



FIRST 5
MONTEREY COUNTY

Partnership News Fall 2011

Childhood Doesn't Last Forever But The Experience Lasts A Lifetime

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The Director's Corner

The change of seasons offers a chance to reconnect after our summer adventures. One point of reconnection is to remind ourselves of the powerful learning that happens in childhood.

We are particularly honored this fall to host The Wonder of Learning- The Hundred Languages of Children exhibition at the National Steinbeck Center in Salinas, running through November 15, 2011. We hope that you will visit the exhibition and encourage your colleagues and the families you work with to do the same.



As First 5 Monterey County moves into the fall months, 20 Funded Partners are serving thousands of young children and their families throughout the county with our new cycle of funding (Cycle 2). Yet with the beginning of a new funding cycle also comes the reality of the state's budget crisis on First 5's across the state.

The 2011/2012 budget signed by the Governor left First 5 commissions and all their local programs and initiatives in a more difficult situation than ever. In March, Assembly Bill 99 (AB99) was signed into law, shifting \$1 billion from First 5's to the state's general fund. Although Proposition 10 revenues are currently not included in this year's state budget, AB99 is still in place. Unless it is repealed or defeated in court, locally we are still obligated to pay \$10 million to the state by June 2012. This will greatly impact our long-term plans for supporting children and families in our community.

We are confident that our current investments will continue to provide critical local programs in Monterey County and we will continue to work together to provide our youngest children with the support they deserve. The Commission is grateful to all of our funded partners for their dedication and commitment to ensuring young children thrive. Finally, I would like to personally invite you to visit The Wonder of Learning exhibition at the

National Steinbeck Center. Be prepared to be amazed!

Warm regards,
Francine Rodd

International Exhibit at the National Steinbeck Center Showcases Innovative Approach to Early Education

An international exhibit opened in Salinas, California this summer showcasing the powerful learning that happens in early childhood. *The Wonder of Learning - The Hundred Languages of Children* exhibition at the National Steinbeck Center (One Main Street, Salinas) runs through November 15, 2011. This 6,000 square foot exhibition shares the world-renowned educational work of the preschools and infant toddler centers of Reggio Emilia, Italy. It is free and open to the public every day of the week, including Saturdays and Sundays, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

"Quality early childhood education has a positive and lasting impact on children's development - they have better school, employment, and life outcomes," said Simón Salinas, Monterey County Supervisor and First 5 Monterey County Commission Vice Chair. "The Wonder of Learning - The Hundred Languages of Children will deepen our understanding of how children learn and provide an opportunity to exchange ideas about strengthening the way we support our young people."



The infant toddler centers and preschools in the Italian city of Reggio Emilia are based on an innovative and strong image of the child, as well as practices that support every child's potential and developing competencies. The exhibition's different themes communicate and instruct about new ways of gathering materials and creating environments, where research and the joy of discovering and learning by children and teachers together, are both possible and documented. After the devastation of World War II and at a time of scarce resources, the city of Reggio Emilia put the education of their young children first. Now people from all over the world recognize their educational work in developing quality early learning for young children. The exhibition aims to inspire parents, educators, service providers, community leaders, policy makers, businesses, and other advocates for children to better understand the powerful learning that occurs in early childhood.

"Children are born curious, creative, capable, and aware of their own theories about how the world works," said Salinas Mayor Dennis Donahue. "We are privileged to host this exhibition. Salinas is the exhibition's only Northern California venue during a six-year North American tour."



Reggio Children organized this exhibition in collaboration with the North American Reggio Emilia Alliance (NAREA). The Wonder of Learning - The Hundred Languages of Children exhibition is hosted locally by First 5 Monterey County with funding from The David and Lucile Packard Foundation, Monterey Peninsula Foundation, Community Foundation for Monterey County, and First 5 California.

Group tours and on-site collaborative meetings are available. Additionally, we have created a Sponsorship Program for organizations serving young children and their families in Monterey

County that provides financial support to ensure parents and/or staff can visit the exhibition. For more information [click here](#).

New Funded Partners

On July 1st, the second cycle of funding for **First 5 Monterey County's** Early Learning Opportunities focus (Cycle 2) began. The funded programs are in the following areas:

- *Parenting Development.* This includes programs that maintain relationships with parents to build knowledge, skills, and confidence in parenting as well as their ability to access resources to assist their family. Funding is primarily focused on parents with children from the prenatal stage to age 3, but not exclusive of children ages 4 and 5. Services include home visiting; series of group parenting education classes; playgroups; and information, referral, and assistance services.
- *Child Care Quality.* These are programs that enhance child care provider/caregiver education, child care environment quality, child care workforce development, and parent-teacher interactions.
- *Mental and Physical Health.*
 - *Special needs assessment, screening, and support.* This program provides a coordinated system of screening, referrals, and services for children with Special Needs, including emotional delays in the 93905 zip code catchment area.
 - *Coordinated, flexible, and individualized support and services for children who have experienced trauma or prenatal exposure to drugs/alcohol.* These programs provide comprehensive services through screening, dyadic therapy, and home visits to children and families that have been put at risk.

To view a list of our funded partners with a description of the programs funded for Cycle 2, [click here](#).

First 5 Funding Still Threatened

The 2011/2012 budget signed by the Governor left First 5 commissions and all their local programs and initiatives in a more difficult situation than ever. In March, Assembly Bill 99 (AB99) was signed into law, shifting \$1 billion from First 5's to the state's general fund. Although Proposition 10 revenues are currently not included in this year's state budget, AB99 is still in place. Unless it is repealed or defeated in court, locally we are still obligated to pay \$10 million to the state by June 2012. It will be several months before we know the results of these legal challenges.

This potential and substantial loss will greatly impact our long-term plans for supporting children and families in our community. It will mean rethinking our long-term financial plan over the coming months. We are hopeful that with thoughtful changes, we can work to maintain our community investments for Cycle 2.

Contact your state Senator and Assembly Member right away. Because the final State Budget did not include Proposition 10 (First 5) funding, many state lawmakers are not aware that First 5 is still mandated to pay \$1 billion by June 30, 2012. Call, write, or fax your representative now and let them know funding for these critical programs is still in peril. For sample letters, [click here](#).

Children's Movement Focuses on Changing State's Agenda for Children

Almost everyone agrees that children are important. But when it comes to effective public programs and legislation, children are being left out. For the first time in modern history, the current generation

of children in America is expected to live shorter lives and have a lower standard of living than their parents. Babies need our voice.

The Children's Movement, an initiative of Children Now, recently began campaigns to improve children's wellbeing and rejuvenate the state. They have also developed The Children's Agenda for California, a comprehensive plan addressing education and health problems undermining children's development. Topics covered in The Children's Agenda specific to young children include a comprehensive, high-quality early learning system for all children; coordinating and streamlining the delivery of children's services; effectively implementing federal health care reform; and reducing childhood obesity rates.

The Children's Movement reminds us that these are important times for our youngest generation. You can join the movement, [click here](#).

Our Commissioners

- Elliott Robinson, Chair Director, Monterey County Department of Social & Employment Services
- Simón Salinas, Vice Chair 3rd District Supervisor, Monterey County Board of Supervisors
- Jeannie Hori-Garcia, Secretary Early Childhood Education Educator, Hartnell Community College
- Ray Bullick Director of Health, Monterey County Health Department
- Jan Phillips-Paulsen Early Childhood Educator (Community Member)
- Esther Rubio Director, Monterey County Head Start (Community Member)
- Josefina Silva Preschool Coordinator, Greenfield Union School District (Community Member)

For more information about First 5 Monterey County go to www.First5Monterey.org . For updates from First 5 Monterey County, please join us on [Facebook](#).

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