



2020-2028 Strategic Plan

ABOUT FIRST 5 LA

First 5 LA Puts Kids 1st Because We Can't Afford Not To

There is a window of opportunity during a young child's development that calls on the collective efforts of parents, the community, service providers, and policy makers to prioritize young children. While this window is open, from before birth to age 5, 90% of a child's brain will develop and determine social, emotional and learning patterns for life. Laying a solid foundation and building up – step by step – helps to build and develop her brain and ultimately impacts her ability to enter school ready to learn and succeed.



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Section 1: Strategic Overview

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Our Strategic Vision (North Star)



**Our
North
Star**

By 2028, all children in L.A. County will enter kindergarten ready to succeed in school and life.



What's Our Role in Making this Vision a Reality?

Advocate, funder, convener, collaborator, catalyst, and communicator of child and family needs and strategies that make a difference in their lives.

Making the Systems that Focus on Families, Work for Families

To contribute to greater impact, First 5 LA established a new strategic direction in 2015. First 5 LA made the pivot in its role from a direct service funder to an agent of systems change. What this means is that as a systems change agent, we believe we can help family-serving systems work better for families, through collaborating and partnering with public and community partners.

These systems include health, early care and education (ECE) and family supports as well as local community resources. Our work focuses on strengthening systems (public agencies, organizations, and communities) in L.A. County to better meet the needs of young children and families. We're working to make sure that these systems are accessible for young children and families, provide quality service and experiences, are aligned and provide connections to concrete services and supports, and have the resources to be sustainable.

Why 2028?

Our experience in the last five years has taught us that systems change is a long-term proposition. 2028 represents a milestone year, as Los Angeles hosts the Summer Olympics. We are committed to making visible and measurable improvement in the lives of children and families by 2028.

Our Pathway for Systems Change



Our North Star

By 2028, all children in L.A. County will enter kindergarten ready to succeed in school and life.

We Want Systems To Be

- Accessible
- Quality
- Aligned
- Sustainable

Results for Children and Families

- Families optimize their child's development.
- Children receive early developmental supports and services.
- Children are safe from abuse, neglect, and other trauma.
- Children have high-quality early care and education experiences.

We Change Systems By

- Policy change
- Practice change
- Will building

Our Strategic Priorities

- Strengthen public & community systems
- Advance & build on community experience
- Expand influence & impact with data
- Optimize our effectiveness

Our Values

- Collaboration
- Integrity
- Learning
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Our Values

We ground our work in **Our Values**, that act as guiding principles for how we do our work, the culture we aim to promote, and a benchmark to measure behaviors and performance.



Collaboration

We promote a collaborative culture and strategies in all that we do.



Integrity

We act in ways that reflect Our Values and hold ourselves accountable for our behaviors and the outcomes of our work.



Learning

We integrate learning into all aspects of our decision-making, commit to continuous improvement and share what we have learned.



Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

We embrace the diversity of L.A. County, advocate for fairness and promote systems that advance the full participation of young children and their families.



Our Investment Guidelines

Building from the foundational work captured in First 5 LA's 2015 Investment Guidelines, the Investment Guidelines continue to serve as criteria for decision-making for all major components of the strategic planning process and as ongoing policy guidance for Board and staff during implementation. Together, the Investment Guidelines represent a “six-part identity statement” for First 5 LA. The refined Guidelines explicitly prioritize adopting an equity lens throughout our work and addressing the critical challenge of declining First 5 revenue.



Our Investment Guidelines

EQUITY: Prioritize children, families and communities in our target population that our work has the greatest potential to impact and advance our North Star

SUSTAINABILITY: Embed sustainability strategies within all of our work

PARTNERSHIP: Engage partners throughout planning, development, and execution of our work

PREVENTION: Focus on early intervention and prevention

SYSTEMS CHANGE: Focus on systems change and implementation to impact the most children and families

EVIDENCE AND INNOVATION: Prioritize scaling up evidence-based practices, balanced with investments in innovative and promising approaches to address community needs

What this Means for our Work

- Use data to elevate disparities and achieve equitable outcomes
- Strengthen existing public systems to be child-and family-centered
- Incorporate the voice of families and communities in systems change
- Plan and operate within our fiscal reality
- Create new revenue and fund leveraging strategies
- Co-invest with partners
- Demonstrate how committed partnerships are engaged and fundamental to our work
- Invest in early intervention and prevention as the primary focus of our work
- Link downstream investments to prevention
- Focus on strengthening existing systems; rather than creating new systems
- Consider direct services only when there is significant potential to demonstrate models for scalability and sustainability
- Pursue and test innovative and promising approaches, as necessary, to respond to community needs and achieve scale

What's Needed to Make our North Star a Reality?



Results for Children and Families

First 5 LA adopted four **Results for Children and Families** that represent what we believe are the preconditions necessary to achieve this vision. First 5 LA cannot achieve these results alone. To make progress toward these results, we will actively engage parents, community leaders, public agencies, community organizations, and other funders.

Result 1: Families have the resources, opportunities and relationships to optimize their child's development.

When families thrive, so will their children. Families can thrive when they have strong social relationships within neighborhoods and communities, access to necessary resources, and assistance navigating an often confusing array of supports, including educational, health, mental health and other services.

Result 2: Children receive early and timely developmental supports and services.

Children receiving intervention services when a developmental delay is detected early can improve their physical, mental and socio-emotional health and overall well-being. In Los Angeles County, too many children prenatal to age 5 are not screened for developmental and behavioral delays. When children are not routinely screened, families miss out on opportunities to identify developmental and behavioral concerns and receive early intervention services.

Result 3: Children are safe from abuse, neglect, and other trauma.

There is increasing recognition of the lifelong impacts of early childhood trauma. We know that 90% of a child's brain is developed by age 5 and research demonstrates that traumatic experiences greatly influence brain function, social interactions, and physical and emotional health. Addressing trauma in early childhood must include a priority focus on the reduction of child abuse and neglect.

Result 4: Children have high-quality early care and education experiences.

Making sure children have high-quality early care and education experiences prior to kindergarten entry leads to future school success. Children with high-quality early care and education experiences not only gain specific cognitive skills, such as reading, language development and numeracy skills, they also develop socio-emotional skills through structured play, physical and motor development, and build positive relationships with adults and peers.



We have identified 10 specific indicators that will help us monitor progress in making these conditions present for all children and their families and we are committed to measuring and reporting on this progress, engaging all our partners in the reporting process. See Appendix B for the specific list of indicators and preliminary baseline data.

Our Outcomes for Child-and Family-Centered Systems



Making the Systems that Focus on Families, Work for Families

Systems change is about “shifting the conditions that hold a problem in place.” It means working in partnership with parents and leaders at the state, county, and local level to change the conditions that affect child development and family well-being.¹

First 5 LA has identified four characteristics of systems that we believe are critical for making systems work for families. We define these as our **long-term system outcomes**, recognizing that “systems change” encompasses a broad set of interrelated changes² that are complex.

We are working to ensure that systems that support children and families are:



System Change Outcomes:

What this Means:

Accessible

Public and community systems provide equitable access to quality supports for all young children.

Quality

Public and community systems reflect parent priorities, diverse community needs, and standards that drive results for children.

Aligned

Public and community systems connect and link quality supports for children and families.

Sustainable

Funding, policies, and public support advance sustainable and equitable investments in young children.

¹ Kania, John, Kramer, Mark, and Senge, Peter. (2018). The Water of Systems Change. Retrieved from <https://tinyurl.com/TheWaterOfSystemsChange>

² BUILD system framework.

How Can we Change Systems?

First 5 LA's Contribution to Systems Change

Systems change is complex work. Meaningful and sustained change requires the collaborative efforts of multiple partners, across multiple sectors, working on the multiple elements inherent in systems change.

At First 5 LA, we believe that **our best contribution** to changing systems is employing three approaches:

Policy Change¹

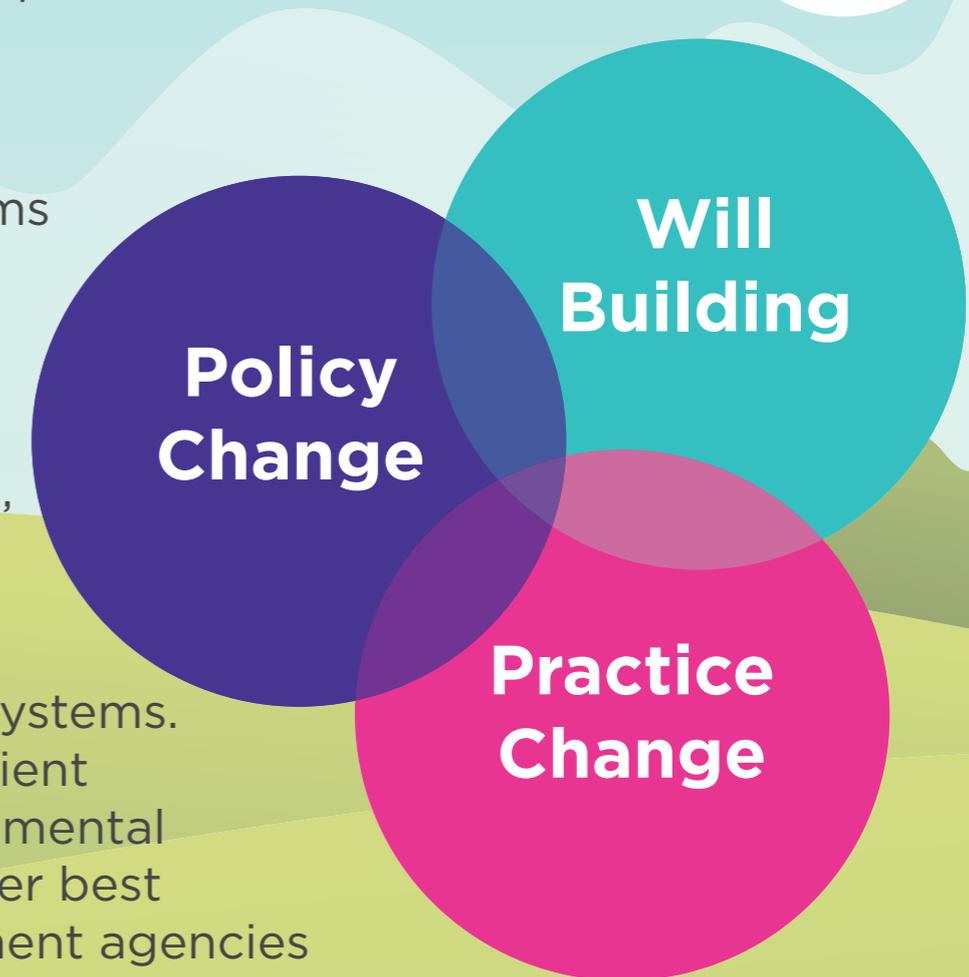
Efforts to change rules governing institutions, practices, and resource allocation. Policy can be set by both public institutions (e.g., government) and private institutions (e.g., hospitals or employers).

Practice Change¹

Efforts to change the expectations, skills, habits and capacities of systems. Examples of practice change include reworking pediatric office patient procedures to ensure children regularly receive a validated developmental screening and referral to resources, promoting dual-language learner best practices in early childhood settings, and supporting local government agencies to effectively engage families and communities.

Will Building

Efforts to build and sustain the will, relationships and networks to change norms, attitudes, behaviors and beliefs.



In implementing these systems change approaches, First 5 LA will deploy a **range of tactics** including public education, partnership development, advocacy and, most fundamentally, data. These three systems change approaches are interrelated and reflect our experiences over the past five years that demonstrate the need to work on all three approaches in parallel to effect changes in systems.

¹ Coffman, 2007. *A Framework for Evaluating Systems Initiatives*.

Strategic Priorities for First 5 LA's Work



Based on our learnings over the past five years, and the reflections generated through the Strategic Plan Refinement process, First 5 LA has developed four **strategic priorities** that articulate how we will focus our efforts and contributions to achieve our system change outcomes and ultimately our targeted results for children and families.

Strengthen Public and Community Systems

Improve, integrate and expand family-centered systems of early prevention, intervention and learning.

Advance and Build on Community Experience

Connect, maximize and coordinate public resources, local assets and relationships.

Expand Influence and Impact with Data

Expand the availability, use and power of data.

Optimize Our Effectiveness

Heighten organizational performance to enhance our impact.



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Our Refined Strategy



Strengthen Public and Community Systems

Improve, integrate and expand family-centered systems of early prevention, intervention and learning.

Advance and Build on Community Experience

Connect, maximize and coordinate public resources, local assets and relationships.

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Strategic Priority #1

Strengthen Public and Community Systems

Improve, integrate and expand systems of early prevention, intervention and learning to become family-centered, child-focused and promote equitable outcomes.

Why is this a Priority for First 5 LA Now?

Given alignment with state and county priorities, First 5 LA, with its partners, has a transformative opportunity to improve and expand the capabilities of public and community systems to better meet the needs of young children and families and promote their well-being.

What have we Learned?

Our pivot to systems change work began in 2015. Through our refinement process, we learned that First 5 LA's role as a **convener, catalyst, and advocate** is welcomed and valued. We connect public and community systems leaders to inform local, county and state systems change efforts, bringing a child-focused and equity emphasis to this work.



2028

Priorities for Our Role

First 5 LA will continue to serve as a **policy and practice leader** in building a universal, voluntary home visiting system. Our commitment to early identification and intervention for children will be broadened to encompass maternal health and focus on ensuring that public systems provide timely and quality services. We will leverage our experience in engaging families and support the expertise of our public partners in addressing trauma. Our ECE policy and quality work will reflect the diverse early childhood settings in which children grow and learn. Our work will be done with our Best Start community leaders, who are critical to ensuring systems change efforts are reflective of family and community priorities.

Strategic Priority #2

Advance and Build on Community Experience

Connect, maximize and coordinate public resources, relationships and local assets and relationships within our 14 Best Start geographies.

Why is this a Priority for First 5 LA Now?

The 14 Best Start geographies provide an opportunity to demonstrate the impact and value of weaving together key resources and infrastructure to advance local solutions for early prevention, intervention and learning.



What have we Learned?

Our 10 years of work in the Best Start geographies provide a platform for lifting up the voices of community leaders and parents. This experience demonstrates that public system changes are necessary, but insufficient to change outcomes for children and families. We need to strengthen and create local networks that can support parents in their communities and capitalize on these learnings to inform our county and state policy work and better integrate First 5 LA and partner investments.

2028

Priorities for Our Role

Our 14 Best Start geographies provide the opportunity to demonstrate impact at a local level. We will **strengthen connections and coordination** among First 5 LA, county partner and philanthropic investments as these geographies can serve as the “proof of concept” for broader systems change. Our Best Start geographies are places to pilot strategies to improve care provided by family, friends, and neighbor. By promoting the use of population-level developmental assessment, we will inform community planning, activate partners, spur innovation and promote advocacy for improved learning environments for children. Where public funding is dedicated to improving transportation, open spaces and healthy food access, and promoting healthier environments, First 5 LA with our Best Start networks will work to ensure that the Best Start geographies are prioritized for investments.

Strategic Priority #3

Expand Influence and Impact with Data

Expand the availability, use and power of data and parent voice to call attention to disparities, amplify advocacy, and drive policy change, practice change, and will building.

Why is this a Priority for First 5 LA Now?

First 5 LA is well-positioned to help gather, shape and disseminate data and be a critical voice and storyteller to improve the four Results for all children and families in L.A. County. Family perspectives, stories of family experiences and quantitative measures are all essential tools to build public will and advance learning on early childhood.

What have we Learned?

First 5 LA is a **trusted resource for information** on children and families in L.A. County and can help elevate awareness, impacts and highlight disparities. Our four results and related indicators provide an important scorecard for measuring progress. Mobilizing leaders and capturing our contribution to changing systems requires a diverse set of reporting tools, quantitative and qualitative data, and communication strategies.



2028

Priorities for Our Role

First 5 LA will continue to serve as an important **advocate for young children and their families** with community leaders and policy makers. First 5 LA will generate and share the learnings we have developed over the past 20 years on effectively engaging families and partnering with communities to inform our ongoing work and the work of our partners. In parallel, we will support families to expect and advocate for quality services that will support their children's healthy development, such as home visiting, developmental screenings and early care and education. Expansion of population-level developmental assessment will inform our work, demonstrate progress, build public will and strengthen our advocacy role.

Strategic Priority #4

Optimize Our Effectiveness

Heighten organizational performance to enhance our impact.

Why is this a Priority for First 5 LA Now?

To successfully lead this work, First 5 LA must align its structure, staffing, processes and culture with our strategic priorities to champion and promote systems change.

What have we Learned?

Prior strategic plans did not explicitly identify the investments and importance of First 5 LA building the capabilities necessary to successfully execute on the Strategic Plan. This plan makes explicit the necessary process, structure, staffing and culture for First 5 LA to function as a high-performing organization and make meaningful progress on our North Star.



2028

Priorities for Our Role

As First 5 LA fully steps into our role as an **early childhood systems change agent**, we must adapt our business processes and organizational structure, while operating within the requirements of a public agency and our evolving fiscal reality. First 5 LA will strengthen our knowledge, skills and capacities to successfully execute the 2020-2028 Strategic Plan and demonstrate commitment to our Values in our daily work, internally and externally. Acknowledging our evolving fiscal reality, we will maximize available revenue sources and, when appropriate, pursue new dedicated revenue for early childhood.

Cycle for Review and Updating the 2020-2028 Strategic Plan



First 5 LA will engage in ongoing and periodic review, reflection, and refinement of elements of the Strategic Plan grounded in learning from experience and data reporting through our **Impact Framework**, which (a) monitors how well systems are working for children and families, (b) assesses the effectiveness of our systems change strategies, (c) guides course-correction, and (d) helps us understand the context to inform our strategies.

First 5 LA also will retool and leverage our annual planning processes (e.g., budgeting process, annual public hearing, contract approval process, etc.) as opportunities to reflect on strategy implementation, ensure compliance, and solicit Board input through application of our Governance Guidelines and Investment Guidelines.

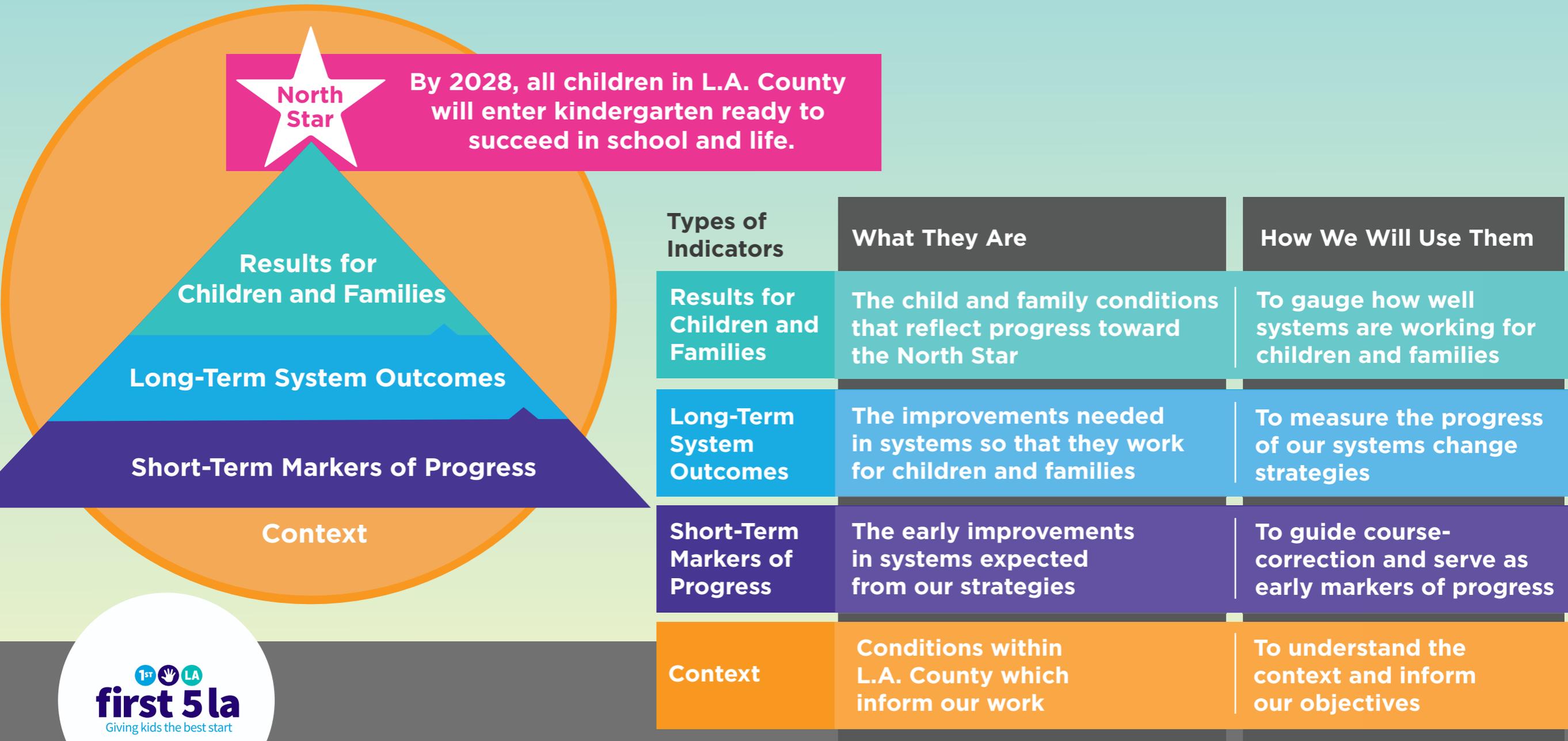


* Dependent on availability of data sources

Measuring and Reporting Our Progress: Impact Framework Indicators

What are Impact Framework Indicators?

The Impact Framework is comprised of four types of data, each aligned with First 5 LA's pathway to reach the North Star. Please see **Appendix B** for more information.



To continue to learn more about First 5 LA and implementation of the 2020-2028 Strategic Plan, please visit www.First5LA.org



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Appendices and Additional Materials

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- II. What are the Impact Framework Components?
- III. How will the Impact Framework inform our work?
- IV. Results for Children and Families Indicators
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Our Strategic Priorities

Strengthen Public and Community Systems

What We Will Do

Improve, integrate and expand systems of early prevention, intervention and learning to become family-centered, child-focused and promote equitable outcomes.

Why is this a Priority for First 5 LA Now?

Given alignment with state and county priorities, First 5 LA, with its partners, has a transformative opportunity to improve and expand the capabilities of public and community systems to better meet the needs of young children and families and promote their wellbeing.

Advance and Build on Community Experience

Connect, maximize and coordinate public resources, relationships and local assets, and relationships within our 14 Best Start geographies.

The 14 Best Start geographies provide an opportunity to demonstrate the impact and value of weaving together key resources and infrastructure to advance local solutions for early prevention, intervention and learning.

Expand Influence and Impact with Data

Expand the availability, use and power of data and parent voice to call attention to disparities, amplify advocacy, and drive policy change, practice change, and will building.

First 5 LA is well-positioned to help gather, shape and disseminate data and be a critical voice and storyteller to improve the four Results for all children and families in L.A. County. Family perspectives and quantitative measures are essential data tools to build public will and advance learning on early childhood.

Optimize Our Effectiveness

Heighten organizational performance to enhance our impact.

To successfully lead this work, First 5 LA must align its structure, staffing, processes and culture with our strategic priorities to champion and promote systems change.

Appendix A: Strategic Priority 1

Strengthen Public & Community Systems

Improve, integrate and expand systems of early prevention, intervention and learning to become family-centered, child-focused and promote equitable outcomes.

- 1.1 Provide program and policy leadership to support the development and expansion of a universal system of voluntary home visiting that builds upon existing infrastructure.
- 1.2 Advocate for policies and transformative practices to ensure that public systems provide maternal health services as well as child early identification and intervention services.
- 1.3 Advocate for policy change in the early learning reimbursement rate structure to incentivize quality and competitively compensate the early childhood workforce.
- 1.4 Advocate for policy change that aligns and enhances the eligibility and program requirements of publicly funded preschool.
- 1.5 Broaden state and local quality initiatives to encompass all early learning settings in coordination with system partners.
- 1.6 Lead program and policy expansion of family-centered practices and support adoption of trauma-informed approaches in systems serving children and families.
- 1.7 Partner with Best Start Networks to inform County and State system improvement efforts and advance local priorities.

Advance and Build on Community Experience

Connect, maximize and coordinate public resources, relationships and local assets and relationships within our fourteen Best Start geographies.

- 2.1 Connect and coordinate First 5 LA's program investments and public/private investments to demonstrate impact at a local level as "proof of concept" to inform countywide system improvement efforts.
- 2.2 Pilot strategies to strengthen the delivery of Family Child Care and Family, Friends, and Neighbor.
- 2.3 Advocate and support the expanded use of a population-level developmental assessment to inform community action.
- 2.4 Optimize policy, partnership, and advocacy opportunities in transportation, food and open space, and elevate early childhood considerations in environmental health and related community-identified priorities.

Expand Influence and Impact with Data

Expand the availability, use, and power of data and parent voice to call attention to disparities, amplify advocacy, and drive policy change, practice change and will building.

- 3.1 Activate community leaders and policy makers to prioritize young children and families in budgetary, policy, and practice decisions.
- 3.2 Develop communication strategies to increase consumer demand for home visiting, early identification and intervention, and early learning.
- 3.3 Generate and share learning on effectively incorporating family and community engagement within the work of First 5 LA and our partners.
- 3.4 Partner on data and evaluation efforts to demonstrate effectiveness and promote continuous quality improvement in prevention and early intervention systems.
- 3.5 Expand the adoption and integration of a population-level developmental assessment to capture an accurate snapshot of school readiness in L.A. County, drive early childhood systems change, and highlight best practices in diverse communities.

Optimize Our Effectiveness

Heighten organizational performance to enhance our impact.

- 4.1 Adapt our structure and business processes as a public entity to promote efficiencies, foster integration, and recognize our evolving fiscal environment.
- 4.2 Maximize revenue opportunities and pursue new dedicated revenue for early childhood, consistent with First 5 LA's strategic priorities.
- 4.3 Strengthen First 5 LA's staff knowledge, skills and capacities to successfully execute the Strategic Plan.
- 4.4 Foster a culture that embodies Our Values (of collaboration, learning, integrity, and diversity, equity and inclusion) and showcase them in our daily interactions with each other and our work with external partners.

Appendix B: Impact Framework

Impact Framework Measurement and Reporting Plan

- I. What is the Impact Framework?
- II. What are the Impact Framework Components?
- III. How will the Impact Framework inform our work?
- IV. Results for Children and Families Indicators
- V. Crosswalk of Indicators for the Results for Children & Families
- VI. Indicators Guide



Appendix B: What is the Impact Framework?

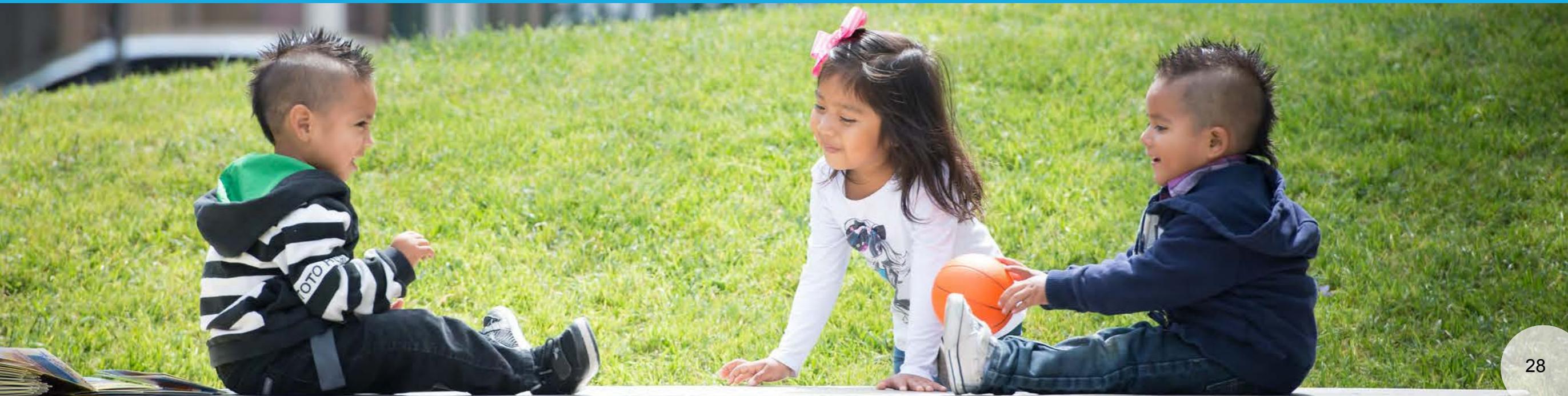


First 5 LA is working to ensure that all children in L.A. County will enter kindergarten ready to succeed in school and life by 2028. The journey to our North Star is complex and made in conjunction with diverse partners such as parents, community members, grantees, county agencies, elected officials, and others. To help us navigate the complexity of our work and measure progress toward our North Star, we are developing a tool called the Impact Framework.

It identifies data we will monitor to:

- **Gauge how well systems are working for children and families**
- **Assess the effectiveness of our systems change strategies**
- **Guide course-correction**
- **Understand our context and inform our strategies.**

The Impact Framework will help us tell First 5 LA's story and ensure we remain responsive to the needs of children prenatal to age 5 in L.A. County.



Appendix B: What are the Impact Framework Components?

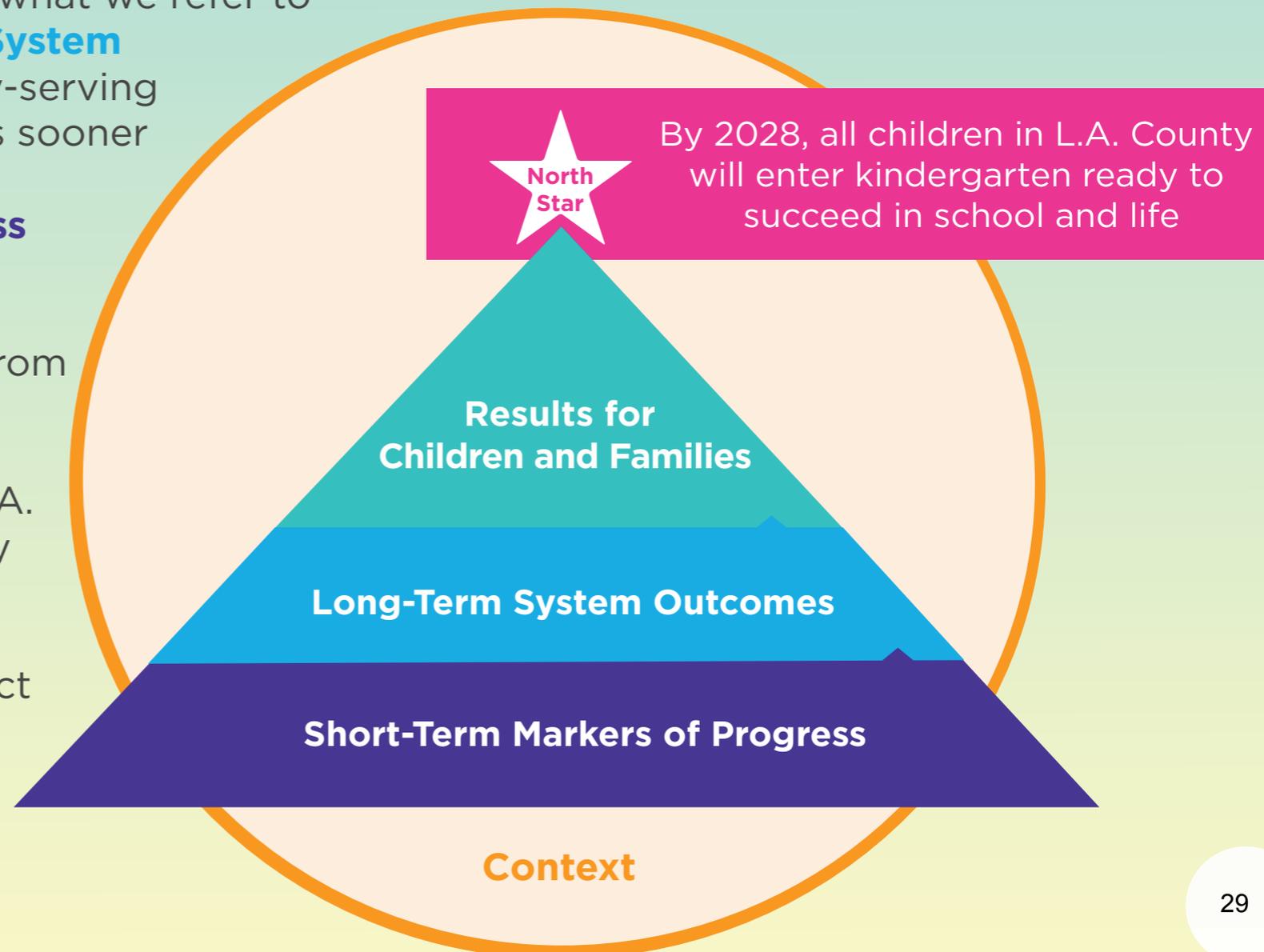


There are four types of data that the Impact Framework will monitor (see visual below). Each type is aligned with First 5 LA's strategies to reach the North Star.

First, there are four optimal conditions that we believe family-serving systems can facilitate for children and families to ensure children are kindergarten ready - these are our **Results for Children and Families**. When we look at data for our Results for Children and Families, it can help us gauge how well family-serving systems are working.

For families to have these conditions in the Results for Children and Families, the systems that serve them must be responsive to their needs. Over the next decade, we envision that family-serving systems will be accessible, quality, aligned and sustainable - what we refer to in the Impact Framework as our **Long-Term System Outcomes**. There are improvements to family-serving systems we expect to see from our strategies sooner and that serve as early markers of progress. These are our **Short-Term Markers of Progress** (in development). First 5 LA will use these to guide our investments and strategic course-corrections based on what we learn from our investments.

Lastly, there are many things happening in L.A. County that might not be directly affected by First 5 LA's work but are important for us to know about to understand the lives and conditions of children and families. The Impact Framework's **Contextual Indicators** can lend insight to the conditions of children and families in L.A. County, information we can also use to inform our strategies.



Appendix B: How will the Impact Framework inform our work?

The data from the Impact Framework will be reviewed in cycles. Annually, we will review the Contextual Indicators to inform our objectives and every three years we will review the indicator data for System Outcomes and Results for Children and Families to refine the strategies to reach our North Star. There are also other inputs that can inform our understanding of what's working and what we can do better. The experiences of children and families, the feedback from our grantees and partners, and new data and research that emerge over time are examples of other inputs that can help us determine the impact of our grantmaking strategies and learn how we can support the systems that serve L.A. County's children and families. We are currently developing plans for our review cycles to ensure we're incorporating the Impact Framework data and other inputs into how we measure our effectiveness as an organization. Additionally, as First 5 LA's work continues to evolve, we will periodically review the Impact Framework indicators to determine if they need to be revised or expanded.

What happens next?

There are several next steps for the development of the Impact Framework. First, we will be selecting system outcome indicators in collaboration with key partners. Next, as an organization that values learning, we are also developing a process to make sure that the Impact Framework will be a learning tool not only for all First 5 LA staff but also for our grantees, partners and L.A. County's families. We are committed to sharing insights with our partners, grantees and L.A. County families, and hope that they too learn from First 5 LA's journey to ensuring that all children in L.A. County will enter kindergarten ready to succeed in school and life by 2028.



Appendix B: Results for Children and Families Indicators



The indicators for the Results for Children and Families are a component of the Impact Framework which represent child and family conditions that reflect progress toward the North Star. Monitoring these data will help First 5 LA gauge how well systems are working for children and families. Please see the **Indicators Guide** (page 33) that highlights the value of each indicator and provides a high-level summary of the most recent data and trends.

- 1 Increased rate of L.A. County children birth to age 5 enrolled in a high-quality early learning and care program.
- 2 Increased rate of income-eligible L.A. County children birth to age 5 enrolled in publicly-funded early learning and care programs.
- 3 Increased rate of L.A. County children birth to age 3 with a developmental delay participating in early intervention services.
- 4 Decreased average age of L.A. County children entering special education services.
- 5 Decreased rate of L.A. County children with Child Protective Services involvement at any point during the first five years of life.
- 6 Increased rate of L.A. County families with children birth to age 5 who read, tell stories, sing, play music, or teach letters, words, or numbers to their child daily.
- 7 Increased rate of L.A. County families who participate in home visiting programs at any point prenatally through age 5.
- 8 Increased rate of eligible L.A. County families with children prenatal to age 5 participating in safety net programs.
- 9 Increased rate of L.A. County families with children birth to age 5 who report having one or more people to talk to in times of need.
- 10 Increased rate of L.A. County families with children birth to age 5 that have access to parks and open spaces.



Appendix B: Crosswalk of Indicators for the Results for Children & Families



Indicator	Children have high-quality ECE experiences	Children are connected early to developmental services & supports	Children are safe from abuse, neglect & other trauma	Families optimize their child's development
1	✓	✓		✓
2	✓			✓
3		✓	✓	
4		✓	✓	
5			✓	
6				✓
7			✓	✓
8			✓	✓
9			✓	✓
10				✓

Appendix B: Indicators Guide

The indicators for the Results for Children and Families are a component of the Impact Framework which represent child and family conditions that reflect progress toward the North Star. Monitoring this data will help First 5 LA gauge how well systems are working for children and families. This document highlights the value of each indicator and provides a high-level summary of the most recent data and trends. At this time, we are reporting data and trends from publicly available data sources; **data on result indicators will be updated as additional data is secured.**

Result Indicator	Value of the Indicator	Current Data Source ¹	Most Recent Data	Historical Data Trends
1. Increased rate of L.A. County children birth to age 5 enrolled in a high-quality early care and education program.	<p>There is a large body of evidence that suggests having high-quality early care and education (ECE) experiences prior to kindergarten entry leads to later school success. Beyond the experiences that improve specific cognitive domains, such as reading, language development and numeracy skills, participating in high-quality ECE promotes socio-emotional development through structured play, physical and motor development and the building of positive relationships with providers and peers. This indicator provides insights into the proportion of children in L.A. County connected to such services.</p>	<p>Proxy Measure: Quality Counts California (QCC) Common Data File for L.A. County</p>	<p>In 2017-18, just under 6% of the 631,911 children under 5 years old in L.A. County were attending a Quality Start Los Angeles (QSLA)-rated high quality early care and education program.</p> <p>Among the 43,660 children served in QSLA-rated programs during 2017-18, a total of 37,111 children were enrolled in programs that were rated Tier 3 or higher.²</p>	<p>Pending access to historical data</p>
2. Increased rate of income-eligible L.A. County children birth to age 5 enrolled in publicly-funded early care and education programs.	<p>Participation in subsidized early care and education programs not only offers access to high-quality programs for low-income families, it also enhances the overall economic well-being of families in L.A. County. The research related to the relationship between family economic well-being and school readiness and later success is well established. This indicator provides insights into the proportion of children in L.A. County connected to such a resource.</p>	<p>Direct Measure: Enrollment data from Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) and the Office for the Advancement of Early Care and Education (OAECE) Annual Survey of Early Care and Education Providers; Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles (CCALA)</p>	<p>70,516 children in L.A. County are enrolled in early care and education settings subsidized by state and federal funding sources as of April 2019. This represents 15.5% of the 455,581 children who were eligible for subsidized care in 2016.³</p>	<p>Pending access to historical data</p>

[1] Please note there are three types of measures of the indicators: (1) Direct measures of the indicator, (2) Proxy measures which are indirect measures that provide an estimation of the indicator, and (3) Related Data which is provided when no measure of the indicator currently exists and a close alternative provides some insights into the current state of affairs.

[2] Please note additional data will be added in the future to include enrollments in programs with NAEYC accreditation, NAFCC accreditation, or those in compliance with Head Start Program Performance standards.

[3] American Institutes for Research (2016). Early Learning Needs Assessment Tool.

Appendix B: Indicators Guide (cont'd)

Result Indicator	Value of the Indicator	Current Data Source ¹	Most Recent Data	Historical Data Trends
<p>3. Increased rate of L.A. County children birth to age 3 with a developmental delay participating in early intervention services.</p>	<p>Research has shown that the earlier children’s developmental needs are identified, the more effective interventions can be in supporting healthy child development, reducing stress in the home, increasing parental capacity and increasing success in school. This indicator provides insights into the proportion of children in L.A. County connected to such services.</p>	<p>Proxy Measure: CA Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) Early Start Part C Annual Performance Report, Percent of children and toddlers birth to 3 with Individual Family Service Plans (IFSP)</p>	<p>Fiscal Year 2017 Early Start data indicates that 47,025 California children birth through age 3 are receiving early intervention services through the Regional Centers. This represents 3.18% of the 1,476,631 infants and toddlers in California.⁴ However, literature on early identification suggests 12-16% of children in the United States have at least one developmental delay.²</p>	<p>The proportion of California children who receive early intervention services through Early Start has increased slightly over the ten-year period between 2005 and 2017 (from 1.99% to 3.18%).</p>
<p>4. Decreased average age of L.A. County children entering into special education services.</p>	<p>Research has shown that the earlier children’s developmental needs are identified, the more effective the intervention can be supporting healthy child development, reducing stress in the home, increasing parental capacity and increasing success in school. Indicator 4 adds value by capturing services received beyond IDEA Part C (Early Start) by tracking the average age of children entering special education services with the goal of reducing this age over time, signaling that children are receiving services earlier.</p>	<p>Direct Measure: California Department of Education Special Education Division, average age of children receiving special education services for speech or language impairment.³</p>	<p>As of December 2017, the average age of children receiving special education services for speech or language impairment among children in L.A. County was 6.25 years old.</p>	<p>Over the last 10 years, the average age of those receiving special education services has gradually decreased by 0.6 years.</p>

[1] Data are currently available only as a state-wide indicator and not specific to L.A. County.
 [2] Mackrides, P. S., & Ryherd, S. J. (2011). Screening for developmental delay. American Academy of Family Physicians, 84 (5), 544 – 549.
 [3] Speech and language impairments are the most prevalent developmental delay among young children, and frequently accompanies other delays. Draft as of 9.19.19

Appendix B: Indicators Guide (cont'd)

Result Indicator	Value of the Indicator	Current Data Source	Most Recent Data	Historical Data Trends
<p>5. Decreased rate of L.A. County children with Child Protective Services involvement at any point during the first five years of life.</p>	<p>Children involved in the child welfare system are less likely to participate in high-quality early care and education programs, to be ready for kindergarten, or to graduate from high school. They are also more likely to be involved in other systems. This indicator provides insights into the proportion of children who have involvement with the child welfare system during their early childhood.</p>	<p>Direct Measure: Children’s Data Network, Cumulative Risk of Child Protective Services Involvement</p>	<p>Of children born in 2013, 16.2% were reported to Child Protective Services (CPS) as a victim at least once during their first five years of life, 5.7% were substantiated as a victim, and 2.8% were placed in out-of-home care.</p>	<p>There has been a slight increase in the rate of children reported to CPS as a victim at least once during their first five years of life, from 14.6% of children born in 2007. No significant changes occurred in the rate of children with substantiated cases or out-of-home placement.</p>
<p>6. Increased percentage of L.A. County families with children birth to age 5 who read, tell stories, sing, play music, or teach letters, words, or numbers to their child daily.</p>	<p>Research has shown that families play a key role in supporting their child’s language development. This indicator serves as a proxy for both awareness of child development and active parental engagement.</p>	<p>Proxy Measure: Public Health Foundation Enterprises (PHFE) WIC Research and Evaluation Department, L.A. County WIC Survey⁷</p>	<p>In 2017, of 6,000 surveyed WIC parents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 45% reported reading to their child every day. 35% reported telling stories to their child every day. 67% reported playing music to their child every day. 60% reported teaching letters, words, or numbers to their child every day. 	<p>Since 2008, there have been slight increases in the percentage of WIC parents reading to their child everyday (from 37% to 45%) and in telling stories to their child every day (from 27% to 35%).</p>

[7] The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) provides supplemental foods, nutrition education and referrals to health care, at no cost, to low-income pregnant, breastfeeding and postpartum women, infants, and children up to age 5 who are determined to be at nutritional risk. In 2017, 48% of L.A. County families with children under the age of 5 participated in WIC. While the L.A. County WIC Survey is representative of the population of low-income WIC participants, it is not a population-wide measure for L.A. County broadly.

Appendix B: Indicators Guide (cont'd)



Result Indicator	Value of the Indicator	Current Data Source	Most Recent Data	Historical Data Trends
<p>7. Increased rate of L.A. County families who participated in home visiting programs at any point during prenatal through age 5.</p>	<p>Home visiting is a powerful tool to support and strengthen families by providing family-centered coaching and mentoring, education, support on an individual basis, and connecting families to additional critical services and supports. Home visitors meet families where they are and foster the critical parent-child bond by reinforcing parents' own efforts and abilities to optimize their child's development. This indicator provides insights into the proportion of children in L.A. County connected to such services.</p>	<p>Direct Measure: Los Angeles Best Babies Network (LABBN), Enrollments in First 5 LA funded Home Visiting Programs (Welcome Baby, Healthy Families America and Parents as Teachers).</p>	<p>A total of 18,678 families enrolled in First 5 LA-funded home visiting programs during Fiscal Year (FY) 2018-19. In 2017, 128,919 children were born in L.A. County ⁸</p>	<p>Enrollment in Welcome Baby has seen a steady increase from 12,777 in FY 2016-17 to 16,851 in FY 2018-19, while enrollments in First 5 LA-funded Healthy Families America and Parents as Teachers have remained relatively stable.</p>
<p>8. Increased rate of eligible L.A. County families with children prenatal to age 5 participating in safety net programs.</p>	<p>Public service system programs, such as CalWORKS, CalFresh, WIC and Medi-Cal, represent the availability of critical economic support resources for children and families. They allow families to meet important health care and basic needs. This indicator is a proxy for systems being accessible and available to meet families' needs.</p>	<p>Related Data: CA Department of Social Services, California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKS)</p> <p>Direct Measure: CA Department of Social Services, CalFresh Program Reach Index.</p> <p>Related Data: U.S. Department of Agriculture, CA WIC Program MIS System.</p> <p>Related Data: Department of Health Care Services, Medi-Cal Penetration Brief.</p>	<p>In 2019, 18% of children under 18 years old in L.A. County received CalWORKS.</p> <p>In 2017, CalFresh reached over two-thirds (69%) of all eligible families.</p> <p>In 2017, WIC served roughly half of all L.A. County children under the age of 5 years old.⁹</p> <p>In 2015, 57.7% of all children birth to age 5 years old in L.A. County had Medi-Cal as their primary insurer.⁹</p>	<p>Within the past seven years (2012-19), there has been a slight decrease in children under 18 years old receiving CalWORKS with 24% of children receiving cash assistance in 2012. Over a 10-year span (2007-2017), the percent of L.A. County children under age 5 years old participating in WIC slightly decreased.</p>

[8]Enrollment data for home visiting programs that do not receive First 5 LA funding is not currently accessible.

[9]Please note that data estimates for the number of families eligible for CalWORKS, WIC, and Medi-Cal is pending access. Currently accessible data looks at participation compared to the total population of children in L.A. County and does not account for eligibility criteria.

Appendix B: Indicators Guide (cont'd)



Result Indicator	Value of the Indicator	Current Data Source	Most Recent Data	Historical Data Trends
<p>9. Increased rate of L.A. County parents/caregivers with children birth to age 5 who report having one or more people to talk to in times of need.</p>	<p>Research suggests that having stable social connections has been shown to be a critical support for families that enables them to deal with economic, social and parental stress. This indicator measures how well families have access to informal supports to assist in promoting their child's development.</p>	<p>Proxy Measure: PHFE WIC Research and Evaluation Department, L.A. County WIC Survey</p>	<p>Across L.A. County during 2017, more than 80% of parents/caregivers report having someone to turn to if they needed someone to comfort or listen to them.</p>	<p>Pending access to historical data</p>
<p>10. Increased rate of L.A. County families with children prenatal to age 5 that have access to parks and open spaces.</p>	<p>Families having access to parks and open spaces is representative of a community environment that offers the type of resources that enable families to be active and connect with others. This indicator can be viewed as a demonstration of communities' commitment to young children and building social connections.</p>	<p>Proxy Measure: Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, Needs Assessment, Percentage of L.A. County residents who reside within one half-mile of a park, beach, or other open space greater than one acre.</p>	<p>In 2016, 49% of people residing in L.A. County lived within one-half mile of a park, beach, or other open space greater than one acre while 51% lived beyond one-half mile.</p> <p>Overall, 80% of parks in L.A. County experience high park pressure (amount of available land versus density of population in area) making play and connection difficult.</p>	<p>Pending access to historical data</p>

Appendix B: Indicators Guide (cont'd)



Contextual Indicators

This section summarizes 14 Contextual Indicators intended to capture the L.A. County context which are divided into the following four domains: child characteristics, maternal characteristic, resources, and community characteristics. The four domains represent factors that are most relevant and the best fit to inform First 5 LA's work.

Contextual Indicator	Value of the Indicator	Current Data Source	Most Recent Data	Historical Data Trends
Child Characteristics				
1. California Strong Start Index (CASSI): Average number of assets at birth (by birth cohort)	Birth asset scores, which summarize the conditions in which children are born, can speak to the need for services and supports to optimize child development across communities in L.A. County as children with fewer assets may have greater need for services. The CASSI explores 12 assets across family, health, service, and financial domains.	Direct Measure: California Strong Start Index, First 5 Association/Children's Data Network	In 2016, children born in L.A. County had an average of eight out of 12 assets at birth, which is consistent with the state average.	Pending access to historical data
2. Low Birth Weight: Percent of live births in L.A. County where the child weighed under 2500 grams	Low birth weight, one of the leading causes of infant death, speaks to the need for services like prenatal care, home visiting, and health services.	Direct Measure: California Department of Public Health, Center for Health Statistics, OHIR Vital Statistics Section, 2006-2015.	In 2015, 9,100 (7.3%) of children were of low birth weight in L.A. County.	Over the last 10 years, there has been very little fluctuation in the proportion of children of low birth weight in L.A. County.
3. Child Weight: Percent of children birth to 5 years in L.A. County that have a Body Mass Index (BMI) that falls within overweight and obese BMIs	Childhood obesity puts children at risk for poor health outcomes later in life. Child weight informs our understanding of our target population and speaks to the need for nutrition programming in early learning and care and home visiting programs.	Proxy Measure: Women, Infant, Child (WIC) Program, Childhood Obesity Rates in L.A. County	In 2015, 9,100 (7.3%) of children were of low birth weight in L.A. County.	Over the last 10 years, obesity rates for 3- and 4-year-old children have remained relatively consistent after reaching an all-time high in 2009. (21% and 22.5% respectively)

Appendix B: Indicators Guide (cont'd)

Contextual Indicator	Value of the Indicator	Current Data Source	Most Recent Data	Historical Data Trends
<p>4. Special Education: Number of children aged 0 to 5 years old in L.A. County who are enrolled in special education</p>	<p>Children with an IFSP or IEP are eligible for special education services. This helps inform our understanding of the demand for services that will promote learning and developmental growth for children with special needs.</p>	<p>Direct Measure: California Department of Education, Special Education Division</p>	<p>In 2017, more than 22,000 children aged 0 to 5 years old were enrolled in special education in L.A. County.</p>	<p>Enrollment in special education among 0-to 5-year-olds increased by 8% between 2014-2015 to 2017-2018.</p>
<p>5. English Learner Designation: Number of kindergarteners in L.A. County who have received English Learner designation</p>	<p>English learner students are those students for whom there is a report of a primary language other than English. English Learner Designation informs our understanding of our target population and speaks to the need for professional development in early learning and care settings.</p>	<p>Direct Measure: California Department of Education DataQuest, Enrollment by English Language Acquisition Status and Grade</p>	<p>In the 2018-2019 school year, 30%, or a total of 38,740 kindergarteners in L.A. County, were classified as English Learners.</p>	<p>While the number of kindergarteners in L.A. County has remained relatively flat from 2014-2015 to 2018-2019, the percent of kindergarteners classified as English Learners decreased by 8% during this period (38% to 30%).</p>
<p>6. 3rd Grade English Language Arts Proficiency: Percent of 3rd grade students in L.A. County meeting or exceeding grade-level standard in English Language Arts California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) during an academic year</p>	<p>Childhood obesity puts children at risk for poor health outcomes later in life. Child weight informs our understanding of our target population and speaks to the need for nutrition programming in early learning and care and home visiting programs.</p>	<p>Proxy Measure: Women, Infant, Child (WIC) Program, Childhood Obesity Rates in L.A. County</p>	<p>In 2015, 9,100 (7.3%) children were of low birth weight in L.A. County.</p>	<p>Over the last 10 years, obesity rates for 3- and 4-year-old children have remained relatively consistent after reaching an all-time high in 2009. (21% and 22.5% respectively)</p>

Appendix B: Indicators Guide (cont'd)

Contextual Indicator	Value of the Indicator	Current Data Source	Most Recent Data	Historical Data Trends
Maternal Characteristics				
7. Exclusive Breastfeeding: Annual percentage of mothers in L.A. County who initiate exclusive breastfeeding one week, one month, and three months after childbirth	Breastfeeding rates are indicative of mother/child bonding and child nutrition. This informs our understanding of what the landscape of exclusive breastfeeding looks like in L.A. County, and speaks to the need for mothers to attain services and resources geared toward breastfeeding practices.	Proxy Measure: Los Angeles Mommy and Baby Project (LAMB), % of mothers reporting exclusive breastfeeding	In 2016, an estimated 55.6% of mothers in L.A. County were exclusively breastfeeding their children at 1 week, 51.0% at 1 month, and 43.2% at 3 months.	Since 2014, the percentage of mothers exclusively breastfeeding at 3 months has increased by 5% in L.A. County.
8. Maternal Depression: Annual percentage of mothers in L.A. County displaying signs or symptoms of depression at any point before, during, or after childbirth	Maternal depression negatively impacts healthy early development and school readiness. This informs our understanding of the long-term effects of maternal depression, and speaks to the need of early identification and screening for mothers.	Proxy Measure: California Department of Public Health: Maternal and Infant Health Assessment (MIHA) Survey Data Snapshot, County of Los Angeles, Maternal Characteristics	Between 2013 and 2015, an estimated 13.9% of mothers in L.A. County experienced prenatal depressive symptoms, and 13.6% of mothers of newborns in L.A. County experienced postpartum depressive symptoms.	Since 2010, the percentage of mothers experiencing prenatal and postpartum depression in L.A. County has remained steady.
Resources				
9. Income: Number of children between 0 to 5 years old in L.A. County whose families have an income less than the Federal Poverty Line	Lack of financial resources can limit other resources and opportunities available to families to support their children's development, and can be an indicator of need.	Proxy Measure: U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates	In 2017, an estimated 457,665 or 20.9% of children under the age of 18 in L.A. County were in poverty.	The percent of children under the age of 18 in L.A. County in poverty has steadily decreased from 624,784 or 27.4% in 2013 to 457,665 or 20.9% in 2017.

Appendix B: Indicators Guide (cont'd)

Contextual Indicator	Value of the Indicator	Current Data Source	Most Recent Data	Historical Data Trends
<p>10. Food Insecurity: Percent of families with children between 0 and 5 years in L.A. County who experience a disruption of food intake or eating patterns because of lack of money and other resources in any given year</p>	<p>Food insecurity can lead to long-term negative health and developmental consequences for children, and can be an indicator of need.</p>	<p>Proxy Measure: Los Angeles County Department of Public Health</p>	<p>In 2015, an estimated 27.7% of families with children under the age of 18 in L.A. County were living in a household with limited or uncertain access to adequate food.</p>	<p>From 2002 to 2011, the percent of families with children under the age of 18 in L.A. County with limited access to adequate food increased by 9%, and then decreased from 2011 to 2015 by 6%.</p>
<p>11. Homelessness: Number of children between 0 to 5 years in L.A. County who are without a home or live in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter (chronic).</p>	<p>Homelessness can negatively affect the health, development and well-being of pregnant women, children and families, and can be an indicator of need.</p>	<p>Direct Measure: Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA)</p>	<p>In 2018, a total of 264 children under the age of 18 were reported as homeless, making up an estimated 2% of the homeless population in Greater Los Angeles.</p>	<p>The homeless youth count has significantly decreased across all of L.A. County from 2016 to 2018.</p>
<p>12. Emergency Room Visits: Ratio of necessary vs. unnecessary emergency room visits among children 0 to 5 years in L.A. County</p>	<p>High rates of emergency room visits among children 0 to 5 could be an indicator of limited child health literacy, lack of access to and utilization of routine primary care, or lack of insurance coverage.</p>	<p>Direct Measure: California Office of Statewide Health Planning & Development</p>	<p>In 2017, there were over 2 million emergency room visits in California that were classified as non-emergency issues.</p>	<p>Unnecessary emergency room visits make up 16.9% of all emergency room visits and have remained steady from 2016 to 2017.</p>

Appendix B: Indicators Guide (cont'd)

Contextual Indicator	Value of the Indicator	Current Data Source	Most Recent Data	Historical Data Trends
Community Characteristics				
13. California Healthy Places Index: Percentile rank of L.A. County compared to other California counties	This indicator can help identify community strengths and assets as well as opportunities for growth. It also gives a holistic picture of a community's health in comparison to other California communities and counties.	Direct Measure: Public Health Alliance of Southern California: California Healthy Places Index	Overall, L.A. County has healthier community conditions than 50% of other California counties, and healthier economic and educational conditions than over 60% of other California counties.	Pending access to historical data
14. Access to Transportation: Percentage of households in L.A. County who have limited access to personal (lack of mobile vehicle) or public transportation (train, bus, subway, etc.)	Monitoring access to transportation can help inform the location of easily accessible sites for programming and identify communities in need of more flexible services, such as mobile clinics or home visiting.	Proxy Measure: Public Health Alliance of Southern California: California Healthy Places Index	While over 90% of L.A. County residents have access to an automobile, this is a lower rate than almost all other California counties.	Pending access to historical data



Appendix C: Context for the SPR4 Process

- I. First 5 LA's Strategic Plan Refinement (SPR4) process
- II. Critical Success Factors for SPR4 Process
- III. The signals we heard
 - a. Landscape
 - b. Programmatic
 - c. Organizational
- IV. Summary of Community & Stakeholder Input



Appendix C: First 5 LA's Strategic Plan Refinement (SPR4) process

First 5 LA is an independent public agency with a goal to support the safe and healthy development of young children so that by 2028, all children in L.A. County will enter kindergarten ready to succeed in school and life. Changing systems and policies to prioritize children at the earliest moments in their lives is what's required to help all children have the best start possible in life.

SPR4 Process

First 5 LA's Strategic Plan Refinement process – referred to as SPR4 – encompassed four major phases:

Phase I: Review how our strategies have been and are being implemented to achieve our targeted outcomes and the resulting learnings.

Phase II: Reflect on how changes in the landscape and our own implementation experience can inform our approach to achieving our targeted outcomes.

Phase III: Refine our strategies to incorporate learnings from our own experience in policy and systems change work and our assessment of strategic opportunities to achieve our targeted outcomes.

Phase IV: Results to document and assess First 5 LA's progress on achieving our North Star.

Why Strategy Refinement?

The 2015-2020 Strategic Plan represented a significant pivot for First 5 LA to transition from its role primarily as a funder of direct services to a focus on systems change. This change was driven by the recognition that only through a focus on the systems that are designed to support families at the community, county and state level could First 5 LA have the desired impact on all children in L.A. County, given our limited and declining resources. The Strategic Plan Refinement process, launched in January 2019, affirmed our commitment to system change and refined our approach informed by our learnings, changes in the environment, and appreciation of the value of **more clearly articulating the unique role and assets of First 5 LA.**

Review

How have our strategies been implemented?

What progress has been made?

Reflect

What has changed in the environment?

What have we learned about policy and systems change?

Refine

How should we refine our work based on what we've learned and strategic opportunities?

Results

Document our strategic direction and targeted results.

Appendix C: Critical Success Factors for SPR4 Process

At the outset of the process, First 5 LA identified seven critical success factors that were established as fundamental markers for how the Strategic Plan Refinement process would be executed. These were our commitments and expectations for the Strategic Plan Refinement process and remain relevant for how we will continue to work in implementation.

Equity | Articulates how First 5 LA is working to ensure that all children are ready to succeed in school and life, with priority focus on those facing disparities along income, racial, ethnic and geographic lines

Impact | Clearly identifies our intended impact and means to measure our progress

Integration | Facilitates further integration of our work, highlighting cross-cutting, systems change approaches to achieving First 5 LA's "North Star"

Fiscal Stewardship | Recognizes and reflects our fiscal constraints, projected revenue declines and fiscal stewardship to operate within expected resources

Plain Speak | Is clear in language and approach for our diverse partners, staff, Board, and public

Priorities & Focus | Prioritizes and further focuses what we must do to advance our policy and systems change work programmatically, organizationally, and operationally

Capacity-Building | Leverages the process to enhance First 5 LA's ability, skill, and infrastructure for strategy development and implementation

Appendix C: The Signals We Heard



The Review Phase of the **SPR4** took stock of:

- **Progress** on 2015-2020 Strategic Plan implementation
- **Lessons learned** on effectively implementing systems and policy change
- **Shifts in the landscape** that might affect First 5 LA's strategy

Learning for Action (LFA) conducted **20+ interviews** and reviewed **20+ documents** [see "Review Phase Data Report" in Appendix D] to identify themes organized into three areas:

- 1 **Landscape Review** – examining changes in the landscape that might impact how First 5 LA achieves its targeted results
- 2 **Organizational Review** – examining First 5 LA's strengths and areas for growth
- 3 **Programmatic Review** – examining progress and lessons learned regarding implementation of First 5 LA's strategies

Landscape Insights

The key question that guided the Landscape Review: *What has changed in the landscape in the last three years that might impact how First 5 LA achieves its targeted results?*

- The majority of children from birth to age 5 in the County are children of color. L.A. County is the ninth most diverse among the largest 150 metro regions in the nation. Communities of color constitute a considerable majority of the county's population.
 - Nearly half (49%) of L.A. County parents of children 5 and under are foreign born, and of these, 67% are not citizens.
- Regions within the county have disparate levels of opportunity, clustering along racial and economic lines.
- Profound inequities threaten the long-term prosperity of L.A. County. People of color are far more likely to be in poverty or working poor than Whites.
- Differential access to employment and education contributes to racial disparities in all four of First 5 LA's outcome areas.
- The state policy climate is favorable for systems-level investments in early childhood. **First 5 LA brings credibility and focus to the policy table** and is positioned to engage in powerful advocacy to guide wise investment of new resources.
- Local entities are receptive to First 5 LA's systems change approach. First 5 LA is a thought leader and strong partner to county departments. Furthermore, First 5 LA has strengthened partnerships with research institutions.

Appendix C: The Signals We Heard (cont'd)



Organizational Insights

The key question that guided the Organizational Review: *What have we learned about First 5 LA's capacity to do systems and policy change work?*

- Staff and Board are stronger and working together more effectively than ever before.
- Integration is an ongoing journey.
- First 5 LA has strengthened its systems and policy change capabilities, with more room to grow.
- First 5 LA overall has increased the effectiveness of its functioning as an organization; and there are opportunities to become more nimble and develop new revenue sources.
- First 5 LA should continue to hone its strategies, with a focus on equity and driven by data and learning.
- Effective communications are critical for driving change among systems, communities and families.



Appendix C: The Signals We Heard (cont'd)

Programmatic Insights

The key questions that guided the Programmatic Review: *What progress has First 5 LA made in the first three years of its 2015-2020 Strategic Plan implementation? What has First 5 LA learned about how it does the work to best achieve outcomes?* Key insights include:

- First 5 LA's shift to policy and systems change is highly valued across stakeholders.
- Partnerships have been effective and are key to ongoing success; and there is a need to more clearly identify who First 5 LA partners with and why. Stakeholders suggest that First 5 LA should:
 - Deepen partnership with community-based organizations and parent leaders.
 - Build even stronger connections with philanthropy, government agencies and the corporate sector.
 - Consider a deeper focus at the local municipality level.
- First 5 LA can further clarify its approach to the important work in the 14 Best Start geographic areas:
 - Clarify what is unique about First 5 LA's approach in, intended outcomes for, and long-term sustainability plan for efforts in Best Start Communities.
 - Engage greater community voice, build relationships with new partners within communities, and help neighborhoods develop a sustainable strategy.
- First 5 LA's early learning work exemplifies its **unique role in bridging practice and policy**. First 5 LA's systems change approach and strong relationships with key ECE partners has helped to make traction on Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) in the county. Stakeholders want further clarification of First 5 LA's Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) strategy.
- Leadership on home visitation is a unique value that First 5 LA brings to the County and State. Stakeholders have noticed that home visiting programs have scaled and are more sustainable.
- First 5 LA has made important strides in addressing children's health needs in the areas of early identification and intervention as well as trauma informed care.

Appendix C: Summary of Community & Stakeholder Input

As part of First 5 LA's Strategic Plan Refinement process, input from the Board of Commissioners, external stakeholders, county agencies, and from select Best Start communities was gathered through interviews and community engagement sessions to inform First 5 LA's strategies and how to approach its work. The summary reports [See "Reflect Phase: County Partner Interviews and Community Engagement Session Summaries" in Appendix D] synthesize input from these key stakeholders to support the strategy refinement process undertaken by the First 5 LA staff Strategy Refinement Teams (SRTs).



Learning for Action (LFA) staff conducted phone interviews with 19 community partner stakeholders consisting of 17 county partners as well as representatives from First 5 CA and the First 5 Association. LFA also interviewed the Board of Commissioners.

First 5 LA staff conducted 10 engagement sessions with key stakeholders. The sessions engaged more than 130 stakeholders once completed. First 5 LA also held 10 input sessions with Best Start communities and eight informational interviews were conducted by staff from the Communities Department.

Finally, First 5 LA partnered with the Center for Effective Philanthropy (CEP) to conduct two surveys – one for grantees, which included contractors, and one for stakeholders. Findings from the grantee and stakeholder surveys serve as baseline data to determine how First 5 LA is doing and how we compare to 300 other philanthropic organizations within CEP's dataset.

Appendix C: Summary of Community & Stakeholder Input (cont'd)

Overarching themes include:



Recommendations for First 5 LA's role

- First 5 LA's policy efforts at the state level need to be informed by deeper understanding of what programmatic efforts look like in other regions and other counties. Systems change efforts may also benefit from collaboration with other First 5 county commissions.
- First 5 LA can better clarify its identity and role, particularly as it emerges out of the strategy refinement process.
- Focus on families living in poverty, families of color, and specific geographies in the county where needs for comprehensive supports for family can have the greatest positive impact.
- First 5 LA can continue to share more information about its work with other First 5 county commissions, perhaps through First 5 California and the First 5 Association. Representing the largest county in the state, First 5 LA can pursue some approaches that other smaller First 5 organizations cannot. The resulting plans, resources, data, approaches to measurement, and learnings could be valuable for other counties working on similar efforts. Similarly, the First 5 LA Commission and staff can broaden their understanding of other First 5s, for example, how they are addressing declining revenue or their top priorities.
- Continue policy advocacy efforts to advance ECE priorities in alignment with county and state budget and ECE policy opportunities.
- Stay closely connected to families and communities, including their voices through ongoing input processes and collaboration to better understand their needs and definition of progress/success on shared goals.
 - First 5 LA is positioned to leverage community voice and elevate family needs in a way that county partners cannot, particularly given the valuable infrastructure in place via the Best Start communities.
 - Continue to engage in parent engagement, with careful mindfulness of cultural differences and varied family structures.
- Feedback from both the CEP grantee and stakeholder surveys suggests there are opportunities for First 5 LA to deepen its overall understanding of the communities and context in which it works. In addition, First 5 LA was rated higher than typical¹ as affecting public policy in their respected fields. Stakeholders provided the highest rating to First 5 LA's focus on systems and policy change in comparison to other Investment Guidelines. Grantees rated First 5 LA higher than typical and stakeholders rated the organization as typical on how First 5 LA advances the state knowledge in their fields.

¹ Typical ratings are defined as ratings between the 35th and 65th percentile in CEP's dataset. Rating above the 65th percentile is defined as "higher than typical" while rating below the 35th percentile is defined as "lower than typical."

Appendix C: Summary of Community & Stakeholder Input (cont'd)

First 5 LA's Role in Advancing County Efforts

- First 5 LA could play a critical role to ensure that county level efforts are informed by policies and opportunities at the state and federal levels.
- In addition, First 5 LA could enhance opportunities for County-level collaboration through:
 - “Networking the networks” – develop a regional approach engaging county departments and CBOs in adjacent, complementary, and overlapping initiatives.
 - Align work across partners engaged in common strategies (e.g., home visiting).
- Contribute to the data landscape:
 - Assist in the development of data that can help County partners advocate for sustainable funding.
 - Support predictive risk modeling to better serve the needs of the community.
 - Partner with Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to establish the evidence base for prevention services/interventions (to expand services in alignment with the Family First Services Prevention Act).

Organizational Capabilities

- First 5 LA is respected and valued by its County partners as:
 - A critical voice and thought leader with deep roots in the community and expertise on issues related to children and families.
 - A valued partner that has flexibility to engage and contribute to shared efforts in ways that County partners cannot.
 - Well suited to provide strategic guidance on how best to seize opportunities created by the Governor's investments in early childhood.



Organizational Capabilities (cont'd)

- First 5 LA can assist in the development of data that can help County partners advocate for sustainable funding in the face of declining fiscal support from First 5 LA.
- First 5 LA should consider applying an equity framework to the organization and in the work.
 - Develop an equity voice for families and reflect it in First 5 LA's communications.
 - Provide implicit bias training for staff and grantees.
 - Consider the impact of racism, implicit bias and/or lack of awareness of trauma informed approaches on child and family outcomes.
 - Consider hiring practices internally and those of grantees.
 - Review fiscal policies to ensure resources and support are equitable.
 - Review contracting and funding approaches and processes to remove barriers for funding local community groups and organizations (e.g., increase opportunities to partner with and fund African American led CBOs).
- Although the CEP stakeholders survey findings rated First 5 LA as clearly communicating its strategy, they rated First 5 LA less positively about clearly communicating its goals. CEP's recommendation that First 5 LA staff improve their written and personal communications about First 5 LA goals so that they are clearly and consistently communicated.



Community Input

Community input suggests the following opportunities:

Early Care and Education (ECE)

- Continue policy advocacy efforts to advance ECE priorities in alignment with County and State budget and ECE policy opportunities.
- Make ECE more relevant to the education sector broadly by drawing stronger, more intentional links across ECE, K-12, and higher education.
- Continue to support quality ECE through advancement of the workforce and professionalization of the field.
- Advocate to raise ECE workforce compensation and support efforts to make the profession more attractive as a career.
- Advance policies to improve quality of childcare sites.

Health

- Partner with provider professional organizations to ramp-up training in assessment and developmental screening.
- Support systems integration to effectively connect families to resources/services following identification of developmental delays.
- Partner with others to develop a recommendation for a standard county-wide evidence-based assessment tool.

Families & Communities

- Contribute to targeted communications campaigns (e.g., by zip code) and increase social media efforts to raise parent/caregiver awareness and knowledge of child health and development.
- Stay closely connected to families and communities, including their voices through ongoing input processes and collaboration to better understand their needs and definition of progress/success on shared goals.
- Continue to engage in parent engagement, with careful mindfulness of cultural differences and different family structures.
- Stay the course with current home visiting efforts, working toward universal access.

Appendix D: Additional Materials

I. Review Phase Data Report

II. Reflect Phase: County Partner Interviews and Community Engagement Session Summaries

III. Center for Effective Philanthropy (CEP) Grantee and Stakeholder Perception Survey Key Findings and Recommendations



Phase Data Report Review

<https://tinyurl.com/SPR4-Report>

Summary of Data Sources for Review Phase Data Report

The findings and themes synthesized in this document draw on interviews with members of the First 5 LA Board of Commissioners and Executive Team as well as from Learning for Action's (LFA) review of the following reports, briefs, and First 5 LA internal resources:

External Reports and Resources

Getting Down to Facts II: ECE in California

Investing Early: Taking Stock of Outcomes and Economic Returns from Early Childhood Programs (RAND, 2017)

Equity Profile of Los Angeles (PolicyLink and PERE, 2017)

Race Counts: Advancing Opportunities for All California, 2017)

Achieving Fair Access to Early Education (EC Berkeley and AIR, 2018)

Center for Health Equity, Action Plan Community Forum Summary

Road to Safety for Our Children: LA County Blue Ribbon Commission on Child Safety

Condition of Children Birth to Age Five and Status of Early Childhood Services in California

Understanding Barriers to Early Intervention Services for Preterm Infants: Lessons from Two States

First 5 LA Internal Reports and Analysis

Stakeholder Review Memo

Summary of Key Themes from Review of 2018 Board Discussions on 2015-2020 Strategic Plan

October 2018 All-Staff Meeting Strategic Planning Survey Results

Impact Framework Phase 1 Analysis

2015-2020 Strategic Plan Variance Focus Group Summary Report

First 5 LA Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Workgroup - Equity Memo

First 5 LA: A Take on Equity Brief (June 2018, Prepared by PolicyLink and USC PERE)

First 5 LA Equity Factsheet (June 2018) Prepared by PolicyLink and USC PERE)

First 5 LA EI: Surveillance and Screening Issue Brief 1, May 2018

Long Term Financial Projections

Program Division Business Plan - Integration Summary Memo

Program Division Business Plan: January 2018-June 2020

Enterprise Risk Management Project Framework - Interviews

First 5 LA IT Assessment Report

First 5 LA IT Strategic Plan

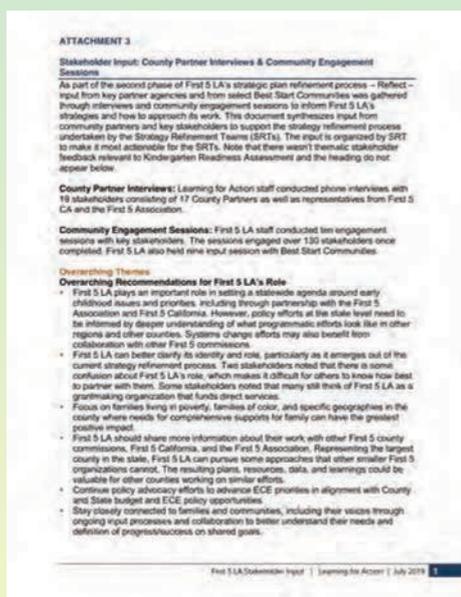
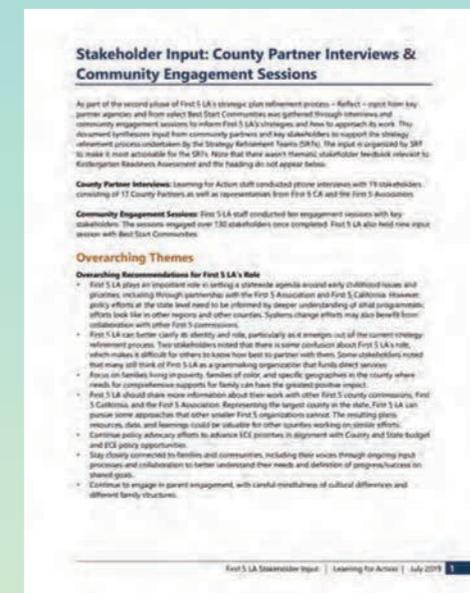
First 5 LA Impact Framework Template Guidance Memo



Reflect Phase: County Partner Interviews and Community Engagement Session Summaries

Inputs linked to Strategic Refinement Topics of ECE Quality Supports, Communications, and Data Strategy

<https://tinyurl.com/SPR4-Inputs>



Inputs linked to Strategic Refinement Topics of Built Environment, Communities and System Change, Cross Cutting Strategies: Trauma Informed Care and Family Engagement, Home Visiting, and Data Strategy

<https://tinyurl.com/SPR4-Inputs2>

Center for Effective Philanthropy (CEP) Grantee and Stakeholder Perception Survey Key Findings and Recommendations Memo

<https://tinyurl.com/SPR4-Survey>

Item 2
Attachment 1

Key Findings and Recommendations from First 5 LA 2019 Grantee and Stakeholder Perception Reports Prepared by The Center For Effective Philanthropy

In February and March of 2019, The Center for Effective Philanthropy conducted a survey of First 5 LA ("First 5") grantees and stakeholders, achieving a 47 percent response rate for the grantee survey and 56 percent response rate for the stakeholder survey. The memo below outlines CEP's summary of key strengths, opportunities, and recommendations. First 5 LA's grantee and stakeholder perceptions should be interpreted in light of the First 5's goals and strategies.

Context matters – both in terms of interpreting your results and in planning for future action based on these findings. Our hope is that these results will inform your planning and learning efforts by providing data and insight, from grantees' and stakeholders' perspectives, about First 5's relative strengths and opportunities for improvement.

This memo accompanies the comprehensive survey results found in First 5's interactive online reports at <https://cep.surveymethods.org> and in the downloadable online materials.

First 5 LA's full reports also contain more information about survey analysis and methodology. CEP has included comments below that reference both positive and constructive feedback but that are representative of overall themes in grantees' and stakeholders' open-ended remarks.

Note: The term "significant" is used only when differences in mean ratings are statistically significant when tested at a $p < 0.1$ level.

Notable Contributions to Public Policy and Advancement of Knowledge

- On measures related to First 5 LA's work in their fields, grantees and stakeholders provide ratings that are similar to or higher than the typical funder in CEP's comparative datasets.
 - Both groups provide higher than typical¹ ratings for the extent to which First 5 LA has affected public policy in their fields.
 - Grantees rate First 5 higher than typical for the extent to which it has advanced knowledge in their fields, and stakeholders provide ratings that are similar to typical.
 - When asked how effective First 5 LA is at accomplishing each of its investment guidelines, stakeholders provide the highest ratings for First 5 LA's focus on systems and policy change, rating on average a 5.4 on a 7-point scale.

¹ Throughout this summary of findings, "typical" grantee ratings are defined as ratings between the 35th and 65th percentiles in CEP's dataset. Ratings above the 65th percentile are defined as "higher than typical," while ratings below the 35th percentile are defined as "lower than typical."

Appendix E: Key Terms and Definitions



Appendix E: Key Terms and Definitions

Policy Change¹ – Efforts to change rules governing institutions, practices, and resource allocation. Policy can be set by both public institutions (e.g., government) and private institutions (e.g. hospitals or employers).

Practice Change¹ – Efforts to change the expectations, skills, habits and capacities of systems. Examples of practice change includes adopting a universal ACEs screening tool, work to improve adoption of best practices in early childhood settings, and work to improve how a department effectively engages families and communities.

System¹: A group of interacting, interrelated, and interdependent components that form a complex and unified whole.

Systems Change¹: Change that encompasses a broad set of interrelated changes, including the norms, resources, behaviors, learned habits, culture, authority/decision-making and patterns operating within the legal, regulatory, social and community environment.

Will Building – Efforts to build and sustain the will, relationships, networks to change norms, attitudes, behaviors and beliefs.

