



April 15, 2021

INFORMATION  ACTION

**SUBJECT: *KIT FOR NEW PARENTS UPDATE***

**Strategic Plan Priority Area:** Child Health

**Goal:** All children thrive by achieving optimal health prenatal through age 5.

**Strategic Plan Priority Area:** Family Functioning

**Goal:** All families have the knowledge, skills, and resources to support their children's optimal development.

### **SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE**

In October 2020, the Commission authorized funding for up to \$18 million to fund the development, fulfillment, and evaluation of the updated *Kit for New Parents (Kit)* from fiscal years 2020–21 through 2023–24.

In February 2021, First 5 California (F5CA) released a request for proposal (RFP) for fulfillment services for the *Kit* and has completed the first phase of evaluation for the submission received. The maximum amount for the agreement is \$11.5 million for a term of three years, with an anticipated start date of May 2021. The current *Kit* contract with the Office of State Publishing (OSP) sunsets June 30, 2021.

Funding also will be used for a *Kit* evaluation, OSP print services (a State agency requirement), and development of *Kit* promotional and training materials.

Execution of the new *Kit* agreement is F5CA's first step toward increasing *Kit* distribution to hard-to-reach populations. In addition to fulfillment services, the new contractor will be required to provide data collection and reporting services that include, but not limited to, demographic information about populations served from organizations requesting *Kits*.

Recent data from the California Health Interview Survey (CHIS) describes who uses the *Kit* and its perceived usefulness.<sup>1</sup> Usage of *Kit* information was high (83%) among parents who received it in the past 12 months. Findings among those parents included:

- Low-income parents were using it. More than 90 percent of parents who received the *Kit* are below 200% of the federal poverty level.
- By racial/ethnic group, use of *Kit* information was highest among Asian (91%) and Hispanic (85%) parents.
- By educational attainment, use of the *Kit* was highest among parents with 12 years of education or a high school diploma (96%), though use was quite high for parents with less than 12 years of education (77%) and more than 12 years of education (81%).
- Households with dual language learner (DLL) children reported high use (91%).
- Parents rated *Kit* usefulness as 8.7 on a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being least useful and 10 most useful).

While the CHIS data provide an important statewide snapshot of parent use and perception about the *Kit*, additional information will be helpful about what areas of the State are well-covered and what areas of the State are being missed. The *Kit* RFP data collection requirements are intended to fill this information gap and will also provide a framework for a new *Kit* evaluation to be conducted by F5CA's Evaluation Office.

A critical next step in expanding the *Kit's* reach to those who need it the most is development of new *Kit* distribution partnerships throughout the State.

Since February 2021, F5CA has been developing partnerships with organizations and agencies providing direct services to low-income parents such as:

- Head Start
- California Department of Public Health—Office of Oral Health
- California Child Support Services
- CalWORKs Family Resilience Branch

This is an ongoing effort with continuing outreach to advocacy organizations, health care providers, and social service agencies working directly with low-income parents of children ages 0 to 5. In addition, F5CA is strengthening relationships with First 5 county commissions through timely communication about the *Kit* and future enhancements to make *Kit* ordering, shipment tracking, and distribution data more accessible and user friendly to counties.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Research memorandum: *CHIS 2017/2018: Tables of Selected Child Variables*, UCLA Center for Health Policy Research to First 5 California, February 2021, Table 8, Table 9.

Building new partnerships with community organizations and strengthening current relationships with First 5 county commissions through better customer service will enable F5CA to reach the goal of getting *Kits* into the hands of families of children ages 0 to 5 who live in poverty.

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

The Commission has continually approved funding since 2001 to provide the *Kit for New Parents* to California parents and caregivers of children ages 0 to 5.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

None.