



AGENDA ITEM: 6C  
DATE OF MEETING: January 18, 2012  
ACTION:   X    
INFORMATION: \_\_\_\_\_

**FIRST 5 CALIFORNIA GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTING  
THE CALIFORNIA CHILDREN AND FAMILIES ACT**

**SUMMARY OF REQUEST**

The Commission is asked to review and approve the updated Guidelines for Implementing the Children and Families Act (the Guidelines).

**BACKGROUND**

The California Children and Families Act of 1998 (the Act) states that First 5 California adopt Guidelines for the development of “an integrated and comprehensive statewide program of promoting, supporting, and improving early childhood development that enhances the intellectual, social, emotional, and physical development of children in California.” (Health and Safety Code Section 130125)

That same section requires that First 5 California: “On at least an annual basis, periodically review its adopted guidelines and revise them as may be necessary or appropriate.” The section also states that “at least one public hearing” on the guidelines be held prior to adoption.

The Guidelines are a tool and resource to guide county commissions in the planning/design of a comprehensive, integrated plan to implement the Act. The Guidelines are intended to suggest pathways for achieving the goals of the Act; they are not prescriptive or mandatory. These guidelines were last updated in 2006.

**SUMMARY**

Incorporating input from the local county commissions, First 5 California Research and Evaluation staff revised the Guidelines with updates designed to streamline and update the document with the latest information available.

The newly updated Guidelines will assist county commissions with the review and revision of their implementation plans. The guidelines support county commissions in developing a comprehensive, integrated plan, and guide an outcomes-based accountability approach.

The Guidelines include:

1. Commission Background
2. Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles
3. Guidelines: Purpose and Structure
4. Focus Area One: Parent Education and Support Services
5. Focus Area Two: Child Care and Early Education
6. Focus Area Three: Health and Wellness

The Guidelines also cover the strategic planning elements that the Act requires:

- Description of goals and objectives
- Description of programs/services/projects
- Description of measurable outcomes using appropriate reliable indicators
- Description of how program/services/projects will be integrated into an accessible system

The process of updating the Guidelines has spanned several years and has been inclusive. For example, county representatives on the Technical Assistance Committee of the First 5 Association provided feedback in addition to that mentioned above.

Changes to the Guidelines for 2012 are as follows:

- Updated roster of current commission members.
- Reformatted document for quicker review.
- Revised resources to match current organizations and agencies.
- Inclusion of promising practices developed since 2006 that improve the health and wellness of children.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

In order to comply with the requirements of Proposition 10, staff recommends the Commission approve the updated Guidelines for Implementing the Children and Families Act and its release to county commissions.