

ADVOCACY AGENDA 2018

AND, HOW ARE THE CHILDREN?



PERINATAL READINESS

Reinforcing the earliest stages of parenthood, from pregnancy planning through the first six months of life



ADVOCACY GOALS:

- Expanded home visiting options for new families
- Increased awareness about health impacts of marijuana use on young children and their families

WHY? Parenting can be most isolating and stressful during the early months of a child's life. Home visiting programs offer families support and education at this critical time, helping parents build skills, confidence, and connections with resources. With cannabis legalization in CA, it is important to alert pregnant and parenting families of potential impacts on the baby.

CHILD HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Promoting young children's wellness and access to quality care



ADVOCACY GOALS:

- Stronger alignment of systems that track and address developmental milestones in young children
- Increased access to pediatric oral health care and disease prevention

WHY? The health of our community's youngest children should be protected regardless of family income or circumstance – but isn't. Fewer than 1 in 3 infants and toddlers are given routine recommended developmental screenings, while 1 in 4 are at risk for delays. Dental disease is largely preventable, yet a majority of low-income children reach grade school with cavities.

EARLY LEARNING

Ensuring that from birth, children have rich and varied opportunities to develop their minds



ADVOCACY GOALS:

- Increased parent engagement as a child's first teacher
- Community investment in quality AND affordable access to early childhood education

WHY? Children learn from birth; 80% of brain development happens in the first 3 years of life. Children who are regularly talked, read and sung to from infancy do better in school. Knowing this, our community should maximize investment and time in early learning – but doesn't. We face a paradox: quality child care and parent education costs are out of reach for most families, while child care worker salaries are among the lowest in the workforce.

FAMILY STRENGTHENING

Supporting parents and families to build stable, nurturing and enriching home environments for young children



ADVOCACY GOALS:

- Increased access to safe, affordable homes for families with young children
- Increased Culture of Family-Friendly Workplaces that Support Young Families

WHY? Our community should be a place where young children and families thrive – but sometimes it isn't. Families working and raising children here should be able to afford a place to live – but often can't. It is more expensive to live here than most areas of the country. Families with young children are frequently at maximum stress and minimum earning power. Government and business have a role to play in supporting them during this important stage of life.