

Relationships at the Center of Change!

When services and systems center the needs of young children and families, we will make progress to ensure:

- Children are healthy, well-cared for, and reach their unique potential
- Families and caregivers are connected, respected, and supported in caring for their children

FAMILIES



SERVICES



COMMUNITY



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This year, we witnessed what's possible when families, services, and community come together with purpose. Every number in this report represents our community. Children, families, educators, caregivers, and advocates that are together in strength, hope, and connection.”

Francine Rodd | Executive Director, First 5 Monterey County



Growing Together: A Family's Journey of Patience & Love

VALENTINA'S STORY

Valentina connected with Door to Hope's Parents as Teacher's program to help her four-year-old son who was having trouble focusing and managing his emotions. "I wanted someone who had experience with children – someone who could really help him with his motor skills, his attention, and all the emotions he was feeling," she said.

From the very first meeting, Valentina noticed something different. "He immediately started focusing better. I'd never seen him connect like that with someone he didn't know," she shared about her home visitor interactions. "Watching him interact with her – seeing how she communicated with him so calmly and kindly – I just loved her right away."

Through their family sessions Valentina began to see her own growth, too. "I learned to slow down, to listen, and to really try to understand what my kids are feeling. I take more time to help them express themselves."

Valentina also has older children and felt that working with a parent educator strengthened her overall parenting skills and confidence. "I thought I had a pretty good idea about parenting," she reflected, "but this program helped me in ways I couldn't figure out before. It brought out better communication between me and my kids – and helped me see my own strengths as a mom."

Now, Valentina feels more connected, patient, and proud, "This program [home visiting] didn't just help my son – it helped me become a better parent."



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It [home visiting] brought out better communication between me and my kids – and helped me see my own strengths as a mom.”



REDUCING SYSTEM INEQUITIES

Each Number Tells the Story of a Community that Cares Deeply for Its Children

9,514 children, parents, caregivers, providers and educators supported during FY 2024–2025



Ensure young children and families furthest from opportunity and most impacted by system's inequities are at the center of the work

2024–2025 REACH

Prioritize Serving Children Under 3:

78% of children served by First 5 services were under 3

Prioritize Areas with Access to Fewer Resources:

93% of families served live in priority zip codes

F5MC Funded Partners Serve Families in their Home Languages:

Nearly 75% of children served speak a language other than English at home, with more than 40% speaking an indigenous language at home

WHY IT MATTERS

Healthy child development begins prenatally, and the earliest years lay the foundation for future learning and development

Focusing services in under-resourced areas ensures that all children have access to the care and opportunities they need to thrive

Every child learns best when their home language and culture are valued

STRENGTHEN CONNECTIONS

Our Partnerships are Bridges—Connecting Families to Hope, and Systems to Change

First 5 Monterey County partners with programs that help caregivers and families access resources and nurture their children's development. Together, these organizations make up the Strong Start Partnership, a coordinated network that supports families from pregnancy through age five. Through trust, relationship-building, and personalized support, Strong Start partners help families identify and achieve their own goals, ensuring they feel valued and supported every step of the way. The partnership is led by the GoKids and Door to Hope collaboratives, which include the Child Advocate Program of the Monterey County Probation Department and Centro Binacional para el Desarrollo Indígena Oaxaqueño (CBDIO). F5MC also partners with North Monterey County Unified School District to implement home visiting through the CalWorks program.



Strengthen connections and enhance family access to integrated and collaborative services

2024–2025 REACH

WHY IT MATTERS

Home Visiting—Strengthen the Parent-child Relationship:

Parents increased the types of interactions with their children that are linked to healthy child development, for instance supporting their child's exploration and curiosity and responding to the child's communication and emotional cues

Nurturing and responsive caregiver-child relationships are the foundation for learning and development

Home Visiting—Developmental Screenings:

87% of children received one or more developmental screenings

Developmental screenings help identify a child's strengths and potential needs early, ensuring families receive timely support and resources

Care Coordination—Access to Services:

338 referrals were made to resources

Parents receiving care coordination shared that they struggled with accessing services before enrolling in F5MC-funded care coordination, but once in care coordination they were able to connect with the services they most needed

BUILDING CAPACITY

97% of Children Served in Care Coordination and Home Visiting were also Enrolled in Medi-Cal



Build capacity with service providers, administrators and families
as they support young children

2024-2025 REACH

WHY IT MATTERS

Mental Health Trainings:

127 participants

A workforce trained in mental health is better equipped to support children's well-being and families with compassion and understanding

Race, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (REDI) Trainings:

61 participants in one or more trainings

Having a workforce trained in REDI ensures children and families are seen and respected; providers recognize their own biases, and more equitable outcomes are achieved

Family, Friend, and Neighbor Cafes:

58 participants

When caregivers are connected they learn from each others' challenges and successes and are better equipped to care for children



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I feel more capable of continuing to help my community and the families I work with. The advice and teachings that the Instructors have given us on how to self-regulate ourselves. This has helped me become stronger in my work.”

Mental Health Training Participant

ELEVATE EARLY CHILDHOOD

Standing with Families, Standing for Hope



I ask my legislators to support us with the challenges we live through each day. Children and their parents need to be protected with programs that provide them with safety, even after deportation.

**Central Coast Early Childhood Advocacy
Network Participant** | Monterey County

Elevate early childhood as a priority and advocate for what families need to thrive

2024-2025 REACH

WHY IT MATTERS

Central Coast Early Childhood Advocacy Network:
756 members

A growing Network strengthens our collective voice and ensures that the needs of children and families are heard at every level of decision-making

Advocacy Trainings and Events:
**177 community members participated in
advocacy workshops**

Policy workshops support advocates with tools to amplify their experiences, meet with elected officials, and influence systems

Legislation:
**8 bills supported were signed by the
governor in the 2025 legislative session**

Passing early childhood legislation brings resources, protections, and opportunities to our community

First 5 Monterey County Financials

\$4,634,211 Programs and Services

\$873,027 Administration

\$425,911 Evaluation

\$5,933,149 Total Invested



First 5 Monterey County, also known as the Monterey County Children and Families Commission, was established in 1999 following the passage of Proposition 10, a 1998 statewide initiative. Proposition 10 adds a 50-cent tax to tobacco products, providing dedicated funding for programs supporting children from the prenatal stage through age 5 and their families. Funds are distributed to each county based on annual birth rates. First 5 Monterey County manages the funds locally as an independent public agency governed by a board of Commissioners.