We focus on the early years of life because they are so critical to a child’s development. Researchers and childhood experts agree:

- Early relationships with parents and caregivers can affect how children learn, get along with others and succeed in school and in life.
- Quality early experiences can encourage the well-being of a child physically, emotionally, socially and intellectually.

In Best Start communities, the goal is that children:

- Are born healthy
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Are safe from abuse and neglect
- Are ready for Kindergarten

Best Start Communities

Central Long Beach
Compton, East Compton
East Los Angeles (including City Terrace, Commerce and parts of Monterey Park)
El Monte, South El Monte
Lancaster
Metro LA
Pacoima
Palmdale
Panorama City
South Los Angeles/Broadway-Manchester
South Los Angeles/West Athens
Southeast LA County Cities (including Bell, Bell Gardens, Cudahy and Maywood)
Watts-Willowbrook
Wilmington

Best Start is an effort of First 5 LA, a child advocacy organization created by California voters to invest tobacco tax revenue in programs that improve the lives of children in Los Angeles County. We focus our efforts on young children between pregnancy and preschool because we know that more than 90 percent of brain development occurs in the first few years of life. That means we’re building solid foundations for our children while making our communities stronger.
About *Best Start*

*Best Start* is a community-driven effort that brings together parents and other community members to support young children and families.

*Best Start* is about empowering families.

*Best Start* is about strengthening communities.

*Best Start* is about making sure that all children succeed.

*Best Start* is about our future and our children’s future.

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**What *Best Start* looks like is up to each community.**

Communities are where families live, play and learn. At the center of *Best Start* are Community Partnerships creating plans to address the *Best Start* goals in ways that fit their community. For example, a Community Partnership might decide to build clean, safe parks; to make sure that local markets offer healthy, affordable foods; to ensure easy access to medical services; or to address the need for early care and education.

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**Take your seat at the table**

**Where’s your seat?**

**PARENTS** are the heart and soul of *Best Start* — they know best what their children need to thrive.

**BUSINESSES** support communities to prosper.

**HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS** help families achieve and maintain good health.

**GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS** represent the community and impact policy.

**EDUCATORS** nurture children’s love of learning.

**FAITH-BASED LEADERS** provide a trusted source of support and guidance.

**COMMUNITY RESIDENTS** understand how to make their neighborhoods wonderful places to live.

**FOUNDATIONS, COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS** and **NONPROFITS** know the community’s strengths and challenges and can provide critical support.

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**Parents want what’s best for their children**

- A healthy community that cares for its families
- Safe neighborhoods, school grounds and outdoor play areas
- Healthy food that’s affordable and available
- Local activities that allow children to play, stay active and keep moving

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**We can’t do this without you.** Turning *Best Start*’s vision into a reality is only possible when everyone who lives, works and provides services in the community comes together, shares experiences and designs the best way to achieve the dreams of the community. Please contact us or visit our website to learn how you can get involved.

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