



January 26, 2017

SUBJECT	
<p><b>REPORT ON “THE EARLY GROWTH OF LATINO TODDLERS: CAUSES, CONSEQUENCES, AND POLICY OPTIONS”</b></p> <p><b>Strategic Priority Area 1. Children and Families:</b> Support children prenatal through age 5 and their families by providing culturally and linguistically effective resources, knowledge, and opportunities for them to develop the skills needed to achieve their optimal potential in school and life.</p> <p><b>Goal: Goal 1.1 Child Health:</b> Children prenatal through age 5 and their families access the full spectrum of health and behavioral health services needed to enhance their well-being.</p> <p><b>Goal 1.2. Early Learning:</b> Children birth through age 5 benefit from high-quality early education, early intervention, family engagement, and support that prepares all children to reach their optimal potential in school and life.</p> <p><b>Goal 1.3. Family and Community Support and Partnership:</b> Families and communities are engaged, supported, and strengthened through culturally effective resources and opportunities that assist them in nurturing, caring, and providing for their children’s success and well-being.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Action</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information</p>

### SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

Bruce Fuller, professor of education and public policy at the University of California, Berkeley and Dr. Alma Guerrero, pediatric physician and assistant professor at the University of California, Los Angeles, School of Medicine will report on a series of studies addressing the growth of Latino toddlers from late infancy through the preschool years. The presentation will include a discussion of the article from the Hispanic Journal

of Medicine entitled “Differing Cognitive Trajectories of Mexican American Toddlers: The Role of Class, Nativity, and Maternal Practice.” (See Attachment A.) These studies track the progress in cognitive and social development, along with health status, of Latino toddlers. The findings of the studies help to illuminate the strengths and growth potential of parenting among diverse Latino families, and how public programs may assist young children and parents.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

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This is an information-only item. First 5 California staff is not requesting action at this time.

## **BACKGROUND OF KEY ISSUES**

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While studies show many Latino children enter kindergarten far behind middle-class Caucasian peers in terms of verbal language and cognitive skills, they also find they arrive at school with comparatively strong social competencies and an eagerness to engage in classroom tasks. Additionally, reports show health outcomes vary based on family income, nativity, and integration with middle-class norms. These findings shed light on the importance of addressing issues such as when and how public efforts may benefit Latino children during opportune windows of development.

Drs. Fuller and Guerrero will report on a series of studies that examine when cognitive “delays” begin to emerge among Latino toddlers and the downstream consequences of these trends. The studies emphasize the importance, for practitioners and policy designers, to distinguish between the cognitive, social, and healthy development of Latino children. This includes how families who have not traditionally qualified for public aid, but whose children may benefit from early interventions.

## **SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND ACTION**

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The Commission has previously discussed this issue in a broader context, but this report will present the issue in a more comprehensive manner.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

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- A. Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences article entitled: “Differing Cognitive Trajectories of Mexican American Toddlers: The Role of Class, Nativity, and Maternal Practices.”