



FIRST 5 CALIFORNIA COMMISSION NEWS

NEW COMMISSIONER APPOINTMENTS

On February 23, the First 5 California Commission welcomed Assembly Speaker Toni Atkins' appointment of **Shana Hazan**, the Senior Director of Strategic Resource Development at Jewish Family Service of San Diego.

Ms. Hazan, who also is a member of the Human Relations Commission for the City of San Diego, brings her passion as a mother, educator, youth leader, and champion for high-quality education to our Commission.

For more background and information on Ms. Hazan, click [here](#) to view First 5 California's press release on her appointment.

On February 26, Governor Brown appointed **Lupe Jaime** from Fresno County to fill the vacancy left last year by former Commissioner and current

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Camille's Corner

Camille Maben, Executive Director, First 5 California



Let me begin this edition of FOCUS with some breaking news. First 5 California closed out the month of February with not just one but two new appointments to our Commission! We are pleased to welcome Shana Hazan, replacing Commissioner Kathryn Icenhower, and Lupe Jaime, who replaces Commissioner Magdalena Carrasco. More detailed information about our newest commissioners is included in the FOCUS sidebar.

As the Commission welcomes Ms. Hazan and Ms. Jaime, we also acknowledge the hard work and dedication of outgoing Commissioner **Dr. Kathryn Icenhower**, CEO of SHIELDS for Families—a private community-based non-profit organization dedicated to empowering and advocating for high-risk families in South Los Angeles. We thank Dr. Icenhower for all her time and dedication to the Commission.

We also acknowledge and thank San Jose City Councilwoman **Magdalena Carrasco**, for her tenure on the Commission and for serving as First 5 California's representative on the Educare Board.

This edition of FOCUS also includes information on items such as our 2016 Summit, some recent legislative interactions, highlights from our January Commission meeting, the launch of phase two of our *Talk. Read. Sing.*[®] campaign, an update on First 5 IMPACT, a feature article on First 5 San Francisco, and several events featuring Commission Chair George Halvorson, including the screening of the documentary, "The Raising of America."

I'll end my "Corner" with a quote I heard recently, adapted from John Wesley, that inspires. I find it especially inspirational in the work we do, and I hope it will inspire you as well ...

*Do all the good you can by every means and every way you can. Do it in all the places and at all the times you can, to all the people you can, and for as long as you can. **

In 1998, California voters passed Proposition 10—the California Children and Families Act—and declared the importance of investing in a better future for California's youngest children. For the past 17 years, the California Children and Families Commission (First 5 California) has established quality standards and invested in the development of programs and services emphasizing improvement in early education, child care, social services, health care, research, and community awareness. The vision of First 5 California is for all of the state's children to receive the best possible start in life and thrive.

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San Jose City Councilwoman
Magdalena Carrasco.

Ms. Jaime is the Director of the Early Care and Education (ECE) Department at the Fresno County Office of Education where she serves as the liaison between the California Department of Education, and the ECE and child care programs in Fresno County. She is an expert in infant and toddler care having spent 10 years working for Central Valley Children's Services Network.

For more background and information on Ms. Jaime, click [here](#) to view First 5 California's press release on her appointment. ✨



January Commission Meeting

At the January 28, 2016, meeting in Sacramento, Commissioners took action to continue funding for the California Smokers' Healthline for another four years. In addition, they approved First 5 California's move forward with the "Trusted Messengers: *Talk. Read. Sing.*® Campaign," which will further strengthen our campaign messaging to parents and caregivers through "trusted messengers," such as doctors, child care providers, and other representatives who can help us reach a broader audience via additional means and multiple doses. Stay tuned for updates as this effort develops from concept to reality.

First 5 California has several new and ongoing programs, events, and partnerships occurring this year. Some of what is in the works includes:

- Planning the 2016 Child Health, Education, and Care Summit (November 8-10)
- Implementing the next phase of our *Talk. Read. Sing.*® campaign
- Ongoing implementation of First 5 IMPACT

In addition, the partnership established at last year's Summit involving Tom Torlakson, State Superintendent of Public Instruction; Diana Dooley, Secretary of the California Health and Human Services Agency; and George Halvorson, Chair of our First 5 California State Commission; has proved fruitful. In 2015, we collaborated on amplifying *Talk. Read. Sing.*®, highlighting the message of early brain development and science at several events. For 2016, there are plans for additional collaborations, including the kick-off (on page 3) of our newest media campaign for *Talk. Read. Sing.*® ✨

Legislative Meetings

During the whirlwind week that culminated with our January 28 Commission meeting, several Commissioners joined Executive Director Camille Maben and several First 5 California staff to meet with Legislators and their staff at the State Capitol.

In a condensed timeframe, First 5 California met with 15 respected members of the Legislature. This interaction was conducted to ensure California's leaders are fully aware of who we are, what we represent, and most importantly—the impact we have on millions of Californians. ✨

Talk. Read. Sing.® Blasts Off

On Monday, February 1, First 5 California kicked off the next phase of the *Talk. Read. Sing.*® campaign at a “launch event” at Sacramento’s Tsakapoulos Library Galleria. In addition to launching our newest television ad, the event included an array of powerful speakers—First 5 California Commission Chair George Halvorson, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson, and Will Lightbourne, Director of the California Department of Social Services. Each highlighted their respective agencies’ roles in delivering and amplifying the *Talk. Read. Sing.* messaging within their programs that serve young children and their families. Featured at the launch was former NASA astronaut Jose Hernandez, who delivered his personal story of “How I Really Got Here”—the new theme of the next round of ads. Growing up the son of migrant farm workers, he recalled his mom reading to him and engaging with him from an early age, and his father always encouraging him and believing that he was capable of achieving any goal he desired—even space.

The event was punctuated by the First 5 Express (our former, repurposed Hands-on Health Express). The new Express is a bilingual children’s activity center that travels across California to inspire families with children ages 5 and younger to promote early brain development



Jose Hernandez, former NASA astronaut, reading to children at the event.

by talking, reading, and singing with their kids and to understand the importance of brain development during a child’s earliest years. With so many young children and families present at the event, perhaps the greatest highlight was watching Mr. Hernandez read and talk with the kids in the audience.

Every child and family member in attendance was able to take pictures or receive autographed pictures from Mr. Hernandez. The event, by consensus, was a great success. *



Will Lightbourne, Camille Maben, Tom Torlakson, George Halvorson.



Tom Torlakson at First 5 California Express.

First 5 IMPACT: Update

The work of First 5 California staff has been in high gear since the release of the First 5 IMPACT (Improve and Maximize Programs so All Children Thrive) Request for Application (RFA). Beginning in December 2015, First 5 California staff began reviewing 49 Lead Agency High-Quality Action Plans, representing all 58 counties, as part of the First 5 IMPACT RFA process. In addition, since July 2015, First 5 California staff, in collaboration with our partners from WestEd, provided training and technical assistance to counties through a variety of activities. They include:

- First 5 Association Staff Summit—September 2015
- Five Regional Planning Meetings (55 counties total)—October 2015
- Four System Functions Webinars—October 2015
- Two First 5 IMPACT RFA Instructional Videos
- First 5 Association Small County Summit—November 2015
- Six QRIS data system vendor demonstrations—December 2015 and January 2016

In addition to these activities, First 5 California staff has provided additional First 5 IMPACT Application Resources on the First 5 IMPACT website covering multiple topics and resources, such as Sample Applications, Frequently Asked Questions, and several other topics. Of special

note, First 5 California staff has fielded and responded to more than **1,900 inquiries** related to First 5 IMPACT since the RFA release.

The launch of First 5 IMPACT requires significant capacity-building in the tools and resources that are part of its framework. Building capacity on these tools is especially critical with all 58 counties engaged in promoting quality rating and improvement activities through First 5 IMPACT and/or the California State Preschool Program Quality Rating and Improvement System Block Grant. To meet this need, First 5 California staff continue to provide training and technical assistance throughout the state, including:

- Certification of reliability of 46 individuals throughout the state on the Environment Rating Scale, which measures environment quality in early learning settings.
- Statewide training and certification of 93 assessors and 80 trainers on the Classroom Assessment Scoring System® tool, which measures and supports improvement of adult-child interactions proven to impact child outcomes.

To keep up to date on current information and resources for First 5 IMPACT, be sure to visit the webpage at http://www.cfc.ca.gov/programs/programs_impact.html. *



Preschool for All is Success for All

Laurel Kloomok, Executive Director—First 5 San Francisco

How a society supports young children and their families' matters because the early years establish the direction for the rest of their lives. There are many ingredients that positively contribute to a young child's development—loving, nurturing family members and caregivers; good nutrition; access to preventive health care and treatment; and safe, supportive homes and communities are just a few. High-quality early education is a particularly important component as it prepares children for all future learning.

In March 2004, San Francisco voters created one of the nation's first city-funded universal preschool systems, Preschool for All (PFA). In its creation, the city recognized that the best way to ensure a strong future for everyone was to make sure all children received the early care and education opportunities they needed. It was a distinct honor for First 5 San Francisco to serve as the city department responsible for launching and leading this ambitious early education initiative.

Ten years later, the results of PFA were evident. Children's preschool participation reached an all-time high, preschool programs stepped up the quality of their curricula and teaching, and children started kindergarten with better academic and social skills. Moreover, PFA expanded educational opportunities for the city's children, especially among African American and Latino children who previously had the least access to high-quality early education. Among these children, the



city made its greatest gains in preschool participation and saw some of the largest increases in children's skill development.

It is safe to say that when the citizens of San Francisco voted for the PFA initiative, it seemed unlikely that their vision would be as progressive and unique ten years later.

San Francisco voters recently approved early care and education funding for the next 25 years. First 5 San Francisco will join city partners and continue to align its family resource centers, quality preschools, Help Me Grow initiative, and other investments putting children birth to age 5 and their families first. ✨

FIRST 5 SAN FRANCISCO WINS AWARD



Recently, the First 5 San Francisco PFA staff were recognized by San Francisco Mayor Ed Lee for all they have accomplished in the last ten years.

Mayor Lee presented a Certificate of Honor to PFA staff for their dedication, professionalism, and best practice in implementing the city's PFA program.

The evening was an affirmation to the work of First 5 San Francisco in helping San Francisco achieve one of the highest-quality preschool systems in the country.

Congratulations to all! ✨

Let's Get Healthy California Innovation Conference

First 5 California State Commission Chair George Halvorson was invited by California Health and Human Services Agency Secretary Diana Dooley to participate in the closing session panel of the "Let's Get Healthy California" Innovation Conference 2016. Mr. Halvorson was recognized as a leader in influential public health campaigns, specifically on spreading the importance of early brain science. First 5 California's *Talk. Read. Sing.*® (TRS) campaign was highlighted as an outstanding example of statewide innovation and partnership. Secretary Dooley recognized Mr. Halvorson as an original "Let's Get Healthy California" task force member who helped launch the initiative in 2012.

Mr. Halvorson presented on the successes of the first phase of the TRS campaign and First 5 California's plans to transform it from a media campaign to a social movement in its next phase. He also previewed our newest television commercial.

Mr. Halvorson and the TRS campaign were recognized on the same stage with the Blue Shield of California Foundation's efforts to promote healthcare innovations across the state; the California Healthcare Foundation's endeavors to improve the quality of the state's maternity care; and The California Endowment's statewide initiative



to address health issues through innovative multisector partnerships to create healthier communities.

The conference also showcased community innovations in health across "Let's Get Healthy California's" highlighted areas of focus: "healthy beginnings," "living well," "end of life," "redesigning the health system," "creating healthy communities," and "lowering the cost of care."

For more information, visit <http://letsgethealthy.ca.gov/>. *

First 5 California Hosts Legislative Policy Briefing on Quality Rating and Improvement System

On January 22, 2016, First 5 California Executive Director Camille Maben and several First 5 California staff co-hosted a legislative policy briefing with the California Department of Education (CDE) at the State Capitol.

The policy briefing—*The QRIS Journey: What QRIS Means for Quality Improvement Efforts in Early Education and Care Programs in California*—was presented before a packed room of legislative staff to inform them about the research, strategies, and models for building quality rating and improvement systems (QRIS) that effectively support quality in early education and care programs in California.

First 5 California staff, along with Debra McMannis and Cecelia Fisher-Dahms from CDE, provided information from the Race to the Top–Early Learning Challenge efforts, the California State Preschool Program, Infant/Toddler QRIS Block Grants, and First 5 IMPACT. In addition, WestEd representative, Gerrit Westervelt,

shared his expertise on national, research, and systems perspectives.

An expert panel concluded the briefing with representatives from three county Race to the Top–Early Learning Challenge leads: Kathleen Guerrero, First 5 El Dorado; Krista Murphy, Orange County Department of Education; and Natalie Woods Andrews, Sacramento County Office of Education. The panel shared local lessons learned and best practices during the panel discussion co-moderated by Mr. Westervelt and Ms. Maben.

The briefing audience included representatives from the Department of Finance and the Legislative Analyst's Office; legislative staffers from both the Senate's and Assembly's Human Services, Education, and Appropriations committees; and various members from several legislators' offices. By all accounts, the policy briefing was informative and effective. *

First 5 California Commission Chair Participates in San Francisco Screening of Raising of America Documentary

In mid-January, George Halvorson, First 5 California Commission Chair, participated as an expert panel member following the screening of “The Raising of America,” a five-part documentary that examines why children in America, considered an economically rich, first-world country, are doing poorly.

The screening, hosted by First 5 San Francisco and emceed by Executive Director Laurel Kloomok, scrutinizes causes, consequences, and asks the questions that will spark a conversation to change policy in order to refocus our investment in young children and families. The participants in the well-attended screening produced an emotional dialogue among the attendees, while spurring calls for change.

In the same manner as First 5 California’s *Talk. Read. Sing.*® campaign, the series strives to be more than just a documentary, but a movement. It is more than just a television show, more than political fodder—it is geared toward national engagement on the science and policy involving children’s health, child care, quality education, and parenting, among other important topics.

Science has demonstrated definitively that by age 3, children’s brains already are about 80% developed and by age 5, the percentage is up to 90%. It is important to inform others outside our field that delayed, incomplete, or adverse interactions with young children can establish life-long ramifications. Impediments to positive early childhood development include poor health and nutrition, familial limitations, and lack of resources.

This series aims to create a movement to ensure this message is extended into the mainstream where practices can be driven by science-based data, engagement, and policies that, collectively, can drive all segments of our population.

The producers of “The Raising of America” intend to follow their previous successful pattern of engagement by televising the five films, partnering with hundreds like-minded stakeholders, including First 5 California and multiple county commissions, to host screenings.

The Raising of America website (www.RaisingofAmerica.org) has an “Online Learning Center,” where visitors can access toolkits, discussion guides, and other support material to help facilitate successful screenings. ✨

Episodes include:

■ ***The Raising of America—Signature Hour***

The U.S. is a can-do nation. So why is child well-being in the U.S. so much worse than in other rich countries? How can we do better?

■ ***Once Upon a Time—When Childcare for All Wasn’t Just a Fairytale***

Childcare in America is a patchwork—uneven in quality, unaffordable to most and failing many of our youngest children. Once Upon a Time allows us to imagine how things might have been different.

■ ***Are We Crazy About Our Kids?***

Economists rarely turn their attention to the world of early childhood and preschool. But with a wealth of scientific research pointing to the importance of a child’s earliest years, several economists are worried about our investments in early childhood.

■ ***Wounded Places—Confronting Childhood PTSD in America’s Shell-Shocked Neighborhoods***

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) isn’t only about combat vets. Too many of our children, especially children of color living in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty, show the effects of unrelenting structural racism, street violence, domestic instability and other adversities. And their symptoms look a lot like PTSD.

■ ***DNA Is Not Destiny—How the Outside Gets Under Your Skin*** ✨

Save the Date: 2016 Child Health, Education, and Care Summit

On November 8–10, 2016, First 5 California will partner with other state agencies and stakeholders to host the 2nd Child Health, Education, and Care Summit in Sacramento. Similar to the 2015 Summit, First 5 California anticipates the Summit to accommodate approximately 1000 attendees during its three-day run.

The 2016 theme, From Partnerships to Impact, will focus on the goals explored during the 2015 Summit interchange of ideas, information, and collaborative commitments. The Summit will include powerful and provocative keynote speakers, early education workshops and sessions presented by child and health experts, plus many networking opportunities. This event provides a critical forum for all parties with a vested interest in the success of all children, particularly those ages 0 to 5 years.

The Summit also will showcase three sub-themed areas of work:

- **Early Learning**—All children should have access to early care and educational opportunities where they

can learn what they need to succeed in school and in life

- **Health, Mental Health, and Nutrition**—All children need access to health services that include nutrition, behavioral, and medical health needs
- **Family Engagement**—All families should have economic and parenting support to ensure a safe and stable environment

This year, First 5 California will unveil its innovative online event management system designed to enhance and improve the “Call for Presentation” process. The announcement for the Call for Presentations and sponsorship opportunities will be advertised in March, with registration opening in August.

First 5 California looks forward to your participation in November! ✨

