

## 2016/2017 SNAPSHOT

# PARENTING DEVELOPMENT: Playgroups

Young children thrive through healthy relationships with their family and community. The positive day-to-day interactions children have with their parents and caregivers—like talking, reading, singing, and playing—help them develop the skills they need to succeed in school and life. Understanding this importance, First 5 Monterey County invests in playgroups that help families nurture important parent-child relationships, learn about their child's unique development, and find connections to local resources and services.

During playgroups, parent educators, like Michele Huizar of the Salinas Public Library, model interactions critical for children's early learning and social development and focus on play as the way young children learn. Michele's approach works to "build cognitive skills and development, allowing children a chance to explore sensory, science, craft, and math activities. But it's all through play."

"You have to establish a relationship with the parent and show them that you really are interested in the development of their child," Michele says. These relationships have big payoffs—Michele has connected families to needed resources like child development screenings and services for developmental delays.

## Playgroup Spotlight: SAMANTHA AND GAVIN



Samantha, a Salinas mother, attended her first playgroup facilitated by Michele when her oldest daughter was a preschooler. Now with her two-year-old son Gavin, and a baby on the way, she continues this weekly tradition, noting, "I have an hour and a half just to interact with my son. I think that's the most precious thing."

Playgroups provide Gavin a chance to interact with other children while also helping Samantha continue the learning at home—Michele's suggestions have prompted Samantha to include her children in everyday activities like cooking. Samantha sings praises about Michele as a facilitator, "She's so amazing. She's always welcoming, my kids love her."

With her oldest now in kindergarten, Samantha remembers how her daughter "liked being able to express herself through all the songs and reading." Ultimately, playgroups prepared her daughter for the routines of school. "She understood more about structure before going to school. She knows that school has a structure too and playgroups helped her get that sense. That has been really, really helpful to my daughter."

## Playgroups At-a-Glance 2016/2017

**8** out of 10  
parents indicated improvement in

- their confidence of helping their child learn
- the amount of activities they do together with their child
- their connection with other families with children



### 2016/2017 Funded Agencies

#### ACTION

- Alisal Union School District
- Binational Center for the Development of Oaxacan Indigenous Communities
- Chualar Union School District
- City of Salinas - Salinas Public Library
- Community Action Partnerships of San Luis Obispo
- Continuing Development, Inc.
- Door to Hope
- Easter Seals Central California
- GoKids, Inc.
- Gonzales Unified School District
- Greenfield Union School District
- Hartnell College and Hartnell College Foundation
- Hartnell College Child Development Center
- Kinship Center - A Member of the Seneca Family of Agencies
- Mexican American Opportunity Foundation
- Monterey County Health Department, Behavioral Health
- Monterey County Health Department, Public Health
- Monterey County Office of Education
- Monterey County Probation Department
- Monterey Peninsula College (MPC) and MPC Foundation
- Monterey Peninsula Unified School District
- North Monterey County Unified School District
- Pajaro Valley Prevention and Student Assistance, Inc.
- Pajaro Valley Unified School District
- Praxis Consulting
- Soledad Adult School
- WestEd Center for Prevention and Early Intervention

#### Commissioners

- Simón Salinas (Chair)
- Julie Drezner (Vice-Chair)
- Josefina Silva (Secretary)
- Elsa Jimenez
- Elliott Robinson
- Chris Shannon
- Jamie Valenzuela-Mumau

First 5 Monterey County works to: increase early childhood funding; collaboratively enhance access to resources and services for families with young children; and inspire policies and practices supporting early learning. In fiscal year 2016/2017, funds supported the following types of programs: parent-child playgroups; parenting classes; home visiting; family, friend, and neighbor playgroups; event sponsorships; college counseling for early childhood educators; technical assistance and quality support to child care centers; mental health counseling; and special needs support.

**\$7.1M**  
INVESTED

**35,423**

CHILDREN, PARENTS, CAREGIVERS,  
PROVIDERS, AND EDUCATORS SUPPORTED

Total Expenditures: \$7,143,821

Programs & Services: \$6,085,188

Evaluation: \$328,128

Administration: \$730,505

HOW WE INVESTED  
IN PROGRAMS  
AND SERVICES



**44%**

Parenting Programs



**29%**

Child Care Quality Programs



**27%**

Mental Health & Child Well-Being Programs

Childhood doesn't last forever but the experience lasts a lifetime.

[www.First5Monterey.org](http://www.First5Monterey.org) 831-444-8549