The Case for Early Childhood Systems:
Building Public Will

FIRST5
ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA
The Case for Kids

90% of a child’s brain development happens before age 5

High-quality birth-to-five programs for disadvantaged children can deliver a 13% return on investment

Source: Harvard Center for the Developing Child

Rate of Return to Investment in Human Capital

Prenatal 0-3 4-5 School Post-School

Source: James Heckman, Nobel Laureate in Economics
What Happens in the First 5 Years Affects Us All

Attention to supporting the early years can change the trajectory of a whole lifetime.

**WHAT HAPPENS AS A CHILD...**
- Positive parenting fosters social and emotional resilience
- Improved relating to others in school, work, and at home
- Safe and thriving communities; reduced social welfare costs

**...SHAPES THE ADULT...**
- Access to well-coordinated medical care
- Healthy habits, healthier lives
- Healthier population, savings on social and medical costs

**...AND THE REST OF SOCIETY**
- Participation in high-quality preschool
- Increased likelihood of high school graduation
- More skilled workforce
Other Countries Invest in Families, The US Lags

And the US lags behind its global peers in spending on young families

Public Spending on Young Families as a % of GDP
Child Tax Credits, Childcare, Paid Family Leave, and Single Parent Support

OECD (Advanced Industrial Countries) 2013
Inequalities Exist Across California

The magnitude of need in CA is enormous. In every community there are those who are born facing greater challenges.

47% of CA’s children live in or near poverty

Life expectancy varies dramatically from one neighborhood to the next:

- In the Bay Area, life expectancies across ZIP codes vary by as much as 13 years.
  - The life expectancy in West Oakland is 67, similar to Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, and North Korea.
- In West Fresno, life expectancy is >20 years lower than in other parts of the city.
- In Los Angeles, there’s a 12-year gap in life expectancy across neighborhoods.

Source: Public Policy Institute of CA; http://www.vitalsigns.mtc.ca.gov/life-expectancy
First 5s Understanding of CA’s Challenge

First 5 focuses energy and assets upstream, to have greater impact

- Funding not prioritized for 0-5
- Parents struggle to navigate siloed systems
- Poverty and inequalities persist

Parents and children have insufficient access to the community-based support they need

Children suffer in their development (health, learning, wellbeing)

Society suffers socially and economically
**Key First 5 Investment Areas**

**Mission:** First 5 builds the early childhood systems and supports needed to ensure California’s young children are **safe, healthy, and ready to succeed in school and life**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESILIENT FAMILIES</th>
<th>COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT</th>
<th>QUALITY EARLY LEARNING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prevention of abuse and neglect</td>
<td>High-quality prenatal and new family care</td>
<td>Access to quality infant/toddler care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent capacity-building and supports</td>
<td>Universal screening and early intervention</td>
<td>High-quality universal preschool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe, stable, and supportive neighborhoods</td>
<td>Mental health supports for parents and children</td>
<td>Linkages to mental health and other supports</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Research demonstrates the transformative power of these programs.*
One day, California’s success will be measured by the wellbeing of its youngest children.
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