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First 5 commissioners approve support for Healthy Families Program

The California Children and Families Commission (First 5 California) had a full agenda at its July 15 meeting, but the item receiving the most public comment was a proposed resolution to join public and private partners in offering support to the popular Healthy Families Program.

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First 5 California Executive Director Kris Perry read the brief resolution to the commissioners and a packed room of concerned early childhood development advocates that included former Assemblywoman Wilma Chan and others who requested First 5's support following Perry's presentation.

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State commissioners Maria Minon, M.D., left, and Molly Munger discuss the importance of supporting the Healthy Families Program.

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"First 5 believes in a shared responsibility approach," Perry said to state commissioners and the audience. "Joining with other public and private partners, we are committed to ensuring children have access to health insurance."

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Last December, First 5 California and many First 5 county commissions helped the Healthy Families Program avert a waiting list for new applicants for

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children's health coverage with a \$16.75 million contribution. The program is administered by the Managed Risk Medical Insurance Board (MRMIB).

First 5 California's resolution established a continued commitment to assist MRMIB, contingent upon the availability of funds. The State Commission unanimously approved the resolution.

Also during the July commission meeting, J. Ronald Lally, co-director of WestEd's Center for Child and Family Studies, delivered a statistical presentation on critical results of early childhood education. His data indicated demographic trends within California focusing on health, teen motherhood, ethnic comparisons, and educational and poverty levels. Lally reported that California's population of children 0 to 5 is projected to increase from 2.95 million in 1990 to 3.70 million in 2010. The WestEd research also indicated nearly 617,000 children ages 0 to 5 in California currently live in poverty.

In another informative presentation, Dr. Katherine Magnuson discussed the scientific effects of a child's brain and the importance of human interaction for healthy development early in life. Dr. Magnuson, an assistant professor of Social Work at Harvard University's Center on the Developing Child, presented her scientific findings from a report titled "The National Forum on Early Childhood Program Evaluation."



Fraser Communications CEO Renee Fraser explained the strategy of First 5 California's public education and outreach campaign.

The state commissioners also heard a description of the

development and delivery of the first phase of First 5 California's public education and outreach campaign from Fraser Communications. CEO Renee Fraser explained that First 5 California's advertising decisions were based on research that provided a framework for determining where to target outreach efforts. The campaign was launched in June.

The public education and outreach campaign includes an innovative package of radio spots with a catchy and popular jingle that are airing on a variety of stations throughout California. In addition, transit buses and bus shelters throughout the state are outfitted with brightly colored banners. The purpose of all the media is to direct families of young children to the new First 5 California parents' resource Web site. Fraser said, "As of mid-July, we've had 42,000 hits to the micro-site since it went up in June."

Executive Director Perry also presented a mid-year review of First 5 California's strategic plan, announcing that, "Ninety percent of our objectives have been completed." In addition, the commissioners approved an extension of the ALOM contract to continue producing the popular *Kit for New Parents*.

The next commission meeting is scheduled for October 21 in Los Angeles.

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Project Legacy moving forward

On July 15, First 5 California commissioners approved a streamlined and accelerated version of the *Project Legacy* process. *Project Legacy* is the foundation for First 5 California's roadmap to the future, established as the development of a distinctive set of signature programs for children 0 to 5 and their families. *Project Legacy* will result in the development of measurable program goals.

First 5 California staff will continue to solicit input on program goals from stakeholders at three public forums in northern, central and southern California. During the

input forums, stakeholders will provide feedback on the draft goals and help with their prioritization. The new process utilizes the expertise of a small expert panel, rather than a large workgroup, to develop the draft goals. The expert panel includes researchers, practitioners, philanthropists, and parents. Using a smaller expert panel allows *Project Legacy* to be developed in a more streamlined process.

Detailed information about the streamlined process is posted on the *Project Legacy* Web site at <http://www.cafc.ca.gov/press/legacy.asp>. Meeting dates for the regional input forums are scheduled for August 24, 25 and 27. Once determined, the meeting times and locations will be announced on the First 5 California Web site. Individuals interested in following the progress or participating in the development of *Project Legacy* are encouraged to sign up for the *Project Legacy* list serve also found at the First 5 California Web site. To receive periodic *Project Legacy* updates, please subscribe by sending an email with the subject line "SUBSCRIBE" to: evalnewssubscribe@cafc.ca.gov.

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California Head Start publication features First 5 California

The Spring 2009 issue of *Bridges*, a 32-page collaborative publication produced by the California Department of Education and the California Head Start Association (California Head Start-State Collaboration office), features First 5 California, highlighting its history, purpose, projects and programs.

The publication details the inception of First 5 California through Proposition 10, an initiative passed by California voters in 1998 to institute a 50-cent-per-pack tax on tobacco products. The revenue, allocated among the state's 58 counties and the state commission, is dedicated to supporting and improving health and education outcomes for children ages 0 to 5.

There are more than 150 Head Start and Early Head Start agencies throughout California. First 5 California

partners with these agencies to increase the number of children enrolled in the Head Start programs and improve educational outcomes for the state's youngest population.

Bridges provides a comprehensive, easy-to-read analysis of First 5 with an overview of the organization, a discussion on developing a quality workforce of teachers and caregivers, public and private collaborations, and a detailed description of the *Kit for New Parents*. The latest issue of *Bridges* can be found at:

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/documents/bridges09.pdf>.

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Early learning collaboration benefits children of migrant workers

In today's economic climate, avoiding duplication of services and maximizing funding efforts by forming strong partnerships is imperative. These partnerships lead to increased access to quality early care and education services for hard-to-reach and at-risk populations while helping to narrow the achievement gap.

First 5 California staff recently met with representatives from the California Department of Education (CDE), the Migrant Education Even Start (MEES) program, the Academy for Education Development of the National Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) Collaboration Office, and Migrant Head Start of Riverside and Imperial Counties. The June 25 meeting was held to develop a new partnership aimed at providing sustained quality health and education services to children of migrant workers and their families.

The group had a dialogue around service and program information, then identified service areas that needed coordination, making an essential step toward the goal of expanding early learning services to migrant and seasonal farm worker preschoolers and their families.

The group determined next steps should include:

- Joint agency meetings to improve communication
- Shared curriculum
- Shared resources such as books and supplies
- Shared data to avoid duplicated services
- Formalizing the partnership by developing a Memorandum of Understanding

The next collaborative meeting is scheduled for September 15 in Sacramento.

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KCET meets to determine growth of educational programming

On July 21, First 5 California commissioner and co-director of the Advancement Project, Molly Munger, served as moderator and Executive Director Kris Perry was a panelist for an early education discussion at KCET's historic studios in Hollywood.

KCET, public television producers of award winning programs *A Place of Our Own*, *Los Niños en Su Casa* and *Sid the Science Kid*, hosted the day-long meeting of their Circle of Advisors. The meeting was designed to develop improved standards and ideas for future television programming.

Other expert panelists included Linda Smith, executive director of the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA); Yolie Flores Aguilar, member of the Los Angeles Unified School Board; and Walter Gilliam, director of The Ed Zigler Center in Child Development and Social Policy at Yale University.

The panelists discussed critical issues affecting early education, workforce development, K-12 alignment, and the impact of research on policy in California. The invitation-only meeting included a group of 50 policy advocates, community organizations and family child care providers.

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Emmy award for *Sid the Science Kid* developer

Sid the Science Kid, the digitally animated instructional series, is an innovative state-of-the-art program designed to teach the benefits of learning science to children in preschool up to age 5. First 5 California proudly serves as co-sponsor of the series, created by the Jim Henson Company.



On Saturday, August 22, the Henson Digital Puppetry Studio will accept an Engineering Emmy Award in Los Angeles for its pioneering animation system that allows performers to puppeteer and voice digital characters in *Sid the Science Kid*.

The Academy of Television Arts & Sciences presents the engineering award annually to an individual, company, or organization for engineering developments that are an extensive improvement over existing methods, or so innovative in nature that they materially affect the transmission, recording or reception of television.

Sid the Science Kid is also nominated for two Daytime Entertainment Emmy Awards, including Outstanding Children's Animated Series and Outstanding Achievement in Main Title and Graphic Design. The Daytime Emmy Awards will be televised Sunday, August 30 on the CW Television Network at 4:00 p.m. (PST).

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First 5 California develops comprehensive data on hard-to-reach communities

First 5 California's effort to identify hard-to-reach communities throughout California is on track to be completed by the end of August. The project was developed for First 5 California by ProProse, a social marketing agency in Sacramento.

Hard-to-reach populations are defined as linguistically or culturally isolated groups that make up the top 27 languages from the 2000 U.S. Census data (excluding English), as well as Native American and Indigenous Mexican communities. The findings will provide a comprehensive overview of where these populations with children age 0 to 5 reside in California, and the best methods to communicate First 5 California messages in appropriate languages and culturally appropriate ways. The information is gathered through a range of qualitative and quantitative research approaches, including:

Census Data Analysis: The creation of demographic maps and data tables for the hard-to-reach populations showing the geographic location of households with children 5 years and younger, as well as the information on the primary language spoken at home, mean household income, marital status, and mother's education level.

Literature Reviews: A compilation of a thorough review of research reports, published articles and other available literature to help understand the challenges facing families of young children in hard-to-reach communities.

Key Informant Interviews: Key informant interviews with select First 5 county commissions to gather more grassroots information about populations in certain areas of the state.

Media Analysis: A media consumption analysis to identify the in-language media outlets that exist throughout the state, as well as any available media consumption patterns of the hard-to-reach populations.

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First 5 California's ads and videos on You Tube and Facebook

A sampling of ads from First 5 California's public education and outreach campaign are posted in a slideshow on YouTube at

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LtouV1sj0tg>.



Click here to see the Spanish-language version:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B5QAiazMeHc>

All First 5 California videos can be found on YouTube at:

www.youtube.com/first5ca or on First 5 California's Facebook page: www.facebook.com/first5california.

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First 5 California featured in new segment on *Univision Los Angeles*

Beginning in August, First 5 California Communications Director Elisa Bupara will appear live every month on *Univision Los Angeles* (KMEX) as part of the station's "Deja Huella, Edúcate" ("Leave your Mark, Get Educated") campaign. Bupara's appearances will address early childhood development issues ranging from school readiness to holiday safety. The feature is part of *Univision's* new public education campaign aimed at reducing the high school drop out rate among Latinos.

On August 20, Bupara is scheduled to promote First 5 California's popular *Kit for New Parents*, a comprehensive package of information and resources for first-time parents, in an interview on *Univision San*

Francisco's (KDTV) morning show "Al Despertar."

For more information about Univision air dates, visit www.univision.com

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Save the date: CARES Promising Practices Symposium

First 5 California hosts its annual Comprehensive Approaches to Raising Educational Standards (CARES) program *Training and Technical Assistance Promising Practices Symposium* November 2-3 at the Holiday Inn Capitol Plaza in Sacramento.

The symposium offers two days of shared discussion and techniques to develop quality childcare through the CARES program.

The first day features a workshop titled, "Shaping our Future Together: A Practicum on Diversity and Collaboration." Elena Pell, a consultant for Equilibria Coaching and Consulting leads this full-day, interactive, workshop. Pell is co-author of *Walking the Walk*, a publication that outlines her nine principles of quality workforce development.

The workshop encourages participants to reflect on their current educational and workforce aptitude and determine their next steps to higher quality service delivery.

The second day is titled, "Early Learning Workforce: Laying the Groundwork for California's Future." Jerlean Daniel, Ph.D., deputy executive director of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) is scheduled to be the keynote speaker.

The morning panel discussion is titled "How California's Statewide Vision Fits into the National Picture" while the afternoon participants will engage in "Table Talks" facilitated by statewide leaders on topics taken from the *NAEYC Blueprint for State Early Childhood Professional*

Development Systems.

The closing keynote speaker, Peter Mangione, co-director of WestEd, will discuss the California Department of Education's Preschool Foundations and Teacher Competencies.

For more information on this informative and exciting event, please contact Cynthia Hearden, consultant, First 5 California, at chearden@ccfc.ca.gov.

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