In the first five years of a child’s life, critical brain connections are made that shape lifelong learning. Incredibly, by age five, a child’s brain has grown to 90% of adult size. Research shows that high-quality early childhood education provides a 13% return on investment. How we nurture and support our children today will impact their future success in school and in life.

Our Vision:
All children reach their unique potential in a family and community that values, respects, and invests in early childhood.

Over the past 22 years, First 5 Monterey County (F5MC) has helped nearly 600,000 children, families, educators, and care providers.
Since 1999, First 5 Monterey County (F5MC) has been dedicated to supporting children prenatal to age five and their families in three impact areas:

**Impact 1**
Children receive services that contribute to their overall health and safety

**Impact 2**
Children have high-quality early childhood experiences, child care and education

**Impact 3**
Children are at the center of policies and legislation

“First 5’s efforts to support early care and education providers over the years have literally saved my business as well as others. They are responsible, flexible, and proactive in crisis situations. Most recently, without their proactive advocacy and support, the child care situation in the county during the pandemic would have been much worse.”

— Shannan Watkins, Early Development Services

“My family has been through a lot of very difficult things. First 5 services came to our family to help us make some drastic changes. When I saw the change in my family, I felt strong and more important too. Thank you very much to First 5. I hope this program never ends.”

— Costino Santos, Parent
First 5 Monterey County is providing for children 0–5 and their families by responding to the **needs of today and the future**. Here are just a few highlights of our efforts.

**22,270** children, parents, caregivers, providers and educators supported during FY 2020–2021

**Children receive services that contribute to their overall health and safety**

| **1,089** | children and parents received personalized **connections to services**, such as, speech therapy, mental health therapy, etc. |
| **964** | children were **screened** to improve children’s health and prevent learning delays |
| **855,680** | diapers and wipes distributed during times of shortage |
| **2,145** | vaccines administered to child care educators |

**Children have high-quality early childhood experiences, child care and education**

| **1,074** | trainings provided to early childhood educators, child care providers and social service partners to ensure high quality service delivery to an **estimated 8,600 children** |
| **750** | children participated in a dual language learning program in English and Spanish |
| **2,000** | free books in the community |
| **410** | Hartnell and MPC students supported to complete their early childhood education degree to address the teacher shortage |
| **≈5,000** | kits for new parents distributed |

“I started participating in First 5 programs because I wanted to offer dual language education to children. Parents need to know that this program will help them. It has left us with a family connection and they have created reading routines. First 5 was here, the children participated and now I see them blooming.”

— Alma Granillo, Child Care Provider
First 5 Monterey County, also known as the Monterey County Children and Families Commission, was established with the passage of Proposition 10 in 1998. Proposition 10 is a statewide initiative that provides a dedicated source of funding for programs serving children from the prenatal stage through age 5 and their families. This voter approved proposition adds a 50-cent per pack tax to all tobacco products. Funds are collected statewide and distributed to each county based upon annual birthrates. First 5 Monterey County was established in 1999 and is the independent public agency responsible for administering Proposition 10 funds in Monterey County and is governed by a board of Commissioners.