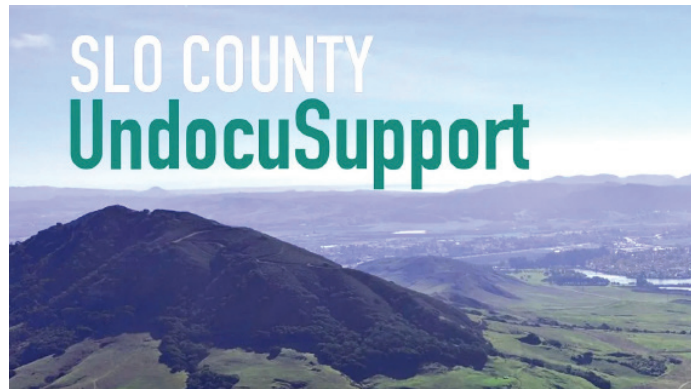
* Reflects up to date information at the time this report was drafted.

ONGOING IMPACT HIGHLIGHT

Theory of Change outcomes supported

- New partners are identified, existing partners are activated, and champions and influencers highlighted
- Increased public and political will to take action on priority issues
- Needed programs are sustainably supported by public and partner investment
- Increased cross-sector alignment on needs and gaps
- Stronger evidence base for needs, gaps and solutions exists

Last year, UndocuSupport successfully highlighted the need for support for immigrant families and We Are the Care spotlighted the need for better, more equitable child care options in the county. This year, First 5 San Luis Obispo County staff continued to support these efforts through convening, strategic communications, and other policy, advocacy and systems change strategies. Here is a look at what they have accomplished and what is next:



UndocuSupport

SLO County UndocuSupport is a collaboration of local organizations, community leaders, and concerned individuals who came together in April 2020 during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic with a common goal: to provide financial support for local immigrant families, including undocumented and mixed status immigrant families who were left out of federal pandemic relief programs.

First 5's ongoing contribution

First 5 San Luis Obispo County staff provided substantial support initially as a core partner and cross-sector convener to highlight the need for equity for immigrant families and catalyze efforts to address it. This year, UndocuSupport needed less ongoing support as the coalition now has full-time staff.

Where are they now?

UndocuSupport initially raised over \$500,000 in funds from community, agency and philanthropic partners to provide direct relief for nearly 3,000 individuals or families in need.

HIGHLIGHTS

UndocuSupport also gained a better understanding of community needs including the needs of Mixteco families in particular, who do not speak Spanish. This prompted a research study with statewide partners on the Mixtec population, and illuminated the need to increase capacity among promotores and other local organizations providing interpretation and outreach.

They have now shifted from providing direct aid in a crisis to long-term strategies, completing a strategic plan, having full-time staff based at The Community Foundation San Luis Obispo County (which is also the group's fiscal sponsor and houses the UndocuSupport Fund), and doing community coordinating work with a formalized organizational structure. Their coalition building efforts at multiple levels have created strong local partnerships. They are part of a regional effort to support immigrant families that includes 805 UndocuFund in Santa Barbara and Ventura, as well as a new statewide effort, the California UndocuNetwork. In addition, so they can expand support and focus on ongoing needs, they have diversified funding sources as part of sustainability planning to include support from the City and County of San Luis Obispo and new philanthropic partners.

We Are the Care

First 5's ongoing contribution

First 5 staff provided substantial initial support for coalition building and community engagement to highlight the need for better and more equitable child care options. First 5 also provided funding for social media campaigns to help raise awareness. This year, We Are the Care needed less ongoing support as the coalition moved to being housed by a partner agency.



Where are they now?

We Are the Care transitioned to be led by the Child Care Planning Council, which is housed at the San Luis Obispo County Office of Education (its fiscal sponsor). There, the coalition will have new connections and resources and can use that additional capacity to explore additional related issues and community needs such as challenges faced by school-aged children.

We Are the Care was pivotal in building support for dedicating ARPA funds to support children 0-6 and their families by increasing the county-wide capacity for child care and child care provider licensing.

Coalition members continue to provide public comments at local government meetings to keep a spotlight on child care as an issue and to provide ongoing support for ways to address expanding capacity to provide child care county-wide.

APPENDIX 1: TABLE OF PROJECTS

This table outlines all of First 5 San Luis Obispo's projects in the 2021-2022 fiscal year including the lead organization, a brief description of the work, and associated strategies from First 5's Theory of Change.

			Strategy		
Project	Organization	Description	Funding for direct services and programs	Policy, advocacy, systems change	Place-based network building
Child Health & Development					
BABES	County of San Luis Obispo Public Health Department	Provided breastfeeding education and support and peer counseling for pregnant and breastfeeding mothers at WIC clinics throughout the county.	✓		
Health Access Trainer	Carsel Consulting Group	Provided professional development activities to increase provider capacity to connect children 0-5 with healthcare services.	✓		
Help Me Grow Centralized Access Point	CAPSLO	Provided a one-stop shop where families and providers connected with resources needed to assess concerns related to early development and get help addressing them. It included a Family Resource Center, call line, and a care coordination system.	✓		
Kits for New Parents	First 5 San Luis Obispo County	Distributed kits to new parents that included a Parent Guide, "What to Do When Your Child Gets Sick" book, baby touch-and-feel book, and a directory of local community resources and services for young children and families.	✓		
Oral Health Prevention for Children	Tolosa Children's Dental Center	Provided preventive services for children 0-5 including oral health screening and assessment, parent education, dental exams, and cleanings.	✓		

APPENDIX 1: TABLE OF PROJECTS

Strategy

Project	Organization	Description	Funding for direct services and programs	Policy, advocacy, systems change	Place-based network building
Oral Health Program Manager	County of San Luis Obispo Public Health Department	Coordinated children's oral health services, including dental screenings, referrals, and connecting clients with providers. Provided education about children's preventive dental care to parents of children 0-5.	✓		
Vision Screening	Optometric Care Associates	Screened children 2-5 for vision problems at early childhood development and care sites and referred them to local providers for treatment if indicated.	✓		
3 by 3 Developmental Screening Partnership	First 5 San Luis Obispo County	Pediatricians at two local clinics integrated routine early development screening, guidance, and referrals into well-child visits. Funded by a County of San Luis Obispo Behavioral Health Department MHSa Innovation grant through June 2022.	✓	✓	
Help Me Grow Steering Committee	First 5 San Luis Obispo County	Convened partners to support a community system that ensures timely support for families related to developmental milestones in early childhood.		✓	
Early Learning					
California State Preschool Program	San Luis Obispo County Office of Education	Funded high-quality early childhood education for families who are low income.	✓		
Early Childhood Nature-Based Experiences	San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden	Expanded access and programming to increase nature-based experiences, education and wellness for young children.	✓		

APPENDIX 1: TABLE OF PROJECTS

			Strategy		
			Funding for direct services and programs	Policy, advocacy, systems change	Place-based network building
Project	Organization	Description			
We Are the Care	First 5 San Luis Obispo County	Focused on raising public awareness, cross-sector collaboration and local government engagement to address the challenges involved in early care and education in our communities.		✓	✓
Resilient Families					
Basic Needs Family Support	CAPSLO	Provided and distributed resources and support to meet the basic needs of families with children 0-5 including rental assistance, food, and child care.	✓		
Family Resource Centers	Parents Helping Parents	Provided information, referrals, training, family support, and outreach to families of children with special needs.	✓		
Family Support Counseling	MP Health	Provided bilingual individual, family, and couple mental health counseling and education to people caring for children 0-5.	✓		
Parent Learning Pods	South County Youth Coalition	Provided classes in Spanish and English where caregivers had real-time experiences with their children, developed a social network, and received age-appropriate information about their children.	✓		
Partnership for Resilient Families	Link Family Resource Center	Provided resources and support services for pregnant women, caregivers, and families with children ages 0-5 throughout North County.	✓		

APPENDIX 1: TABLE OF PROJECTS

			Strategy		
			Funding for direct services and programs	Policy, advocacy, systems change	Place-based network building
Project	Organization	Description			
Perinatal Mental Health Support Services	Pregnancy & Parenting Support of SLO County	Provided counseling for pregnant women and new parents to address heightened uncertainty, stress and perinatal mood and anxiety challenges (via a collaborative partnership with the Community Counseling Center).	✓		
Family-Friendly Workplaces	SLO Chamber of Commerce	Provided resources and support to businesses to help assess their current business practices, identify opportunities for change, and adopt family-friendly policies (including investments in quality child care) that help to support parent employees, sustain a strong local workforce, improve quality of life, and bolster the economic vitality of our communities.	✓	✓	
ARPA Funding Engagement	First 5 San Luis Obispo County	Worked with an array of partners and local governments to advocate for allocation of Federal ARPA funding for child care.		✓	
Child Care Feasibility Study	First 5 San Luis Obispo County	Researched local public policies that ease and incentivize the creation of child care programs and support the child care workforce to recommend options for public sector agencies. The Child Care Planning Council served as a coordinating partner, and the core participating agencies were San Luis Coastal Unified School District, Cal Poly, City of San Luis Obispo, and County of San Luis Obispo.		✓	

APPENDIX 1: TABLE OF PROJECTS

			Strategy		
			Funding for direct services and programs	Policy, advocacy, systems change	Place-based network building
Project	Organization	Description			
Hands-on Heroes	First 5 San Luis Obispo County	Recognized dedicated individuals who make a difference in the lives of children and youth while communicating about First 5 policy initiatives.		✓	
Home Visiting Coordination	County of San Luis Obispo Public Health Department	Conducted an environmental scan to determine the existing scale of home visiting services, researched platforms for a shared data system, and convened home visiting programs as first steps in creating a unified home visiting system of care.		✓	
SLO County UndocuSupport	First 5 San Luis Obispo County	Convened and participated in a coalition of local organizations, community leaders, and concerned individuals working to support local immigrant families.		✓	✓

APPENDIX 2: EVALUATION METHODS

To generate the findings in this report, First 5 San Luis Obispo County's evaluation team gathered, analyzed, and synthesized information from the following sources:

Funded partner end of year reports

First 5's funded partners submitted a written report at the end of the fiscal year that included relevant numerical data (e.g., number of children served, number of counseling sessions conducted) as well as their reflections on the successes, challenges, and impact of their funded work as well as broader community needs.

Funded partner pediatric data

First 5's funded partners submitted counts of children, caregivers, and providers served each quarter.

Interviews

First 5's evaluation team conducted one-on-one interviews with First 5 staff, Commissioners, partners (funded and non-funded), and other community stakeholders, including policymakers. These interviews explored experiences and perceptions of First 5's work broadly and around specific strategies and initiatives.

Document review

The evaluation team reviewed an array of documents aside from funded partner reporting to explore First 5's contribution to outcomes. Documents included media coverage of key issues; research reports supported and generated by First 5 and partners; statements by local policymakers; and local government websites, including applicable grant program information.

Learning sessions with First 5 staff

The evaluation team facilitated a series of learning sessions with First 5 staff to create the Theory of Change and explore feedback from key stakeholders on First 5's work.
