



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 2, 2017

Contact: Erin Gabel
916.708.8895

First 5 California Launches Statewide Infrastructure for California Quality Rating and Improvement System

Infrastructure critical step in quality early learning investment

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — First 5 California is investing in building a strong California child care and early education workforce by creating an effective training and technical assistance system to support early care and education providers. To this goal, First 5 California has awarded the WestEd Center for Child and Family Studies (WestEd) a \$12 million, three-year contract to provide high-quality, research-based statewide standards, training, and resources necessary to support local teachers and child care providers through the work of California's Quality Rating & Improvement System (CA-QRIS).

WestEd has significant and strategic partnerships with four of the nation's leaders in core early care and education areas, including the Childcare Quality & Early Learning Center for Research and Professional Development at the University of Washington, the University of Florida Lastinger Center for Learning, Zero to Three, and the Brazelton Touchpoints Center. These partners, along with California-based professional development leaders and state and local agencies will focus on building the capacity of individual child care providers, including provider coaching and program leader support, statewide training standards, and family engagement training and resources.

"Research shows us the most important factor in any early learning setting is the teacher or child care provider," said Camille Maben, Executive Director of First 5 California. "Investing in each early education teacher will improve children's development and enhance their school readiness."

First 5 California, through its five-year First 5 IMPACT investment, is committed to seeding crucial state, regional, and local infrastructure to grow and support local quality rating and improvement system (QRIS). WestEd's work will build upon and adapt existing national, state, and local resources for high-quality, early learning system support, draw upon the experience of state and national quality child care experts, and provide California with affordable, sustainable, and user-friendly tools to contribute to the implementation of the CA-QRIS.

- More -

The CA-QRIS continues the work launched in 2012 with California's federal Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant, which charged counties Regional Leadership Consortia with implementing a locally-driven QRIS to improve the quality of early learning programs throughout the state.

A QRIS is a system for improving early learning settings, which includes quality standards and a monitoring process, a process for supporting continuous quality improvement, incentives to meet quality standards, and dissemination of information to parents and the public about program quality. Currently, CA-QRIS systems are funded through various blended local, state, and federal funds and partnerships intended to enhance the quality of early learning and care settings throughout California.

#

About First 5 California

First 5 California was established in 1998 when voters passed Proposition 10, which taxes tobacco products to fund services for children ages 0 to 5 and their families. First 5 programs and resources are designed to educate and support teachers, parents, and caregivers in the critical role they play during a child's first five years – to help California kids receive the best possible start in life and thrive. For more information, please visit www.cfc.ca.gov