



Strategic Plan | 2024-2029

Appendix C

Building a future where every child
is born healthy and thrives in nurturing,
safe and loving communities.



Acknowledgments



We embark on this next chapter as an organization with a renewed focus and resolve to work in partnership to create a lasting impact for our county’s youngest children. We do so with appreciation for the engagement of our entire community in this process, including our committed partners and grantees, the passionate First 5 LA team and our consultants. The guidance and insight of our board of commissioners was essential.

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Community Partners

AAPI Equity Alliance
ActiveSGV (San Gabriel Valley)
Antelope Valley Partners
for Health
Active SGV
Black Women for Wellness
California Child Care Resource
and Referral Network
Catalyst California
Center for the Study of
Child Care Employment
Child Care Alliance of
Los Angeles
Child Trends
Children’s Bureau of
Southern California
Community Coalition
Community Partners
Crystal Stairs/Community Voices
El Nido Family Centers
EmpowerTHEM Collective
Families In Schools
Hilton Foundation
InnerCity Struggle

Long Beach Forward
Long Beach Mayor’s Fund
Los Angeles Food
Policy Council
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Los Angeles County Commission
for Children and Families
Los Angeles County
CEO Poverty Alleviation
Initiative (PAI)
Los Angeles County Office
of Child Protection
Memorial Care
ÓRALE
Para Los Niños
PHFE WIC
Public Health Alliance
Rising Communities
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The Children’s Partnership
The Nonprofit Partnership
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A letter from our executive director



Dear Partners,

Every child has the potential to thrive. The pandemic exacerbated disparities and laid bare what we have long known: that healthy food, secure housing, and families' experiences of safety and belonging are critical to children's well-being. It also showed we must go further.

During the first five years, a child creates trillions of neural connections that become the foundation of their brain architecture. The healthy development of this architecture is dependent on a child's relationships and experiences. During these critical years, children need the support of safe, stable and nurturing relationships and environments. Young children's interactions in social environments, with their families, caregivers and communities, and their physical environments — where they live, play and explore — have long-term implications

for their health and well-being. That's why we must work together to ensure children have a solid foundation from early learning experiences to reach their **full developmental potential**.

Our strategic plan focuses on goals to collectively build toward ensuring children's needs across a continuum of basic (physiological and safety), psychological (esteem, love and belonging) and self-fulfillment (self-actualization) needs are met. As we emerge from a global pandemic, we commit to centering racial justice and equity in our work and partnering with renewed urgency to create a future where young children and their families are prioritized in Los Angeles County and across the state. We seek to go beyond mitigating the effects of growing inequities to address root causes by engaging in community engagement, prevention and systemic change.

Let's work together to create change so our region shines as an example of what it looks like to prioritize our youngest children and their families as our pathway to a strong and inclusive future. At First 5 LA, we look forward to partnering with you so we can create a brighter, more equitable future for our youngest children and their families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "K Howell". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Karla Pleitéz Howell
First 5 LA
Executive director

Building a future where every child ● thrives



Prioritizing children during the crucial early years

There is a window of opportunity during a young child’s development that calls on the collective efforts of parents, the community and service providers to respect, support one another and work together. While this window is open, from prenatal to age 5, 90% of a child’s brain will develop and determine social, emotional and learning patterns for life. Laying a solid foundation — step by step — helps build and develop a child’s brain and ultimately impacts their ability to enter school ready to learn and succeed. Supporting children during this crucial period is the best way to promote lifelong health, well-being and success.

Setting a strong foundation for every child

To set a strong foundation for children’s well-being, lifelong learning and success, collaboratively we must ensure our systems and organizations truly work for and support every child and their family across race, ethnicity, class, geography, physical and cognitive differences, sexual and gender identity, home language and the diversity of family structures. And we know these systems will only work for young children when we recognize that they live, grow and develop within the context of their families and communities. That’s why at First 5 LA we take a whole child, whole family approach.

To ensure every child has what they need to reach their full developmental potential during the critical years of prenatal to age 5, at First 5 LA we engage in a targeted universalism approach. We ground our strategic plan in universal goals for the well-being of all children prenatal to age 5 and their families in Los Angeles County. Then we work with our partners, communities and families to identify targeted tactics to meet different groups’ varying needs. First 5 LA tactics will seek to work to address factors such as structural inequities and historic and present-day oppression.



Creating a bright and inclusive future for Los Angeles County children

With over a half million children under age 5 in Los Angeles County, we recognize the need to partner to advance better outcomes for our youngest children and their families across race, ethnicity, class, physical and cognitive differences, sexual and gender identity, home language and the diversity of family structures. Together, we must go further. All families want what is best for their children. The rich diversity of families in Los Angeles County is a strength for our county and within each family, but too many face systemic barriers. More than half of Los Angeles County households with children lack sufficient income to meet basic needs, including healthy food and secure housing. Nearly 3 out of 4 Los Angeles County households with children under 5 speak a language other than English. While speaking multiple languages is an asset for children, many families face language barriers to accessing supports and services. Barriers from systemic racism in local, state and federal policies and practices persist, with significant disparities in child well-being in Los Angeles County among different racial and ethnic groups. While engaging, collaborating and building on the strengths of Los Angeles County's diverse families and communities, we must address structural inequities as well as historic and present-day oppression that create barriers for children prenatal to age 5 reaching their full developmental potential.

Championing early childhood as part of the First 5 network

At First 5 LA, we are proud to be part of the statewide network of 58 county commissions championing investments in the health and well-being of our youngest children and their families. We celebrate our collective work that began in 1998 when California voters passed Proposition 10, instituting a new tax on tobacco products to fund the creation of the statewide network of First 5s. Together, the First 5 network — including First 5 California, the First 5 Association and our county commission partners — shines a spotlight on the importance of the early years. In everything we do, the First 5 network brings expertise and perspectives in early childhood, elevating the concerns of children prenatal to age 5 and their families where they may otherwise not be considered. At First 5 LA, we commit to working collaboratively with our First 5 network to continue to support young children's safe and healthy development now and into the future.

Approach



Over the past 25 years, First 5 LA has evolved from funding only direct services to collaborating broadly to identify and implement systems change to advance better outcomes for our youngest children and families. Given the changing landscape and our commitment to community engagement, partnership and equity, First 5 LA's role continues to evolve. To advance this strategic plan to ensure children have a solid foundation to reach their full developmental potential, First 5 LA will act as:

Convenor: brings together public agencies, philanthropy, nonprofit organizations and communities to share data, access and learn from new and diverse perspectives

Connector: cultivates existing and new relationships to improve collaboration to advance better outcomes for children and families

Trusted thought partner on early childhood: ensures issues impacting children, prenatal to age 5 are part of diverse agendas and spaces

Advocate: influences resource allocation and distribution, policy and practice changes, and implementation of public policy

Working in partnership for collective impact

As one of the state’s largest funders of early childhood and an independent public agency, at First 5 LA we recognize we make our strongest contributions in partnership with other public agencies, nonprofit organizations, philanthropic organizations and communities, including parents, caregivers and families. We will only reach our bold goals to truly achieve measurable, long-lasting results for children prenatal to age 5 and their families when we work collaboratively, innovate and adopt new approaches, embracing feedback and continuous learning. First 5 LA is committed to aligning our organizational practices, capabilities and resources to making the greatest possible impact for Los Angeles County’s children prenatal to age 5 and their families.

We recognize that our commitment to equity and continuous learning must include reflecting on our own actions and where we fall short. We strive to center equity and racial justice in our work, looking for opportunities to be part of the solution and recognizing and elevating community agency and voice. Further, through analysis of systemic racism and historic inequities, we identify and seek to address systemic barriers that are causing problems.

As part of our collaborative approach, it is essential we ground our work in family and community engagement, input and feedback. We bring together partners across public agencies, philanthropy, nonprofit organizations and communities to share data, access and learn from new and diverse perspectives, and build collective capacity to achieve a common purpose. As a public organization that in many instances has greater flexibility than county or state agencies, we strive to be solutions-oriented and look for opportunities to serve as a conduit to connect and elevate community voices with our fellow public agencies.

Leveraging Results-Based Accountability

As part of our commitment to results for young children and their families, we take a **Results-Based Accountability** approach where the desired end results drive the process.

To be accountable and transparent, a Results-Based Accountability approach outlines measures on two levels. First, we identify measurable objectives for **population-level accountability** that will move through collective action with partners over time. This form of accountability uses indicators as data points to help us gauge the conditions of well-being for populations within a geographic area. For First 5 LA, our focus population is children prenatal to age 5 in Los Angeles County. Second, we identify a measure for **performance-level accountability** for our investments in tactics that are in collaboration with partners. As part of this, we will focus on impact metrics, including asking questions such as: “Who is better off as a result of the tactics?” By embracing the two-level approach to measuring our impact, we seek to work in collaboration with partners and hold ourselves accountable in our unwavering pursuit of lasting results for young children and their families.

Creating long-lasting impact

In 1998, California voters passed Proposition 10, instituting a new tax on tobacco products, which funded the creation of the statewide network of First 5s. Today, the acceleration of statewide tobacco prevention successes has led to less people smoking — a public health victory for children and their families. At the same time, this also has created challenges for our funding streams and has established a new fiscal reality for First 5 LA. Proposition 10 dollars were always intended to be a declining source of revenue with tobacco purchases decreasing and funds steadily and significantly declining over time. Most recently, California voters approved Proposition 31, banning the sale of certain flavored tobacco products and further accelerating declining revenue.

At First 5 LA, we have developed a sustainability framework that maximizes our assets and develops alternative revenue strategies. We are focused on making a long-lasting impact by working collaboratively with our First 5 network and local partners to ensure we continue to support young children’s full developmental potential.



First 5 LA's vision, mission and values drive how we'll partner to ensure all of our youngest children have what they need to reach their full development potential.

We share our vision that outlines the world we want to see and our mission that shares the collaborative actions we will take to get there.



We envision a future where every child is born healthy and thrives in a nurturing, safe and loving community.



We advocate for children and their families, amplify community voice and partner for collective impact so that every child in Los Angeles County reaches their full developmental potential throughout the critical years of prenatal to age 5.



First 5 LA's values guide and direct how we show up and the actions we take to make the greatest possible impact for Los Angeles County's children prenatal through age 5 and their families.

Impact: We remain curious, open to new ideas, adaptable to improve and unwavering in our pursuit of lasting results for young children and their families.

Equity: We honor the wisdom of our communities, recognizing that their assets hold the key to dismantling systemic barriers and forging a path to racial justice, as we champion opportunity for all.

Partnership: We inspire collective action built on trusting relationships, diverse perspectives, humility and mutual respect.

Integrity: We are accountable for results, ensure the most effective use of public resources and reflect on our actions.



Goals Objectives Strategies Tactics

Child development teaches us that young children are able to meet their **full developmental potential** when they live, grow and develop with the opportunities and supports to reach their maximum capacity for their **physical, cognitive, social and emotional development.** This is why our goals focus on ensuring children’s needs across a continuum of basic (physiological and safety), psychological (esteem and love and belonging) and self-fulfillment (self-actualization) needs. Our collaborative work seeks to move us toward a future where **every child prenatal to age 5 in Los Angeles County meets their full developmental potential.**



Our goals express a desired condition of well-being for all children prenatal to age 5 in Los Angeles County across the continuum of needs, building from physiological safety to esteem, love and belonging and toward self-fulfillment.

Goal One:

Children prenatal to age 5 and their families have their basic needs met.

Our first goal recognizes that young children’s well-being starts with secure housing and economic security. These foundational needs for physiological safety are essential, and we know that for a child to reach their full developmental potential, we must go further.

Goal Two:

Children prenatal to age 5 have nurturing relationships and environments.

Our second goal recognizes that children need the support of safe, stable and nurturing relationships and environments during the earliest and most influential years from prenatal development to age 5. Children need nurturing relationships from family members and caregivers to form healthy attachments. They need to live, grow, play and learn in healthy environments with clean air and water and access to parks and outdoor spaces. Young children’s interactions in social environments, with their families, caregivers and communities, and their physical environments — where they live, play and explore — have long-term implications for their health and well-being.

Goal Three:

Children prenatal to age 5 have a solid foundation for well-being, lifelong learning and success.

Building further, our third goal focuses on laying the foundation for children’s well-being, lifelong learning and success. This requires ensuring children have the confidence, culturally relevant and affirming experiences, and solid foundations from early learning experiences to reach their full potential. Our youngest children are our future innovators and problem-solvers who will set up Los Angeles to be part of a thriving global economy.

Objectives



Our objectives articulate a measurable level of desired change. Current data on the objectives reflect unacceptably low measures that do not reflect our aspirations for every child in Los Angeles County to meet their full developmental potential. The objectives are a starting point based on existing measurements. Over the course of our five-year plan, in collaboration with our diverse partners, we will track and adjust objectives when necessary. The strategic plan objectives demonstrate we have much to do to address structural racism and historic and present-day oppression.

First 5 LA is committed to the progress of our youngest children and their families by tracking these objectives.

Goal One

Children prenatal to age 5 and their families have their basic needs met.

Objectives

- 1.1 REDUCE the annual number of deaths of children under 1 year old per 1,000 live births in Los Angeles County to 3.5% by the end of 2029.
- 1.2 REDUCE the annual percent of households with children prenatal through age 5 in Los Angeles County living in poverty to 15.4% by the end of 2029.
- 1.3 REDUCE the annual percent of households with children prenatal through age 5 in Los Angeles County who experience housing insecurity to 52% by the end of 2029.

Goal Two

Children prenatal to age 5 have nurturing relationships and environments.

Objectives

- 2.1 INCREASE the annual percent of pregnant and/or post-partum people in Los Angeles County identified as at-risk for maternal depression who receive mental health care.¹
- 2.2 INCREASE the annual percent of children prenatal to age 5 in Los Angeles County with access to sufficient choices for healthy foods by the end of 2029.¹
- 2.3 INCREASE the annual percent of children prenatal to age 5 in Los Angeles County who have access to parks and open spaces to 57% by the end of 2029.

Goal Three

Children prenatal to age 5 have a solid foundation for well-being, lifelong learning and success.

Objectives

- 3.1 INCREASE the annual percent of children prenatal to age 5 in Los Angeles County receiving publicly funded early care and education in a mixed-delivery system to 25% by the end of 2029.
- 3.2 INCREASE annual percent of children prenatal to age 5 in Los Angeles County with a developmental delay receiving early intervention services by the end of 2029.¹
- 3.3 INCREASE annual percent of households with children prenatal to age 5 in Los Angeles County receiving culturally affirming services and supports by the end of 2029.¹

¹ Population-level data for this objective is not readily available. First 5 LA, in partnership with experts in the field, will co-create a data development agenda to track progress for this objective.

Strategies



These strategies are interdependent; they influence and inform each other. More and better legislation, administrative regulations and resources are needed to address the needs of children prenatal to age 5 and their families. Similarly, the performance of public systems needs to improve, including through removing barriers based on inequities and bias, to ensure better outcomes for children prenatal to age 5 whom these systems are already serving. To achieve these strategies, we must partner with communities — parents and caregivers and institutional leaders countywide — to grow a social movement focused on children prenatal to age 5.

To ensure that children grow and develop with healthy food, have secure housing and experiences of safety and belonging, have nurturing relationships and environments, and are set up to thrive, First 5 LA will advance three core strategies: catalyze public policies, strengthen public systems and grow a social movement.

Our strategies are:

One:

Catalyze public policy efforts at the local, state, and federal levels that prioritize the needs of children prenatal to age 5 and their families.

Two:

Collaborate with partners to strengthen public systems, services and supports for children prenatal to age 5 and their families.

Three:

Partner with communities to collaboratively grow a social movement that elevates the needs of children prenatal to age 5 and their families.



Tactics

On an ongoing basis, First 5 LA will continue to identify and refine the tactics that advance our goals, objectives and strategies. Tactics are the concrete organized activities, such as projects, programs and initiatives, we will engage to achieve one or more of our objectives.

First 5 LA will apply three universal parameters to identify and select a collection of tactics to achieve the change identified in our objectives while at the same time calibrating our investments commensurate with our current and future revenues.

These universal parameters include:

Alignment and Potential Impact

The proposed tactic addresses First 5 LA's goal(s) and deploys one or more strategies and shows significant potential to impact the targeted objective(s).

Equity-Driven Planning Process

The proposed tactic shows how it will impact the lives of people and groups across race, ethnicity, class, geography, physical and cognitive differences, sexual and gender identity, home language and the diversity of family structures. The tactic must also show how these communities were meaningfully involved in the planning process and will continue to be engaged in the implementation phase.

Cost-Benefit and Sustainability

The proposed tactic demonstrates greater benefits than other alternatives, given the cost, and that the change the tactic will produce in policy, protocols and/or practices will be sustained beyond First 5 LA's funding.



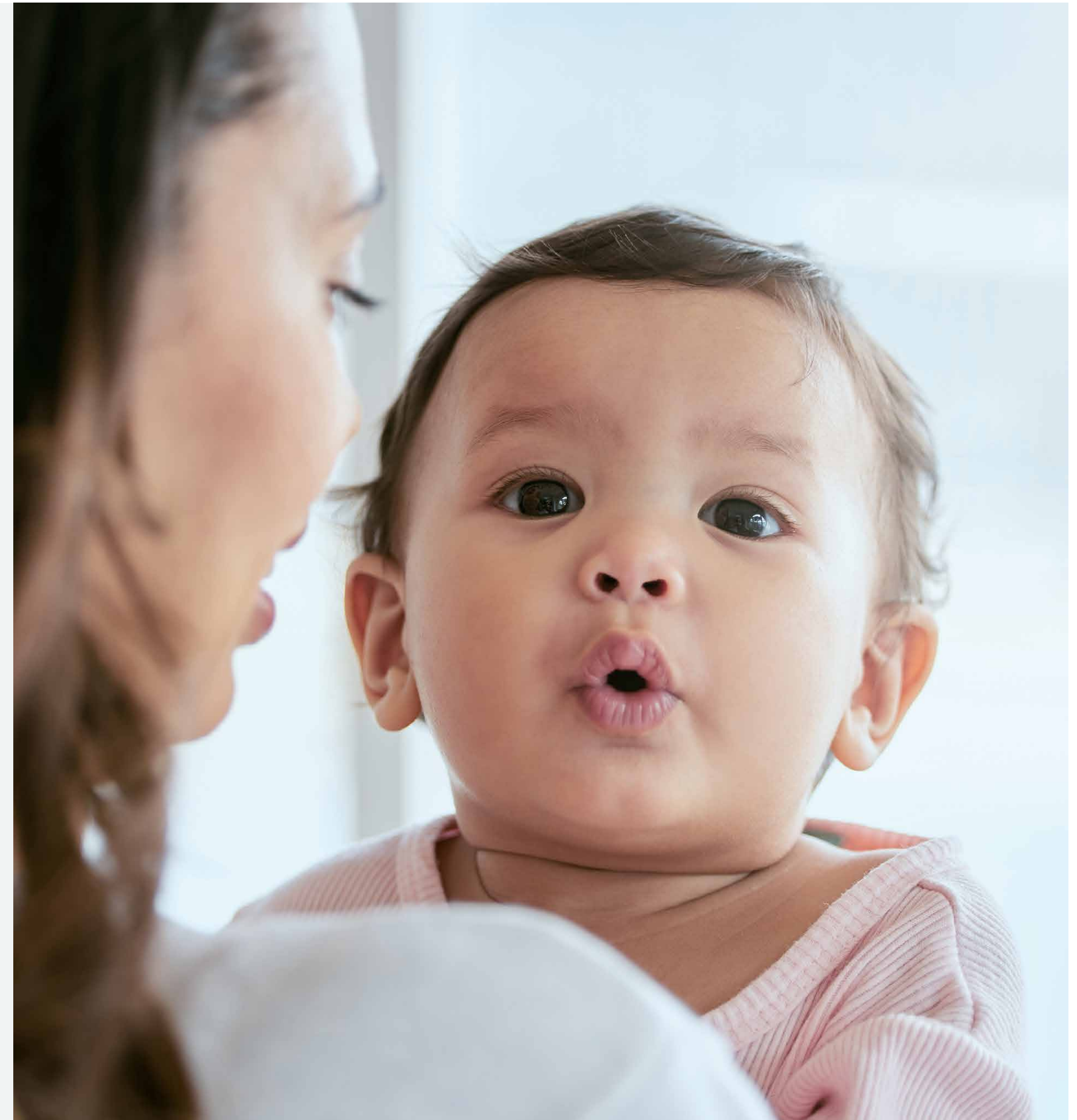
Vision: We envision a future where every child is born healthy and thrives in a nurturing, safe and loving community.

Mission: We advocate for children and their families, amplify community voice and partner for collective impact so that every child in Los Angeles County reaches their full developmental potential throughout the critical years of prenatal to age 5.

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	TACTICS
Children prenatal to age 5 and their families have their basic needs met.	Reduce - Infant Mortality - Poverty - Housing Insecurity	Catalyze public policies efforts at the local, state, and federal levels that prioritize the needs of children prenatal to age 5 and their families.	On an ongoing basis, identify and refine the tactics that advance our goals, objectives and strategies.
Children prenatal to age 5 have nurturing relationships and environments.	Increase - Supports for Maternal Depression - Choices for Healthy Foods - Parks & Open Space	Collaborate with partners to strengthen public systems , services, and supports for children prenatal to age 5 and their families.	Universal Parameters: Alignment and Potential Impact Equity-Driven Planning Process
Children prenatal to age 5 have a solid foundation for well-being, lifelong learning and success.	Increase - Early Care & Education - Early Intervention Services - Culturally Affirming Services	Partner with communities to collaboratively grow a social movement that elevates the needs of children prenatal to age 5 and their families.	Cost-Benefit and Sustainability



To continue to learn
more about First 5 LA's
2024-2029 Strategic Plan,
please visit First5LA.org.



Appendix

Center for the Study of Social Policy (2018) About Strengthening Families™ and The Protective Factors Framework: <https://cssp.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/About-Strengthening-Families.pdf>

Dean, H. (2020) Understanding Human Need (Understanding Welfare: Social Issues, Policy and Practice) 2nd Edition.

First 5 LA Sustainability Framework (Item 6B: September 14, 2023, First 5 LA Board of Commissioners Meeting) <https://meetings.boardbook.org/Documents/WebView-er/2038?file=7a2a8d10-fa43-4fd7-939e-d56800cff267>

Friedman, M. (2015) Trying Hard Is Not Good Enough 10th Anniversary Edition: How to Produce Measurable Improvements for Customers and Communities (Chapter 2: “The Building Blocks of Results-Based Accountability”)

Powell, J. et al. (2019) Targeted Universalism, Policy & Practice Primer (Othering & Belonging Institute at UC Berkeley): <https://belonging.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/2022-12/Targeted%20Universalism%20Primer.pdf>

In February 2023, First 5 LA staff began a collaborative, iterative strategic planning process that has been inspired and informed by a multitude of perspectives and data. The planning process included opportunities for staff, community members and commissioners to engage in thoughtful discussions about First 5 LA’s strengths and opportunities.

This section of the appendix provides an overview of the discussions with the First 5 LA Board of Commissioners:

June 8, 2023: Meeting of the Board of Commissioners Item 10: Strategic Plan Reset: Landscape Findings

- GOST (Goals, Objectives, Strategies & Tactics) Framework (Item 6; Attachment A: June 8, 2023, First 5 LA Board of Commissioners) <https://meetings.boardbook.org/Documents/WebView-er/2038?file=3d09810f-6c21-46d3-83f5-e1176e0d7f98>

- Presentation: <https://meetings.boardbook.org/Documents/WebView-er/2038?file=ff5a3600-5eb7-406d-b3da-79b050330e4d>

June 29, 2023: Special Joint Meeting of the Board of Commissioners and Program & Planning Committee Item 4: Strategic Plan Reset: Conditions of Young Children and Their Families

- Presentation: <https://meetings.boardbook.org/Documents/WebView-er/2038?file=a4556600-fd88-4c40-aec0-5f27d793609a>

July 13, 2023: Meeting of the Board of Commissioners Item 8: Strategic Plan Reset: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis

- Presentation: <https://meetings.boardbook.org/Documents/WebView-er/2038?file=40f980b0-d5b2-47ea-bba8-96fc818d6632>
- Attachment —Landscape Synthesis: <https://meetings.boardbook.org/Documents/WebView-er/2038?file=788792a3-6fce-4ee7-a75b-9ded8c50bd8e>

Sept. 14, 2023: Meeting of the Board of Commissioners Item 6: Strategic Plan — Proposed Goals, Indicators, Objectives and Strategies

- Item 6A Presentation: <https://meetings.boardbook.org/Documents/WebView-er/2038?file=3edac692-48f8-4c9d-a86b-dfe76230ae51>
- Item 6A Background Attachment: <https://meetings.boardbook.org/Documents/WebView-er/2038?file=92d71163-ece2-4e8d-8f28-c386db4399bf>
- Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs (Item 6A: Sept. 14, 2023, First 5 LA Board of Commissioners Meeting) <https://meetings.boardbook.org/Documents/WebView-er/2038?file=3edac692-48f8-4c9d-a86b-dfe76230ae51>

Sept. 28, 2023: Special Meeting of the Board of Commissioners, Program & Planning Committee, Budget & Finance and Executive Committees Item 6: PUBLIC HEARING — Annual Review of First 5 LA’s 2020-2028 Strategic Plan

- Presentation: <https://meetings.boardbook.org/Documents/WebView-er/2038?file=0c7e28f2-1028-48d8-9d53-c52b-330d60c4>

Oct. 12, 2023: Meeting of the Board of Commissioners Item 11: Review of and Public Hearing on the Proposed Strategic Plan

- Presentation: <https://meetings.boardbook.org/Documents/WebView-er/2038?file=68cb4cf4-9c79-494a-a131-0dd5bf6d8e02>
- Attachment with Background for Discussion: <https://meetings.boardbook.org/Documents/WebView-er/2038?file=af2899f7-ac5a-4fbe-b9f9-ae091eb0af8f>

This section of the appendix provides an overview of the discussions with community partners:

Sept. 18, 2023:

- Agenda and Presentation: <https://www.first5la.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Community-Engagement-Strategic-Plan-09-18-23.pdf>

Sept. 22, 2023:

- Agenda and Presentation: http://www.first5la.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/F5LA_Community-Strategic-Plan-Briefing_9.22.23.pdf

Oct. 17, 2023:

- Agenda and Presentation: <https://www.first5la.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Agenda-10.17.23-Strategic-Plan-and-Community-Engagement.pdf>

Glossary

Basic needs: Basic needs are fundamental requirements that are essential for human survival and the building blocks for a decent quality of life. These needs are varied and include food, water, shelter, safety and more.

Given First 5 LA’s fiscal reality outlined in the strategic plan, we will focus on the following basic needs: economic security, housing security and health security.

Communities: Communities are an interconnected network of individuals, organizations and entities united by shared aspirations and a commitment to fostering inclusivity to create a collective sense of empowerment and collaborative action to address the complex challenges of our time. Communities include residents, community-based organizations, community organizers, faith-based organizations, etc.

Culturally Affirming: Culturally affirming refers to practices, attitudes and behaviors that validate and support the cultural identities, beliefs and values of individuals or groups. It implies a commitment to recognizing and respecting the cultural diversity of people and affirming the importance of their cultural backgrounds in a way that fosters a sense of belonging, pride and self-worth. Culturally affirming approaches often aim to combat discrimination, bias and stereotypes while promoting a more inclusive and equitable

environment. Examples of culturally affirming practices include language access, diversity of staff and curriculum that represents diverse cultures.

Direct Services: Direct services are programs or supports that provide assistance directly to individuals or communities. These services are typically intended to address particular needs, such as health care, education, social support, emergency services, crisis intervention, etc.

Given First 5 LA’s fiscal reality outlined in the strategic plan, First 5 LA will consider two aspects of direct services:

- Programs that directly serve children and families
- Networks or systems (including providers) that directly serve children and families

Housing Insecurity: Housing insecurity refers to a condition where individuals or families lack stable, safe and affordable housing, often facing the risk of being unhoused or subject to frequent moves due to financial constraints or other factors.

Housing insecurity also includes experiences such as overcrowding, living in poorly maintained housing and/or having a high rent-to-income burden.

Mental Model: A mental model is an internal representation of an external reality that helps a person make sense of the world. Mental models help people understand how things work and are used to help make sense of information, make decisions and solve problems.

Public Policy: Public policy refers to the set of rules, principles and actions that governments and other institutions use to address and manage societal issues (including health care, education, social welfare and more). Public policy encompasses decisions and strategies that determine how resources are allocated, regulations are established and services are provided to achieve specific goals, such as promoting public welfare, economic growth or environmental sustainability.

Public Systems: Public systems are governmental agencies, policies and programs that collectively work to meet a particular set of family needs.

Social Movement: A social movement is a collective, organized effort by a group of individuals and/or organizations to bring about social, political, economic and/or cultural change that ultimately gains traction at a larger societal scale. Social movements advocate for a specific cause, reform or ideologies and seek to influence public opinion and policy. Social

movements play a crucial role in shaping and challenging structures.

These movements represent a diverse range of causes and issues, highlighting the power of collective action and social change.

Sustainability: Sustainability for First 5 LA means ensuring we can achieve long-lasting impact, stability and flexibility toward our mission.

It also means that the organization is financially solvent, with spending not outpacing revenue generation. It means that the organization is investing in staff development and internal capacity so that there is strong and sustainable leadership over the long term.

Systems Change: Systems change refers to a fundamental shift in the governmental agencies, policies and programs that collectively work to meet a particular set of family needs. It involves making changes to the system’s components, processes and structures to achieve different and more desirable results. Systems change work requires addressing root causes rather than just addressing symptoms. For example, in addressing poverty, a systems change approach might involve not only providing temporary aid but also reevaluating and restructuring economic and social systems to reduce poverty at its source.