August 6, 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

August 6, 1:30pm & 8:00pm: LA CityView Channel 35 "LA Roundtable" will feature KCAL’s Dave Bryan’s interview with new members of the LAUSD Board of Education. The show will discuss the district’s future and where the new board might be headed.

August 7, 8:30am-9:00pm: "First Step to a Healthy Life" Breastfeeding Walk is sponsored by the Memorial Care Center for Women at Miller Children’s Hospital, Long Beach Memorial 2801 Atlantic Avenue, Long Beach 90806. A reception with guest speakers to follow. For more information call Bonnie Henson at (562) 933-2772.

August 9, 6:00pm-9:00pm: All for the Love of Kids "Hope & Dreams" Family Fundraiser and Awards Dinner sponsored by Fifth District Los Angeles County Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich and the Department of Children and Family Services, is being held at Edwards Renaissance 14 Theatres, 1 East Main Street, Alhambra 91801. Adults $35, children 12 and under $12.50. For more information contact Michael Wrice at wricem@dcs.lacounty.gov or call (213) 739-6202.

Ranking Reports:
The Status of Our Children

For Californians who work daily to improve the lives of children, finding out how those we serve compare to children in other regions can provide an idea of where we need to improve our services. Last month, a report by the Annie E. Casey Foundation and another by the New America Foundation presented important information about where we stand as a state, and as a nation, in terms of how we care for our children. The report found that, overall, California ranks somewhere in the middle on meeting children's needs.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation’s KIDS COUNT initiative, a national state-by-state effort to track the status of children in the U.S. released its 18th annual report - the “2007 KIDS COUNT Data Book” - ranking states on measures of child and family well-being. The Data Book uses 10 “indicators”, including physical health, population and family characteristics, and economic status to measure the status of children.

According to the study, California ranks 19th among U.S. states. Although the state’s child death rate and infant mortality rate is lower than the national average, the report indicated that too many of our children reach the age of 18 without anyone they can call family.

Also released was the New America Foundation’s “2007 Child Well-Being Index (CWI): Special Focus Report on International Comparisons”, comparing the U.S. to Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom. According to this report, U.S. children are “in the middle of the pack”, excelling in some areas but showing significant deficiencies in others.

In the CWI report, the U.S. did well in areas such as safety and behavioral concerns, community connectedness, and emotional well-being, but poorly in health and education efforts. Family economic well-being also was a mixed picture.

To access information on the 2007 KIDS COUNT Data Book click here or call Marci D. Bransdorf at (410) 223-2852. To access information on the 2007 Child Well-Being Index click here or call David Grey at 202-986-2700.
August 11-12: “Annual NBC4/Telemundo 52 Health and Fitness Expo” is being held at the Los Angeles Convention Center, South Hall K, 1201 S. Figueroa St., Los Angeles 90015. The expo is free to the public and offers free seminars, samples, screenings, and activities. First 5 LA grantee St. John’s Well Child and Family Center will be at the expo representing their First 5 LA respective programs. For more information call Jessica Ostrowski at (857) 991-1701 or e-mail jostrowski@networkevents.tv.

August 25, 10:00am-8:00pm: A Back to School Fair and Community Celebration is sponsored by the Office of L.A. County Supervisor Don Knabe, at Adventure Park in South Whittier. First 5 LA grantees, L.A. County 211 and LAUP, will be representing their First 5 LA programs. For more information call Joseph Matthews at (562) 807-7350.

August 25, 10:00am & 12:30pm: “Summer Sizzle” featuring The Reader’s Theatre and Zhakanaka – The Word, presented by Hyde Park Ready for School at the Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza, 3650 W. Martin Luther King Blvd., Los Angeles 90008. Free event for children 2-8 years-old. For more information call Antoinette Johnson at (323) 753-4551

August 26-28: 17th Annual CityMatCH Maternal and Child Health Leadership Conference “Building the Best Environments for Families and Children” is sponsored by CityMatCH at the Denver Marriott Tech Center, 4900 S. Syracuse, Denver, CO 80237. For registration fees and/or more information call (402) 561-7500 or visit http://citymatch.org/apps/conf_index.php.

September 7-8, all day: “LAUP Conference and Education Expo” is being held at the Los Angeles Convention Center, West Wing - Petree Hall, Exhibit Hall C & D - 1201 S. Figueroa St., Los Angeles 90015. For more information visit or call (866) 581-LAUP (5287) http://www.laup.net/.

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 90405. Registration is $650. For more information call Jennifer at (310) 391-2558 x5 or jennifer@hearttouch.org.

BREASTFEEDING SERIES
To commemorate World Breastfeeding Week, the Monday Morning Report is running a four-week series highlighting how this healthy practice is supported in the community.

La Leche Celebrates 50th Anniversary
This month marks the 50th anniversary of La Leche League International (LLLI), an organization founded to encourage, inform, and support women who choose to breastfeed their babies. LLLI has chapters in 65 countries and has earned the distinction of pioneering the movement towards publicly acknowledging the great benefits of breastfeeding.

Who’s on Third?: Knowledge Management in the Nonprofit Sector
Have you ever been in the situation where someone at work knew a crucial bit of information that you needed but was on vacation so you could not access it? Or, have you ever walked into a community meeting expecting to be the only representative from your organization there, only to find your colleague at the same meeting? These kinds of frustrating situations can be avoided with efficient, planned information sharing, a practice commonly referred to as knowledge management.

Knowledge and information give us the tools to operate in our workplace. For that reason, the appropriate management of those two things is very important. But the nonprofit sector tends to find the management of knowledge and information especially challenging. Employees tend to become storehouses of important institutional information that immediately evaporates when the employee moves on to another job, or remains locked away if the employee doesn't communicate well.

But when organizations intentionally set up infrastructure to capture knowledge and information, what one employee knows can become easily accessible to all employees. This kind of sharing makes it easier to bring on a new employee, or allow existing employees to work more efficiently because information is more readily available to them.

“Two of the biggest barriers to nonprofits properly managing information are insufficient technological infrastructure and the tapping of investment dollars for proper information management systems, like a customized database solution that can help an organization fulfill its mission,” said Henry Gascon, Director of Education at NPower LA - a project that assists Southern California nonprofits with technology implementation and support.

Because nonprofits are often inexperienced in the development and use of databases they are at a disadvantage when attempting to organize their information. NPower LA has made available workshops to help solve this problem and bring organizations up to speed. To learn more about workshops available through NPower LA, go to http://www.npowerla.org/. To learn more about knowledge management in the nonprofit sector click here.
Community Opportunities Fund: Informational Sessions

The first cycle of First 5 LA’s new initiative, the Community Opportunities Fund, has begun! Last Friday we kicked off the first in a series of informational sessions, held so the community can best understand the intent of the initiative and how to apply for these dollars.

I’d like to encourage anyone thinking of applying for these funds to RSVP for a session, if you have not already. Staff has organized them to be informational and interactive. Attending can help lay an excellent foundation for an applicant’s Letter of Intent.

The Fund, intended to improve outcomes in three priority areas - supportive parents and caregivers, good health for children, and prevention of unintentional injuries - through organizational capacity building, is expected to have a competitive and diverse applicant pool. So having the added insight into the application process can help.

Including today’s, there will be four more sessions held throughout the county this week, and one on Monday of next week. To learn more about the fund and to RSVP for a session go to www.first5la.org/cof.htm.

LLLI was started in 1956 by seven mothers from Illinois who breastfed their babies - a practice that only about 25 percent of mothers engaged in at the time. By 1964, LLLI had launched 19 chapters, including chapters in Canada, Mexico, and New Zealand.

In 1991, LLLI joined with other organizations to form the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA), a global network with chapters in 120 countries working to protect, support, and promote breastfeeding. Together they founded World Breastfeeding Week, slated for the first week in August, and are celebrating its 10th anniversary ending tomorrow.

A $40 membership in LLLI gives participants access to up-to-date information on breastfeeding practices through monthly meetings, telephone assistance, and online resources. Meetings are led by accredited volunteers who have breastfed their own babies and are specially trained to assist mothers new to breastfeeding. Members also receive a bi-weekly breastfeeding and parenting journal called “New Beginnings”.

To become a member of LLLI, or for more information, visit their website at http://www.lalecheleague.org/. To learn about the many walks happening tomorrow in honor of World Breastfeeding Week click here.

POLICY PICKS

First 5 LA Reaches Out to Elected Officials about the Importance of SCHIP

As champions of children, First 5 LA recognizes the importance of informing elected officials about the impact of policy and legislation on the children and families that we serve. With the reauthorization of the State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) hanging in the balance, the First 5 LA government affairs staff is on the move to let Congress know how this program impacts L.A. County’s children.

To that end, we have partnered with other child and healthcare reform advocacy groups like United Way of Greater Los Angeles and Community Health Councils Inc, to make visits to members of Congress based in L.A. County that play a crucial role in the reauthorization of SCHIP. Local congressional representatives especially need to know how failure to fund SCHIP will effect families served by First 5 LA grantees in their districts.

Backed by strong bipartisan support, SCHIP was established in 1997 to provide states with matching funds toward children’s healthcare insurance. With SCHIP’s 10th anniversary fast approaching, Congress faces the important task of reauthorizing the program.

The House approved legislation last week on that greatly expanded the federal health insurance program for the children of the working poor. The legislation is now in the Senate, where a more modest version of the program with bipartisan support will be voted on this week.

As the largest recipient of SCHIP funds via the Healthy Families program, California’s children stand to gain the most from its reauthorization, and the pending expansion. As advocates for our children, First 5 LA is proud to participate in this process.