



AGENDA ITEM: 4
DATE OF MEETING: July 25, 2013
ACTION: _____
INFORMATION: X

STRATEGIC PLAN PROCESS

SUMMARY

The Glen Price Group continues to facilitate the Commission's Strategic Plan development process. This inter-active meeting will provide Commissioners and the public an opportunity to engage in the development of the plan, and provide feedback and suggestions related to the Statement of Strategic Direction.

BACKGROUND

At the April 2013 Commission meeting, the Glen Price Group provided an overview of the strategic planning process.

Since then, much progress has been made, including the following:

- Forty-six intensive, one-on-one interviews were conducted with key informants statewide.
- A statewide survey was developed and conducted, involving over 1,100 participants statewide.
- Documents and data were extensively reviewed, including analysis of First 5 county commission strategic plans.
- Facilitation of two participatory planning meetings with First 5 California staff.
- Iterative development of planning materials and documentation.

Thus far, guidance and support has been provided by the Core Planning Team, consisting of Commissioner Icenhower, Vice Chair Duterte (through June 2013), Moira Kenney (Executive Director, First 5 Association of California), Camille Maben (Executive Director, First 5 California), Diane Levin (Chief Deputy Director, First 5 California), and Jaime Hastings (Executive Advisor, First 5 California).

ATTACHMENTS

- Draft First 5 California Statement of Strategic Direction
- Overview of Quantitative Survey Results
- Key Quantitative Survey Results Data Points
- First 5 California Key Stakeholder Themes

First 5 California: Draft Statement of Strategic Direction

This document serves as a summary of work to date towards the development of First 5 California's (F5CA) Statement of Strategic Direction, the overarching frame for our strategic plan. As we move forward, it provides the basis for development of more detailed development of objectives and action plans. This version of the Statement of Strategic Direction is an early draft developed on the basis of extensive input received from F5CA stakeholders statewide. It is organized in four sections describing First 5 California's:

- Vision
- Mission
- Values
- Goals

This draft of the Statement of Strategic Direction is intended to be a 'lightning rod' for First 5 California commissioners and First 5 Association members to provide further input and suggestions for revision.

1. First 5 California Vision

The vision is an aspirational statement of what First 5 California would like to achieve in the future. It provides direction for First 5 California's compass.

Draft Vision:

California's children thrive from birth and are prepared for lifelong success.

2. First 5 California Mission

First 5 California's mission states its core reason for being, who it plans to serve, and how it plans to do so. It serves to differentiate its functions and core expertise from other organizations that are working in different ways towards the same vision.

Mission: *Serve as an essential partner as California builds unity, capacity, and systems creating the foundation for lifelong success for children 0 to 5 and families.*

3. First 5 California Values

The values represent First 5 California's essential and enduring tenets. They are a small set of general guiding principles and focus all the work First 5 California undertakes.

- Children and Family Focused: We place the needs of children and families at the center of decision-making, program planning, and policy development and do so in culturally and linguistically sensitive ways.
- Commitment: We dedicate ourselves to ensuring our work yields innovative programs, policies, and systems that result in the highest quality of service to children with the greatest need.
- Collaborative: We create and practice a shared understanding of inclusivity, collaboration, and partnership, both internally, and externally across disciplines, county commissions, stakeholder groups, and traditional silos.
- Outcomes-driven: We seek high-quality results that are measurable, and we use evaluation as a tool for continuous improvement.
- Civic: We advocate for public policies aimed at improving outcomes and systems of support for children ages 0 to 5 and are accountable to the people of California for the wise and effective use of public funds.
- Intentional: We make decisions and take action in strategic and intentional ways to make the greatest impact.

4. Strategic Goals, Strategies, Objectives, and Indicators

First 5 California’s proposed goals are organized around three “meta-goal” areas, which represent the three primary foci of work and activity: children, systems and networks, and public support.¹ These areas are viewed as being critically linked, meaning that strong outcomes for children will not be achieved without strong systems and public support. The tables below provide a meta-goal in each of these areas as well as supporting goals. Based on agreement around these goals, strategies, objectives, and indicators will be developed in future planning phases.

Meta-Goal	Goals	Strategy and Approach	Objectives and Indicators
<p>★ Children</p> <p>Support children 0 to 5 by providing resources and opportunities for them to develop cognitive, social, and emotional skills and by providing access to health care and services needed to achieve success in school and life.</p>	<p><i>Child Health:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children 0 to 5 receive the full spectrum of health care and services they need to sustain their well-being. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence-based Approaches Data and Evaluation Partnerships and Collaboration Public Education Policy and Advocacy 	
	<p><i>High-Quality Early Learning:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children 0 to 5 have access to high quality early learning and care that prepares them to succeed in school and life. 		
	<p><i>Family Support and Partnership:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families have access to resources and opportunities that assist them in nurturing, caring, and providing for their children’s success and well-being. 		

¹ In addition to the meta-goals that guide First 5 California’s external work for children ages 0 to 5 and their families, First 5 California staff will work with an additional meta-goal for institutional development within the organization. This meta-goal directly supports the other three by building increased internal capacity for First 5 California’s ability to achieve its vision.

Meta-Goal	Drivers and Goals	Strategy and Approach	Objectives and Indicators
<p>★ Systems and Networks</p> <p>Foster the strength and vitality of the First 5 network and California support systems serving children 0 to 5 and families.</p>	<p><i>Leadership as a Convener and Partner:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring stakeholders together to align, collaborate on, and bolster statewide efforts and initiatives to improve outcomes for children 0 to 5 and families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Data and Evaluation ✓ Partnerships and Collaboration ✓ Public Education ✓ Policy and Advocacy 	
	<p><i>Resource Development and Stewardship:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategically and fully leverage existing resources and seek new opportunities and resources to maximize return on investments for children 0 to 5 and families. 		

Meta-Goal	Goals	Strategy and Approach	Objectives and Indicators
<p>★ Public Support and Investment <i>Build public investment in the well-being and success of children 0 to 5 and their families.</i></p>	<p><i>Communications:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empower parents and families to support their children 0 to 5 by communicating evidence-based awareness and advisory messages. • Build public engagement in investing in early childhood. • Increase public understanding of First 5's mission, responsibilities, and successes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Data and Evaluation ✓ Partnerships and Collaboration ✓ Public Education ✓ Policy and Advocacy ✓ Evidence-based Information for Families 	
	<p><i>Legislative Engagement/Leadership:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influence policy change at the local, county, and state levels that improves conditions for children 0 to 5 and their families. 		

First 5 California – July 25th Strategic Planning Session

Overview of Strategic Planning Process

July 25, 2013 Overview of Quantitative Survey Results 1

First 5 California – July 25th Strategic Planning Session

Timeline and Key Milestones*

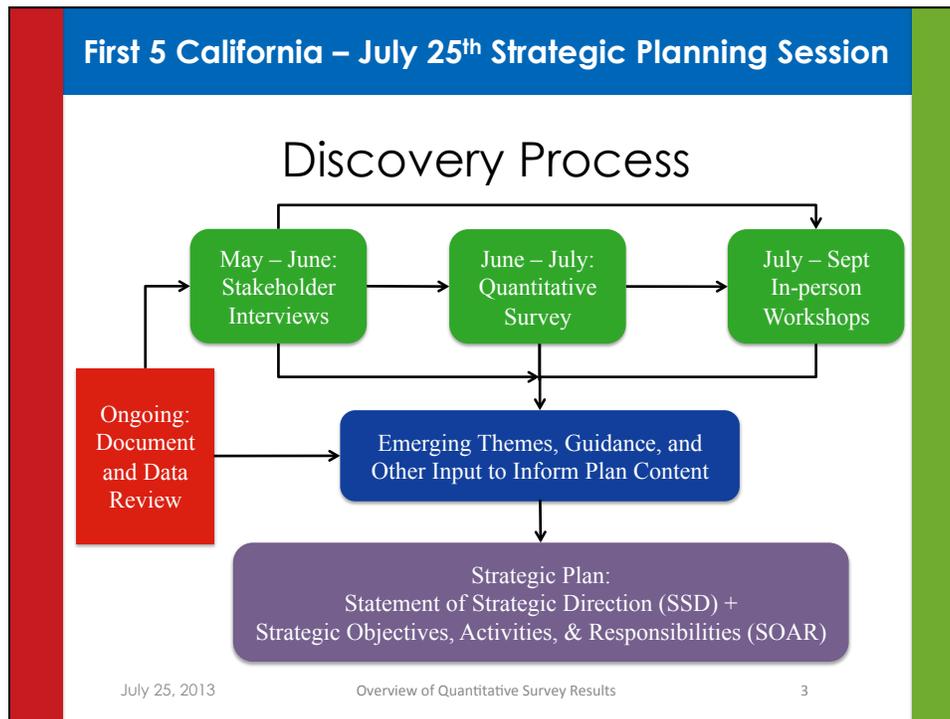
* Dates are tentative

- 1** **May:** Convened Core Planning Team – Biweekly Meetings
- 2** **May-July:** Began Discovery Process Includes in-person workshops with staff and First 5 Association.
- 3**
- 4**
- 5** **August-September:** Develop Draft Strategic Objectives, Activities, and Responsibilities (SOAR)
- 6** **October 24:** Present Final Strategic Plan to First 5 Commission (SSD + SOAR)

July: Develop Draft Statement of Strategic Direction (SSD) And present to the Commission on July 25, 2013.

August-September: Gather and Incorporate Feedback on the Draft SSD and SOAR

July 25, 2013 Overview of Quantitative Survey Results 2



First 5 California – July 25th Strategic Planning Session

Initial Results of Stakeholder Survey

The slide features a large, bold title 'Initial Results of Stakeholder Survey' centered on the page. The slide footer includes the date 'July 25, 2013', the title 'Overview of Quantitative Survey Results', and the page number '4'.

First 5 California – July 25th Strategic Planning Session

Stakeholder Survey

- Confidential, online survey
- Qualitative and quantitative (multiple choice, spectrum of agreement, ranking) questions
- Disseminated via First 5 CA networks
- 1,101 responses – Top participants:
 - Nonprofit employee (228)
 - Early childhood educator (194)
 - Other (164)
 - First 5 County staff (current or former) (135)

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Overview of Quantitative Survey Results

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Additional Demographics

- Participants who indicated “Other” were predominantly county commission grantees
 - nonprofit and city/county staff across various programs in health, early learning, and social services
- Responses from all counties except Sierra

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Overview of Quantitative Survey Results

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First 5 California – July 25th Strategic Planning Session

Analysis Methodology

- Quantitative Results
 - Spectrum of agreement questions
 - 1 - Strongly Disagree, 2 - Disagree, 3 - Somewhat Disagree, 4 - Somewhat Agree, 5 - Agree, and 6 - Strongly Agree
 - Finding average of responses for each question
 - Finding global average of all survey question responses
 - Comparing average for each question to global average
 - Ranking questions

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Overview of Quantitative Survey Results

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Analysis Methodology

- Overall quantitative results:
 - Average score for spectrum-of-agreement questions: 4.44 (out of 6)
 - Scores greater than 4.89 are **green**-highlighted
 - Scores lower than 3.99 are **red**-highlighted
 - Disaggregated scores are not highlighted

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Overview of Quantitative Survey Results

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How to Read the Data Tables

Statement	Score	n	%SwA+	%SwD-
79. Mission Clarity				
c) I have a clear understanding of the specific goals and objectives of First 5 California	4.70	1087	89%	11%
First 5 California Commissioner (current or former)	5.19	27	96%	4%
First 5 California staff member (current or former)	4.70	30	90%	10%
First 5 County Commissioner (current or former)	4.97	62	90%	10%
First 5 County staff member (current or former)	4.88	135	92%	8%

- The average level of agreement across all stakeholder groups was 4.70, which falls between Somewhat Agree (4) and Agree (5)
- 1,087 participants responded to this statement on Mission Clarity
- 89% of all respondents to this statement indicated a score of Somewhat Agree or stronger
- 11% of all respondents indicated a score of Somewhat Disagree or weaker
- First 5 CA and County commissioners indicated a stronger average level of agreement than the majority of respondents (>4.89)

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First 5 California – July 25th Strategic Planning Session

Opportunities for Alignment

- Survey participants were almost evenly split on which two statewide efforts First 5 CA could align (Q89)
 - Strengthening Families, a research-based cost-effective strategy to increase family stability, and prevent child abuse and neglect
 - California Comprehensive Early Learning Plan (CCELP)

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First 5 California – July 25th Strategic Planning Session

Observations

- Overall, stakeholders rated First 5 California and its work very positively
- First 5 California staff members were more critical of themselves than almost all other demographic groups.
- Private contractors with First 5 California and First 5 California Commissioners (former and current) responded most positively overall.

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Overview of Quantitative Survey Results

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First 5 California – July 25th Strategic Planning Session

Observations (cont'd.)

- Quantitative data does not line up with more nuanced themes from analysis of qualitative interview and survey responses, and was not always consistent with responses within the survey
 - Survey captures a snapshot of opinions from a broader group of stakeholders with varying degrees of experience with First 5 CA and knowledge of its mandate
 - Interview responses were from a smaller group of stakeholders more intimately familiar with First 5 CA's work and responsibilities

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Overview of Quantitative Survey Results

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Observations (cont'd.)

- High-scoring areas:
 - First 5 CA is seen as an agent of change in the areas impacting children ages 0 to 5
 - First 5 CA investments in child health and early education and care
- Low-scoring areas:
 - External stakeholder engagement
 - Collaboration and partnership with County Commissions
- Ranking questions 85, 87, and 89 provide a “heat map” of survey participants’ opinions

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Overview of Quantitative Survey Results

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Focus Areas Moving Forward

- Survey participants ranked early childhood education and child health as the top two focus areas, respectively, for First 5 CA moving forward (Q85)
 - Overall, survey participants feel First 5 California has successfully invested in those two areas (Q81)
 - However, responses from comments in interviews and the survey made a distinction between spending money in child health and intentionally investing in child health initiatives

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Key Strategies

- Survey participants strongly indicated that First 5 CA should prioritize:
 - funding programs and services, and
 - advising the Governor and legislature as a key strategy for accomplishing its work
- Interviewees prioritized a policymaking and advocacy over funding as a greater role for First 5 CA as an avenue for effecting sustainable, long-term systems change in the face of diminishing revenues

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Overview of Quantitative Survey Results

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First 5 California – July 25th Strategic Planning Session

Opportunities for Alignment

- Survey participants were almost evenly split on which two statewide efforts First 5 CA could align (Q89)
 - Strengthening Families, a research-based cost-effective strategy to increase family stability, and prevent child abuse and neglect
 - California Comprehensive Early Learning Plan (CCELP), which aligned with participants indication that First 5 CA should continue to focus on early childhood education

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Opportunities for Alignment (cont'd.)

- While the top ranking of alignment with Strengthening Families does not clearly fall under the focus areas of early childhood education, it is related to child health, and arguably, therefore, early learning

Key Quantitative Survey Results Data Points

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First 5 California Stakeholder Survey - June 2013

Aggregated Responses to Spectrum of Agreement Statements by Stakeholder Group

Statement	Score	n	%SwA+	%SwD -
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Spectrum of Agreement Scores:

1 - Strongly Disagree 2 - Disagree 3 - Somewhat Disagree 4 - Somewhat Agree 5 - Agree 6 - Strongly Agree

3.5 or above is a score of Agreement

Average score for all responses from all stakeholders = 4.44

Majority of scores (68%) fell between the range of 3.99 to 4.89 (Standard deviation=0.45)

Scores highlighted in green or red fall outside of the average range and indicate areas of stronger agreement/disagreement

Statement		Score	n	%SwA+	%SwD -
First 5 California helps disseminate research-based best practices in the field.		4.58	828	86%	14%
10c	First 5 California Commissioner	4.89	27	89%	11%
30i	First 5 County Commissioner	4.29	59	78%	22%
30i	First 5 County Staff	3.95	130	68%	32%
46d	Grant Making Organization	5.00	7	86%	14%
51d	Nonprofit Organization	4.88	76	93%	7%
51d	Other State Agency	4.42	219	84%	16%
62	Early Childhood Educator	4.92	190	92%	8%
68	Family Support Provider	4.92	49	90%	10%
74	Health Care Provider	4.83	71	96%	4%
I have a clear understanding of the relationship between First 5 California and the county commissions		4.77	61	90%	10%
4a	First 5 California Commissioner	4.89	28	89%	11%
13c	First 5 California Staff	4.67	33	91%	9%
I have a clear understanding of the overall focus of the First 5 movement (Prop 10 mandate)		5.13	61	95%	5%
4b	First 5 California Commissioner	5.21	28	93%	7%
13d	First 5 California Staff	5.06	33	97%	3%
I have/had a clear understanding of my individual role and responsibilities within First 5 California		5.07	60	92%	8%
4c	First 5 California Commissioner	5.37	27	96%	4%
13a	First 5 California Staff	4.82	33	88%	12%
Through my work I feel personally connected to the mission of First 5 California		5.03	61	92%	8%
4e	First 5 California Commissioner	5.29	28	93%	7%
13e	First 5 California Staff	4.82	33	91%	9%
I am proud of my role in the movement to improve the lives of young children and families in California		5.56	61	100%	0%
4f	First 5 California Commissioner	5.71	28	100%	0%
13f	First 5 California Staff	5.42	33	100%	0%
First 5 California communicates articulately with the public and external stakeholders		4.09	56	75%	25%
7a	First 5 California Commissioner	4.30	27	78%	22%
21b	First 5 California Staff	3.90	29	72%	28%

Key Quantitative Survey Results Data Points

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First 5 California Stakeholder Survey - June 2013

Aggregated Responses to Spectrum of Agreement Statements by Stakeholder Group

Statement		Score	n	%SwA+	%SwD -
First 5 California seeks out and is responsive to input from local commissions		3.88	240	64%	36%
7b	First 5 California Commissioner	4.42	26	77%	23%
21c	First 5 California Staff	4.00	27	78%	22%
30a	First 5 County Commissioner	3.90	59	69%	31%
30a	First 5 County Staff	3.73	128	55%	45%
First 5 California seeks out and is responsive to input from other state agencies		4.27	51	80%	20%
7c	First 5 California Commissioner	4.46	24	79%	21%
21d	First 5 California Staff	4.11	27	81%	19%
First 5 California seeks out and is responsive to input from foundation and other government agency funders		4.31	49	84%	16%
7d	First 5 California Commissioner	4.50	22	82%	18%
21e	First 5 California Staff	4.15	27	85%	15%
First 5 California seeks out and is responsive to input from nonprofit organizations		4.18	49	78%	22%
7e	First 5 California Commissioner	4.36	22	77%	23%
21f	First 5 California Staff	4.04	27	78%	22%
First 5 California seeks out and is responsive to input from legislators and policy makers		4.42	52	87%	13%
7f	First 5 California Commissioner	4.83	23	96%	4%
21g	First 5 California Staff	4.07	28	79%	21%
39a	Policy Maker	5.00	1	100%	0%
First 5 California seeks out and is responsive to input from the general public		3.92	49	65%	35%
7g	First 5 California Commissioner	4.27	22	82%	18%
21h	First 5 California Staff	3.63	27	52%	48%
First 5 California is a strong advocate for the needs of children ages 0 to 5 and their families at the state level		4.87	522	91%	9%
10d	First 5 California Commissioner	5.27	26	96%	4%
30j	First 5 County Commissioner	4.83	60	92%	8%
30j	First 5 County Staff	4.59	130	85%	15%
39f	Policy Maker	5.00	1	100%	0%
46g	Grant Making Organization	5.29	7	100%	0%
51g	Nonprofit Organization	5.22	78	97%	3%
51g	Other State Agency	4.85	220	91%	9%
First 5 California is a strong advocate for the needs of young children and their families at the federal level		4.37	482	78%	22%
10e	First 5 California Commissioner	4.72	25	80%	20%
30k	First 5 County Commissioner	4.35	57	77%	23%
30k	First 5 County Staff	4.03	116	65%	35%
39g	Policy Maker	4.00	1	100%	0%
46h	Grant Making Organization	4.71	7	86%	14%
51h	Nonprofit Organization	4.79	72	97%	3%

Key Quantitative Survey Results Data Points

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First 5 California Stakeholder Survey - June 2013

Aggregated Responses to Spectrum of Agreement Statements by Stakeholder Group

Statement		Score	n	%SwA+	%SwD -
51h	Other State Agency	4.37	204	79%	21%
First 5 California collaborates and partners successfully with local county commissions		3.86	213	63%	37%
8a	First 5 California Commissioner	4.59	27	89%	11%
30L	First 5 County Commissioner	4.03	59	68%	32%
30L	First 5 County Staff	3.63	127	55%	45%
First 5 California provides the support and policy guidance needed to stakeholders (local commissions, other state agencies, legislators, funders, nonprofits) to develop a strong 0 to 5 movement/voice		4.30	515	77%	23%
10a	First 5 California Commissioner	4.76	25	92%	8%
30g	First 5 County Commissioner	4.19	59	75%	25%
30g	First 5 County Staff	3.64	127	54%	46%
39d	Policy Maker	4.00	1	100%	0%
46e	Grant Making Organization	5.14	7	100%	0%
51e	Nonprofit Organization	4.81	77	94%	6%
51e	Other State Agency	4.45	219	83%	17%
First 5 California plays an appropriate role with regard to fostering statewide collaboration in issues related to children ages 0 to 5		4.50	512	82%	18%
10b	First 5 California Commissioner	4.76	25	92%	8%
30h	First 5 County Commissioner	4.40	60	83%	17%
30h	First 5 County Staff	3.88	126	62%	38%
39e	Policy Maker	4.00	1	100%	0%
46f	Grant Making Organization	4.71	7	100%	0%
51f	Nonprofit Organization	5.04	75	99%	1%
51f	Other State Agency	4.67	218	87%	13%
First 5 California collaborates and partners successfully with state/federal policy makers and legislators		4.62	26	88%	12%
8b	First 5 California Commissioner	4.68	25	92%	8%
39h	Policy Maker	3.00	1	0%	100%
First 5 California collaborates and partners successfully with foundations and grant making institutions		4.52	31	87%	13%
8c	First 5 California Commissioner	4.42	24	83%	17%
46i	Grant Making Organization	4.86	7	100%	0%
First 5 California collaborates and partners successfully with other state agencies/nonprofits		4.32	345	78%	22%
8d	First 5 California Commissioner (other state agencies)	4.42	24	79%	21%
8e	First 5 California Commissioner (nonprofit organizations)	4.40	25	88%	12%
51k	Nonprofit Organization	4.62	76	84%	16%
51k	Other State Agency	4.20	220	74%	26%
First 5 California Requests for Applications (RFA) provide clear guidelines for applicants about what is required		4.36	188	81%	19%
34a	First 5 County Commissioner and Staff	4.27	161	80%	20%
56a	Private Contractor	4.93	27	93%	7%

Key Quantitative Survey Results Data Points

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First 5 California Stakeholder Survey - June 2013

Aggregated Responses to Spectrum of Agreement Statements by Stakeholder Group

Statement		Score	n	%SwA+	%SwD -
First 5 California provides <i>timely</i> responses to inquiries from RFA applicants		4.34	186	80%	20%
34b	First 5 County Commissioner	4.42	43	79%	21%
34b	First 5 County Staff	4.19	116	76%	24%
56b	Private Contractor	4.89	27	96%	4%
First 5 California provides <i>helpful</i> responses to inquiries from RFA applicants		4.37	184	85%	15%
34c	First 5 County Commissioner and Staff	4.31	157	84%	16%
56b	Private Contractor	4.74	27	93%	7%
Applications are evaluated in a timely manner		4.46	183	87%	13%
34d	First 5 County Commissioner	4.32	41	80%	20%
34d	First 5 County Staff	4.41	115	89%	11%
56d	Private Contractor	4.89	27	93%	7%
The process for RFA review and approval is transparent and understandable		4.32	185	82%	18%
34e	First 5 County Commissioner	4.40	42	83%	17%
34e	First 5 County Staff	4.22	116	81%	19%
56e	Private Contractor	4.63	27	85%	15%
First 5 California has made effective use of stakeholder groups as a means for gathering input and advice from the field across the state.		3.97	663	67%	33%
30b	First 5 County Commissioner (local commissions)	3.90	59	63%	37%
30b	First 5 County Staff (local commissions)	3.62	126	52%	48%
30c	First 5 County Commissioner (F5 Association)	4.27	55	84%	16%
30c	First 5 County Staff (F5 Association)	3.99	122	70%	30%
39b	Policy Maker	4.00	1	100%	0%
46b	Grant Making Organization	4.50	6	83%	17%
51b	Nonprofit Organization	4.40	77	78%	22%
51b	Other State Agency	3.94	217	66%	34%
First 5 Communicates effectively with stakeholder groups		4.19	331	74%	26%
39c	Policy Maker	4.00	1	100%	0%
46c	Grant Making Organization	4.50	6	83%	17%
51c	Nonprofit Organization	4.44	77	82%	18%
51c	Other State Agency	4.04	220	69%	31%
56j	Private Contractor	4.63	27	85%	15%
First 5 California seeks out and is responsive to input from stakeholder groups		4.22	304	77%	23%
46a	Grant Making Organization	4.83	6	100%	0%
51a	Nonprofit Organization	4.48	77	78%	22%
51a	Other State Agency	4.11	221	76%	24%

Key Quantitative Survey Results Data Points

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First 5 California Stakeholder Survey - June 2013

Responses to Spectrum of Agreement Statements Answered by All Respondents

Statement	Score	n	%SwA+	%SwD-
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Spectrum of Agreement Scores:

1 - Strongly Disagree 2 - Disagree 3 - Somewhat Disagree 4 - Somewhat Agree 5 - Agree 6 - Strongly Agree

3.5 or above is a score of Agreement

Average score for all responses from all stakeholders = 4.44

Majority of scores (68%) fell between the range of 3.99 to 4.89 (Standard deviation=0.45)

Scores highlighted in green or red fall outside of the average range and indicate areas of stronger agreement/disagreement

79. Mission Clarity

Statement	Score	n	%SwA+	%SwD-
a) I have a clear understanding of how Proposition 10 tobacco taxes are connected to First 5 California	5.07	1091	92%	8%
First 5 California Commissioner (current or former)	5.50	28	100%	0%
First 5 California staff member (current or former)	5.13	30	93%	7%
First 5 County Commissioner (current or former)	5.45	62	95%	5%
First 5 County staff member (current or former)	5.57	134	98%	2%
State or federal policymaker (legislator, legislative staff, etc.)	6.00	1	100%	0%
Employee at grant-making organization	4.86	7	100%	0%
Employee at another state agency	5.13	80	94%	6%
Employee at a nonprofit organization	4.99	228	92%	8%
Private contractor with First 5 California	5.29	31	97%	3%
Early childhood educator	4.96	191	91%	9%
Family support provider	4.85	48	90%	10%
Health care provider/contractor (including physical health, mental health, and oral health)	4.89	75	91%	9%
Expectant or current parent/primary caregiver of a child ages 0 to 5	3.69	13	62%	38%
Other	4.84	163	87%	13%
b) I have a clear understanding of the mission and values of First 5 California	4.97	1090	94%	6%
First 5 California Commissioner (current or former)	5.37	27	96%	4%
First 5 California staff member (current or former)	5.10	30	100%	0%
First 5 County Commissioner (current or former)	5.18	62	95%	5%
First 5 County staff member (current or former)	5.09	134	93%	7%
State or federal policymaker (legislator, legislative staff, etc.)	6.00	1	100%	0%
Employee at grant-making organization	5.29	7	100%	0%
Employee at another state agency	4.88	80	93%	8%
Employee at a nonprofit organization	4.87	226	95%	5%
Private contractor with First 5 California	5.34	32	94%	6%
Early childhood educator	4.88	191	95%	5%
Family support provider	5.04	49	94%	6%
Health care provider/contractor (including physical health, mental health, and oral health)	4.95	75	93%	7%
Expectant or current parent/primary caregiver of a child ages 0 to 5	4.46	13	85%	15%
Other	4.95	163	94%	6%

Key Quantitative Survey Results Data Points

DRAFT

First 5 California Stakeholder Survey - June 2013

Responses to Spectrum of Agreement Statements Answered by All Respondents

Statement	Score	n	%SwA+	%SwD -
c) I have a clear understanding of the specific goals and objectives of First 5 California	4.70	1087	89%	11%
First 5 California Commissioner (current or former)	5.19	27	96%	4%
First 5 California staff member (current or former)	4.70	30	90%	10%
First 5 County Commissioner (current or former)	4.97	62	90%	10%
First 5 County staff member (current or former)	4.88	135	92%	8%
State or federal policymaker (legislator, legislative staff, etc.)	3.00	1	0%	100%
Employee at grant-making organization	5.00	7	100%	0%
Employee at another state agency	4.60	80	88%	13%
Employee at a nonprofit organization	4.55	224	87%	13%
Private contractor with First 5 California	5.13	32	94%	6%
Early childhood educator	4.64	191	88%	12%
Family support provider	4.67	49	90%	10%
Health care provider/contractor (including physical health, mental health, and oral health)	4.68	74	92%	8%
Expectant or current parent/primary caregiver of a child ages 0 to 5	4.23	13	77%	23%
Other	4.64	162	91%	9%
d) I have a clear understanding of the difference between First 5 California and my local First 5 county commission	4.59	1086	81%	19%
First 5 California Commissioner (current or former)	4.93	27	93%	7%
First 5 California staff member (current or former)	4.93	30	90%	10%
First 5 County Commissioner (current or former)	5.24	62	97%	3%
First 5 County staff member (current or former)	5.44	134	96%	4%
State or federal policymaker (legislator, legislative staff, etc.)	6.00	1	100%	0%
Employee at grant-making organization	4.43	7	86%	14%
Employee at another state agency	4.45	80	76%	24%
Employee at a nonprofit organization	4.50	224	81%	19%
Private contractor with First 5 California	4.72	32	78%	22%
Early childhood educator	4.36	192	79%	21%
Family support provider	4.23	48	69%	31%
Health care provider/contractor (including physical health, mental health, and oral health)	4.29	73	73%	27%
Expectant or current parent/primary caregiver of a child ages 0 to 5	3.77	13	54%	46%
Other	4.28	163	72%	28%
e) I am knowledgeable about First 5 California—its purpose (mandate), history, and work	4.61	1088	87%	13%
First 5 California Commissioner (current or former)	4.96	27	93%	7%
First 5 California staff member (current or former)	4.97	30	97%	3%
First 5 County Commissioner (current or former)	4.89	62	90%	10%
First 5 County staff member (current or former)	5.17	133	95%	5%
State or federal policymaker (legislator, legislative staff, etc.)	5.00	1	100%	0%
Employee at grant-making organization	4.86	7	100%	0%
Employee at another state agency	4.58	80	88%	13%

Key Quantitative Survey Results Data Points

DRAFT

First 5 California Stakeholder Survey - June 2013

Responses to Spectrum of Agreement Statements Answered by All Respondents

Statement	Score	n	%SwA+	%SwD -
Employee at a nonprofit organization	4.46	225	84%	16%
Private contractor with First 5 California	4.78	32	84%	16%
Early childhood educator	4.52	192	86%	14%
Family support provider	4.24	49	78%	22%
Health care provider/contractor (including physical health, mental health, and oral health)	4.41	75	85%	15%
Expectant or current parent/primary caregiver of a child ages 0 to 5	3.92	13	69%	31%
Other	4.47	162	85%	15%
f) I believe First 5 California is an agent of change in the areas impacting children ages 0 to 5	5.04	1089	94%	6%
First 5 California Commissioner (current or former)	5.22	27	96%	4%
First 5 California staff member (current or former)	5.30	30	93%	7%
First 5 County Commissioner (current or former)	5.11	61	95%	5%
First 5 County staff member (current or former)	4.83	135	88%	12%
State or federal policymaker (legislator, legislative staff, etc.)	4.00	1	100%	0%
Employee at grant-making organization	5.29	7	100%	0%
Employee at another state agency	5.09	79	96%	4%
Employee at a nonprofit organization	4.88	227	92%	8%
Private contractor with First 5 California	5.13	32	94%	6%
Early childhood educator	5.14	191	95%	5%
Family support provider	5.18	49	94%	6%
Health care provider/contractor (including physical health, mental health, and oral health)	5.17	75	96%	4%
Expectant or current parent/primary caregiver of a child ages 0 to 5	4.62	13	85%	15%
Other	5.08	162	97%	3%
81. First 5 California Investments				
a) First 5 California has successfully invested in child health	4.93	1059	96%	4%
First 5 California Commissioner (current or former)	5.19	27	100%	0%
First 5 California staff member (current or former)	4.41	29	86%	14%
First 5 County Commissioner (current or former)	4.95	60	97%	3%
First 5 County staff member (current or former)	4.66	130	89%	11%
State or federal policymaker (legislator, legislative staff, etc.)	5.00	1	100%	0%
Employee at grant-making organization	5.00	7	100%	0%
Employee at another state agency	5.11	74	100%	0%
Employee at a nonprofit organization	4.89	221	98%	2%
Private contractor with First 5 California	5.03	30	97%	3%
Early childhood educator	4.97	189	97%	3%
Family support provider	5.08	48	96%	4%
Health care provider/contractor (including physical health, mental health, and oral health)	4.99	74	97%	3%
Expectant or current parent/primary caregiver of a child ages 0 to 5	4.69	13	85%	15%
Other	5.02	156	97%	3%

Key Quantitative Survey Results Data Points

DRAFT

First 5 California Stakeholder Survey - June 2013

Responses to Spectrum of Agreement Statements Answered by All Respondents

Statement	Score	n	%SwA+	%SwD -
b) First 5 California has successfully invested in early education and care	5.02	1069	96%	4%
First 5 California Commissioner (current or former)	5.22	27	100%	0%
First 5 California staff member (current or former)	4.73	30	93%	7%
First 5 County Commissioner (current or former)	5.12	60	100%	0%
First 5 County staff member (current or former)	5.02	132	95%	5%
State or federal policymaker (legislator, legislative staff, etc.)	6.00	1	100%	0%
Employee at grant-making organization	5.00	7	100%	0%
Employee at another state agency	5.12	78	97%	3%
Employee at a nonprofit organization	4.89	221	95%	5%
Private contractor with First 5 California	5.06	31	90%	10%
Early childhood educator	5.01	190	93%	7%
Family support provider	5.17	48	98%	2%
Health care provider/contractor (including physical health, mental health, and oral health)	5.14	74	99%	1%
Expectant or current parent/primary caregiver of a child ages 0 to 5	4.50	12	83%	17%
Other	5.11	158	97%	3%
c) First 5 California has successfully invested in family functioning	4.59	1040	89%	11%
First 5 California Commissioner (current or former)	4.70	27	89%	11%
First 5 California staff member (current or former)	4.45	29	86%	14%
First 5 County Commissioner (current or former)	4.62	60	90%	10%
First 5 County staff member (current or former)	4.28	130	77%	23%
State or federal policymaker (legislator, legislative staff, etc.)	4.00	1	100%	0%
Employee at grant-making organization	4.57	7	100%	0%
Employee at another state agency	4.75	72	96%	4%
Employee at a nonprofit organization	4.55	213	91%	9%
Private contractor with First 5 California	4.72	29	86%	14%
Early childhood educator	4.62	186	88%	12%
Family support provider	4.79	48	90%	10%
Health care provider/contractor (including physical health, mental health, and oral health)	4.66	73	92%	8%
Expectant or current parent/primary caregiver of a child ages 0 to 5	4.42	12	83%	17%
Other	4.67	153	92%	8%
d) First 5 California has successfully invested in public awareness	4.78	1061	91%	9%
First 5 California Commissioner (current or former)	4.78	27	93%	7%
First 5 California staff member (current or former)	4.13	30	77%	23%
First 5 County Commissioner (current or former)	5.11	61	97%	3%
First 5 County staff member (current or former)	4.73	131	92%	8%
State or federal policymaker (legislator, legislative staff, etc.)	6.00	1	100%	0%
Employee at grant-making organization	4.43	7	71%	29%
Employee at another state agency	4.95	74	92%	8%
Employee at a nonprofit organization	4.79	219	91%	9%
Private contractor with First 5 California	5.03	31	94%	6%

Key Quantitative Survey Results Data Points

DRAFT

First 5 California Stakeholder Survey - June 2013

Responses to Spectrum of Agreement Statements Answered by All Respondents

Statement	Score	n	%SwA+	%SwD -
Early childhood educator	4.77	189	91%	9%
Family support provider	4.81	48	85%	15%
Health care provider/contractor (including physical health, mental health, and oral health)	4.73	73	92%	8%
Expectant or current parent/primary caregiver of a child ages 0 to 5	4.25	12	83%	17%
Other	4.78	158	94%	6%
e) First 5 California has successfully invested in systems of care	4.49	1031	86%	14%
First 5 California Commissioner (current or former)	4.78	27	96%	4%
First 5 California staff member (current or former)	4.41	29	86%	14%
First 5 County Commissioner (current or former)	4.48	60	83%	17%
First 5 County staff member (current or former)	4.15	126	71%	29%
State or federal policymaker (legislator, legislative staff, etc.)	3.00	1	0%	100%
Employee at grant-making organization	4.43	7	100%	0%
Employee at another state agency	4.78	74	95%	5%
Employee at a nonprofit organization	4.39	209	86%	14%
Private contractor with First 5 California	4.70	30	90%	10%
Early childhood educator	4.60	183	88%	12%
Family support provider	4.75	48	88%	13%
Health care provider/contractor (including physical health, mental health, and oral health)	4.57	72	88%	13%
Expectant or current parent/primary caregiver of a child ages 0 to 5	4.33	12	83%	17%
Other	4.45	153	88%	12%
f) First 5 California has successfully invested in long-term, sustainable systems change	4.35	1043	80%	20%
First 5 California Commissioner (current or former)	4.31	26	73%	27%
First 5 California staff member (current or former)	3.67	30	73%	27%
First 5 County Commissioner (current or former)	4.40	60	80%	20%
First 5 County staff member (current or former)	3.98	129	64%	36%
State or federal policymaker (legislator, legislative staff, etc.)	4.00	1	100%	0%
Employee at grant-making organization	4.43	7	100%	0%
Employee at another state agency	4.58	74	89%	11%
Employee at a nonprofit organization	4.36	215	79%	21%
Private contractor with First 5 California	4.47	30	80%	20%
Early childhood educator	4.50	187	87%	13%
Family support provider	4.58	48	85%	15%
Health care provider/contractor (including physical health, mental health, and oral health)	4.36	72	76%	24%
Expectant or current parent/primary caregiver of a child ages 0 to 5	4.00	12	67%	33%
Other	4.37	152	86%	14%
83. Communication				
a) First 5 California uses its resources to consistently deliver timely and responsive services to the public and external stakeholders.	4.36	1036	83%	17%
First 5 California Commissioner (current or former)	4.54	24	83%	17%

Key Quantitative Survey Results Data Points

DRAFT

First 5 California Stakeholder Survey - June 2013

Responses to Spectrum of Agreement Statements Answered by All Respondents

Statement	Score	n	%SwA+	%SwD -
First 5 California staff member (current or former)	4.00	30	70%	30%
First 5 County Commissioner (current or former)	4.36	58	81%	19%
First 5 County staff member (current or former)	4.12	124	75%	25%
State or federal policymaker (legislator, legislative staff, etc.)	5.00	1	100%	0%
Employee at grant-making organization	4.43	7	100%	0%
Employee at another state agency	4.51	75	91%	9%
Employee at a nonprofit organization	4.20	218	78%	22%
Private contractor with First 5 California	4.62	29	90%	10%
Early childhood educator	4.56	185	89%	11%
Family support provider	4.64	47	87%	13%
Health care provider/contractor (including physical health, mental health, and oral health)	4.39	71	80%	20%
Expectant or current parent/primary caregiver of a child ages 0 to 5	4.18	11	73%	27%
Other	4.38	156	85%	15%
b) First 5 California communicates clearly with the public and external stakeholders	4.22	1034	77%	23%
First 5 California Commissioner (current or former)	4.40	25	76%	24%
First 5 California staff member (current or former)	3.97	30	73%	27%
First 5 County Commissioner (current or former)	4.20	59	73%	27%
First 5 County staff member (current or former)	4.10	125	73%	27%
State or federal policymaker (legislator, legislative staff, etc.)	4.00	1	100%	0%
Employee at grant-making organization	4.17	6	83%	17%
Employee at another state agency	4.36	72	83%	17%
Employee at a nonprofit organization	4.01	218	70%	30%
Private contractor with First 5 California	4.72	29	90%	10%
Early childhood educator	4.44	185	85%	15%
Family support provider	4.53	47	81%	19%
Health care provider/contractor (including physical health, mental health, and oral health)	4.17	69	74%	26%
Expectant or current parent/primary caregiver of a child ages 0 to 5	3.91	11	55%	45%
Other	4.17	157	80%	20%
c) First 5 California seeks out and responds to feedback from the public and external stakeholders	4.19	1015	77%	23%
First 5 California Commissioner (current or former)	4.14	22	64%	36%
First 5 California staff member (current or former)	3.62	29	52%	48%
First 5 County Commissioner (current or former)	4.19	57	74%	26%
First 5 County staff member (current or former)	4.02	120	69%	31%
State or federal policymaker (legislator, legislative staff, etc.)	4.00	1	100%	0%
Employee at grant-making organization	4.17	6	83%	17%
Employee at another state agency	4.39	71	86%	14%
Employee at a nonprofit organization	4.03	216	72%	28%
Private contractor with First 5 California	4.43	28	79%	21%
Early childhood educator	4.38	184	82%	18%

Key Quantitative Survey Results Data Points

DRAFT

First 5 California Stakeholder Survey - June 2013

Responses to Spectrum of Agreement Statements Answered by All Respondents

Statement	Score	n	%SwA+	%SwD -
Family support provider	4.41	46	80%	20%
Health care provider/contractor (including physical health, mental health, and oral health)	4.30	71	77%	23%
Expectant or current parent/primary caregiver of a child ages 0 to 5	4.09	11	73%	27%
Other	4.17	153	83%	17%
d) First 5 California's current annual reporting is useful for clarifying and tracking First 5 California outcomes and spending	4.28	992	80%	20%
First 5 California Commissioner (current or former)	4.19	26	81%	19%
First 5 California staff member (current or former)	4.04	28	75%	25%
First 5 County Commissioner (current or former)	4.55	53	81%	19%
First 5 County staff member (current or former)	4.01	122	70%	30%
State or federal policymaker (legislator, legislative staff, etc.)	5.00	1	100%	0%
Employee at grant-making organization	4.71	7	100%	0%
Employee at another state agency	4.52	69	91%	9%
Employee at a nonprofit organization	4.16	206	77%	23%
Private contractor with First 5 California	4.56	25	88%	12%
Early childhood educator	4.47	179	88%	12%
Family support provider	4.47	45	82%	18%
Health care provider/contractor (including physical health, mental health, and oral health)	4.31	70	80%	20%
Expectant or current parent/primary caregiver of a child ages 0 to 5	4.00	11	55%	45%
Other	4.17	150	80%	20%

Key Quantitative Survey Results Data Points
DRAFT

Color Key	Highest Rank
	Second Highest Rank
	Lowest Rank

85. Given First 5 California's mandate, please rank the areas in which you believe First 5 California needs to increase focus during the next few years?					
	Child Health	Early education and care	Family functioning	Public awareness	Systems of Care
All	2	1	3	5	4
First 5 California Commissioner (current or former)	1	2	3	5	4
First 5 California staff member (current or former)	3	1	2	5	4
First 5 County Commissioner (current or former)	2	1	5	4	3
First 5 County staff member (current or former)	5	1	3	4	2
State or federal policymaker (legislator, legislative staff, etc.)	3	4	1	5	2
Employee at grant-making organization	3	2	1	5	4
Employee at another state agency	2	1	3	4	5
Employee at a nonprofit organization	3	1	2	5	4
Private contractor with First 5 California	2	1	3	5	4
Early childhood educator	2	1	3	5	4
Family support provider	3	2	1	5	4
Health care provider/contractor (including physical health, mental health, and oral health)	1	4	3	5	2
Expectant or current parent/primary caregiver of a child ages 0 to 5	2	1	4	3	5
Other	3	1	2	5	4

Key Quantitative Survey Results Data Points
DRAFT

Color Key	Highest Rank
	Second Highest Rank
	Lowest Rank

87. Please rank/prioritize the key strategies First 5 California should implement to achieve the key areas of focus you prioritized above.						
	Advising Governor and legislators	Convening and partnerships	Dissemination of materials	Funding programs/ services	Measuring Results	Research
All	2	3	4	1	5	6
First 5 California Commissioner (current or former)	3	4	2	1	5	6
First 5 California staff member (current or former)	1	3	4	2	5	6
First 5 County Commissioner (current or former)	1	3	5	2	4	6
First 5 County staff member (current or former)	1	3	4	2	5	6
State or federal policymaker (legislator, legislative staff, etc.)	6	5	4	1	2	3
Employee at grant-making organization	2	3	6	1	3	5
Employee at another state agency	3	2	5	1	4	6
Employee at a nonprofit organization	2	3	4	1	5	6
Private contractor with First 5 California	4	3	2	1	5	6
Early childhood educator	2	4	3	1	5	6
Family support provider	2	3	4	1	5	6
Health care provider/contractor (including physical health, mental health, and oral health)	2	3	4	1	5	6
Expectant or current parent/primary caregiver of a child ages 0 to 5	3	2	5	1	6	4
Other	4	2	3	1	5	6

Key Quantitative Survey Results Data Points

DRAFT

Color Key	Highest Rank
	Second Highest Rank
	Lowest Rank

89. Statewide Alignment: Given existing statewide work to support the needs of children ages 0 to 5 and their families, please rank/prioritize the initiatives or efforts to which you believe First 5 California's work should align.

	AB 212	CCELP	California Coverage and Health Initiatives	California Home Visitation Program	California Partners for Permanency	Child Welfare Council	Covered California	Head Start Quality focus	Health in All Policies	Help Me Grow / Project Launch	RTTT - ELC	Strengthening Families
All	9	2	5	4	12	10	8	7	11	3	6	1
First 5 California Commissioner (current or former)	8	2	4	5	12	8	7	6	10	2	11	1
First 5 California staff member (current or former)	11	1	6	7	11	8	8	5	10	4	3	2
First 5 County Commissioner (current or former)	10	1	3	4	11	12	8	7	9	5	6	2
First 5 County staff member (current or former)	9	2	4	4	12	9	7	8	11	3	6	1
State or federal policymaker (legislator, legislative staff, etc.)	6	6	1	6	6	5	2	4	6	6	6	3
Employee at grant-making organization	11	1	3	5	6	7	11	8	10	4	9	2
Employee at another state agency	8	1	6	5	12	10	9	7	11	2	4	3
Employee at a nonprofit organization	9	2	5	3	10	11	8	7	12	4	6	1
Private contractor with First 5 California	9	2	8	4	12	10	5	7	11	3	6	1
Early childhood educator	8	1	5	7	11	10	9	6	12	3	4	2
Family support provider	8	4	5	2	11	7	11	6	10	3	9	1
Health care provider/contractor (including physical health, mental health, and oral health)	9	6	1	3	10	11	5	7	7	4	12	2
Expectant or current parent/primary caregiver of a child ages 0 to 5	9	5	2	8	12	3	9	5	11	4	7	1
Other	10	1	5	4	12	9	8	7	11	3	6	14 of 14

Key Stakeholder Themes Emerging from First 5 California Strategic Planning Qualitative Discovery Work and County Strategic Plan Analysis

First 5 California began its 2013 strategic planning process by engaging in significant discovery work, soliciting the ideas and opinions of stakeholders across the state. This input was gathered through interviews and a widely disseminated survey, both conducted and analyzed by the Glen Price Group (GPG).¹ At the same time, GPG collected and analyzed the strategic plans of the First 5 County Commissions to gain a deeper understand of the goals and priorities of the diverse counties around the state. The information gained from this discovery work will allow First 5 California to strategically collaborate and partner with stakeholders across the state to affect positive impact on children ages 0 to 5 and their families.

This document synthesizes, analyzes and themes the results of stakeholder interviews (46), open-ended survey responses (1,101), and the strategic plans of First 5 County Commissions (53). It should be read in conjunction with the analysis of responses to quantitative survey questions (see: Overview of Quantitative Survey Results and Key Quantitative Survey Results Data Points).

The following outline gives a brief overview of the materials found in the four sections of this document:

Section 1. Interview Themes

Analysis of interview responses yielded the following “key question” and accompanying themes:

What will be the enduring and sustained legacy of First 5 California and how can this be advanced and achieved?

- Defining the mission and role of First 5 California
- Building relationships and developing partnerships
- Creating common data and evaluation systems to assess effectiveness
- Increasing awareness through advocacy, policy, and communications work

See Appendix 3 for full interview results and themes.

¹ The Glen Price Group (GPG) is an integrated services consulting firm specializing in strategic planning, resource development, and capacity building. For more information, please see: www.glenpricegroup.com.

Section 2. Qualitative Survey Themes

Survey respondents were provided the opportunity to submit open-ended responses, yielding a rich body of commentary on various aspects of First 5 California. Important emerging themes from this input included:

First 5 California Successes and Strengths

- Statewide public awareness and education
- Flexible funding that facilitates county-based initiatives
- Convening and supporting statewide collaboratives

First 5 California Challenges and Weaknesses

- Greater need for agreement on First 5 California role and priorities
- Need for more collaboration
- Improved ability to demonstrate outcomes and impact

First 5 California Opportunities and Potential Strategies

- Alignment and integration
- Collaboration and partnerships
- Leadership as a convener
- Advocacy and policy making

Section 3. County Strategic Plan Review

GPG also gathered and analyzed First 5 County strategic plans with an eye towards providing a snapshot of the key directions being taken by counties. A summary of this work follows:

Strengths

- Deliberate planning for declining revenue;
- Integrated strategies and systems of care;
- Specific indicators and outcomes; and
- Clear organization and graphics

Weakness

- Lack of clarity and specificity;
- Misalignment of outcomes and indicators;
- Excess of strategic goals and/or strategies;
- Weak evaluation plans; and
- Limited public accessibility

Primary Goals

- Enhancing health and/or health opportunities for children and/or families with children 0 to 5 (physical, developmental, and/or mental)

- Strong Families and Communities: Providing parents, families and communities with relevant timely and culturally appropriate information, education, services and support to create safe/nurturing environments for kid

Primary Objectives

- Parent/Caregiver education (positive parenting, developmental best practices, learning groups, etc.)
- Increasing services, support and resources (basic, behavioral, counseling) connect families, and improve access
- Early identification and referral (developmental, social, emotional, health and behavioral problems)
- Increasing the number of high-quality early care and education programs provided and/or number of children enrolled

Section 4. Appendices

- Appendix 1. Interview Protocol
- Appendix 2. Quantitative Results to Interview Spectrum of Agreement Questions
- Appendix 3. Detailed Interview Results: Primary Themes, Secondary Themes, and Outliers by Question

Section 1: Interview Themes

In order to inform the development and content of the forthcoming First 5 California strategic plan, the First 5 California Core Planning Team developed a list of stakeholders for individual interviews.² Working from this list, the Glen Price Group³ conducted stakeholder interviews with 46 key informants. Interviewees included First 5 California commissioners, staff, legislators, advocates for children ages 0 to 5, and members of the business and philanthropic sectors. Interviewees were asked a series of questions about First 5 California and its programs for California's youngest children, their families, and communities. Responses were recorded, compiled, analyzed, and themed.⁴

These interviews not only provided insight into the current strengths and limitations of First 5 California (F5CA), but also elicited the beliefs of stakeholders about First 5 California's opportunities, challenges, and past performance in a number of focus areas. The rich material provided by this diverse group of stakeholders provides significant themes that can inform and guide the strategic planning process moving forward.

Emerging Overarching Interview Themes

This section outlines overarching themes emerging from GPG's analysis of the interview results, representing issues that were brought up repeatedly in response to different questions or areas of the interview. An important meta theme that repeatedly surfaced in all parts of the interviews relates to programmatic and financial sustainability and impact. We have framed this theme as a strategic question that could drive and frame much of the subsequent planning work: ***What will be the enduring and sustained legacy of First 5 California and how can this be advanced and achieved?***

Though interviewees were not asked this specific question, interview responses from First 5 California stakeholders suggested a frame of overarching themes that begin to answer it.

² The Core Planning Team currently includes the First 5 California Executive Director Camille Maben, Executive Advisor Jaime Hastings, First 5 California Chief Deputy Director Diane Levin, First 5 Association Executive Director Moira Kenney, and First 5 California Commissioner Kathryn Icenhower.

³ The Glen Price Group (GPG) is an integrated services consulting firm specializing in strategic planning, resource development, and capacity building. For more information, please see: www.glenpricegroup.com.

⁴ For the interview protocol see Appendix 1.

Defining the Mission and Clarifying the Role of First 5 California

First 5 California has the opportunity to clearly define its vision and mission as it moves forward with its strategic planning process. It needs a comprehensive and unambiguous mission to guide its work across the state with county commissions, and in Sacramento as the voice of California's youngest children. Stakeholders believed that the lack of clarity around First 5 California's mission and role has had a significant impact on its ability to affect change and make statewide impact. To create and sustain a lasting legacy for children ages 0 to 5 and their families, First 5 California must constantly drive its work towards a unified, cohesive, and robust mission. Many stakeholders believe that First 5 California must be the "go-to" statewide convener around issues affecting children 0 to 5.

Building Relationships and Developing Partnerships

To create and build a lasting impact for California's youngest children, First 5 California must continue building relationships and developing partnerships. First 5 California now has the opportunity, with new leadership and the development of a new strategic plan, to reach out, rebuild, and reinvent its relationships. From the counties to statewide entities and from nonprofits to the private sector, First 5 California can create strategic partnerships that will leverage its resources, increase its reach, and improve its ability to impact the lives of young children.

Creating Common Data and Evaluation Systems to Assess Effectiveness

In a time of decreasing resources, First 5 California must be strategic in its investments and confident in the effectiveness of its actions. Through research on effective programs and best practices, First 5 California can identify, facilitate, and support more efficient mechanisms for improving outcomes for children ages 0 to 5.

Increasing Awareness through Advocacy and Policy Work

First 5 California has a strong history of improving public awareness and shaping thinking about the issues facing children ages 0 to 5 and their families. First 5 California has raised awareness about the need for quality early learning and care and has influenced the creation of workforce development strategies to improve the quality and level of education of early education and care providers. Many informants discussed the need to build upon previous successes and move forward in a stronger advocacy and policy making role by standing up as a unified voice for those serving the population of young children and

their families. First 5 California could play an important role across the state and in Sacramento as a convener and champion.

Interview Question-Specific Themes

Table 1 below provides a brief description of the primary and secondary themes, along with outliers, for each question asked of the 46 key informants.⁵

Table 1: Summary of Question-Specific Interview Themes	
Question	Key Themes
In what areas do you believe that the work of First 5 California has been particularly successful?	<p>Primary Themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing public awareness of the importance of early childhood development Raising the bar in early childhood education through investments in access to care and education and workforce development
	<p>Secondary Themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The programs that have allowed counties and the state to work together effectively such as the Kit For New Parents and CARES/CARES Plus <i>"Incentivizing a few counties to take bigger risks with preschool"</i> and coordinating their work through the Child Signature Program-1⁶
	<p>Outliers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting and protecting programs for young children and families when the state faced tremendous budget shortfalls over the past 5 years
What do you believe are First 5 California's	<p>Primary Themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The quality of First 5 California staff and the current transition process The quantity and flexibility of funds: autonomy and a focus on quality and access

⁵ Primary themes consist of ideas and opinions raised by a frequent majority of stakeholders both across and within questions. Secondary themes denote ideas and opinions raised by more than a few informants. Outliers are responses made by only one or two informants but presented an interesting idea or question for consideration. Questions reporting a mean, mode, and N were spectrum of agreement questions. Data for spectrum of agreement questions can be found in Appendix 2.

⁶ Child Signature Program-1 denotes First 5 California's first round of three rounds of funding for its Child Signature Program.

Table 1: Summary of Question-Specific Interview Themes	
Question	Key Themes
key strengths?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First 5 California's unique positioning in regards to its funding and its state-wide reach as both a strength and an opportunity
	<p>Secondary Themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First 5 California's work on public awareness First 5 California signature programs
	<p>Outliers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The "youth of the organization" and the perception of First 5 California as a forward-thinking organization First 5 California's gathering and sharing of evidence-based resources
What do you believe are First 5 California's key weaknesses?	<p>Primary Themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First 5 California's relationship with the counties Deficiency of fund prioritization and program evaluation The narrow focus of First 5 California on programs rather than advocacy and policy
	<p>Secondary Themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High turnover, weak capacity building, and disjointed and/or inconsistent communication among First 5 California staff
	<p>Outliers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of stakeholder inclusion Limited perception of First 5 California as a strategic partner
What do you believe are First 5 California's key opportunities?	<p>Primary Themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing collaboration and partnership, and serving as a thought leader and convener Leveraging resources from a declining budget to shift the focus away from programs The strong federal focus on early childhood education and care
	<p>Secondary Themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focusing on child health and the Affordable Care Act
	<p>Outliers</p>

Table 1: Summary of Question-Specific Interview Themes	
Question	Key Themes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The establishment of transitional kindergarten Working to meet the needs of the changing demographic groups of California
What do you believe are First 5 California's key challenges?	<p>Primary Themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collecting data, evaluating programs, and ensuring efficiency Defining and messaging the vision and mission of First 5 California
	<p>Secondary Themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First 5 California's visibility and credibility with the Governor and Legislature First 5 California's relationship with the state commissioners
	<p>Outliers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overcoming silos across state organizations serving California's youngest children and their families
Overall, I believe that First 5 CA has successfully invested in Early Education and Care. Mean: 3.77 Mode: 4 N= 43 ⁷	<p>Primary Themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The positive impact of the Child and Parent Signature Programs Limitations to the Child and Teacher Signature Programs
	<p>Secondary Themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First 5 California's limited focus on Children Ages 0 to 3
	<p>Outliers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questioning whether First 5 California should run programs or shift its work elsewhere. First 5 California should prioritize children with disabilities or other special needs
Overall, I believe that First 5 CA has successfully	<p>Primary Themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child health is an opportunity for investment First 5 California has passively funded child health through other entities

⁷ Interviewees had the option of "decline to state" if they felt they did not have enough information to answer the question.

Table 1: Summary of Question-Specific Interview Themes	
Question	Key Themes
invested in <i>Child Health</i> . Mean: 3 Mode: 2, 4 ⁸ N= 37	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Counties have a greater focus on child health than First 5 California
	Secondary Themes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First 5 California's has made some notable investments in child health
Overall, I believe that First 5 CA has successfully invested in <i>Family Functioning</i> . Mean: 2.52 Mode: 3 N= 29	Primary Themes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First 5 California's success with the kit for new parents State level programs to improve family functioning are difficult to deliver successfully
	Outliers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First 5 California efforts to improve family functioning do not target the right population
Overall, I believe that First 5 CA has successfully invested in <i>Systems of Care</i> . Mean: 2.61 Mode: 3 N= 28	Primary Themes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First 5 California should have a greater focus on Systems of Care Developing Systems of Care in early childhood education and care and the Teacher Signature Program has had some success Systems of Care is an unknown concept for many First 5 California stakeholders
	Secondary Themes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The counties have worked to improve local Systems of Care for children and their families more than First 5 California has done
	Outliers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First 5 California needs to collaborate with other agencies
Overall, I	Primary Themes

⁸ Twelve informants each answered 2 and 4 to this question.

Table 1: Summary of Question-Specific Interview Themes	
Question	Key Themes
<p>believe that First 5 CA has successfully invested in <i>Public Awareness</i>. Mean: 3.64 Mode: 3 N= 44</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First 5 California has had a strong and successful history of public awareness campaigns, especially with targeted populations • First 5 California raises awareness about issues pertaining to the first five years, but could better promote awareness about the organization itself • Little data exists to demonstrate the impact and reach of the media campaigns
	<p>Secondary Themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First 5 California needs to expand its target population for its media outreach efforts
	<p>Outliers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First 5 California lacks a consistent message promoting its mission
<p>Overall, First 5 California has been successful in partnering with First 5 County Commissions, other State Agencies, and nonprofits. Mean: 2.91 Mode: 3 N= 43</p>	<p>Primary Themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First 5 California has significant room for growth in its partnerships with the county commissions, nonprofit organizations, and state agencies • New leadership created optimism around future partnerships
	<p>Secondary Themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First 5 California has operated under a defensive posture that hindered collaboration
	<p>Outliers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First 5 California should be the convener for all groups working on first five issues
<p>Overall, First 5 California has been successful in <i>facilitating</i></p>	<p>Primary Themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First 5 California has had some success in changing early childhood education and care systems • First 5 California has not changed public policy pertaining to children ages 0 to 5

Table 1: Summary of Question-Specific Interview Themes	
Question	Key Themes
<p><i>systems change</i></p> <p>Mean: 2.5</p> <p>Mode: 3</p> <p>N= 40</p>	<p>Secondary Themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First 5 California has been instrumental in changing how the public thinks about children ages 0 to 5
	<p>Outliers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First 5 California supports a number of established programs and builds on existing structures. To this extent, First 5 California has not built a new infrastructure or fundamentally changed the systems serving children ages 0 to 5.
<p>In what other policy and program areas do you believe that First 5 California should focus its work?</p>	<p>Primary Themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First 5 California should focus on policy, advocacy, and influence • First 5 California should focus on research, evaluation, and integration • First 5 California should focus on health care for the “whole-child”
	<p>Secondary Themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First 5 California should focus on systems for addressing the needs of a demographically changing population • First 5 California should shift its attention to ages 0 to 3
	<p>Outliers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First 5 California should support full-service community schools

Section 2:
Survey Themes

"I believe the First 5 CA has a much greater potential for influence and impact than has been the case historically. I truly hope that this will change going forward."

--First 5 County Staff

To solicit the opinions and ideas of a wide range of stakeholders across the state, First 5 California widely disseminated a comprehensive survey and collected responses from 1,101 diverse stakeholders, as illustrated in table 2.

Table 2: First 5 California Stakeholder Survey - June 2013		
Demographics of All Respondents		
1. My primary (current or most recent) experience with First 5 California is/was as a(n):	#	%
Employee at a nonprofit organization	228	21%
Early childhood educator	194	18%
Other	164	15%
First 5 County staff member (current or former)	135	12%
Employee at another state agency	80	7%
Health care provider/contractor (including physical health, mental health, and oral health)	75	7%
First 5 County Commissioner (current or former)	62	6%
Family support provider	49	4%
First 5 California staff member (current or former)	33	3%
Current	24	
Former	7	
Decline to state	2	

Table 2: First 5 California Stakeholder Survey - June 2013

Demographics of All Respondents		
Private contractor with First 5 California	32	3%
First 5 California Commissioner (current or former)	28	3%
Expectant or current parent/primary caregiver of a child ages 0 to 5	13	1%
Employee at grant-making organization	7	1%
State or federal policymaker (legislator, legislative staff, etc.)	1	0%
Total	1101	100%

The survey asked respondents to answer a number of quantitative and qualitative questions. In the qualitative section, respondents had the opportunity to provide written comments and feedback about First 5 California and its work.

This document outlines three major theme areas from the qualitative survey results:

- Successes/Strengths
- Challenges/Weaknesses
- Opportunities/Strategies

Success/Strengths from Survey Responses

Survey respondents noted that First 5 California has demonstrated success in a few key areas:

Statewide public awareness and education

Stakeholders recognize First 5 California's media campaigns and Kit for New Parents as successful examples of its work. TV ads and billboards, particularly in the early years of the Commission's existence, were regularly cited as effectively elevating public awareness on the importance of early childhood and shaping public perception about the need for quality early childhood education. Additionally, the media campaign and Kit For New Parents have created strong name, or brand, recognition for First 5 California.

“The Kit for New Parents continues to be very popular and is a tangible PR and education tool that is invaluable. Given that it is intended to support families of young children navigate the myriad of systems while leveraging their child's formative years, it is a critical tool that should be kept in place going forward.”

--First 5 County Staff

Flexible funding that facilitates county-based initiatives

CARES/CARES Plus and School Readiness are examples of effective flexible funding that First 5 California provided in the past that allowed the state and county commissions to work together to address issues of quality early childhood education and school readiness in a way that met county needs. The small county augmentation has also provided critical support to counties with fewer births and resources, enabling them to carry out the mission of Proposition 10 and help more isolated 0 to 5 populations.

“For Nevada County, the original CARES program is the best example: the matching funds allowed us to participate with a do-able county match; the structure of the program helped us create a high-level, consistent program but allowed for some flexibility to accommodate local needs.”

--First 5 County Staff

Convening and supporting statewide collaboratives

Stakeholders called out First 5 California's powerful contributions to strengthening, supporting, and convening statewide collaborations: the state of California's successful Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge application; the Statewide Screening Collaborative to support early identification of special needs; and First 5 California's former statewide conference and annual Water Cooler Conference.

“[The statewide conference]...was an excellent tool to help foster collaboration and learning on a statewide level...it was a vital learning opportunity plus an opportunity to create stronger policy advocates.”

--First 5 County Commissioner

Challenges/Weaknesses from Survey Responses

Survey respondents described a number of challenges facing First 5 California:

Greater need for agreement on First 5 California's role and priorities

Although First 5 California has great name recognition by the public, the public and many early childhood stakeholders at the state and county levels are unaware of what First 5 California does, how it does it, and why it is important. The lack of clarity regarding First 5 California's mission and vision by stakeholders hurts First 5 California in many ways, but most recently and tangibly when legislators have attempted to utilize the state commission "as an ATM." Many stakeholders cited First 5 California's shifting priorities and inconsistent funding as a detriment to sustainability of great programming and long-term impact. Several stakeholders commented that First 5 California had also strayed from its founding vision and needed to return to it. Others called out a lack of alignment between the First 5 California mission and goals and those of the County Commissions, making it more challenging to coordinate with county efforts. Some expressed that First 5 California is uniquely positioned to fill in the gaps that others cannot due to limited or restricted funding, or political risk. However, they added that the state commission has not realized its potential as an agent of sustainable systems change for children 0 to 5.

Meanwhile, other stakeholders expressed the belief that First 5 California's primary role should be to fund direct services for children 0 to 5. Of those who felt that First 5 California's primary focus should be funding direct services, it was clear that some didn't know that First 5 California's funding was mandated for some areas such as public awareness and research. Yet, there is awareness among many stakeholders that First 5 California faces diminishing revenues over time and that with decreasing resources, continuing to implement programs and fund services will be less and less feasible and effective. Additional criticisms of First 5 California's work in recent years include its heavy focus on the 4 to 5 population, serving only the neediest, and on early childhood education. Investments made to date have helped raise the bar for quality early childhood education for preschoolers but have neglected the 0 to 3 population, the families who are not impoverished but are struggling, and the full spectrum of early childhood issues including maternal health, mental health, health, and family support.

"I don't have a clear understanding as to what First 5 is all about but I do know their focus is on children 0 to 5 and my program has been the recipient of many of their good works. What they have provided has greatly improved the lives of children and families in my area."

--Early Childhood Educator

More collaboration

Additionally, many stakeholders commented that in the past First 5 California has not collaborated with county commissions or other state agencies in the

planning phase of programs, causing duplications of efforts and data systems and unnecessary administrative burden in evaluation and reporting by county commissions. First 5 California is perceived by some as “top-down” and not encouraging of a more collegial working relationship with partners. Small, rural county commissions also share that First 5 California’s initiatives often fail to reflect the needs of their communities. Communication is sometimes late or nonexistent. External stakeholders are not the only ones to cite challenges with collaboration and timely communication with First 5 California. Internally, staff of First 5 California also shared that although there has been progress in recent months under new leadership, in the past communication collaboration across units could often be difficult.

“Locally, I don’t see First 5 as the agency disseminating information or acting as a model of best practices. Their programs are well-implemented but often duplicate or parallel programs; they build separate structures rather than working collaboratively with existing players.”

--Family Support Provider

“The Kit for New Parents is a great example of state and local collaboration because of the ability for county commissions to add custom items with local information!”

--First 5 California Staff

Improved ability to demonstrate outcomes and impact

Survey respondents noted that First 5 California has not been able to effectively demonstrate the success of its work for a number of reasons. Data collection has not been coordinated or standardized with other state agencies and county commissions in a way that provides meaningful and convenient measures for all parties. Stakeholders shared that the reporting and evaluation requirements of First 5 California programs can be a deterrent to participation because of their complexity and administrative burden. At the same time, some stakeholders acknowledge the challenge for First 5 California in collecting existing data from various counties and agencies that have their own systems and measures. First 5 California has not always effectively followed up on evaluation of its own investments because of limited staff and capacity. Additionally, First 5 California has not been diligent and strict in requiring measurements of success from other state agencies to which it has given funds. First 5 California needs more clear and consistent measures for all of its investments statewide to bolster its ability to advocate at the state level for policies that can offer long-term systems change for children 0 to 5 and their families.

"The evaluation and reporting is not always aligned, thus creating additional reporting requirements that are not additive."

--First 5 County Commissioner

"...need more realistic and simpler approaches for measuring results."

--Health Care Provider/Contractor

"Evaluation and reporting is so subjective at county levels that state reporting is unable to effectively translate that into their annual reports. The beauty of what each program is doing is that it is decided on and developed at local levels - there must be a better way to report that to the state so that we have more effective data."

-- First 5 County Staff

Opportunities and Strategies from Survey Responses

While First 5 California has had some significant accomplishments, there are many opportunities for improving its ongoing work and achieving even greater impact. In general, stakeholders view First 5 California's current state of transition with optimism, especially in the context of other changes at the state and federal levels.

Alignment and integration

Despite the past climate of crisis related to funding and the struggle to protect programs and services for young children and families, many exciting state and federal initiatives are underway that will directly impact children 0 to 5. With the implementation of the federal Affordable Care Act, stakeholders notes a significant opportunity for First 5 California and all stakeholders in the area of health to work with each other and the federal government to optimize the benefits for expectant parents, children 0 to 5, and young families. The Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge and the California Comprehensive Early Learning Plan are two opportunities to align statewide efforts and stakeholders around early learning and care. Stakeholders also highlighted the Department of Social Services' Strengthening Families initiative as an opportunity to strengthen efforts focusing on parent education and partnerships, social-emotional development, family support, and prevention of child abuse. At the county levels, there are some interesting and innovative programs and pilots that integrate systems of care (health education and prevention, family support, early learning and care) for children 0 to 5 and their parents including LAUP and Help Me Grow in Orange County. Furthermore, many stakeholders called for

greater emphasis on the whole child and strengthening linkages between organizations serving children 0 to 5 and their families.

"First 5 CA needs to take the lead in breaking down the silos and creating and implementing a comprehensive and integrated system of information and services to support and optimize early childhood development. Then the dollars we spend on the other areas can be used to expand/enhance and build upon those systems. With ACA, children's health (including prenatal) should have an increased focus in order to help create and support a new culture of health statewide."

--First 5 County staff

Collaboration and partnerships

Recognizing that tobacco tax revenue is declining (and may not be always be a guaranteed source of funds in future political environments) and the ability of First 5 California to grow its staff is limited, respondents suggested that First 5 California needs to leverage resources through deeper collaborations and stronger partnerships. First 5 California should strengthen relationships with a diverse group of stakeholders including county commissions, state agencies, serving the 0 to 5 population and their families, and statewide child advocacy groups. It should also look beyond traditional partnerships with early childhood organizations and cultivate partnerships with groups that have a long-term stake in the success of children such as businesses and Transitional K - 12 education. By enhancing its collaborative capacity and developing deeper partnerships, First 5 California will be able to find better ways to leverage resources, reduce redundancy and bureaucracy across systems, serve more children 0 to 5 in more ways, help everyone achieve their goals more effectively, and demonstrate impact through shared data collection.

"...First 5 should first not duplicate what others are doing, but use the state commission to make collaborative change."

-- Nonprofit Staff

"The question has to be focused on what is First 5 CA uniquely positioned to accomplish that no one else can. When you consider its funding and statewide influence, the State would best serve everyone if it focused on getting the general public to push for greater support for 0 to 5 services and to help facilitate better integration between systems. I know of no other entity that can accomplish these tasks."

--First 5 California Commissioner

Leadership as a convener

First 5 California's mandate includes helping children 0 to 5 be healthy and ready for school. This goal intersects with many different fields and systems (health, education, family support), issues (social emotional development, child abuse and prevention) and populations (foster children, special needs children, English learners, etc.), and can serve to bring together diverse stakeholders that touch the lives of all children 0 to 5. Because the mission of First 5 California is not discipline-specific, respondents note that it can act as the glue among different state departments and nonprofit organizations that do focus on particular early childhood issues. Stakeholders also indicated a desire for First 5 California to identify and promote research-based practices or best practices across disciplines and issues. As a statewide organization with a strong communication and public awareness component to its mission, they saw collecting and disseminating this kind of information to practitioners as natural extension of First 5 California's leadership role and convening capacity. First 5 California can also help fill in the gaps and promote a bigger vision of what is possible if all stakeholders work together.

"First 5 California is uniquely positioned to lead early childhood issues and pull together key leaders in various disciplines. To date this has not been their focus, but to make significant advances in early childhood policy it is critical to bring together different types of early childhood services to build integrated systems of care and support for young children and their families in California, and I would like to see First 5 California take this on."

--Nonprofit Staff

"Convenings that lead to advising policy would be great."

--Nonprofit Staff

Advocacy and policy making

Respondents noted the interrelated nature of the opportunities facing First 5, particularly in relation to potential advocacy and policy work. If First 5 California can make strides in convening and collaborating with partners and aligning efforts among statewide initiatives (driven by the state or federal government), it can create a strong coalition of advocates across sectors and disciplines that can provide a powerful political voice for children 0 to 5. First 5 California needs to strengthen and ensure that its efforts and those of the early childhood movement translate into longer-term systems change through state policies.

“The policy makers are dismally unaware of the work being done on the ground with children and families, and what is needed for the work.”

--Nonprofit Staff

“Continue encouraging legislators to keep making progress in advancing the early care and development field so that educators can continue to improve their knowledge to benefit young lives.”

--Early Childhood Educator

“We need to leverage that fund by making sure that the Governor and legislators are on the same page to create a bigger institutional change that creates a good environment for our youngest children and their families.”

--Nonprofit Staff

“I believe we need to influence legislation, however, I'd hate to see bundles of \$\$ spent on professional lobbying companies. I testified for state and local First 5 at the Senate and Assembly last year & believe that consumers are far more powerful voices than professionals.”

--County Agency Staff

Section 3: Overview of First 5 County Strategic Plans

Summary of Country Strategic Plan Themes

As First 5 California moves through the strategic planning process, it has engaged in a comprehensive review of county strategic plans in order to more deeply understand the priorities and focus areas of First 5 County Commissions. Understanding the strengths, weaknesses, and strategic priority areas of the county commissions illustrates opportunities where First 5 California can support and collaborate with counties across the state.

This document examines First 5 County Commission strategic plans and is organized in three major sections:

- Background and Methodology
- Strengths and Weaknesses
- Overarching Themes Across Counties

Strengths and Weaknesses

First 5 County Commission strategic plans have a number of core strengths. These include:

- Deliberate planning for declining revenue;
- Integrated strategies and systems of care;
- Specific indicators and outcomes; and
- Clear organization and graphics

There were also some common areas for potential improvement across the county strategic plans, areas in which First 5 California and the county commissions could potentially collaborate. These include:

- Lack of clarity and specificity;
- Misalignment of outcomes and indicators;
- Over abundance of strategic goals and/or strategies;
- Weak evaluation plans; and
- Limited public accessibility

Overarching Themes Across Counties

The analysis of county strategic plans included an examination of both strategic goal areas and focus objectives, organized into primary and secondary categories based on the number of counties in which the identified areas were represented. It also included a review of county subgroups based on birth rate. Section 4. below (Overarching Themes Across Counties) provides a compiled list of these strategic focus areas, however the primary goals and objectives across the fifty-eight counties in California include:

- Primary Goals:
 - Enhancing health and/or health opportunities for children and/or families with children 0 to 5 (physical, developmental, and/or mental)
 - Strong Families and Communities: Providing parents, families and communities with relevant timely and culturally appropriate information, education, services and support to create safe/nurturing environments for children
- Primary Objectives:
 - Parent/Caregiver education (positive parenting, developmental best practices, learning groups, etc.)
 - Increasing services, support and resources (basic, behavioral, counseling) connect families, and improve access
 - Early identification and referral (developmental, social, emotional, health and behavioral problems)
 - Increasing the number of high-quality early care and education programs provided and/or number of children enrolled

County Strategic Plan Review: Background and Methodology

The passage of Proposition 10 by the voters of California in 1998 created both a state commission and local county commissions with a mandate to improve outcomes for children age 0 to 5 and their families. The proposition has a number of requirements for both the state and local commissions. One of these requirements is that the county commissions submit strategic plans to the state commission.

First 5 County strategic planning is guided by the following:

Health and Safety Code Section 130140(1)(C)(ii) of the California Children and Families Act requires County Commission strategic plans to include, at a minimum, the following components:

- 1. A description of the goals and objectives proposed to be attained;*
- 2. A description of the programs, services and projects proposed to be provided, sponsored or facilitated;*
- 3. A description of how measurable outcomes of such programs, services and projects will be determined by the county commission using appropriate reliable indicators; and*
- 4. A description of how programs, services and projects relating to early childhood development within the county will be integrated into a consumer-oriented and easily accessible system.¹*

In order to gain a deeper understanding of the goals, focus areas, and priorities of First 5 County Commissions across the state, the Glen Price Group (GPG)⁹ conducted a review of County Commission strategic Plans. This review provides important background knowledge as GPG supports the First 5 California strategic planning process. It illustrates the common foci in the areas impacting children ages 0 to 5 and their families. This review illustrates the strengths of County Commissions and areas where capacity building can be facilitated and best practices can be shared. It also notes weaknesses and areas where First 5 California could potentially be of support to County Commissions.

The process of developing an overview of County Commission strategic plans began with the

creation of a *County Strategic Plan Data Matrix* based on an initial review of the diverse counties of California.¹⁰ This preliminary analysis led to the identification a

¹ The guidelines for First 5 County strategic planning listed in the text box were published in the Proposition 10 Statutes, including Amendments to the California Children and Families Act, California Codes, As of September 22, 200. Section 130140 (1)(C)(ii).

⁹ The Glen Price Group (GPG) is an integrated services consulting firm specializing in strategic planning, resource development, and capacity building. For more information, please see: www.glenpricegroup.com.

¹⁰ The initial review included counties that varied in size, geography and location around the state.

number of strategic goals and objectives, which were added to and amended as additional counties were assessed. The matrix provided a way to mark the goals and objectives of each county and see where counties shared priority areas. GPG reviewed fifty-four county strategy plans.¹¹ The analysis that follows provides an assessment of county strengths and weaknesses, and overarching themes across counties in both focus areas or goals, and objectives and strategies.

County Strategic Plan Strengths and Weakness

The County Commission strategic plans vary considerably in terms of sophistication and depth. The duration of strategic plans ranges from one year to over a decade. A number of plans are under revision or need to be updated and the approach to how plans are updated or amended also varied by county with some counties creating entirely new plans and others issuing a revision document but leaving the majority of the former strategic plan intact. Due to the large number and diversity of strategic plans, elements that were strong for some commissions were often weaknesses for others.

Strengths

Deliberate Planning for Declining Revenue

With each passing year, fewer Californians smoke cigarettes, resulting in decreased funding for First 5 County Commissions. Many counties have made a concerted effort to reorganize and reassess their program priorities to meet the challenge of declining revenue. This has taken a number of different forms in various counties. Some counties have moved away from “wide and shallow” to “narrow and deep” investments to maximize funds. Others have prioritized their focus areas so they can focus on primary objectives and move on to secondary priorities if funds allow. Many counties included specific frameworks to guide funding decisions and priorities. Finally, many counties have included goals and objectives about building new partnerships, leveraging existing funds, or developing new funding sources.¹²

Integrated Strategies and Systems of Care

In both an effort to maximize diminishing funds and create a more holistic system of services for children ages 0 to 5 and their families, many County First 5 Commissions focus on integration and systems of care. Some strategic plans

¹¹ Strategic Plans for the following counties were not available at the time of review: Lake County, Alpine County, Madera County and Calaveras County.

¹² Strong examples include: Contra Costa County, Humboldt County, Solano County, Stanislaus County, Tuolumne County and Placer County.

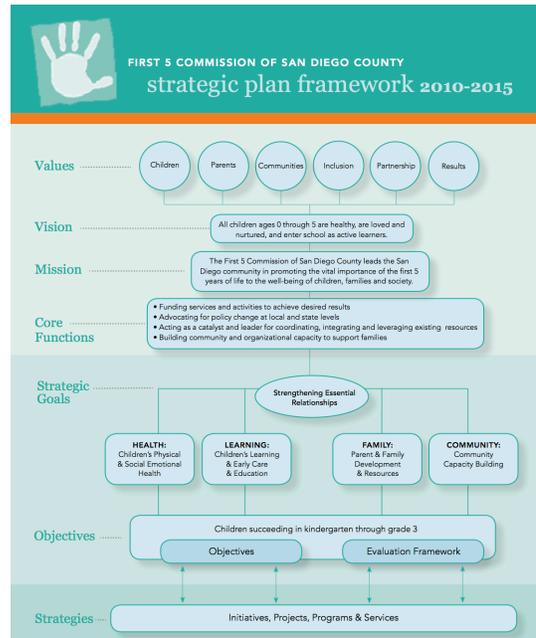
focused on building partnerships and integrating programs to better serve the youngest children of the community and their families.¹³

Specific Indicators and Outcomes

County First 5 Commission strategic plans are required to describe measurable outcomes and “appropriate reliable indicators.” Some counties demonstrated strength in this area. These counties included measurable and ambitious success indicators, timelines and/or detailed expected outcomes. Furthermore, some counties included structures for evaluation, baselines and targets, and data collection mechanisms across goal areas and services.¹⁴

Clear Organization and Graphics

A number of county strategic plans used clear organizational structures, making reading and interpreting the plans easy and simple. Some counties contracted with consultants to work on their plans and other counties created the plans “in house.” Nevertheless, a number of plans from both categories were well designed. Furthermore, numerous county strategic plans had interesting and informative graphics. The use of graphics ranged from visual displays of strategic components, logic models, and Kindergarten Readiness Assessments.¹⁵



First 5 Commission of San Diego Strategic Plan 2010 – 2015 Graphic

Weaknesses

Lack of Clarity and Specificity

Some County First 5 Commission strategic plans lack clarity and specificity in terms of goals, strategies and/or indicators. Other plans were difficult to follow or vague. This was particularly true in two primary areas: priorities and outcomes. In some cases the ambiguity resulted from the breadth of focus areas.

Misalignment of Goals and Strategies

Some counties struggled to align actionable objectives with focus areas. As a result, a number of strategies did not support the stated goal. This misalignment

¹³ Strong examples include: Alameda County, Colusa County, Kern County, Kings County, and Santa Clara County

¹⁴ Strong examples include: Mariposa county, Modoc County, Riverside County, San Diego County, and San Luis Obispo County

¹⁵ Strong examples include: Imperial County, Napa County, San Bernardino County, San Francisco County, and Solano County

creates issues with evaluation and indicators as well. Furthermore, some counties had a mix of priority strategies, objectives, indicators and primary result areas, some of which overlapped. In some cases, this contributed to the ambiguity described in Section 2.2.1.

Excess of Strategic Goals and/or Strategies

Some county strategic plans had a substantial number of goals and strategies. In some cases, long bulleted lists under goal areas wrapped up a number of different objectives – making them indiscernible. While not inherently a weakness, the extensive lists of goals and/or objectives in some county strategic plans made it difficult to determine focus areas or priorities.

Weak Evaluation Plans

Although a description of “measurable outcomes” and “appropriate reliable indicators” is required in the Proposition 10 mandate, some counties failed to include this component entirely. Other counties incorporated weak or rudimentary descriptions of evaluation systems or data collection. This weakness was primarily found in smaller counties, which may not have resources sufficient for strategic planning.

Limited Public Accessibility

The majority of counties posted their strategic plans online for easy public access, however, a number of county strategic plans were more difficult to obtain or unavailable. Of the 58 counties across California, nine county strategic plans were not available online. After telephone and e-mail inquiry, five of the nine counties sent strategic plans or the current state of revisions to GPG. Four county strategic plans were still unavailable at the time of this report, a few of which were undergoing the process of renewing/updating their strategic plans. Of the strategic plans available online, eleven were out of date or had end dates of 2013.

Overarching Themes Across Counties

The county strategic plan data matrix described in Section 1. Background and Methodology, captured the goal and objective areas of each county and allowed GPG to see trends and themes across county priorities. Generally, counties prioritized a number of goal areas for primary focus. Each area of focus usually included a number of strategies to guide the County First 5 Commission in its work towards the overarching goals. The Glen Price Group grouped similar goals and objectives together and developed a summary statement for each. The commonalities are identified and classified by primary and secondary

theme categories.¹⁶ In this report, the goals and objectives listed are those most often cited in county strategic plans and do not necessarily correspond to one another. Furthermore, GPG examined both the ten counties with the highest birth rates in California and the twenty counties with the lowest birth rates to identify themes in the goals and objectives of these sub-groups county commissions. Section 3.3 illustrates where at least half of the largest County First 5 Commissions are making significant investments with Proposition 10 funding and section 3.4 illustrates the investments of the smallest counties.¹⁷

Primary Themes

Primary Goal Areas

- Enhancing health and/or health opportunities for children and/or families with children 0 to 5 (physical, developmental, and/or mental) (45)
- Strong Families and Communities: Providing parents, families and communities with relevant timely and culturally appropriate information, education, services and support to create safe/nurturing environments for children (33)

Primary Objectives

- Parent/Caregiver education (positive parenting, developmental best practices, learning groups, etc.) (39)
- Increasing services, support and resources (basic, behavioral, counseling) connect families, and improve access (36)
- Early identification and referral (developmental, social, emotional, health and behavioral problems) (33)
- Increasing the number of high-quality early care and education programs provided and/or number of children enrolled (27)

Secondary Themes

Secondary Goal Areas

- Children are ready for school (25)
- Increasing, improving, and enhancing the availability, affordability, and quality of early learning and care (22)

¹⁶ Primary themes are foci shared by 50% or more counties (27 or more of the 54 counties reviewed). Secondary themes are foci shared by 33.3% or more counties (18 or more of the 54 counties reviewed).

¹⁷ GPG examined the twenty smallest counties in order to capture both small counties that received fund augmentation for First 5 California, and those that no longer receive those funds.

Secondary Objectives

- Preventative and ongoing oral health care (26)
- Promoting health, prevention and health literacy (25)
- Children have age-appropriate competencies/ are ready for school (may include TK, summer pre-K, or other school readiness initiatives) (25)
- Quality Early Care (coaching, consultation, funding, and incentives for improvement) (25)
- Training (coaching, consultation, and capacity-building opportunities for partner agencies and workforce serving families with young children) (23)
- Access to proper nutrition and fitness resource to maintain healthy weight in children (20)
- Increasing access to health insurance (20)
- Increasing public knowledge and support of First 5 initiatives (18)
- Community building initiatives (18)

High Birth Rate County Themes (Largest County First 5 Commission Investments)¹⁸

High Birth Rate Goals

- Enhancing health and health opportunities for families with children 0 to 5 (physical, developmental, and/or mental) (8)
- Strong Families and communities: Providing parents, families and communities with relevant timely and culturally appropriate information, education, services and support to create safe/nurturing environments for kids (8)
- Children are ready for school (6)

High Birth Rate Objectives

- Quality Early Care (coaching, consultation, funding, and incentives for improvement) (8)
- Early identification and referral (developmental, social, emotional, health and behavioral problems) (7)
- System Integration (7)
- Parent/Caregiver education (positive parenting, developmental best practices, learning groups, etc.) (7)
- Increasing prenatal care (including pregnant/parenting teen support) (6)
- Preventative and ongoing oral health care (6)
- Use of best practices (6)

¹⁸ The twenty largest counties in order of highest birth rate for 2011 are Los Angeles County, San Diego County, Orange County, Riverside County, San Bernardino County, Santa Clara County, Sacramento County, Alameda County, Fresno County, and Kern County.

- Training (coaching, consultation, and capacity-building opportunities for partner agencies and workforce serving families with young children) (6)
- Increasing access to health insurance (5)
- Increasing the number of high-quality early care and education programs provided and/or number of children enrolled (5)
- Children have age-appropriate competencies/ are ready for school (may include TK, summer pre-K, or other school readiness initiatives) (5)
- Increasing services, support and resources (basic, behavioral, counseling) connect families, and improve access (5)
- Increasing public knowledge and support of first five initiatives (5)
- Community building initiatives (5)
- Cultural relevance/sensitivity (5)

Low Birth Rate County Themes (Smallest County First 5 Commission Investments)¹⁹

Low Birth Rate Goals

- Enhancing health and health opportunities for families with children 0 to 5 (physical, developmental, and/or mental) (12)
- Strong Families and communities: Providing parents, families and communities with relevant timely and culturally appropriate information, education, services and support to create safe/nurturing environments for kids (10)
- Children are ready for school (8)

Low Birth Rate Objectives

- Parent/Caregiver education (positive parenting, developmental best practices, learning groups, etc.) (13)
- Preventative and ongoing oral health care (11)
- Increasing services, support and resources (basic, behavioral, counseling) connect families, and improve access (11)
- Promoting health, prevention and health literacy (10)
- Increasing the number of high-quality early care and education programs provided and/or number of children enrolled (8)

¹⁹ The twenty smallest counties in order of lowest birth rate for 2011 are Alpine County, Sierra County, Modoc County, Trinity County, Mariposa County, Mono County, Plumas County, Inyo County, Amador County, Lassen County, Colusa County, Calaveras County, Del Norte County, Glenn County, Tuolumne County, Siskiyou County, Lake County, Tehama County, Nevada County, and San Benito County. Strategic Plans for Alpine County, Calaveras County, Lake County and Madera County were unavailable, making the 50% threshold eight out of sixteen county.

Section 4: Appendices

Appendix 1. Interview Protocol

Introduction

[Read by the interviewer] Thank you for taking the time to be interviewed for First 5 California's strategic planning process.

- This should take about 45 minutes or less.
- This is a confidential interview and your name will not be recorded or identified in any reports or summaries.
- Your comments will be aggregated with others but not attributed to you.

We are interviewing a number of individuals with different perspectives on the work of First 5 California in order to inform development of First 5 California's new multi-year strategic plan. Your responses will help the Commission frame strategic planning activities and create a comprehensive plan that will guide its work over the next few years. I'll be asking you eleven questions about First 5 California and its investment of resources in California's youngest children, their families, and communities in order to prompt your thinking and reflection in these areas.

Do you have any questions before we start?

I will be recording your responses. Please let me know if at any point you want me to pause my note taking.

Questions

1. In what areas do you believe that the work of First 5 California has been particularly successful?
2. What do you believe are First 5 California's key strengths?
3. What do you believe are First 5 California's key opportunities moving forward?
4. What do you believe are First 5 California's key weaknesses?

5. What do you believe are First 5 California's key challenges moving forward?

First 5 California tracks progress in five key result areas to support evidence-based funding decisions, program planning, and policies. Using a scale of 1 to 5 (with 1 being Definitely Not and 5 being Definitely), please rate the following statements. Also please feel free to pass if you do not have sufficient knowledge of or background in the area.

6. Overall, I believe that First 5 CA has successfully invested in the following areas:

- a. Early Education and Care [1 2 3 4 5]
 - i. Can you tell me more about your rating?

- b. Child Health [1 2 3 4 5]
 - i. Can you tell me more about your rating?

- c. Family Functioning [1 2 3 4 5]
 - i. Can you tell me more about your rating?

- d. Systems of Care [1 2 3 4 5]
 - i. Can you tell me more about your rating?

- e. Public Awareness [1 2 3 4 5]
 - i. Can you tell me more about your rating?

7. Using the same scale as before of 1 to 5 (with 1 being Definitely Not and 5 being Definitely), please rate the following statements. Again please feel free to pass if you do not have sufficient knowledge of or background in the topic.

- a. Overall, First 5 CA has been successful in partnering with First 5 County Commissions, other State Agencies, and nonprofits. [1 2 3 4 5]
 - i. Can you tell me more about your rating?

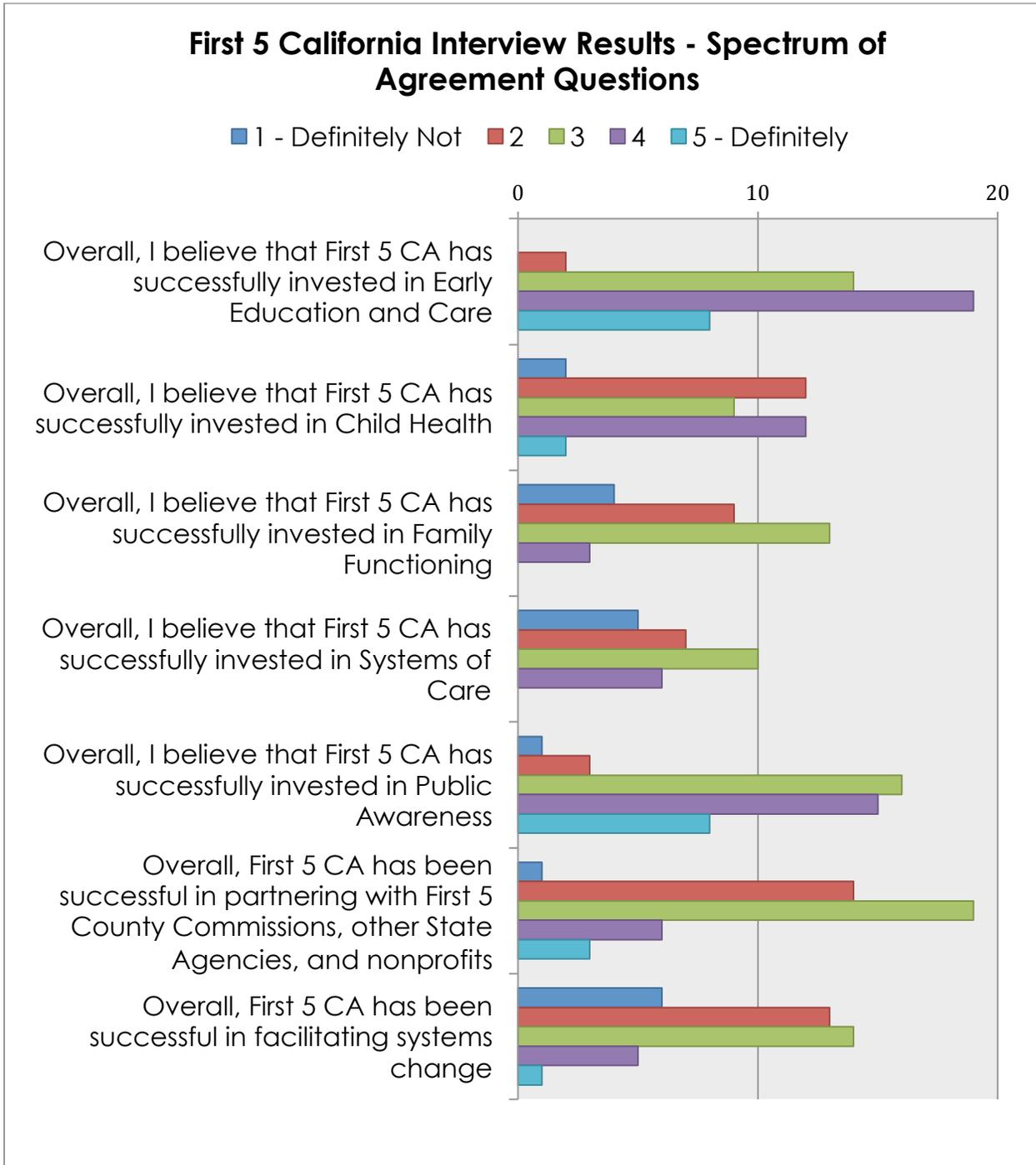
- b. Overall, First 5 CA has been successful in facilitating systems change. [1 2 3 4 5]

- i. Can you tell me more about your rating?
8. In **what** other policy and program areas do you believe that First 5 California should focus its work?
9. **How** could First 5 CA most effectively carry out the work you just suggested?
10. What, if any, external articles, reports, or other sources of data/evaluation etc. should we include in our research for First 5 CA's strategic planning process?
11. Anything else that you would like to share as First 5 California engages in its strategic planning process?

Thank you again for your time and input.

Appendix 2. Quantitative Results to Interview Spectrum of Agreement Questions

During key informant interviews, respondents were asked to respond to several spectrum of agreement questions as summarized by the chart below.



Appendix 3. Detailed Interview Results Primary Themes, Secondary Themes, and Outliers by Question

This section includes supporting information, analysis, and illustrative quotes in relation to the themes and outliers identified in Section 1: Table 1 above.

SUCSESSES: In what areas do you believe that the work of First 5 California has been particularly successful?

Emerging Dominant/Primary Themes

Increasing public awareness of the importance of early childhood development. Many interviewees believe that First 5 California has been successful in creating name recognition and educating the public about the importance of early childhood through its branding, media, and outreach efforts such as its billboards and Kit for New Parents program. [Interviewees noted, however, that name recognition doesn't mean that the general public understands what First 5 California is, what it does, or how and why it does it.]

Respondents note that First 5 California raised the bar on early childhood education through investments in access to services and workforce development. Many key informants cited First 5 California's work to increase access to *high quality* early learning programs through the Power of Preschool/Child Signature programs and improving the quality of early learning programs/workforce through CARES/CARES Plus/Teacher Signature programs. This work was critical in demonstrating the state's commitment to improving quality in the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant Competition.

"We're a quiet giant in this area. I can see us becoming one of the world leaders in figuring out how to get...at-risk children ready for kindergarten."

--First 5 California Staff

Secondary Themes

The programs that have allowed counties and the state to work together effectively such as the Kit For New Parents and CARES/CARES Plus.

First 5 CA has been successful in soliciting and responding to feedback from parents on what is useful in the Kits. This in turn has kept the Kits relevant and effective. The county commissions provide wide distribution and further customization for their local communities. The Kits *"are easy to grab on to and recognize."*

First 5 California and the county commissions demonstrated leadership with CARES and CARES Plus in advancing the quality of the early childhood educator workforce in way that was scalable for counties.

“Incentivizing a few counties to take bigger risks with preschool” and to coordinate their work in a way that may not have happened otherwise through the Child Signature Program-1.

--First 5 County Staff

Outliers and Additional Interesting Input

Supporting and protecting programs for young children and families when the state faced tremendous budget shortfalls over the past 5 years.

The ability to be creative and not have so many rules. First 5 California has the ability to push through creative ideas that may not have passed through other state agencies such as the Kit For New Parents.

Acting as a glue for many entities across the state including local county commissions and sister state agencies on some projects and collaborations, particularly in early education. There is more work to be done here.

Creating a constituency for children 0 to 5. Children can't vote and so don't have a “voice” when policy is being made that will affect them. First 5 CA has been a visible entity focused on children 0 to 5 that can act as that voice for them but could do a better job of convening all groups of stakeholders.

“Kids don't have their own voice [at the state level.]”

--Business Leader

STRENGTHS: What do you believe are First 5 California's key strengths?

Emerging Dominant/Primary Themes

The quality of First 5 California staff and the current transition process. Numerous informants listed the passion of First 5 California staff in their work to better the lives of California's youngest children and their families as a key strength. Furthermore, a number of people called attention to the fact that First 5 California has a small staff, allowing for flexibility and limiting bureaucracy. Many

commented that the transition to a new Executive Director is an asset as First 5 California moves forward.

“Truly the key strength is a staff that cares about the issues we work on. We make an impact on children and their caregivers. We want to make a difference for California children. If you have an agency with people who want to make a difference, you just need the leadership to do it.”

--First 5 California Staff

“The effort put in by program staff- I haven't seen that much care and passion before in a state agency. They really are the key.”

--First 5 California Staff

The quantity and flexibility of funds: autonomy and a focus on quality and access. Although First 5 California faces declining revenue, the mechanism by which it receives funds serves as a huge strength, especially in a difficult budgetary environment. First 5 California does not depend on the will of elected officials to fund its work. This provides autonomy and security to First 5 California. Furthermore, it has the ability to focus on the quality of and access to services for California's youngest children and their families.

“Money. They have an autonomy and a flexible position here to make themselves, remake themselves, leverage themselves, position themselves and an incredible amount of autonomy to do so.”

--State Agency Staff

The unique positioning and reach of First 5 California: A strength and an opportunity. First 5 California occupies a unique position. It sits outside of the state government and the local counties. Its statewide presence allows it to balance the needs of the state with the diverse needs of local communities. The opportunity exists for First 5 California to develop as a convener between the legislature, governor, and counties, but also between public and private entities serving children ages 0 to 5 and their families. Furthermore, First 5 California is well suited to serve as an advocate and communication hub for this work.

“They are in the position that if they became a communications and advocacy hub for early learning and education in the state of California it would be phenomenal. I’m not sure that has been realized.”

--Foundation Staff

“Their notoriety and reach- a willingness to be bold and invest in new areas and try to leverage early investments.”

--Child Advocacy Organization Staff

“Great capacity to touch all corners of the state with the resources necessary to make an impact on the issues they care about.”

--State Agency Staff

“Ability to bring disparate parts of a large system together to reach a common consensus.”

--First 5 California Staff

Secondary Themes

First 5 California’s work on public awareness. An early focus of First 5 California was its dedication to raising public awareness of the issues and needs of children ages 0 to 5. The statutory mandate of First 5 California requires that six per cent of its budget be allocated toward mass media communication to the general public related to methods of child nurturing and parenting to encourage child development; the selection of child care; health and social services; the prevention of tobacco, alcohol, and drug use by pregnant women; and the detrimental effect of secondhand smoke on early childhood development. Informants responded that this had been very successful at raising awareness of important issues for children age 0 to 5 and their families. These efforts also served to promote public awareness about First 5 California and its mission.

First 5 California signature programs. Informants touted the successes of First 5 California Signature programs, particularly the Parent and Child Signature Programs. Through these programs, First 5 California focused on access and quality of early childhood education and care. It has strategically used its funding source to enhance the skills and abilities of the early childhood

teaching workforce, educate parents, and increase access to quality early care and education for children.

Outliers or Additional Interesting Comments

The “youth of the organization.” Established in 1998, one informant reported, “We haven’t been around for long enough to be seen as parochial.”

Gathering and sharing of evidence-based resources. In some instances, First 5 California has been a leader in research-based programs and advocacy for children and families. At the forefront of national trends, First 5 California shared these best practices with the counties and other partners. This success needs to be increased and developed further.

WEAKNESSES: What do you believe are First 5 California’s key weaknesses?

Emerging Dominant/Primary Themes

The relationship of First 5 California and the counties. The relationship between First 5 California and the county commissions is a critical weakness due to a lack of clarity and poor communication. Informants cite practical items ranging from broken online forms to poor reporting practices. Informants pointed out that First 5 California engages in dialogue with the legislature or makes important strategic decisions without the consideration or solicitation of input from the counties. The county commissions develop priorities and fund programs based on their local needs, but for many counties, local and state activities and initiatives are not in harmony. First 5 California has made some improvement in this area in the last six months, but significant steps lay ahead.

“In most people’s mind First 5 gets blended between counties and state. It has been problematic in terms of program and perception.”

--Child Advocacy Organization Staff

Prioritization of funds and evaluation of programs. As revenues continue to decline, the strategic use of resources becomes even more important. Some informants pointed to “bloated” media budgets, the “dribbling out” of funds to the counties, and large consulting contracts for work that could be done “in-house.” Others pointed to the lack of strategic priorities, evaluation, and follow-through. First 5 California has shifted its priorities over the years, resulting in changed investments. While this alone is not necessarily a weakness, it has contributed to the inability to evaluate long-term results. Declining revenue

requires a more strategic use of funds and the ability to analyze results to demonstrate success. Furthermore, perceived ineffective use of funds results in the questioning of First 5 California's entitlement to its resources. In recent years this, coupled with a desperate fiscal climate, led the state to use First 5 California funds to bolster the budgets of other programs. While First 5 California has accepted that role in some cases, informants note that it should not be perceived as a bank for other agencies.

The narrow focus of First 5 California. One of First 5 California's perceived current weaknesses is also one of its greatest opportunities. In the past, First 5 California focused on statewide programs instead of advocacy and leadership. Furthermore, while First 5 California has focused in the areas of teacher and educational quality for California's youngest children, it has not dedicated as much attention and/or resources to other important areas like health and public policy. A number of voices lamented the perceived narrow focus of First 5 California and suggested opportunities to broaden the scope of its mission and message and to establish itself as the leader that it should be.

"They have no understanding of what their lever is and where they are on the fulcrum of change."

--First 5 County Staff

"I don't think it's seen as the kind of leader that it can be. For all kinds of reasons they have stayed fairly separate and apart."

--Foundation Staff

Secondary Themes

Staffing First 5 California. While the dedicated and passionate employees and the small and flexible staff are seen as a strength, a number of staffing concerns persist. The high rate of turnover leads to understaffing, insufficient training, discontinuity, and weak capacity building. Communication across units is disjointed and/or inconsistent and staff feel stretched thin and ill prepared to complete the important work of aiding California's youngest children and their families.

"We spread ourselves very thin, and when we do that we're not doing anything well. There's a limit on what it is that we can do that is going to be really successful."

--First 5 California Staff

Outliers and Additional Interesting Comments

Related to some of the other weaknesses above is the need for First 5 California to **include more stakeholders in their work**. Similarly, First 5 California is **not perceived as a strategic partner** to the majority of important stakeholder groups ranging from the legislature to the county commissions and from nonprofit partners to state departments. This diminishes First 5 California's ability to strengthen their mission, make quality investments in evidence-based programs, and collaborate with leaders in the field.

OPPORTUNITIES: What do you believe are First 5 California's key opportunities?

Emerging Dominant/Primary Themes

First 5 California should increase collaboration and partnership, serving as a thought leader and convener. The onset of new leadership, a modest relaxation in budget tensions, and the process of developing a new strategic plan presents the opportunity for First 5 California to reinvent itself as a partner, collaborator, and convener of organizations serving children ages 0 to 5 and their families. First 5 California can develop partnerships and bring together resources to create a more coherent system to serve California's youngest children. As a thought leader, First 5 California could be the voice for children ages 0 to 5 and the various organizations across the state that work to serve this population, setting the agenda for this work.

"If there can be a comprehensive and unified agenda for young children in which we have both the short- and long-term goals and strategic pathway that will then allow us to plug and play as windows of opportunity open up. We'll know exactly where to go and what to do next."

--Foundation Staff

"One of the greatest opportunities the state commission can seize is nurturing and creating new relationships with statewide actors (philanthropists, stakeholder groups, state agencies) across the broad range of early childhood development policy and program issues."

--First 5 California Staff

Leveraging resources from a declining budget to shift the focus away from programs. While declining revenue might be a weakness for First 5 California, it also presents an opportunity for shifting the focus of the work First 5 California does and the partners with which it works. Leveraging funding includes developing partnerships, establishing new funding sources, and shifting First 5

California's role to one of researcher and disseminator of best practices rather than a funder and operator of programs.

The strong federal focus of early childhood education and care. President Obama has put a heavy emphasis on the importance of quality early learning and care. First 5 California has the opportunity to become a model organization for the support of the nation's youngest children. This also provides the opportunity to work with the federal government to gain additional sources of funding and to spotlight best practices. One of President Obama's focus areas is system integration. A number of informants suggested this areas as an opportunity for First 5 California moving forward.

"The federal government is looking to California to see how it can work in other states."

--First 5 California Staff

Secondary Themes

Child health and the Affordable Care Act. A number of informants discussed the important changes taking place across the state with the roll out of the Affordable Care Act. Some see child health is an important area for First 5 California to focus its attention on moving forward. Some suggested working with the legislature and increasing public awareness of children's health issues while others promoted the need to develop more comprehensive "whole child" systems of care.

Outliers and Additional Interesting Comments

Informants discussed a number of other important areas for First 5 California to consider as it progresses in the development of its strategic plan. **Transitional Kindergarten** provides an opportunity for First 5 California to collaborate with the California Department of Education (CDE) and bridge the gap between children ages 0 to 5 and the public education system in the state. The **changing demographics** present another opportunity for First 5 California to refocus its work with California's youngest children and their families. As First 5 California's target population changes, the strategies and approaches it uses must also evolve.

CHALLENGES: What do you believe are First 5 California's key challenges?

Emerging Dominant/Primary Themes

Data, evaluation, and efficiency. Collecting data on funded programs, evaluating organizational effectiveness, and determining the efficient use of future funding pose a challenge for First 5 California. Using data and evaluation systems to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of its work will allow First 5 California to present a clear case for its funding, illustrate the importance of its work, and become a partner that others want to work with. It will also provide a mechanism for First 5 California to use its dwindling resources to achieve the most “bang for the buck.”

“Evaluation: we need to be able to tell the story of what our investments are doing.”

--First 5 California Staff

“How can we evaluate the effectiveness of First 5 California in a cost-effective way? How do we know we're making a difference in children's lives? Are the programs we're funding doing that? We need a way to measure that.”

--First 5 California Commissioner

“Looking at short-term actionable goals and if there are ways to measure success- that would be a very important priority to determine if there's progress being made.”

--First 5 California Commissioner

Defining and messaging the vision and mission of First 5 California. The pivotal challenge for First 5 California moving forward is to clearly define its mission and disseminate the message to its partners, the legislature and Governor, and the public. First 5 California cannot effectively conduct its work if the foundational understanding of its vision and mission are not shared within the organization and with its key stakeholders. Defining the mission will allow First 5 California to set the agenda for work done around the state for children ages 0 to 5 and their families.

“We haven't defined ourselves strongly enough and it makes us more vulnerable in tough economic times-- people don't know who we are. First 5

California needs to make sure we have a stronger presence and people know what we do.”

--First 5 California Staff

Secondary Themes

Visibility and credibility with the Governor and Legislature. Increasing First 5 California's visibility and credibility with the Governor and Legislature is linked to the development and messaging of a strong vision for First 5 California's work. Without a clearly articulated vision, the Administration and Legislature view First 5 California as a “piggy bank.” Similarly, state agencies and departments do not view First 5 California as a partner due to the lack of visibility and clarity around their work. First 5 California must be able to define its work and identify clear successes in order to gain the support of the state government and foster collaboration with state agencies and departments.

“First 5 California is not on the radar of certain departments at all. In terms of people's day-to-day roles and responsibilities (Department of Education, Human Services, etc.), it's not thought about.”

--First 5 California Staff

First 5 California's relationship with its commissioners. Building a strong relationship with the appointed commissioners poses an important challenge. Some informants discussed a lack of communication around mission and programs. The part-time role of the commissioners, along with the Bagley-Keene rules makes communication and relationship building difficult. Nevertheless, this is an important challenge for First 5 California to overcome.

“The commissioners are the ones with the vote and decision-making power. Informing them as to options is how it's supposed to work.”

--State Policy Maker

Outliers and Additional Interesting Comments

Overcoming silos. For First 5 California to take on a great leadership and convening role for organizations and agencies working to help California's youngest children and families, it needs to overcome the siloed nature of spending and services. The challenge to creating Systems of Care for children ages 0 to 5 rests on First 5 California's ability to unify efforts across the state.

EARLY ED: Overall, I believe that First 5 California has successfully invested in Early Education and Care.

Emerging Dominant/Primary Themes

The Child and Parent Signature Programs. First 5 California focuses significant attention and funding on the Child and Parent Signature Programs (Power of Preschool, Cares Plus). First 5 California prioritized these areas and has aggressively invested in improving the skills and qualifications of early childhood educators and increasing access to early education and care for California's neediest children. Some describe these programs as "innovative" and "well-designed." These programs have also served as a springboard for a number of statewide initiatives in the areas of early education and care.

"Those two programs are really built on best practices. They looked really closely at what was working and what wasn't working."

--First 5 California Staff

"They've been aggressive in trying to reach underserved communities and have those kids have early learning opportunities."

--Legislator

"First 5 California is pushing the boundaries of professionalism in the field."

--Child Advocacy Organization Staff

Limitations of the Child and Teacher Signature Programs. First 5 California can point to a number of successes in their Child and Teacher Signature Programs, but many key informants also pointed out weaknesses and areas for improvement. These were primarily in the areas of evaluation, collaboration, and targeting.

"They've taken specific discrete areas and tried to make a difference. They've made the investment. My issue here is that I don't think they've really effectively evaluated anything."

--Foundation Staff

“First 5 California has what they considered a solid plan but didn’t integrate what they were doing with other folks. It would have been more impactful if they had truly worked closely with other departments or county commissions. They did it by themselves. Their impact could have been more significant if they had leveraged their resources and integrated with other initiatives out there.”

--First 5 California Commissioner

Secondary Themes

Limited focus on children ages 0 to 3. The successes of the Child and Teacher Signature Programs have made an impact on children throughout the state, but primarily through preschool, which tends to target four and five year old children. Some informants urged First 5 California to shift its focus to younger children to ensure that they too had access to quality early care.

“I don’t think we’ve met the mark around the care of young kids.”

--First 5 California Staff

“I don’t mean to detract from preschool at all, it’s an essential part of the continuum but, quite often, the 0 to 3 is lost in some of that attention. That is an ongoing concern and 0 to 3 right now have more needs that exist than 4 to 5. I see a lost opportunity.”

--Legislative Staff

Outliers and Additional Interesting Comments

Defining the role of First 5 California. In assessing the success of First 5 California’s programmatic initiatives, the question that ultimately arises is whether First 5 California should run programs or focus its attention and investments elsewhere. This is an important question in determining the future of First 5 California.

“I’m not sure we should be in the business of running programs. We can be partners in running programs, but I’m not convinced that this is the best way for us.”

--First 5 California Staff

First 5 California should prioritize children with disabilities or other special needs. One concerned informant discussed the limited attention paid to disabled

children and those with special needs in the area of early education and care. This often marginalized and disenfranchised population should receive increased focus in First 5 California's program areas.

"My main concern in this area is that children with disabilities and other special needs are not reflected in their projects. That's our priority population."

--State Agency Staff

CHILD HEALTH: Overall, I believe that First 5 California has successfully invested in Child Health.

Emerging Dominant/Primary Themes

Child health is an opportunity for investment. For First 5 California to have a holistic approach to improving the outcomes for California's youngest children and their families, it needs to focus on child health. The area of child health presents a clear opportunity for First 5 California moving forward. Most informants said they did not know of child health initiatives at the state-level, but hoped to see more from First 5 California in this area in the future.

"If you look at the whole child and development, child health makes a ton of difference, we need to do it."

--First 5 California Staff

"This is a real opportunity for us to look at the spectrum of services, what exists in prenatal to five year range, where are there programs with specific expertise and where can we fill in gaps."

-State Agency Staff

First 5 California has passively funded child health through other entities. In recent years First 5 California has given money to support programs facing state budget cuts in the areas of child health. While this has impacted children age 0 to 5 by maintaining the provision of services, First 5 California has simply been a funder, rather than a policy maker. In many cases, First 5 California had limited choice in whether or not to administer funds and did not make strategic investments. Stakeholders raised major concerns about the lack of oversight and evaluation of these investments and some could not list the programs or services that had received First 5 California dollars.

“The fact that we’ve given a lot of money to other health agencies in the last few years is not enough because we haven’t shaped how that money is spent and we haven’t gotten any results we can evaluate. It’s been very passive.”

--First 5 California Staff

Counties focus on child health, but not First 5 California. The counties have taken a more active role in pursuing child health initiatives. The majority of county strategic plans involve child health foci and programs, but those goals and objectives are not reflected at the state level. Greater alignment and support from First 5 California could leverage successful county programs on a statewide level.

Secondary Themes

First 5 California’s notable investments in child health. Some interview participants listed a number of First 5 California investments and programs targeting child health. These include the following:

- Smoking cessation counseling and the 1-800-No Butts hotline;
- Co-sponsorship of conferences on child health including the annual autism conference and department of health conference;
- The Department of Public Health child health survey;
- The Kits for New Parent; and
- The Hands on Health Van.

While some informants were able to list these initiatives, they had little to contribute regarding the level of priority, success, or evaluation of these programs.

FAMILY FUNCTIONING: Overall, I believe that First 5 California has successfully invested in Family Functioning.²⁰

Emerging Dominant/Primary Themes

First 5 California’s success with the kit for new parents. The majority of informants pointed to the kit as the primary way in which First 5 California impacts family functioning. Some informants see this as a tool to make a positive impact while others doubt its ability to really improve overall family functioning.

²⁰ DEFINE

“The Kit for New Parents is a great way to get information to parents, especially since we are not administering programs at the local level.”

--First 5 California Staff

“I don’t see our Parent Signature Program getting to that sophisticated level of family functioning.”

--First 5 California Staff

The difficulty of improving family functioning at the state level. Improving family functioning is arguably one of the most difficult objectives of First 5 California. It requires a holistic and differentiated approach at a local level. Improving family functioning means different things for different families. This work includes substance abuse treatment, family literacy, rehabilitation, poverty alleviation, domestic violence support, counseling, and many more areas of focus. Not only are these services difficult to provide, but also measuring success is an even greater challenge.

Outliers and Additional Interesting Comments

Efforts do not target the right population. In looking to improve the functioning of the families with children ages 0 to 5, First 5 California must differentiate its approach and mechanisms based on the incredibly diverse needs of families across the state. One informant questioned the ability of the current Parent’s Website to reach the neediest populations, maintaining that the Parent Website, in its current form, targets moderately high-functioning families.

SYSTEMS OF CARE: Overall, I believe that First 5 California has successfully invested in Systems of Care.²¹

Emerging Dominant/Primary Themes

First 5 California should focus on Systems of Care. Systems of Care should be a priority focus area for First 5 California. A number of informants believe that developing Systems of Care is really the mandate of First 5 California and that it provides considerable opportunity moving forward. Some specifically pointed out that First 5 California should be writing legislation to integrate systems for children ages 0 to 5 while others believe the commission was established predominantly for this purpose. This question also raised the concern about

²¹ DEFINE

whether or not First 5 California should be engaged in program management at all.

"This should be the bulk of their investment. This is their opportunity. They should be writing the legislation to integrate systems for children 0 to 5. This is where they should be doing the most but are doing the least."

--First 5 County Staff

"When I think of Systems of Care I think of change in the system, not handling a program, rather getting everyone at the table to make the system better."

--First 5 California Staff

Developing Systems of Care in early childhood education and care and the Teacher Signature Program has had some success. Achievements in building Systems of Care have been made in the Child and Teacher Signature Programs. Many felt that the progress in developing Systems of Care varied greatly across program areas with Preschool and the Cares program having the most success, but health systems and child welfare programs having little or no improvement.

Systems of Care is an unknown concept for many First 5 California stakeholders. The majority of informants, when asked to rate the progress of First 5 California in the development of Systems of Care, said they didn't know what that meant or asked for a definition. When given a definition many of these respondents said they could not think of any First 5 California actions that met that description.

Secondary Themes

The counties have done more around Systems of Care than First 5 California. In the coordination of services and systems, county First 5 commissions have done a better job at integration. Counties are better able to coordinate the services provided locally to create Systems of Care for their populations.

"I know of many local areas that have developed a blueprint and First 5 counties have been at the table locally, but at the state level we should do this as well."

--State Agency Staff

Outliers or Additional Interesting Comments

First 5 California needs to collaborate with other agencies. In order to truly create Systems of Care, First 5 California needs to collaborate with other agencies both within California and beyond. Some of these agencies include the California Department of Education, the Quality Rating and Improvement System National Learning Network, and the California Department of Public Health. This collaboration would promote alignment, and would also help counties access resources.

PUBLIC AWARENESS: Overall, I believe that First 5 CA has successfully invested in Public Awareness.

Emerging Dominant/Primary Themes

First 5 California has a strong history of public awareness campaigns, especially with targeted populations. First 5 California has made considerable investments in public awareness and media campaigns since its establishment. The First 5 California mandate, as established by Proposition 10, includes a media and outreach requirement. Through billboards, TV ads, radio spots, social media, and print, First 5 California has made 0 to 5 issues visible. This has been particularly true for its target audience- low-income parents and families. Many people find First 5 California synonymous with Early Childhood Education and Care due to the reach of its public awareness campaigns. While the majority of informants praised the past efforts of First 5 California, many noted that the public awareness and media campaign had waned in recent years.

“In the early days there was a lot of great public awareness. In recent years that waned.”

-- First 5 California Staff

First 5 California raises awareness around issues pertaining to the first five years, but could do better at raising awareness about the organization itself. First 5 California spreads the message around the importance of the first five years of life, but fails to explain the role of the organization itself. This issue has to do with the targeted populations, the message itself, and the branding of First 5 California when it comes to the programs it funds. For example, First 5 California funds a number of programs across the counties (ex: CARES Plus), but when those programs are administered at the county level, the First 5 California logo does not always appear on the materials. This results in a lack of clarity about the involvement of First 5 California. Some informants also believed that if First 5 California further promoted their role as an organization, people might not think

of First 5 California as a “piggy bank” and would be less willing to accept the attempts to use its funds.

“Public awareness has been more focused on the actual message itself and not awareness of the organization. If there were more knowledge of First 5 California generally speaking, then some of these attempts to access First 5 California reserve funds might arouse more publicity and public outcry.”

--Child Advocacy Organization Staff

Little data exists to demonstrate the impact and reach of the media campaigns.

A common theme expressed by informants focused on the lack of data collection and/or evaluation of the media outreach campaigns. While many answered that the campaign had been widely distributed, First 5 California lacks metrics about the number of viewers, the demographics of those who had seen it, and evaluation of the impact. The effectiveness of the public awareness media campaigns should be assessed.

“Campaign efforts that I’ve seen are impressive, I’m just not clear on how effective the messaging has been in terms of how many people they’re able to reach.”

--First 5 California Commissioner

Secondary Themes

First 5 California needs to expand its target population for its media outreach efforts. First 5 California has successfully disseminated a message around early education and care to targeted populations, but should expand both the targets and the content. One informant stressed the need to expand the focus to include a greater emphasis on father-involvement, domestic violence issues, and homelessness prevention. Other informants noted the need to target policy and decision makers about the role of First 5 California.

“We spend a lot of money on a certain target audience- low income families with children 0 to 5. However, public awareness is more than just that target audience because that target audience is not the policymakers.”

-- First 5 California Staff

Outliers and Additional Interesting Comments

First 5 California lacks a consistent mission message. As funds decline, First 5 California must be more deliberate in stating its mission. One informant notes that as First 5 California's budget declines, it needs to define its mission as either a funder or an advocate, and use its media budget to reflect that choice.

"Part of the issue is that First 5 California hasn't defined what it wants to stand for. Is it a funder or an advocate? It can't do both with declining funds."

-- First 5 California Staff

PARTNERING: Overall, First 5 California has been successful in partnering with First 5 County Commissions, other State Agencies, and nonprofits.

Emerging Dominant/Primary Themes

First 5 California has significant room for growth in its partnerships with the county commissions, nonprofit organizations, and state agencies. First 5 California has had some successes and has missed some opportunities in the past in regards to collaboration. The majority of respondents said they saw significant room for growth in the areas of collaboration between First 5 California and the county commissions, other nonprofits, and state agencies. First 5 California can achieve more for California's youngest children and their families by partnering, leveraging resources, and collaborating with other groups in service of children ages 0 to 5.

"I don't see a lot of partnering. I think we could do so much more good if we did."

--First 5 California Staff

"I'd love to see more opportunities to partner with county commissions to make a broader investment in similar strategies so we can communicate the broader impact of our work in preparing kids for school."

--First 5 County Staff

"There is a difference between meeting with and leading."

--First 5 California Commissioner

The establishment of new leadership created optimism for successful future partnerships. The change in leadership at First 5 California provides opportunities for fresh starts and new relationships. The window is open for new partnerships and greater collaboration between First 5 California, the county commissions, and other agencies serving California's youngest children and their families. Some progress has already been made and the perception of First 5 California is starting to shift already.

"With the skills and expertise that Camille brings as Executive Director and George Halverson coming on board, there's an opportunity to work collaboratively as a team."

--First 5 California Commissioner

Secondary Themes

First 5 California has operated under a defensive posture that hindered collaboration. First 5 California has been forced to reallocate its resources to prop up other agencies during times of deep fiscal and budgetary trouble. This led to defensive posturing by First 5 California that hindered collaboration and partnership. This attitude was best described through a direct quote from one of the informants in the interview process:

"First 5, justifiably so, has been afraid of having its resources taken away, so there is a defensive posture that it has. Once you have a defensive posture, the most well intended questions can spark a level of antagonism. There is a real fear of actually taking a stand on anything and their inability to play with CDD, which is actually the largest funder for kids. I think that ended up being problematic."

--First 5 County Staff

Outliers or Additional Interesting Comments

First 5 California should be the convener for all groups working on first five issues. There are numerous agencies and organizations across all levels of the state that work on issues related to children ages 0 to 5 and their families. First 5 California should serve as the convener of all these groups to help unite efforts and advance public policy.

"There are so many statewide advocacy groups. First 5 California could be the convener for these groups. Wouldn't it be nice to have one agenda? First 5

California could easily be a central voice. People should look at First 5 California as the resident expert on child development.”

--First 5 County Staff

SYSTEMS CHANGE: Overall, First 5 California has been successful in facilitating systems change.

Emerging Dominant/Primary Themes

First 5 California has had some success in changing early childhood education and care systems. Early Childhood Education and Care has been a primary focus of First 5 California. Their work with the child and teacher signature programs increased both access to and quality of early education and care for California’s children. Through this work, First 5 California improved the quality, increased access, and raised the level of dialogue around early childhood education and care.

“If you think of what the world would look like without First 5, there would be less access obviously, but you also wouldn’t have the progress we have in both quality improvements and really outstanding inter-agency programs and I think First 5 has played a huge role in changing systems serving children from birth to five.”

--Child Advocacy Organization Staff

First 5 California has not changed public policy pertaining to children ages 0 to 5. Opportunities exist for First 5 California moving forward to be a change-agent for systems change. Many informants noted the previous lack of involvement and opportunities for future involvement in the areas of public policy and advocacy. In order to shape and change the systems impacting children ages 0 to 5 and their families, First 5 California must influence policy at the state and federal levels. Opportunities to move into the policy area exist as leadership changes, the budget crisis subsides, and First 5 California rolls out a new strategic plan. The areas of policy influence and advocacy present huge opportunities for First 5 California moving forward.

“We’re not out there with policy makers influencing things. We miss the ability to truly and really change the system. If we’re not influencing policy, if we’re not out there, we’re not changing things from the top.”

--First 5 California Staff

Secondary Themes

First 5 California has been instrumental in changing how people think about children ages 0 to 5. The establishment of First 5 California and the work it has done over the last fifteen years has contributed to a fundamental shift in the way society views the care of California's youngest citizens. Public awareness campaigns, improvements in access and quality of early education and care, and the establishment of First 5 county commissions across California have impacted attitudes and perceptions.

"There's been a tremendous amount of change on how we view children and the value of supporting them at an early age."

--First 5 County Staff

Outliers or Additional Interesting Comments

As one informant noted, First 5 California **programs are currently "overlaid" on existing structures.** It supports a number of established programs and builds on existing structures, particularly in the Teacher Signature Program. As a result, First 5 California has not facilitated the creation of new systems or created a new infrastructure, but rather, has enhanced existing ones. This relates to the question of First 5 California's role in program management and whether other priorities would better serve California's youngest children.

AREAS OF FOCUS: In what other policy and program areas do you believe that First 5 California should focus its work?

Emerging Dominant/Primary Themes

Policy, advocacy, and influence. A number of stakeholders see advocacy and policy-making as First 5 California's primary role. First 5 California has the opportunity to provide a unified voice in support of California's youngest children and their families. This includes engaging with the state legislature, building a collective voice, increasing public awareness and support, cultivating relationships and partnerships, and shaping the policy debate around children ages 0 to 5.

"Taking on policy positions and having a policy agenda that they focus on over the course of the year in trying to improve the policies and programs for children 0 to 5."

--Nonprofit Staff

"I think that we should focus on helping to move the field in a united vision for early education and care and some statewide goals that we could message and get people to buy into so when they are doing their work we're all working toward the same united goals."

--First 5 California Staff

Research, evaluation, and integration. As First 5 California strengthens its relationships with the county commissions, it should move into the role of researcher, advocate, and integrator. First 5 California should research best practices and share that information with the counties. It should have clear guidelines and systems to evaluate the programs it funds and should work towards the integration of systems that impact California's youngest children and their families. Overcoming the siloed nature of programs should be one of First 5 California's key priorities.

"I'd love to see First 5 California highlight successes from the various counties and then figure out how to scale them. There are so many hidden success stories and I think First 5 California could play more of a role in shining that light and figuring out how to scale it in a systematic way and set up investments."

--Child Advocacy Organization Staff

"First 5 California needs to focus on systems level change at the state level- an integrated team approach."

--First 5 County Staff

Healthcare for the whole-child. Many informants pointed to healthcare and health systems as important areas for First 5 California to focus its work. Specifically, First 5 California should work toward integrating health systems in all areas that impact prenatal to early childhood care. Counties have focused on areas of health, but First 5 California has had only limited impact.

"I'd like to see First 5 California get a sense of what's out there and what's possible and see if there are some additional investments that it could make in partnership with nonprofits or providers. Dental care, hearing, vision, developmental. There's no statewide coordination."

--First 5 California Commissioner

“We’re doing a lot in education and outreach but we’re missing the health aspect of it-- maternal, mental, prenatal, dental, obesity.”

--First 5 California Staff

Secondary Themes

Systems for addressing the needs of a demographically changing population.

California is undergoing one of the fastest rates of demographic change in the country. First 5 California has an opportunity to manage these changes and be a model for the rest of the country.

“Being ahead of the curve on the demographic change in the state to help them really prepare for children from diverse communities be successful- that’s one of the areas for our state that I think will either determine success or be one of the areas where we’ll feel like we failed.”

--Business Leader

Shifting the attention to ages 0 to 3. Some of First 5 California's most impressive successes are in the areas of access to and quality of Early Education and Care. While the Child and Teacher Signature Programs do not stop at preschool education, the majority of children impacted by these initiatives are four and five years old. As a result, a number of informants believe First 5 California should focus its attention moving forward on children ages 0 to 3 and prenatal care.

“We are getting to a place where more four year olds are likely to be in preschool so the focus on 0 to 3 and prenatal is because we know it has an impact on learning, stress, and trauma and it brings the health and the education pieces together really well.”

--Foundation Staff

Outliers and Additional Interesting Comments

Supporting Full-Service Community Schools. The community school movement is an area where one informant hoped to see First 5 California involve itself in the coming years. Community schools might be a way for First 5 California to target some of the neediest families of children ages 0 to 5 and establish itself as a partner throughout childhood. It also provides the opportunity for First 5 California to coordinate services and partner with other agencies and organizations.

"I think First 5 could be instrumental in incorporating Early Childhood Education and Care learning opportunities into the K-12 system. That's not like going out and campaigning for something. If you offer a program then people will follow... I think there's a huge link that could happen. If you get schools and districts into providing and partnering with First 5 to provide early learning opportunities, it will go."

--Legislator

Q16: ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: Anything else that you would like to share as First 5 California engages in its strategic planning process?

- Accountability of funding
- Evaluation
- Putting out reports and studies
- Interagency collaboration
- Staffing First 5 California with people with expertise in the focus areas
- Where does First 5 California fit and how does it advance the development of a unified early learning system
- How will the Affordable Care Act impact First 5 California's work
- *"This is a unique opportunity to promote a comprehensive interagency system for promoting children's health and well being and success. It could really affect the lives of young children."* —State Agency Staff