



SEPTEMBER 23RD, 2026

Special Projects Update

Commission Meeting



SANTA CRUZ - SAN BENITO - MONTEREY - SAN LUIS OBISPO - SANTA BARBARA - VENTURA

Uplift Child Care Coalition

Centering child care as economic mobility on the Central Coast

State Economic Blueprint

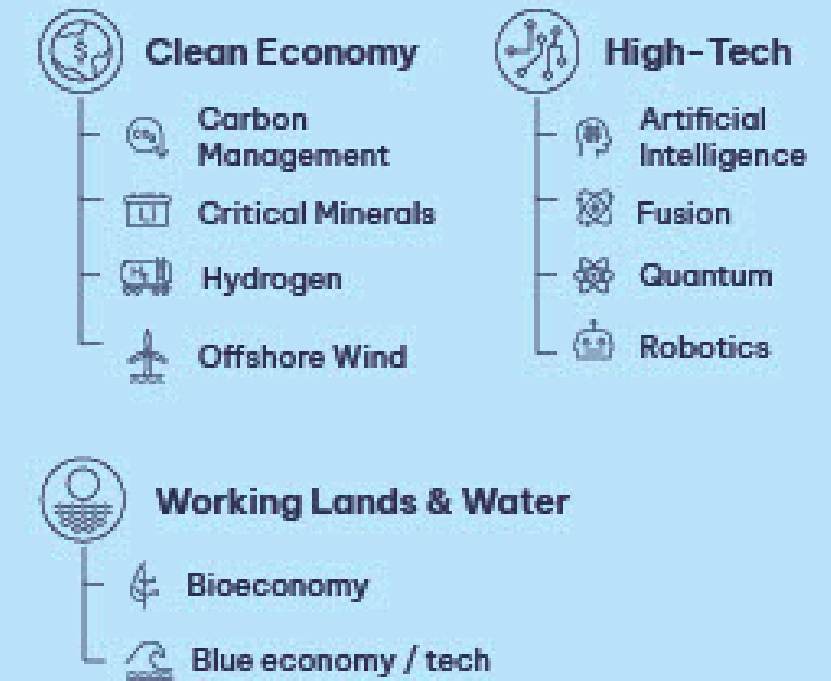
Strengthen



Accelerate

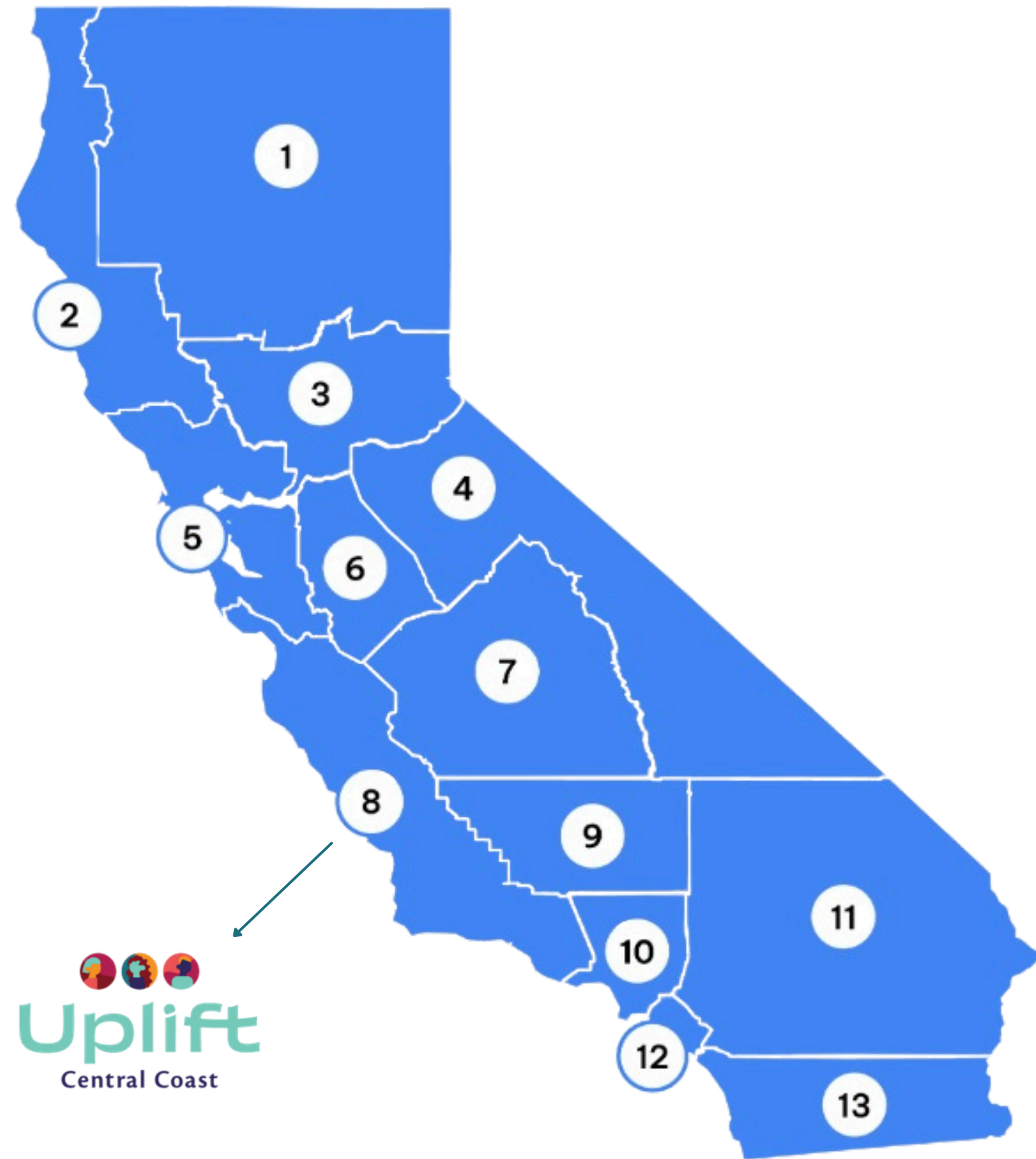


Bet



Anchor





CALIFORNIA JOBS FIRST

- Statewide initiative focused on economic growth, innovation, and access to quality jobs
- 13 Regional Reports informed CA State Economic Blueprint, funding priorities, and grants
- Child care included as an anchor strategy



- Child care as an economic mobility strategy
- ECE/Child care partners across the region connected
- Hosted two convenings of 30+ child care advocates after NOFO released
- Convenings mobilized unprecedented regionwide connections across sector in support of child care
- Inspired First 5 LOI for Accelerator Funding to launch/coordinate 6-County Child Care Coalition





The “Why”

To strengthen child care as a cornerstone of economic mobility by uniting cross-sector partners and coordinating regional efforts, bringing together the brightest minds to ignite innovation and reinforce child care as an integral component of an equitable and thriving Central Coast economy.

The “Who”

A **six-county partnership** coordinated through First 5 San Luis Obispo County.

Coalition Steering Group Members, all based in San Luis Obispo County, provide **cross-sector representation and counterpart connections** to the other five counties.





Coalition sectors include:

- Funders
- Government
- Business
- Child Care Experts
- Higher Education
- ...and more



The “What”

- Facilitate shared learning
- Document & showcase promising best practices
- Activate joint regional advocacy
- Advance regionwide replication & scaling of best practices



The “What” Realized

- Facilitate shared learning
 - Learning Communities
- Document & showcase promising best practices
 - Best Practice Portfolio
- Activate joint regional advocacy
 - Shared Vision Statement
- Advance regionwide replication & scaling of best practices
 - Central Coast Child Care Facilities Action Network



Learning Communities

Learning Communities: Five Focus Areas

- Expand & Retain Child Care Workforce
- Expand Child Care Facilities
- Employer Supported & Subsidized Child Care
- Centralized Resources & Families Navigating Systems
- Community Investment in Child Care



- Six county, cross-sector representation
- Two sets of 90 minute sessions on Zoom for each focus area
 - November & January
- Final Showcase Event
 - July 15th
 - 60+ participants



Best Practice Portfolio



Shared Vision Statement

A Shared Vision for California's Central Coast



We, the Uplift Child Care Coalition, believe that child care is essential to the wellbeing, prosperity, and future of California's Central Coast; and must be high quality, accessible, and affordable for all families. Together, we commit to advancing a child care system that uplifts every child, every family, and every community across our six counties.

Collectively we recognize that.....

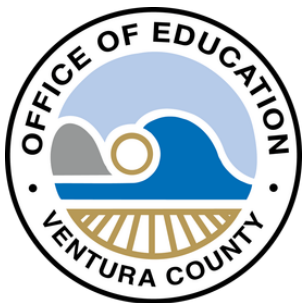
- Child Care is a **Foundation** for lifelong learning and development.
- Child Care is a **Critical Element** of community infrastructure.
- Child Care is **Crucial** for economic vitality and workforce participation.
- Child Care is **Strengthened** by skilled, valued, and well-supported educators.
- Child Care is an **Investment** in our collective future.
- Child Care is a **Shared** responsibility and a shared opportunity.

The Uplift Child Care Coalition is an unprecedented cross-county, cross-sector initiative that brings together the brightest minds to ignite innovation and reinforce child care as an integral component of an equitable and thriving Central Coast economy. We are child care innovators throughout the six-county region building a multi-sector network that includes early care and education leaders, families, resource and referral agencies, child care planning councils, cities and counties, chambers of commerce and employers, nonprofits and higher education.

Shared Vision Statement: Current Endorsements



San Luis Obispo County
Family-Friendly Workplaces



Nora Caruso, Santa Cruz County - Independent
Early Childhood Education Consultant

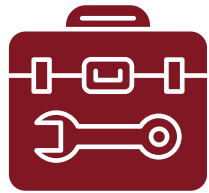
Clint Weirick, San Luis Obispo County - Grover
Beach City Council Member, District 4



Central Coast Child Care Facilities Action Network

Child Care Facilities Action Network

Funded by agencies across all six counties



A Practical Toolkit

Built on the Santa Barbara County Child Care Facilities Master Plan and Toolkit



A Working Network

Specialists trained over nine months, with real fieldwork and coaching between sessions



A Regional Survey and Technical Assistance

A land use survey, mapping the Central Coast's child care facility landscape

Child Care Facilities Specialists

For advocates, coordinators, and community leaders already doing this type of work at some level



Six 90-minute training sessions, plus three coaching sessions shaped by participants' own fieldwork



Sessions built around real jurisdiction opportunities



No cost to participants, honoraria provided through Coalition



Nearly 20 Specialists across the region in this initial cohort

City and County Governments

For cities and counties wanting real data on their own child care facility landscape



Regional land
use survey for
the jurisdiction



A clear picture of
the child care
facility landscape



A direct line to
the Specialists in
the community



A clear plan for
the jurisdiction
moving forward

What the Central Coast Gains

SANTA CRUZ - SAN BENITO - MONTEREY - SAN LUIS OBISPO - SANTA BARBARA - VENTURA



Experts in child care land use policy, grounded in regional survey data



A peer network of practitioners across six counties



A portfolio of data, best practices and applied work for each jurisdiction



A shared regional advocacy plan built by the cohort



Recent Coalition Activities

- Showcase Event hosted on July 15th
 - Over 60 participants
 - All six counties
- Presentation at First 5 CA Summit
 - Bay Area, Central Coast, Orange County
- No-cost extension through September 30th
- Wendy & Maggie presented at Uplift Advisory Council
 - Only 3 out of 42 projects highlighted
- First CCFAN Specialist Session held on September 15th

Website Overview

www.upliftchildcarecoalition.org

- Learning Community Recordings
- Shared Vision Statement & Endorsements
- Best Practice Portfolio
- Child Care Facilities Action Network
- Resources Tab – One Pagers and More





FUNDING & CONSORTIUM

IMPACT and Quality Counts CA

Supporting our Early Care & Education Workforce



Recent Updates

- Special Projects Coordinator now administers First 5 CA IMPACT grant
- Attended Quality Counts California Consortium Meeting after First 5 CA Summit



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Thank you!

Commission Meeting