



FIRST 5 Alameda County



Fast Facts

ORIGIN

First 5 Alameda County is part of a statewide initiative established under the California Children and Families Act of 1998 (Proposition 10) and funded through an increased tax on cigarettes and tobacco products. The Alameda County Board of Supervisors appointed the first Commission in 1999. A strategic plan was developed with input from a broad range of county and community partners focused on early childhood, including: public health, social services, Child Care Planning Council, three child care resource and referral agencies, the Children's Hospital, Alameda County birthing hospitals, county and community home visiting programs, community agencies and representatives from the Alameda County Board of Supervisors. The intent was to build on the existing infrastructure of providers by enhancing or expanding their services and supports.

GOALS

- Parents and primary caregivers provide stable, supportive and nurturing environments for children.
- Children are prepared for school through quality early experiences.
- Children reach their optimal development.
- A comprehensive coordinated early childhood system is in place in Alameda County.

KEY STRATEGIES

To achieve its goals, First 5 Alameda County serves as a:

- **Catalyst** – Sparking grassroots and countywide efforts that support First 5 goals, and using research and data to support policy, practice and system changes.
- **Collaborator** – Working with public systems and community partners to advance services for young children and their families, and advocating for funding, policy and system changes.
- **Funder of Direct Services to Children** – Funding community-based and public agency programs that serve children and families and funding First 5 staff working in the community.
- **Capacity Builder** – Working to increase capacity of our partners through training, technical assistance, coaching, consultation and supporting evaluation and technology infrastructure.

LEAD AGENCY

First 5 Alameda County

MISSION

In partnership with the community, First 5 Alameda County supports a countywide continuous prevention and early intervention system that promotes optimal health and development, narrows disparities and improves the lives of children 0-5 and their families.

INITIATIVE BUDGET

\$18.07 million (FY 2014-15)

START DATE

1999

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

Alameda County, CA

KEY DEMOGRAPHICS

Population
1,610,921 (2014 ACS)

Population Under 5
98,266 (2014 ACS)

Percent of Children in Poverty
15.2% (2014 ACS)

Percent of Newborns at Low Birth Weight
7.4% (2013 CA Dept. of Health)

Percent of Children in Food-Insecure Households
20.7% (2013, Feeding America)

CONTACT

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INNOVATION OF NOTE

Established in 2013, the Alameda County Fathers Corps (ACFC) is a collaborative effort of First 5 Alameda County and Alameda County's Health Care Services Agency and Social Services Agency. The mission of the ACFC is to promote and support fathers and father figures to be meaningfully engaged with their children and families, and to advocate for family service providers to provide father-friendly services and to assist fathers in strengthening their parenting skills. Members of the ACFC participate in a nine-month learning community with other male service providers. Since June 2014, the Fathers Corps has graduated 37 male Father Engagement Specialists and 13 male Father Engagement Mentors. It also developed a set of father-friendly principles that was adopted by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors.

+ EARLY CHILDHOOD-LINC

An initiative of the Center for the Study of Social Policy, **Early Childhood-LINC** (Learning and Innovation Network for Communities) is developed by and for communities. Our mission is to support families and improve results for young children in communities across the country with a focus on accelerating the development of effective, integrated, local early childhood systems.

MEASURES OF PROGRESS

APPROACH

The ultimate measures of First 5's work are kindergarten readiness and third grade success of children. For the past several years, First 5 Alameda County has been a member of the Alameda County Birth to 8 Success Work Group which is made up of County staff that manage programs serving children. The Work Group:

- Advocates for promising strategies and investments that improve outcomes
- Aligns and integrates work
- Educates County leadership on the importance of improving 0-8 outcomes
- Develops mechanisms to collect data for communication and decision making.

Rooted in Results Based Accountability and the Pathways social policy research frameworks, the first long term indicator this group has addressed is: Children are ready for school. More information here: http://acgov.org/icpc/documents/ICPC_School_Readiness_Summary.pdf

INDICATORS

First 5 Alameda County is exploring how best to measure impact of building effective early childhood systems. Some measures of impact from the First 5 Alameda County 2014-15 Annual Report include:

- In 2014-15, 94 percent of surveyed parents who participated in programs funded by the Community Grants Initiative reported increased positive parenting attitudes.
- From 2014 to 2015, calls and referrals to the Help Me Grow phone line for developmental concerns increased by 27 percent.
- Over 1,500 parents in the home visiting program were screened for depression, and 27.5 percent screened positive.

STRUCTURE & LEADERSHIP

A nine-member commission oversees the work of First 5 Alameda County. Commissioners are selected and appointed by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors based upon their expertise in early care and education, health care, social services and children with special needs. The full commission meets seven times a year.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

First 5 Alameda County funds structured parent engagement activities that strengthen protective factors and promote self-reflection and peer-to-peer learning like Parent Cafes and the Parents Ready for School group. First 5 Alameda County also supports the Alameda County Early Childhood Policy Committee which includes parent engagement groups and parent leaders.

FINANCING

Three-quarters of First 5 Alameda County funding comes from the statewide tobacco tax. As expected, tobacco revenues have declined over the years – Alameda County's allotment fell from \$21 million in 1998 to \$13.6 million in 2014. The remaining portion of First 5 Alameda's budget comes from Alameda County agencies and foundation grants.