April 3, 2006
To submit comments or items (3 weeks in advance) for this e-newsletter, please contact Vivien Hao, Public Affairs officer, First 5 LA at vhao@first5.org or (213) 482-7563.

Don’t miss the next Monday Morning Report. If this was forwarded to you, sign up now!

IN THIS ISSUE

Week of the Young Child
First 5 California Chair
National Child Trauma Conference
Family Literacy Showcase
Integrative Medicine Center
Casagrande Champion Profile

CALENDAR

April 6, 10 a.m.-noon: Building our Leadership Skills Using the Hospital Breastfeeding Rates to Promote Model Policies, 2930 W. Imperial Hwy., 4th floor, Inglewood 90303. For information, call Karen Peters at (213) 596-5776 or visit http://www.breastfeedla.org/.

April 7 deadline for June 29-July 1: Family Research Consortium IV 3rd Annual Summer Institute on the Move: Geographic Transitions and the Mental Health of Families, at The Davenport Hotel, Spokane WA 99201. For information, click here.

April 10, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m.: Risks of Not Breastfeeding: Diabetes, Obesity and More--A Day with Marsha Walker, presented by the Breastfeeding Task Force of Greater Los Angeles at Good Samaritan Hospital in Los Angeles. For information, call Karen Peters at (213) 596-5776 or visit http://www.breastfeedla.org/.

Hector Ramirez Named as New First 5 California Chair by Gov. Schwarzenegger

California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger Wednesday appointed Hector Ramirez as chair of the First 5 California Commission. Ramirez replaces Rob Reiner, who resigned as head of the seven-member commission. First 5 California was created in 1999, along with 58 independent county commissions, including First 5 LA, to improve the lives of young children and their families.

Ramirez currently serves as vice president and chief operating officer at Para Los Niños, a nationally accredited community-based family services agency in LA.

Over the past eight years, Ramirez has brought administrative and fiscal oversight to the agency’s child development, family resource, and mental health programs, which serve more than 2,500 children a day and 4,000 families a year.

He previously worked for the LA County Department of Children and Family Services, the LA County Department of Public Social Services, and the Child Welfare League of America.

Ramirez holds an M.A. in Social Work from California State Long Beach and is a graduate of Harvard University’s Performance Measurement for Effective Non-Profit Organizations Program.

First 5 LA to Cosponsor National Child Trauma Conference in May

More than 800 people are expected to participate May 4 in the Children’s Institute, Inc.’s (CII) “In Harm’s Way 2006: Preventing and Healing Childhood Trauma,” a national conference co-sponsored by First 5 LA, the California Department of Social Services, LA County Department of Children and Family Services, LA County Department of Mental Health, and the Institute of Violence, Abuse and Trauma.
April 12, 7 p.m.: A Lecture with Richard Louv, author of Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder, cosponsored by Kidspace Children’s Museum, The Chandler School, and Child Educational Center, Caltech, 332 S. Michigan Ave., Pasadena 91106. For information, call (626) 395-4658 or visit http://www.events.caltech.edu/.

April 12 & 26, 8 a.m.–5 p.m.: Gentle Transitions: Support, Establish and Protect Both Early Mother-Infant Attachment and Breastfeeding in the Hospital Setting, presented by the Breastfeeding Task Force of Greater Los Angeles, Harbor UCLA Medical Center, 1000 W. Carson St., Torrance 90502. For information, call Karen Peters at (213) 596-5776 or visit http://www.breastfeedla.org.

April 19, 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m.: Task Force Seminar: Applying New Evidence-Based Research to Lactation Care: From the Breast to the Baby or the Pump--A Day with Peter Hartman presented by the Breastfeeding Task Force of Greater Los Angeles, Houssels Forum, Long Beach Memorial Medical Center, 2801 Atlantic Ave., Long Beach 90806. For information, call Karen Peters at (213) 596-5776 or visit http://www.breastfeedla.org.

April 21, 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.: Housing Rights Center Presents: 7th Annual Housing Rights Summit with keynote speaker Jackie Goldberg, California State Assembly, 45th District, 202 W. First St., LA 90012. To register, call (213) 387-8400 x26.

April 22, 10 a.m.–3 p.m.: 3rd Annual School Readiness Fair Spring Break Extravaganza, Salvation Army, 7651 South Central Ave., LA 90001. For information, call Elvia De La Torre at (213) 622-5237 x282.

April 25, 9 a.m.–noon: Awakening the Advocate Within: Influencing Public Policy and Legislation, 2930 W. Imperial Hwy., 4th floor, Inglewood 90303. For information, call Karen Peters at (213) 596-5776 or visit http://www.breastfeedla.org.

April 26, 8:30 a.m.–10:00 a.m.: Pre-Natal Workshop presented by T.H.E. Clinic, Queen Anne Place Ready For School Center, 1212 Queen Anne Place, LA 90019. For information and registration, contact Nikki Dana at ndana@lausd.k12.ca.us or (323) 936-8506.

April 29, 9 a.m.–2 p.m.: Passport to Adventure, Health & Safety, presented by United Way Success by 6, Banning High School, 161 W. Williams St., Banning 92220. To register by April 14, call Lupe Lopez at (310) 834-7266.

April 30, 10 a.m.–4 p.m.: El Dia de Los Niños (Children’s Day), East Los Angeles College, 1301 Avenida Cesar E. Chavez, Monterey Park 91754. For information, call Ancelma Sanchez at (323) 981-0028.

The day-long event at the downtown LA Biltmore Hotel will feature some of the country’s preeminent experts on childhood trauma, including author and psychologist James Garbarino on adolescent girls and violence; child development expert Dan Siegel on the importance of early connections in parenting; attorney Dorothy Roberts on gender, race, and class issues in child welfare; and psychologist Hershel Swinger on father absence and engagement.

The conference, which coincides with the CII’s 100th anniversary, will have more than 30 programs and speakers.

In 2003, reports of child abuse and neglect totaled more than 400 a day in LA County, and in a 2005 survey of LA middle school students, between 70 and 90 percent had been exposed to violence.

For information and registration, visit www.childrensinstitute.org/inharmsway.

First 5 LA Grantees Featured at National Family Literacy Event in Kentucky

First 5 LA grantees' success in developing parents' and preschoolers' literacy skills were featured at the recent 15th Annual National Conference on Family Literacy in Louisville, Kentucky.

The conference, "Creating a Literate Nation," drew 1,800 family literacy teachers, administrators, and evaluators from across the country.

Annette Ciketic of Meyler Adult and Family Learning Center in Torrance and Colleen Triesch and Faa'soa Duran of the Long Beach Unified School District shared their experiences working with largely immigrant populations.

"After the first two years, these programs have shown significant growth in parent support for children's learning and an increase in children's personal, social, and physical development," said Freya Gaertner of the American Institute for Research, which serves as the program evaluator.

Also participating were May Ma Ross, First 5 LA program officer, and Liz Guerra and Elida Garcia of the Family Literacy Support Network, which was created through First 5 LA's $15 million, five-year investment in 24 family literacy programs across LA County.

Venice Family Clinic Dedicates Integrative Medicine Center--a First in the Nation

Nearly 100 community leaders celebrated the grand opening last week of the Venice Family Clinic's Simms/Mann Health and Wellness Center in Santa Monica.

Mayor Villaraigosa presents a city proclamation with (from left) donor Vicki Simms, clinic CEO Elizabeth Forer, LA City Councilmember Bill
May 4, 8 a.m.-5:15 p.m.: In Harm’s Way 2006: Preventing and Healing Childhood Trauma, presented by the Children's Institute, Inc., The Biltmore Hotel, 506 S. Grand Ave., Los Angeles 90071. With early registration before April 6: $150. For information, call (213) 385-5100 or visit http://www.childrensinstitute.org/inharmsway.

May 17 & 18, 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m.: Looking Back, Moving Forward: California REACH 2010 Conference, to address inequality in health among racial and ethnic communities, Wilshire Grand Hotel, 930 Wilshire Blvd., LA 90017. For information or to register, call Tamekia Mosley at (323) 757-7244 x281 or visit http://www.careach2010conference.org/.

May 19-21, 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.: Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Training, location of workshop will be given at time of registration. To register by April 28, call the Pasadena Health Department Black Infant Health Program at (626) 744-6093.

EVIE’S DESK
A Salute to Young Children, Families, and Programs

This is the Week of the Young Child, an annual celebration to focus public attention on the needs of young children and their families—and to recognize the early childhood programs and services that meet those needs. I salute all of you who have dedicated yourselves to working for the great cause of building better futures for all children in LA County. We at First 5 LA stand alongside you in our common quest to improve the lives of our children and their families.

Today, we know more than ever before about the importance of children’s earliest years in shaping their learning and development. Yet never before have the needs of young children and their families been more pressing.

The Week of the Young Child is a time to recognize that children’s opportunities are our responsibilities. It is also a time to recommit ourselves to ensuring that each and every child experiences the type of early environment--at home, at child care, at school, and in the community--that will promote their early learning and healthy development.

Evelyn V. Martinez
Executive Director
First 5 LA

CHAMPION PROFILE
Eugene Casagrande Trains Dentists Who Provide Free Services to Children

Eugene Casagrande, D.D.S., is executive director of the Los Angeles Oral Health Foundation, which provides free dental care to children by recruiting and training dentists willing to donate their time and skills.

Through a partnership with First 5 LA and LA Care Health Plan (administrators of Healthy Kids insurance), the foundation serves hundreds of infants and young children in LA County.

Dr. Casagrande was a dentist in private practice for 30 years, specializing in aesthetic and restorative dentistry. He earned a B.S. in Biology at St. Mary’s College and a D.D.S. from USC.

What book has influenced your life the most?
The Bible.

What makes you happy? Angry?
I'm happy when I can make a positive difference in the lives of those less fortunate. I'm angry when those who have the ability to make peace in the world choose not to.

Which historical figure do you admire most?
Mahatma Gandhi, who achieved major positive change in the world by advocating nonviolent protest in a violent time and place.

This new integrative medicine treatment center is the first such facility in the nation offered at a free clinic. The center's staff will include social workers, integrative medicine physicians, and clinicians specializing in acupuncture and in chiropractic and osteopathic techniques and who use a blend of traditional Eastern medicine and modern Western medicine.

The new facility was developed with a $3 million donation from the Simms/Mann Family Foundation, which made the largest private gift ever to a free clinic. Services to be offered will focus on obesity prevention and management for children and adults, chronic pain, diabetes, nutrition, and stress management.

“We are fortunate to have such an innovative health center as part of a free clinic to serve the poor and uninsured residents of the Los Angeles area,” said Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, who helped dedicate the building.

The Venice Family Clinic, a First 5 LA grantee, is the largest free clinic in the nation, serving 22,000 low-income patients. For information, call Mia Arias, Wellness Project coordinator at (310) 664-7863 or visit http://www.venicefamilyclinic.org/.
What is your favorite way to spend time with an important child or children in your life?
Reading to my four children, and now reading to my three grandchildren.

What is your idea of a perfect world?
One in which there is peace, understanding, freedom, proper nutrition, and health care for all people.

Which living person do you most admire?
Ted Turner, who gave the world the ability to communicate in real time.