September 10, 2007
To submit comments or items (3 weeks in advance) for this e-newsletter, please contact Katie Kurutz, public affairs officer, First 5 LA at kkurutz@first5la.org or (213) 482-5902.

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CALENDAR

September 12-October 10, 8:00am-4:30pm: “HEALTH CARE INTERPRETING: A Free course for Bilingual Health Care Workers who Interpret for Patients,” presented by L.A. Care Health Plan located at 555 W. 5th Street, Los Angeles, Ca. 90013. For information call Beverly Treumann at (213) 694-1250, ext. 4223.

September 13-16, 11:00am-dusk: “Los Angeles Korean Festival” at Seoul International Park in Koreatown. The address is 3250 San Marino Street, Los Angeles, 90006. First 5 California’s HANDS-ON HEALTH VAN will provide children ages 0-5 with free games, great prizes, and fun ways to stay healthy. For information visit www.lakoreanfestival.com.

September 14-16, 9:00am-6:00pm: “Certified Infant Massage Instructor Training” is being held at The Heart Touch Project, 3400 Airport Ave. #42, Santa Monica, Ca. 90405. Registration is $650. For information call Jennifer at (310) 391-2558 x5 or jennifer@hearttouch.org.

September 14, 9:00am-4:00pm: “Secure Attachment and Successful Breastfeeding: Evidence Based Practices” is being presented by the Breastfeeding Task Force of Greater Los Angeles at Valley Presbyterian Medical Center, 1107 Vanowen St., Van Nuys 91405. For information call Debbie Cowley at (213) 596-5776 or visit www.breastfeedla.org and go to upcoming seminars.

The Gift of Sight

Approximately 80 percent of what children learn is acquired visually. Unfortunately, many children with visual impairments go undiagnosed until much later in life – something that can inadvertently damage their ability to learn at a young age. In fact, children with poor eyesight can be misdiagnosed as learning impaired, ADHD, or dyslexic.

To address the harmful effects of undiagnosed visual impairment in children, the United American Indian Involvement, Inc. (UAIII) has partnered with the Give the Gift of Sight Foundation to offer free eye exams and eyeglasses to children and young adults ages four through 21. The exams will be given September 24th-28th at the UAIII site in Los Angeles, and are available to Native American and non-Native American children alike.

Now in its second year, the event expects to serve more than 2,000 children and young adults within a five-day span. No paperwork is required for the exam. However, children between the ages of 4-18 must show a signed consent form by their parents or guardians.

Anyone interested in receiving an eye exam must call (213) 202-3970 for an appointment. Click here if you would like a pdf version of the consent form. For an English version of the flyer to distribute to families click here: for Spanish click here.

POLICY PICK

Impact of Budget Cuts to Health Care Programs Outreach Services Felt throughout State

For many families, navigating the complex health care system and tapping into benefits can be daunting. In response to this problem, Outreach, Enrollment, Retention and Utilization (OERU) services for public health coverage programs help families properly enroll in health insurance programs and obtain needed medical services.

Last month, child advocacy groups and counties across California sustained a major blow when the governor vetoed $36.6 million in funding that provide OERU assistance through counties. As the largest in the State of California, L.A. County and its children stand to lose the most to the governor’s budget axe.

Locally, state budget cuts have resulted in a $9.8 million loss to our county’s Department of Public Health (DPH) and its OERU partners – community-based agencies such as the Los Angeles Unified School District and Los Angeles County Office of Education.
September 19, 2007, 10:00am-2:00pm: "Social Marketing Strategies: Using Audience Research to Tailor your Message", at The California Endowment Center for Communities located at 1000 North Alameda Street, Los Angeles, Ca. 90012 (Yosemite Rm. B). To RSVP please contact Julia Heinzerling at (323) 779-1190 by September 12, 2007.

September 20, 2007, 8:30am-10:30am: "PBI Public Policy Lecture Series: Race and Community Relations in Los Angeles and Beyond" at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels, 555 West Temple Street, Los Angeles, Ca. 90012. Please RSVP to Tanner Lopez at (323) 343-3770 or online at www.palbrowninstitute.org. This lecture series is hosted by the California Wellness Foundation.

October 1-5, 7:30am: “PUSD Nutrition, Health & Walk to School Week 2007” for more information about locations follow this link.

October 12-November 16, 8:00am-4:30pm: “HEALTH CARE INTERPRETING: A Free Course for Bilingual Health Care Workers who Interpret for Patients,” presented by L.A. Care Health Plan at the Los Angeles County College of Nursing & Allied Health at LAC+USC Medical Center, 1237 N. Mission Rd., L.A. 90033. For information call Beverly Treumann at (213) 694-1250, ext. 4223.

October 13, 9:00am-1:00pm: “5th Annual Community Fair,” is presented by Virgil Middle School at the Physical Education Field, 152 N. Vermont Avenue, L.A., Ca. 90004. For information contact Lilian Hernandez at (213) 368-2824.

October 25, 6:30pm-8:30pm: “First Annual Manos Amigas/Helping Hands Celebration” honoring Latino youth and adults learning to read and write, and those who help them accomplish this goal. The event is sponsored by the Centro Latino for Literacy, at Crescent Arms, 1709 W. 8th Street, L.A. 90017. For information visit www.centrolatinoaoliteracy.org.

October 29, 8:30am-4:00pm: “Optimal Care for the Mother-Baby and Dad in the Face of Mood Disorders and Trauma”, is being held at the Veterans Memorial Complex (Rotunda Room), 4117 Overland Avenue, Culver City, 90230. This event is sponsored by Westside Infant-Family Network (WIN), Westside Children’s Center and the Breastfeeding Task Force of Greater Los Angeles. This full-day workshop will provide participants with valuable information about the effects of breastfeeding, mood disorders and other topics. Please contact Quine Anderson at (310) 846-4100 x 6131 or by email at quinnea@winla.org, regarding registration.

and the cities of Pasadena and Long Beach – which provide much-needed services to low-income communities. These services include application assistance and follow-up with families to ensure successful enrollment and retention of benefits.

The Los Angeles County’s Department of Health Services places the number of uninsured children at more than 200,000. During this fiscal year, OERU funding would have secured DPH services for more than 100,000 families, including assistance with the application process for a minimum of 25,000 children and their families. Instead the state budget has eliminated all OERU funding for that one-year period, including reimbursement for expenses incurred beyond this point.

Child advocacy groups from across the state are protesting budget cuts to OERU and asking legislators to find other sources of funding.

PARTNERSHIP PROFILE

In addition to the many grantees that First 5 LA works with, we also partner with organizations to help inform our planning and decision-making process. This column will highlight some of those organizations and their work.

The Nations Leaders Turn to Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.

Addressing challenging social policy issues is not an easy task, and providers and policymakers often aren’t sure if their efforts have a desired impact. To help evaluate whether public programs are working as intended, many organizations and policymakers turn to Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.

Mathematica is a non-partisan firm that looks to improve public well-being through data collection and analysis. Through policy research and surveys, Mathematica’s studies inform policymakers and help organizations improve program delivery. The firm’s reputation for quality and objectivity is widely known.

Formed in 1968, Mathematica is headquartered in Princeton, New Jersey, and has offices in Washington, D.C., and Cambridge, Massachusetts. Its staff is composed of economists, psychologists, sociologists, physicians, education specialists, statisticians, and other experts that work collaboratively across disciplines.

Mathematica’s early childhood expertise has been spotlighted in several large-scale national evaluations, including a longitudinal study of the federal Early Head Start program at 17 sites. The research focused on family functioning and children’s development at 14, 24, and 36 months. The firm also conducted follow-up data collection of the children when they were in pre-kindergarten and now in fifth grade.

In addition to early childhood policies and programs, the company studies health care, welfare, education, employment, and nutrition initiatives and has conducted two national evaluations of the federal SCHIP program.
November 14-16, 2007: “Infant/Toddler Training Institute for Higher Education Faculty: California’s Infant/Toddler Learning and Development Program Guidelines and Infant/Toddler Learning and Development Foundations” is being held at the Ayres Hotel in Hawthorne. Fellowships will be provided to all participants and will cover tuition, materials, hotel accommodations (double-occupancy), and most meals. For information call Amy Schustz at (415) 289.2303 or at aschust@wested.org to receive an application form. Please note that the institute is open solely to California higher education faculty teaching courses in early childhood development and care.

CHAMPION PROFILE

Jim Mangia Champions Health for the Economically Disadvantaged

Jim Mangia is the President and CEO of St. John’s Well Child and Family Center, a network of nine health centers and school based clinics providing free medical, dental and mental health services to more than 75,000 children and adults. Mangia built the Well Child and Family Centers from a small single-site clinic to a major health care provider in L.A.

He has built strong and sustainable partnerships with the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), First 5 LA, community-based organizations, schools, educators and health care providers. The Center has three First 5 LA-funded programs.

As CEO, Mangia has testified before congressional committees, the California State Legislature and the Los Angeles City Council about environmental health issues affecting L.A.’s children. He is a co-author of the white paper: Slum Housing, L.A.’s Hidden Health Crisis, which outlines the effect of slum housing on the health of children.

He is a founding member of the Southside Coalition of Community Health Centers and is vice president of the board of the Community Clinic Association of Los Angeles County. He is the chair of the board of Strategic Actions for a Just Economy and the Coalition for Community Health.

Mangia has received the Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition and numerous commendations for his work by city, county and state legislative bodies. He currently resides in Los Angeles.

Which book has most influenced your life?
“The Wretched of the Earth” by Frantz Fanon

Which historical figure do you admire most and why?
Martin Luther King, Jr. because he showed America the road to peaceful revolution.

What is your favorite way to spend time with an important child or children in your life?
Taking my nieces and nephews to Palm Springs to play in the pool.

What is your idea of a perfect world?
A world without exploitation.

EVIE’S DESK

Heat Waves and Children

Two weeks ago, Los Angeles experienced a record-breaking heat wave that was thought to have killed up to 16 people, mostly elderly. Although all of us are affected by triple-digit heat, children, like the elderly, are among the most vulnerable as their small bodies are not as mature.

The National Network for Childcare offers the following tips to protect children when the temperature rises:

- Use fans or air conditioning to keep indoor air moving.
- Arrange outdoor play for before 10:00 a.m. and after 2:00 p.m. to avoid the worst sun of the day.
- Dress children in loose-fitting, lightweight, light-colored clothing, and lightweight hats when they are in the sun.
- Always apply sunscreen before going out.
- Offer children something to drink frequently throughout the day. A few ounces every 20 minutes is better than large amounts taken at infrequent intervals.
- When temperatures exceed 90 degrees Fahrenheit, children should not be involved in strenuous outdoor play for long periods of time.

One not so obvious effect of a hot summer is how it contributes to childhood obesity. When kids cannot play outside they tend to sit in front of the TV. To combat this kind of lethargy, find out what the local parks and recreation centers have for children to do indoors.

Evelyn V. Martinez
Executive Director
First 5 LA
Which living person do you most admire and why?
My father, because he taught me the value of humility, integrity, dignity, courage and hard work.

What is your motto?
Where there's a will there's a way.