



AGENDA ITEM: 7
DATE OF MEETING: April 24, 2014
ACTION: X
INFORMATION: _____

FIRST 5 CALIFORNIA MASS MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS CONTRACT

SUMMARY

Staff requests the State Commission to authorize the release of a new Request for Proposal (RFP) for up to \$68 million for three years to secure a media contractor in order to successfully implement the media requirement of the California Children and Families Act and to educate California families about the importance of early education and health to a child's success in school and in life.

BACKGROUND

Health and Safety Code Section 130105 establishes the California Children and Families Trust Fund, and describes how the revenue is to be distributed. Of the 20 percent allocated to the state, Section 130105 (d)(1)(A) stipulates, "Six percent shall be deposited in a Mass Media Communications Account for expenditures for communications to the general public utilizing television, radio, newspapers, and other mass media on subjects relating to and furthering the goals and purposes of this act, including, but not limited to, methods of nurturing and parenting that encourage proper childhood development, the informed selection of child care, information regarding health and social services, the prevention and cessation of tobacco, alcohol, and drug use by pregnant women, the detrimental effects of secondhand smoke on early childhood development, and to ensure that children are ready to enter school."

The current media contract will expire on December 31, 2014, and cannot be amended. Staff is in the process of developing a new RFP to replace the current media contract through a competitive process.

The current media contract was awarded in 2009 for a total of \$66,405,453 over five years. First 5 California distributed the funds and worked with the contractor to ensure the delivery of health and educational messaging in a variety of media, including the following:

- **Radio:** Radio commercials in multiple languages to deliver messages regarding healthy beverages and language development.
- **Pandora Radio:** Established its own children's radio station.

- **Online:** Online advertising specifically targeted toward adults seeking out parenting information. Online animated banner ads ran on parenting websites and served to drive parents to our First 5 California parent website, Facebook, and Twitter for more information.
- **Newspaper:** Print ads in various newspapers targeting the African American, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Korean communities.
- **Doctors' Offices:** Posters were developed in both English and Spanish on early language development and posted throughout the state in low-income areas to reach the target market.
- **Scholastic Partnership:** In collaboration with First 5 Santa Clara and Scholastic, developed a new Potter the Otter storybook about healthy beverages, which was used as a deliverable in various campaigns, including on the Hands-On Health Express, in doctors' offices, in our radio promotions, and more.
- **Los Angeles (LA) Galaxy:** Partnered with the LA Galaxy for a Kids' Night, which included sponsorship of the evening with on-field events, signage, and giveaways from the Hands-on Health Express. Players also participated in a public service announcement on physical fitness, which was aired in both English and Spanish.
- **Convenience Stores:** Posters on healthy beverages were placed in the windows of convenience stores throughout the state in areas that lacked access to local grocery stores and fresh fruits and vegetables.
- **County Outreach:** Continued its one-on-one outreach with every county throughout the state using the Hands-On Health Express traveling van to engage parents and kids and teach them about the benefits of nutrition and exercise. The traveling exhibit features bilingual "edutainers" who run the kids through various activities to make learning and exploring healthy foods fun.
- **Online Videos:** Produced a series on online videos in both English and Spanish to deliver its message of healthy beverages and early language development. The videos were placed online in forums and on websites to target parents and further drive them to our social media and websites for more information.
- **Social Media:** Facebook and Twitter pages, with daily parenting tips, are actively maintained to reach thousands of parents throughout the state.
- **Read Now California:** Partnered with Clear Channel Radio and public libraries throughout the state in a radio promotion about early literacy. The promotion included a public service announcement by the Executive Director, which was played in every market leading up to a public event.

- **Hmong Cable Television:** To target the specific Hmong population, ads ran on cable television in local areas to reach 95% of the Hmong population. (Hmong is not a written language, so television was the best way to reach the Hmong population.)
- **Television Commercials:** In order to reach a broader audience, First 5 California developed two commercials to run for six weeks from March 2014 through June 2014 about brain development, and talking, reading, and singing to your child from the time they are born.

DISCUSSION

Contract Goals

The winning contractor will be instructed to direct its advertising methodology, research, creative design strategy, and implementation efforts toward supporting and aligning with the following advertising campaign and education program goals:

1. Increase awareness and educate parents and caregivers on the healthy development of children prenatal through 5.
2. Identify, target, and reach California's diverse populations as well as communities that are traditionally hard to reach.
3. Identify and implement a broad range of new and emerging media strategies and technology as a means to reach and educate Californians about the healthy development of young children.
4. Brand First 5 California as a recognized and reliable source of information for issues related to children prenatal through 5.

Strategic Plan

This contract would effectively advance the progress of the Commission's recently adopted Strategic Plan, specially Strategic Priority Area (SPA) 3, "Public Will and Investment." The objective of SPA 3 is to increase public awareness on the importance of the investment in the early years. Two of the activities identified in the plan are:

- "Develop and implement a coordinated communication campaign that proactively and consistently messages the value of early childhood investments with success stories."
- "Include evidence-based culturally and linguistically effective messages, and grassroots and traditional media strategies."

Although the contract would contain many other requirements, the core obligation of the contractor would be to research the market for target populations, and then design, produce, and implement advertising campaigns and public relations activities. Once

each campaign is concluded, the contractor would be required to cooperate with an outside evaluation firm that would determine the effectiveness and impact of the campaign messages.

Television and New Technologies

First 5 California staff will work with the Commission's Public Education and Outreach Advisory Committee on specific messaging, reaching a broader audience, and educating parental decision makers. In addition, new and emerging technologies should be incorporated to be fully effective at penetrating target markets. Some of the advanced targeting methods available could be:

- **Native advertising** - a form of paid media where the ad experience follows the natural form and function of the user experience in which it is placed. For example, the same ad would look and feel different on different websites the target market would use.
- **Video advertising** - such as on YouTube. (YouTube reaches more consumers than cable television. *Six Trends in Advertising You Need to Know for 2014*, *Marketing Week*, January 17, 2014.)
- **Targeting and Retargeting advertising** - takes advantage of a multitude of datasets beyond geographic and demographic by combining those techniques with consumer attitudes and behaviors to target like-minded people with similar motivations.
- **Mobile device advertising** - can be used when consumers are willing to be located and to receive the information.
- **Real-time bidding** - refers to the means by which production inventory is bought and sold on a per-impression basis, via programmatic instantaneous auction, similar to financial markets.

FISCAL IMPACT

The cost of the proposed contract is significant; however, the above described use of television and technologies will be used in the most cost effective way possible to achieve the biggest impact on California parents. Media campaigns that achieve results are expensive. Other state agencies have engaged in media campaigns through media contractors whose cost is significant. Examples are:

- Covered California is currently engaged in a media contract for \$80 million over 1.5 years.
- The California Department of Public Health Tobacco Control Program released an RFP for comprehensive advertising services in the amount of \$75 million over five years.

- The Department of Public Health released an RFP in the amount of \$39 million over three years.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the State Commission authorize the release of a RFP for a new media contract for up to \$68 million over three years.