



2015-16

REPORT TO THE
COMMUNITY



It's All About the Kids in Kern County!



Roland Maier

A Message from the Executive Director

Dear Community Members:

First 5 Kern is proud to present the *2015-16 Report to the Community*. First 5 Kern funded 41 programs benefiting 24,918 children ages prenatal to five and their families throughout Kern County.

This report provides a snapshot of those vital services in health and wellness, parent education and support services, and early childcare and education.

Every day we hear of poignant examples of how First 5 Kern programs are making a positive impact in the lives of Kern County families.

However, as Prop 10 funding continues to decrease each year, there is a statewide movement toward strengthening our integration of services efforts to ensure collaboration with agencies and entities with similar goals. This collaboration will enhance the overall efficiency in provider systems, as we continue to work diligently to maintain direct services through our valued partners.

As we reflect on what we have achieved in the 2015-16 year, we look to the future. With shrinking resources and a rise in family needs, the role of First 5 Kern becomes even more critical for the well-being of Kern County's children.

On behalf of First 5 Kern,

Roland Maier
Executive Director

Our 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.

Our 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.

Our Charge

First 5 Kern was established in 1998 when California voters passed Proposition 10 – The California Children and Families Act – which levied a 50-cent tax on each pack of cigarettes and other tobacco products sold. Revenues generated from the tobacco tax are used to fund local programs that promote early childhood development for children ages 0 to 5 in the areas of health and wellness, parent education and support services, early childcare and education, and integration of services.

Why Ages Zero to Five?

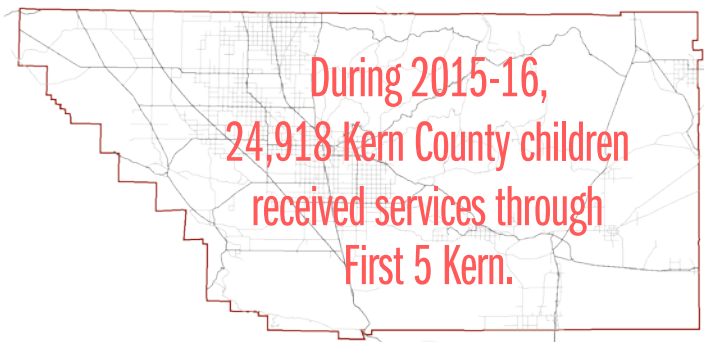
A child's brain develops more in the first five years than at any other time in their life. How children are nurtured and cared for during their first years influences their emotional, physical and intellectual environment and has a profound impact on how the brain is organized. The relationships and contacts a child has with parents and caregivers significantly influence how a child will function in school and later in life.

Our Commitment to Kern County Children

First 5 Kern is designed to provide, on a community-by-community basis, a comprehensive, integrated system of early childhood development services for all children ages prenatal to five.

Through community collaboration of services to provide healthcare, dental care, quality childcare, parent education and effective intervention for at-risk families, Kern County families are provided with the tools necessary to foster secure, healthy and loving attachments.

Our focus is on supporting children to be healthy, active learners who grow up in families and communities that nurture them. In 2015-16, we invested \$8,557,673 in services for children and families in Kern County.





Preschoolers at the **Wind in the Willows Preschool** do all the planting, weeding, watering and fertilizing in their vegetable garden. The children love to eat the food they grow themselves. The preschool provides an affordable early education experience for children ages 3 to 5 in Boron and neighboring communities.



A teacher works one-on-one with a preschooler in the **Delano School Readiness program**. The program provides early learning through center-based and kindergarten transition activities. The family resource center provides direct family support services through case management, parenting classes and referrals and promotes parents knowledge of developmental milestones and norms.

IMPACT ON KERN COUNTY

In this report, we look back on 2015-16 and see the tremendous impact that First 5 Kern-funded services are having on families in Kern County.

Community Investment

In 2015-16, First 5 Kern invested more than \$8 million for services to Kern County families with children ages 0 to 5:

- \$3.0 million for Health and Wellness
- \$3.0 million for Parent Education and Support Services
- \$1.7 million for Early Childcare and Education
- \$0.8 million for Integration of Services

Services

The following are examples of services provided by our funded partners in Kern County:

- Breastfeeding increased from 66.5% to 71.8% across 14 programs, supporting the healthy growth of 1,605 children.
- Medically Vulnerable Care Coordination Project referrals supported case reviews of 845 medically vulnerable infants.
- The Kern County Children's Dental Health Network completed preventative dental treatments for 13,774 children.
- 2,129 children ages 0 to 5 received vaccines from the Children's Mobile Immunization Program.
- Ready to Start learning activities raised the level of total mastery from 53.51% to 85.84% across math, reading and social skills domains for 532 preschoolers.
- 20 programs showed development of 1,464 children significantly above the corresponding age-specific thresholds in Communication, Gross Motor, Fine Motor, Problem Solving and Personal-Social assessments.
- Mothers who smoked during pregnancy dropped from 14% to 8% across 14 programs.
- Within six months, families living in unsafe housing decreased from 24 to 7 across 9 programs.

Integration of Services

First 5 Kern not only dedicates resources to strengthen the quality of specific services, it recognizes the need for strong partnerships for efficient service delivery. Bringing together different disciplines to focus on the needs of a child provides a more timely, seamless and responsive continuum of services, enhancing outcomes for children and families.

Focus Area 1 – Health and Wellness

First 5 Kern-funded programs address the healthcare needs of children ages 0 to 5. These programs improve the health of children through a countywide outreach and enrollment program to enroll children and pregnant women in health insurance. First 5 Kern also supports dental screening and treatment programs for children ages 1 to 5, mental health services, infant health, immunizations and care coordination for medically vulnerable children.

Our 2015-16 funded programs and partners:

- Bakersfield Adult School Health Literacy Program – *Kern High School District*
- Black Infant Health – *County of Kern Public Health Services Department*
- Community Health Initiative of Kern County – *Mercy Foundation - Bakersfield*
- Children's Mobile Immunization Program – *San Joaquin Community Hospital*
- Kern County Children's Dental Health Network – *West Kern Community College District*
- Make A Splash – *City of Bakersfield Department of Recreation and Parks*
- Medically Vulnerable Infant Program – *Clinica Sierra Vista*
- Medically Vulnerable Care Coordination Project – *County of Kern Public Health Services Department*
- Nurse Family Partnership Program – *County of Kern Public Health Services Department*
- Richardson Special Needs Collaborative – *Kern County Superintendent of Schools*
- Special Start for Exceptional Children – *Caring Corner*
- Successful Application Stipend – *County of Kern Public Health Services Department*

Besides alleviation of healthcare issues pertaining to pre-term pregnancy, low birth weight, prenatal care, and prenatal smoking, enhancement of family functioning supported breastfeeding, well-child checkups, immunization completion and insurance coverage.

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Preschoolers at the **Richardson Special Needs Collaborative** begin their group learning activity. The Collaborative provides case management, behavioral needs screenings and referrals and other support services for children ages 0 to 5 with special needs and their families.



Special Start for Exceptional Children provides quality early childhood education, parent support and childcare services with non-traditional hours for medically fragile infants and toddlers at no cost to families.

Focus Area 2 – Parent Education and Support Services

First 5 Kern-funded programs offer parents and caregivers access to culturally-appropriate training in child development; brain development; parenting skills; the value of playtime; and access to family support services such as a public health nurse, crisis intervention, substance abuse and health education. These programs address needs of a diverse range of clients, including adolescents, teen parents and clients facing domestic violence or guardianship issues.



Parents gather for a meeting at the **Blanton Child Development Center**. The Center provides supportive services to teen parents through parenting classes, infant and toddler care and development, and links to community resources while enrolled in alternative education classes.

Our 2015-16 funded partners:

- 2-1-1 Kern County – *Community Action Partnership of Kern*
- Arvin Family Resource Center – *Arvin Union School District*
- Buttonwillow Community Resource Center – *Buttonwillow Union School District*
- Differential Response – *Kern County Network for Children*
- Domestic Violence Reduction Project – *Greater Bakersfield Legal Assistance, Inc.*
- East Kern Family Resource Center – *Community Action Partnership of Kern*
- Greenfield School Readiness – *Greenfield Union School District*
- Guardianship Caregiver Project – *Greater Bakersfield Legal Assistance, Inc.*
- Indian Wells Valley Family Resource Center – *Clinica Sierra Vista*
- Kern River Valley Family Resource Center – *Kernville Union School District*
- Lamont Vineland School Readiness Program – *Lamont School District*
- McFarland Family Resource Center – *McFarland Unified School District*
- Mountain Communities Family Resource Center – *El Tejon Unified School District*
- Shafter Healthy Start – *Richland School District*
- Southeast Neighborhood Partnership Family Resource Center – *Clinica Sierra Vista*
- West Side Community Resource Center – *Taft City School District*
- Women's Shelter Network – *Women's Center - High Desert, Inc.*

Effective parent education programs have been linked with decreased rates of child abuse and neglect, better physical, cognitive and emotional development in children, and increased parental knowledge of child development and parenting skills.

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Focus Area 3 – Early Childcare and Education

First 5 Kern supports programs with the primary objective to provide childcare with an education component. The programs offer school readiness activities and resources, developmental assessments, nutrition services and parent education.



A mom paints with her child at the **Blanton Child Development Center**, a program that provides support to teen parents in child development activities and parent education.

The importance of preparing children to succeed in school is critical. Skills that allow one to problem solve and think creatively are developed in early childhood education settings.

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Our 2015-16 funded programs and partners:

- Blanton Child Development Center – *Kern County Superintendent of Schools*
- Delano School Readiness – *Delano Union School District*
- Discovery Depot Child Care Center – *Bakersfield Homeless Center*
- Lost Hills Family Resource Center – *Lost Hills Union School District*
- Neighborhood Place Community Learning Center – *North of the River Recreation and Park District*
- Ready to Start – *Ready to Start Foundation*
- Small Steps Child Development Center – *Alliance Against Family Violence and Sexual Assault*
- South Fork Preschool – *South Fork Union School District*
- Supporting Parents and Children for School Readiness – *Bakersfield City School District*
- Wind in the Willows Preschool – *Wind in the Willows Education Organization*



Preschoolers gather around for their learning activity at **Neighborhood Place Community Learning Center**. The Center provides classes and early learning through center based activities, direct family support services and referrals and promotes parents knowledge of developmental milestones and norms.

Our Financials – Making Your Tobacco Tax Dollars Count

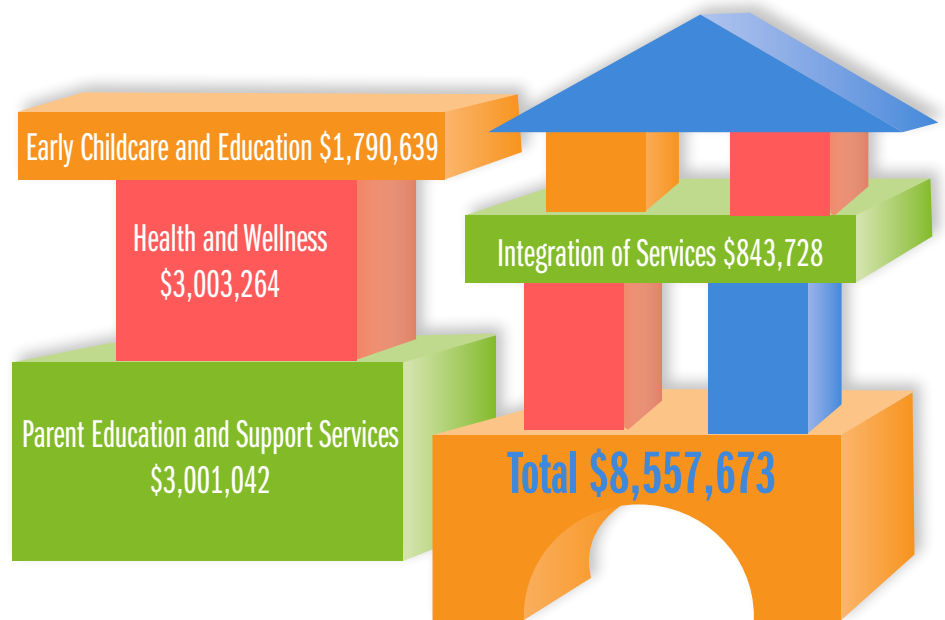
First 5 Kern is committed to using Kern County's tobacco tax dollars efficiently to support quality services for children ages 0 to 5. We want our funded partners to be successful and work closely with them in all aspects of their operations.

✓ We closely monitor every contract to ensure programs are achieving results and meeting all of their performance measures.

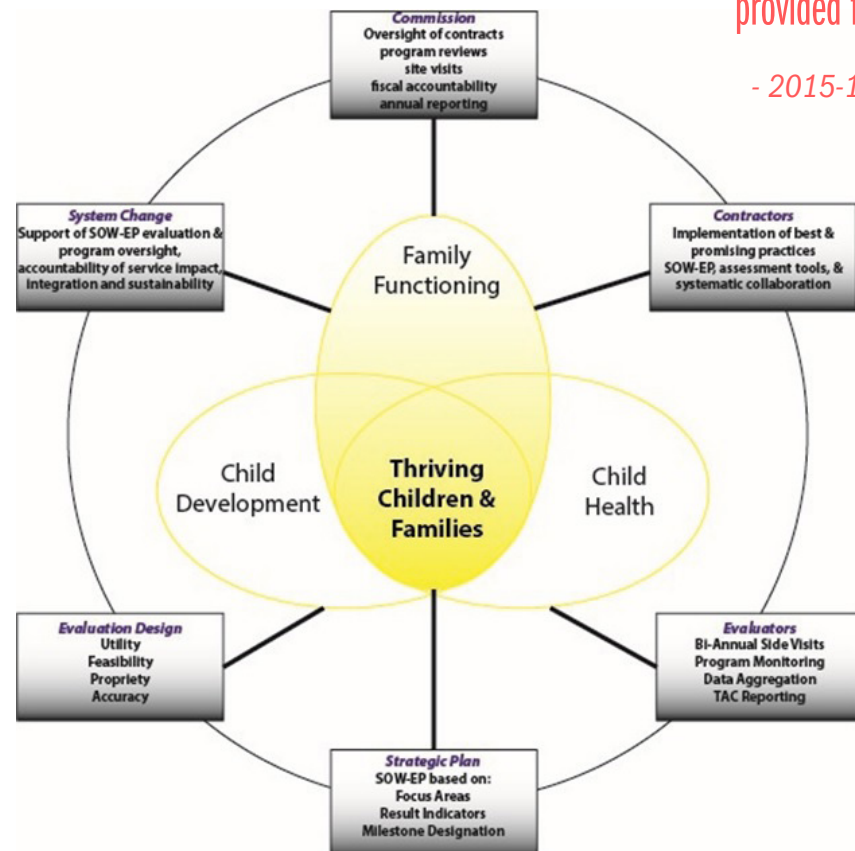
✓ We provide training and technical assistance to help build the capacity of all our funded partners and to support their success.

✓ We are committed to evaluating the effectiveness of our investments. All our initiatives receive extensive support to develop evaluation plans and to document and report results.

Fiscal Year 2015-16 Expenditures by Focus Area



First 5 Kern Evaluation Framework



In 2015-16, First 5 Kern-funded programs leveraged **\$3,250,916** to enhance the services provided for Kern County children and families.

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The evaluation framework centers on “thriving children and families”, conforming to results-based accountability. Evaluation is an important component of the Strategic Plan and Proposition 10 implementation. Carefully tracked and reported information details program outcomes and the impact on communities served.

Commissioners

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Sam Aunai

Dean of Instruction, Porterville College

David Couch

Kern County Supervisor, Fourth District

Claudia Jonah, MD

Health Officer, Kern County Department of Public Health

Susan Lerude

Retired KC Director of Juvenile Programs

Dena Murphy

Director, Kern County Department of Human Services

Rick Robles

Superintendent, Lamont School District

Jennie Sill

Children's System of Care Administrator

Kern County Department of Mental Health

Cindy Wasson

Retired Director Public Health Nursing

Alternate Commissioners

Michelle Curioso

Director of Nursing/MCAH Director

County of Kern Public Health Services Department

Heather Hornibrook

MH Unit Supervisor II, Foster Care Team

Kern County Mental Health Department

Leticia Perez

Kern County Supervisor, Fifth District

Antanette Reed

Assistant Director, Child Protective Services Kern County

Department of Human Services

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Sharon D. Powell

Administrative Assistant

Jan St Pierre

Communications Officer

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Kathy Ives, CPA, MPA, MSA

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Charlene McNama

Administrative Finance Specialist

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Finance Specialist

PROGRAM

Paula De La Riva-Barrera

Program Officer

Wilknica Jefferson

Program Officer

Anastasia Lester

Program Officer

EVALUATION

Theresa Ortiz

Senior Research Analyst

Diana Navarro

Research Associate

As a result of First 5 Kern's outreach at the community, county and state levels, the commission has fulfilled its role to bring services together and fill critical service gaps that that no other funding source is able to address.

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2724 L Street

Bakersfield, CA 93301

Phone: (661) 328-8888

Fax: (661) 328-8880

This report to the community provides a thumbnail look at the programs and services funded by First 5 Kern. For in-depth information on how children and families in Kern County benefit from Proposition 10, please visit us at www.First5Kern.org.