

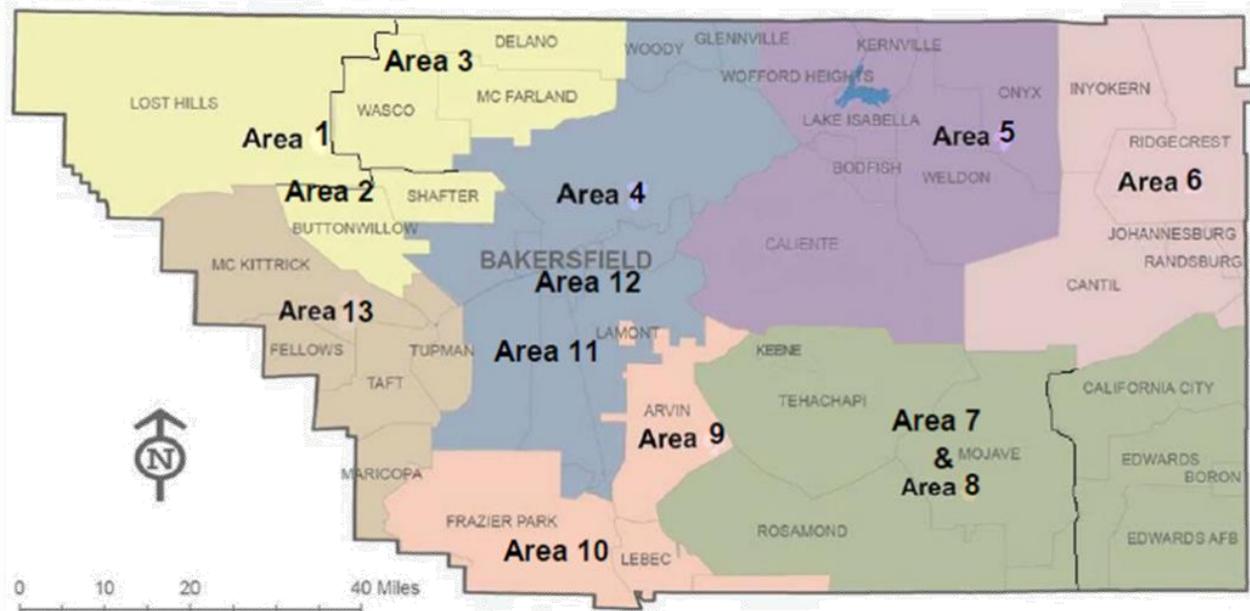


2017 Town Hall Meeting **RECAP**

Purpose

The First 5 Kern Commission is beginning the 2020 Strategic Plan effort and the launch of the next 'Request for Proposal' effort. In preparation, staff met with communities across the county, hosting 12 Town Hall meetings for the purpose of:

1. Sharing First 5 Kern's history and planning steps for the next funding cycle beginning 2020;
2. Identifying priority needs and gaps in services that First 5 Kern can address in the next funding cycle;
3. Utilizing direct discussions with residents to better understand the needs throughout Kern County; and
4. Gathering attendee input, ideas and priorities to share with First 5 Kern Commission.



Meetings

Town Hall meetings were held in the following cities and surrounding communities (not in order of priority):

1. **Lost Hills** – Area 1
2. **Shafter** – Area 2
3. **Delano** – Area 3
4. **Bakersfield - Oildale** – Area 4
5. **Kern River Valley** – Area 5
6. **Ridgecrest** – Area 6
7. **Mojave** – Areas 7 and 8
8. **Arvin / Lamont** – Area 9
9. **Mountain Communities** – Area 10
10. **Bakersfield - Greenfield** – Area 11
11. **Bakersfield - Southeast** – Area 12
12. **Taft** – Area 13

First 5 Kern’s Vision

All Kern County children will be born into and thrive in supportive, safe, loving homes and neighborhoods and will enter school healthy and ready to learn.

First 5 Kern’s Mission

To strengthen and support the children of Kern County prenatal to five and their families by empowering our providers through the integration of services with an emphasis on health and wellness, parent education, and early childcare and education.

The Process

Meetings were advertised throughout the County of Kern via flyers, networking and public service announcements. All meetings were open to the public.

Attendees were asked to share how they view programs and services in their surrounding region based on First 5 Kern’s focus areas: (I) Health and Wellness, (II) Parent Education and Support Services and (III) Early Childcare and Education.

BAKERSFIELD / SOUTHEAST TOWN HALL MEETING – AREA 12

First 5 Kern staff met with six community providers of the Southeast Neighborhood, Bakersfield area. The two hour event was held at the Dignity Health Outreach Center, in Bakersfield, Thursday, April 13, 2017.

Town Hall Hosted By:

- Southeast Neighborhood Partnership Family Resource Center (SENP FRC)
Clinica Sierra Vista
1509 E. 11th Street
Bakersfield, CA 93307

Nicholas Umholtz, Program Supervisor
661-322-3276
nicholas.umholtz@clinicasierravista.org

Provides direct family support services through

- a. Case management.
- b. Nurturing Parenting court-mandated classes.
- c. Health screenings and referrals.
- d. Promoting parents' knowledge of developmental milestones and norms.

Discussion Results

I. Health and Wellness

- Increase earlier access to pediatricians in the area is needed to reduce wait times for medical appointments.
- There is a need for additional child mental health services to address trauma, especially for those children who witness it.
- More child and family counseling services is needed to address early childhood behavioral concerns including services for children before they reach kindergarten.
- Air quality issues need to be addressed in the area which impact asthma, missed school and employment.
- Valley Fever education for the community is needed.

II. Parent Education and Support Services

- Parenting classes using the Nurturing Parenting court-mandated curriculum are offered in twelve-week sessions by the SENP FRC staff. The classes are:
 - a. Well received by local residents and help parents understand developmental stages of childhood.
 - b. Providing a link to case management services through the SENP FRC.
 - c. Empowering more parents to be able to advocate for themselves.
 - d. Addressing effects of severe poverty in the area, including food, housing, and clothing, affecting older and younger generations.

III. Early Childcare and Education

- Providers reported that Discovery Depot Child Care and Head Start provide early childhood education which they wish to see continue.
 - a. Attendees commented they would like to see preschool hours extended to allow parents who work to get in more work hours.
- SENP FRC provides screenings using Ages and Stages Questionnaire-3 (ASQ-3) to help parents determine if their child's development is on track for their age.
- Emergency childcare for single parents and those without additional support systems is needed.
- Increase preschool capacity to:
 - a. Reduce long waiting lists.
 - b. Include infant/toddler program programs before age three.
 - c. Make preschool more affordable.
 - d. Include children with special needs/specialty care.
- Allow working parents to send children to classes without having to be present themselves at Head Start locations.
- Instead of kicking children out of preschool for bad behavior, it was suggested that childcare sites provide behavioral counseling for parents and children.

--- END BAKERSFIELD / SOUTHEAST ---