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FIRST 5 CALIFORNIA RELEASES RESEARCH ON CALIFORNIA'S HARD-TO-REACH POPULATIONS

First 5 California is pleased to announce that its latest research report, "Research to Identify Hard-to-reach Communities," is available at www.first5california.com. First 5 California commissioned the social marketing firm ProProse to conduct the research study and write the report.

The study identifies hard-to-reach populations in California and the most effective methods for communicating with them. The report defined hard-to-reach populations as "communities of families with children up to age five who speak any of the top 27 non-English languages identified by U.S. Census data, plus American Indians and indigenous Mexican communities." First 5 California will use the report's findings as a foundation to continue improving efforts to effectively convey information regarding on the healthy development of all children ages 0 to 5 and guide future program development.

A key finding of the study is that California's diverse population requires a multi-faceted approach to communicate most effectively with its hard-to-reach and underserved communities. It states that multiple approaches can include local and national ethnic publications, radio and television, as well as grassroots, face-to-face contact. It concludes that the most effective messaging strategies are tailored to the unique cultural attributes of each hard-to-reach community.

Other key findings:

- More than 356,000 linguistically isolated California households fit the report's definition of "hard to reach."
- Most hard-to-reach communities in the state have some type of in-language local or regional media available to them.
- Information technology is an important and rapidly growing resource for ethnic and minority populations in California.
- Despite the increase in the use of modern technological advances in these communities, face-to-face grassroots outreach is still one of the most effective forms of communicating with hard-to-reach populations.

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About First 5 California

First 5 California, also known as the California Children and Families Commission, was established after voters passed Proposition 10 in November 1998, adding a 50 cents-per-pack tax on cigarettes to fund education, health, childcare and other programs for expectant parents and children up to age 5.