SUMMARY ACTION MINUTES

SPECIAL MEETING
CHILDREN & FAMILIES COMMISSION OF ORANGE COUNTY

Wednesday, June 6, 2018, 9:00 A.M.

Orange County Transportation Authority Conference Center
550 South Main Street
Orange, California

SANDRA BARRY
Chair

MARIA E. MINON, MD
Chair Pro Tem

RAMIN BASCHSHI, MD
Commissioner

GREGORY HAULK
Commissioner

PEGGY HUANG
Commissioner

SANDRA PIERCE
Commissioner

MIKE RYAN
Commissioner

RICHARD SANCHEZ
Commissioner

MICHELLE STEEL
Commissioner

ATTENDANCE: Commissioners Baschshi, Haulk, Huang, Minon, Pierce, Ryan and Sanchez

EXCUSED: Commissioners Barry and Steel

PRESENT: EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Kimberly Goll

COMMISSION COUNSEL
James Donich

CLERK OF THE COMMISSION
Jamie Ross, Deputy

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PRESENTATIONS: None

CONSENT CALENDAR: (None)

DISCUSSION ITEMS: (Item 1)

1. Conduct annual planning meeting and approve the month of February for future planning meetings
   631245789 APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED
   x x

C.O. WORKSHOP HELD
SUMMARY ACTION MINUTES

**ACTION ITEMS:** (Items 2 - 3)

2. Approve Fiscal Year 2018/2019 Business Plan
   481235679 **APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED**
   x x

3. Elect the Children and Families Commission Chair and Vice-Chair for Fiscal Year 2018/2019
   381245679 **NOMINATED AND ELECTED MARIA E. MINON, MD AS CHAIR**
   x x x

   571234689 **NOMINATED AND ELECTED GREGORY HAULK AS VICE CHAIR**
   x x

**EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT:** (None)

**PUBLIC & COMMISSION COMMENTS:**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None

**COMMISSION COMMENTS:**

Commissioner Haulk – Oral Re.: Thanked staff for all of their hard work in putting together the planning session.

Commissioner Minon – Oral Re.: Presented Commissioner Ryan with a proclamation commemorating his retirement.

**ADJOURNED:** 11:25 A.M.
SUMMARY ACTION MINUTES

*** KEY ***

Left Margin Notes

1  Sandra Barry  A = Abstained
2  Ramin Baschshi, MD  X = Excused
3  Gregory Haulk  N = No
4  Peggy Huang  C.O. = Commission Order
5  Maria E. Minon, MD
6  Sandra Pierce  Reso = Resolution
7  Mike Ryan  Ord = Ordinance
8  Richard Sanchez
9  Michelle Steel

(1st number = Moved by; 2nd number = Seconded by)

/s/  MARIA E. MINON, MD
Chair Pro Tem

/s/  Jamie Ross, Deputy
Clerk of the Commission
May 29, 2018

Dear Members of the Children and Families Commission,

This year we are celebrating the 20-year anniversary of the passage of Proposition 10 that established the statewide system of First 5/Children and Families Commissions. Over the years, we have made great strides in early childhood development, primarily raising the awareness that early health and education investments have profound impacts on the wellbeing of children.

In the early years our focus was on establishing new programs and services, many of which are now embedded in our County’s system of services for young children. For example, every school district with a kindergarten population has staff dedicated to early learning, and school districts are implementing the Early Development Index (EDI) to measure children’s readiness for kindergarten. The Bridges Maternal Health Network has evolved into an integrated system of community providers that identify and respond to risk factors from prenatal through the first years of life. And, a countywide system of over 400 emergency and transitional shelter beds for pregnant women and families was created, as well as direct services to prevent homelessness.

Last year we embarked on a new three-year business plan that focused on the outcomes of these investments. In recognition of the continued decline of tobacco tax revenue, we began to shift our focus to improving early childhood systems while continuing to achieve better outcomes for young children and families. To that end, this June planning meeting continues the momentum that began last year.

Our annual planning meeting will begin with a presentation of the newly drafted Early Childhood Children’s Policy Framework, a document modeled after Colorado’s children’s policy framework; it will be presented by Jodi Hardin who managed Colorado’s process. Next, John Christiansen, our communications consultant, will present the outcome of the recently completed assessment of our communications strategies and recommendations for a new communications plan. The final discussion item is the Community Engagement Plan that was initiated last year and managed by The Olin Group. Anne Olin will present the findings from the process and recommendations for the coming year. Lisa Burke will facilitate the meeting.

In addition to these presentations, Commissioners will take action on two business items: approving the 2018-2019 Business Plan and electing the next Commission Chair and Vice-Chair. It has been my pleasure to serve as your chair these past two years, and I appreciate your leadership and expertise to serve on the Board of the Children and Families Commission of Orange County. As I pass the gavel to the incoming chair, I look forward to another year of innovation and success aimed at improving outcomes for young children and families.

Sincerely,

Sandra Barry
Chair, Children and Families Commission of Orange County
DATE:      May 15, 2018
TO:        Children and Families Commission of Orange County
FROM:      Kimberly Goll, Executive Director
ACTION:    Conduct annual planning meeting and approve the month of February for future planning meetings

SUMMARY:
The Children and Families Commission of Orange County conducts an annual planning meeting each June. In addition to conducting the planning meeting, this item requests approval to move the annual meetings to the month of February beginning in 2019.

DISCUSSION:
The focus of the 2018 planning meeting is to consider opportunities to use the expertise and resources gained over the past 20-years to build momentum for early childhood development. Three presentations and discussions are planned to include the collaborative development of the Early Childhood Policy Framework, recommendations identified from the recent assessment of the community strategies, and implementation of the Community Engagement Plan. Lisa Burke, of Burke Consulting, will facilitate the meeting. The order of presentations are included on the planning meeting agenda (Attachment 1).

Annual Planning Meetings
Proposition 10 Statute requires that all California county Children and Families Commissions approve their strategic plan and budget annually in a public hearing. Orange County complies with the statute and approves the strategic plan and budget each April, but then conducts an annual planning meeting to set the priorities for the upcoming fiscal year in June, two-months later.

Moving the annual planning meetings from June to February would allow Commission members the opportunity to discuss and identify the course of action for the new fiscal year. The strategic plan, business plan and budget would then be presented annually each April, as required, but would reflect the program decisions developed at the planning meeting that would be held in the month of February. The February planning meetings would be structured to focus on refining current programs instead of developing new initiatives in this climate of declining revenue. Commission meetings in June would continue for regular business items. Approving this revision for the 2019 meeting calendar is recommended.

STRATEGIC PLAN & FISCAL SUMMARY:
The recommended actions have been reviewed in relation to the Strategic Plan and are consistent with all goal areas. There is no funding action proposed for this item.
PRIOR COMMISSION ACTIONS:
- April 4, 2018 – Received the annual planning meeting process report.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:
1. Conduct annual planning meeting, receive presentations and provide direction.
2. Approve the month of February for future annual planning meetings beginning February 6, 2019.

ATTACHMENT:
Annual Planning Meeting Agenda

Contact: Kelly Pijl
# 2018 Annual Planning Meeting Agenda

**8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Agenda Item</th>
<th>Presenter(s)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Continental Breakfast &amp; Coffee</td>
<td>James Donich</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:00</td>
<td>Pledge of Allegiance</td>
<td>James Donich</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:05</td>
<td><strong>Item 1</strong> Conduct Annual Planning Meeting</td>
<td>Sandy Barry</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opening Comments</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9:10</td>
<td><strong>Children’s Policy Framework</strong></td>
<td>Jodi Hardin</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Opening Presentation</td>
<td>The Civic Canopy</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:25</td>
<td>Panel Presentation (Facilitated by Jodi Hardin)</td>
<td>Mike Weiss, M.D</td>
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<td>Alfonso Jimenez, Ed.D</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Dottie Andrews</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:40</td>
<td>Facilitated Discussion</td>
<td>Lisa Burke</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:55</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10:05</td>
<td><strong>Communications Assessment</strong></td>
<td>John Christensen</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>Cornerstone Communications</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:25</td>
<td>Facilitated Discussion</td>
<td>Lisa Burke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:35</td>
<td><strong>Community Engagement Plan</strong></td>
<td>Anne Olin</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>The Olin Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:55</td>
<td>Facilitated Discussion</td>
<td>Lisa Burke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:05</td>
<td><strong>Discussion Recap</strong></td>
<td>Lisa Burke</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:15</td>
<td><strong>Item 2</strong> Approve Fiscal Year 2018/2019 Business</td>
<td>Sandy Barry</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:20</td>
<td><strong>Item 3</strong> Election of Chair and Vice-Chair</td>
<td>Sandy Barry</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:25</td>
<td><strong>Public &amp; Commissioner Comments</strong></td>
<td>Sandy Barry</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Adjourn</td>
<td>Sandy Barry</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Pass gavel to incoming Chair</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Next Meeting: August 1, 2018</td>
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Next Meeting: August 1, 2018
Lisa Burke has 30 years of experience working in both public and private sectors in Orange County, including 20 years as sole proprietor of a consulting firm specializing in communications, strategic analysis and performance measurement, and facilitation.

Prior to starting her own consulting firm, Ms. Burke was Vice President for a Los Angeles-based communications and marketing firm; Planning Manager for the Orange County Transportation Authority; and Executive Assistant responsible for land use matters for the Orange County Board of Supervisors/Third District.

Ms. Burke has served as the Project Manager since 2000 for the Orange County Community Indicators report, a collaborative effort to annually measure Orange County’s economic, social, and environmental well-being through a wide range of performance indicators, including trend analysis and regional comparison. Ms. Burke also leads the development of the annual report on the Conditions of Children in Orange County. Ms. Burke was instrumental in several strategic planning efforts for a range of clients from Orange County United Way to the OC STEM Initiative. She facilitates the Orange County Care Coordination Collaborative for Kids, as well as the Early Childhood Policy Framework Task Force.

She received her graduate degree in Civil Engineering/Infrastructure Planning and Management and her undergraduate degree in Economics from Stanford University.

Contact Information
Email: lisa@lisajburke.com
Jodi Hardin provides leadership at The Civic Canopy, a community-based nonprofit focused on creating a culture of collaboration that drives transformative change to ensure stronger neighborhoods, healthier communities and a more just society. She guides the organization-wide strategy, securing the partnerships and resources needed to develop and deliver the Canopy’s core service and support offerings. She applies a strategic lens to all Canopy projects and supports team members to ensure fidelity to the Canopy’s research-based Community Learning Model.

Prior to joining The Civic Canopy, Jodi provided leadership for early childhood systems work in Colorado’s Office of the Lt. Governor. She was responsible for facilitating partnerships across diverse state and local partners to address policies that would increase access, quality and equity across a comprehensive early childhood framework. She led the state’s work to establish the Early Childhood Leadership Commission and secure the $45M Race to the Top, Early Learning Challenge Fund.

Jodi is recognized for expertise in cross-sector partnership building, strategy development and execution, and systems change. She has honed her skills by leading and collaborating with diverse stakeholders at the national, state and community levels. She holds a Master in Public Health from the University of North Carolina with an emphasis on Maternal and Child Health.

Contact Information
Email: jodi@civiccancanopy.org
Dorothy (Dottie) Andrews

Dottie spent much of her career in the health and nonprofit sector. She developed and implemented the first Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) parent services program at CHOC Children’s using first-hand experience as a parent of a critically ill newborn in 1978. She was the Executive Director of Family Support Network, Director of Community Services for March of Dimes Orange County Chapter, the founding Executive Director of MOMS Orange County and Director of Community Outreach at St. Joseph Hospital.

She provided consultant services to re-launch CHOC’s NICU parent services program, launched Healthy Smiles for Kids of Orange County and launched the Community Health Initiative. Dottie was also the Healthy Smiles interim executive director and served as a volunteer on the board of directors. Dottie continues to serve on volunteer boards and mentor women in the nonprofit sector. She is a graduate of UC Berkeley and earned a certificate in Non-Profit Administration from California State University Long Beach. She is the wife of Frank for 53 years, mother to three daughters, and grandmother to six grandchildren.

Alfonso Jimenez, Ed.D.

Dr. Jimenez is the Deputy Superintendent of Educational Services for the Santa Ana Unified School District. He has over 22 years of experience in K-12 education. As Deputy Superintendent, he oversees the Teaching and Learning, School Performance and Culture, and the Special Education divisions. Prior to that, he was the Assistant Superintendent of K-12 Teaching and Learning where he led the development of the district’s Early Learning Framework and the successful expansion of preschools. Dr. Jimenez also oversees the various curriculum and instruction aspects of the school district’s functions, including State and Federal preschool programs, preK-12 curriculum design and implementation, professional development, educational technology, Career Technical Education, principal leadership development, CA Dashboard Schools, and implementation of various aspects of the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) and Local Education Agency (LEA) plans.

Dr. Jimenez has taught for the Long Beach Unified School District and held administrative positions as Assistant Principal, Principal, and Director of Curriculum and Instruction in various districts in Orange and Los Angeles Counties. He served as Director of Elementary Education K-8/Director of Instructional Services K-12 for Lynwood Unified School District and contributed to the district’s equity and detracking efforts to ensure course access for all students which eventually led to the College Board’s naming it AP District of the Year.

Michael Weiss, M.D.

Dr. Weiss practiced general pediatrics in south Orange County for over 20 years with Southern Orange County Pediatric Associates. He served as Medical Director of Quality and Performance Improvement with Monarch HealthCare, before transitioning to the Chief Medical Officer position with Optum after their acquisition of Monarch. He is currently the Vice President of Population Health for CHOC Children’s and oversees the clinical program for CHOC Health Alliance, a pediatric Independent Practice Association formed in partnership with CHOC Children’s.

He is past president of the Orange County Chapter of The American Academy of Pediatrics, served as Chair of the Committee on Fitness and Nutrition, as well as Medical Director of the Healthy For Life/PE4ME program, a fitness and nutrition intervention for overweight children. Dr. Weiss is co-
chair of the California Quality Collaboration a consortium of medical groups, health plans, and industry leaders that design and implement quality improvement programs to improve clinical outcomes in California.

Dr. Weiss graduated from The University of Michigan and completed Medical School at The Western University of Health Sciences in Pomona, CA. He completed his Pediatric Internship and Residency at The Children’s Hospital of Los Angeles. He lives in South Orange County with his wife, Lynn, and has two grown sons and two grandchildren.
Objectives

• Provide an overview of why the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework* was created

• Discuss successes and opportunities experienced based on the *Framework*

• Share tensions that are acknowledged and managed
The Charge in 2008

- Focus on comprehensive needs and strengths of children and families
- Acknowledge a multi-sector approach
- Promote connections and integration
- Strive for quality, access, and equity
- Rely on multiple partnerships and people
- Link state and local levels
Initial Roll-Out

• Open invitation to any, all
• Non-prescriptive
• Organic
Accomplishments

• Unifying vision
• Communication power
• Partnership development
• Alignment
• Mobilization
Learned the Uniqueness of a Shared Vision

FROM

writing a plan

involving experts

a quick plan

TO

building a common commitment

involving everyone who cares

taking the time for broad engagement
Tensions to Manage

• Who owns the *Framework*?

• How is progress monitored?

• What does sustainability look like?
Learnings Along the Way

- Things will evolve -- adapt, learn, keep going
- Leverage, maximize each opportunity
- Allow deeper dives while toggling back to big picture
- Embrace the messiness
- Ensure collaborative work space(s)
What difference has the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework* really made?
A SHARED VISION

This Framework is a shared vision for Colorado’s young children and their families. It guides planning and mobilizes action to ensure all children are valued, healthy and thriving. The Framework is embraced by the Early Childhood Leadership Commission, foundations, state agencies, nonprofits and early childhood stakeholders across Colorado.
Core Principles

- Children and families thrive regardless of income, language and culture
- Supports and services are coordinated and integrated across settings and sectors
- Policies and practices are family-centered

Strategies for Action

- Promote and share knowledge
- Identify and eliminate barriers
- Build community capacity
- Make data-informed decisions
- Encourage public-private approaches
- Advance adequate and sustainable funding
- Implement quality standards
- Embed continuous quality improvement
- Ensure coordinated messaging

Goals

1. Resilient Families
2. Quality Early Learning
3. Comprehensive Health & Development

Results

Child: Young children reach their developmental potential and are ready to succeed in school and in life

Relationships: Adults are knowledgeable, nurturing, responsive and interact effectively with other adults, children and the family unit

Environments: Environments that impact children are safe, supportive, stable and healthy

Orange County: Orange County attains economic and social benefits by prioritizing children and families
### Objectives by Goal Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fundamentals</th>
<th>1 Resilient Families</th>
<th>2 Quality Early Learning</th>
<th>3 Comprehensive Health &amp; Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Access</strong></td>
<td>Parenting programs are sufficiently available, promote the resilience of caregivers, and enhance knowledge of parenting and child development</td>
<td>High quality, developmentally appropriate learning experiences and environments are sufficiently available to meet the needs of all children and families</td>
<td>Comprehensive health coverage and services are sufficiently available and utilized, including screening, early identification, consultation and treatment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Programs, schools and communities offer opportunities for family engagement and leadership</td>
<td>Education, coaching and training are available for caregivers, teachers and other professionals</td>
<td>Mental health needs are identified and treated</td>
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<td>Family friendly policies and practices exist in the workplace</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>Workforce shortages of pediatric specialists are addressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quality</strong></td>
<td>Programs promote and support family self-efficacy and self-sufficiency</td>
<td>Formal and informal care environments and education practices reach the highest standards of quality</td>
<td>Providers and practices consistently meet quality indicators for their respective standards of care</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Families are empowered to choose high quality comprehensive services, supports and education</td>
<td>Curriculum and behavior expectations for programs serving children in TK through 2nd grade are developmentally appropriate</td>
<td>Settings and practices promote positive relationships, optimal child development, and appropriate nutrition and physical activity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Services and programs for families incorporate protective factors</td>
<td>All settings provide effective transitions across and within programs, schools and systems</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Equity</strong></td>
<td>All families have help to access preventive, timely and coordinated services and supports according to their needs, including high-need children and families and special populations</td>
<td>Readiness and academic achievement gaps are eliminated for children birth through eight</td>
<td>Health disparities are eliminated through education, employment, housing, financial and legal policies that support child and family health</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Education, employment, housing, financial, health and legal supports and policies contribute to family economic stability and long-term security</td>
<td>Early childhood professionals are well-trained and well-compensated across programs and settings</td>
<td>All environments are safe, free of toxins, have affordable nutritious foods and other opportunities for physical activity</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>Children with special health, behavioral or developmental needs receive individualized services and supports</td>
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</table>
Working together to ensure all Colorado children are valued, healthy and thriving.

We all play a role in building strong systems for Colorado’s children and families. Developing and sustaining a comprehensive early childhood system with children and families at the center is not an easy task, and no one individual, organization or agency can do it alone. But together, our collective efforts can ensure Colorado children and families thrive.

WHO WE ARE

The Early Childhood Colorado Partnership includes more than 800 network members across the state who are working to ensure Colorado’s children are valued, healthy and thriving. The Partnership creates the space for those members to connect and work together.

We are a statewide effort involving both state and local, public and private partners, across levels of engagement.

We are leaders and partners who seek the advancement of the early childhood system in Colorado.

We are inclusive, open, and welcoming to all who want to connect and participate.

We believe that no single agency can do it all — it takes all of us together to impact young children and families.

WHAT WE DO

The Early Childhood Colorado Partnership is working to advance the vision of the Early Childhood Colorado Framework by offering the space and conditions for diverse partners across the comprehensive early childhood system—encompassing health, mental health, family support and early learning—to come together to identify common results, share best practices, and implement strategies to improve system effectiveness for child and family well-being.

Convening - Provide the environment for diverse, cross-sector, statewide partners to come together, link efforts, share experiences, and identify new opportunities.

Connecting - Connect partners within and to the early childhood system in order to develop relationships and identify synergies between efforts.

Collaborating - Facilitate partnerships, shared goals, aspirations, and resources to do more together.

Capacity Building - Grow and elevate partners and communities to use their strengths for greater early childhood impact.

Communicating - Encourage and support dialogue about relevant and timely early childhood issues and events.
HOW IS BEING A PART OF THE ECCP NETWORK BRINGING VALUE TO YOUR WORK?

Our participation on the Data Action Team has helped us align our work with the Early Childhood Colorado Framework. Because we’re not a direct service organization, discussing and measuring impact is hard, but the Framework provides some sample language and visuals to describe the value of our work.

– Eileen Auer Bennet, Assuring Better Child Development

EPIC (Executives Partnering to Invest in Children) has been grateful to be a part of the ECCP network as it supports our efforts around Family-Friendly Workplace Policies and Practices. Including the business community as a key audience in the Shared Message Bank directly links to and supports what EPIC does as an organization. EPIC’s connection to the statewide early childhood community via the ECCP network has ensured early childhood partners are thinking more deeply about family-friendly workplace policies and practices both internally and externally and how they support children and families to thrive.

– David Shapiro, EPIC

The Essentials for Childhood (Efc) project at the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment sees the ECCP as a critical partner in moving forward the Efc work. We have partnered and co-branded both the policy and data teams between the ECCP and Efc, and Efc strategies have been included in the ECCP mini-grants. The partnership has been invaluable in leveraging our respective projects to inform and improve the early childhood system.

– Efc Leader

HOW CAN YOU CONTRIBUTE TO THE ECCP?

The power of the network is dependent upon cross-sector collaboration, leveraging knowledge and resources, and aligning efforts. Whether you attend full network events, contribute to the Our Voice newsletter, or lend your expertise to an action team, we invite you to be involved.

Learn how at earlychildhoodcoloradopartnership.org or by emailing earlychildhood@civiccanopy.org.
INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

The Colorado Early Childhood Leadership Commission (ECLC) was established in 2010 through SB 10-195 to “promote the coordination of policies and procedures that affect the health and well-being of Colorado children.” The ECLC was reauthorized in 2013 for a period of five years through HB 13-1117 with an added focus on pregnant women; and the number of members was reduced from thirty-five to twenty, with no members from the state legislature. HB 13-1117 also moved the ECLC from the Office of the Lieutenant Governor to the Colorado Department of Human Services. The ECLC serves as Colorado’s state advisory council for early childhood, per the federal Head Start Act.

In its first three years, the ECLC spearheaded several initiatives to improve service delivery and interagency support for children in Colorado ages birth to age 8. Through data gathering, policy development and community engagement, the ECLC has worked to advance all components of the Early Childhood Colorado Framework: early learning; family support and parent education; social, emotional, and mental health; and health.

BASIS FOR CREATION OF COMMISSION CHARTER

In March 2012, the ECLC convened a retreat to discuss their future role, priorities and sustainability because its state mandate and funding end in June 2013. In addition, the ECLC was awaiting the outcome of SB 12-130, which would have created an Office of Early Childhood and included additional roles for the ECLC to support the new office. The bill did not pass, and the ECLC was left with many questions after the retreat about their near-term role and future existence.

That spring, the Governance Committee participated in a facilitated process to draft a set of recommendations to guide the ECLC’s future mission, vision, role, priorities and desired outcomes. The committee took into consideration the ECLC’s current external environment (both opportunities and challenges), as well as their desired legacy for the ECLC. In addition, they reviewed the federal and state mandates, so as to balance their aspirations with realistic parameters.

A draft Governing Charter was the result of that process, and the Governance Committee put forth a set of recommendations for the ECLC’s consideration and endorsement. This new Governing Charter is based upon these recommendations and further incorporates provisions of HB 13-1117.
EARLY CHILDHOOD LEADERSHIP COMMISSION
GOVERNING CHARTER

2013 AND BEYOND

MISSION
To be the trusted and proactive champion for high quality, outcome-focused programs and services for pregnant women and children birth to age eight in Colorado across all sectors.

VISION
Colorado has a comprehensive, seamless and effective service delivery system that supports families to ensure all Colorado’s children are valued, healthy and thriving.

ROLE
The Early Childhood Leadership Commission will serve in the following roles:

➤ Statewide leader
  ➤ Promote a shared vision for early childhood in Colorado
  ➤ Set the strategic direction for early childhood services and governance
  ➤ Be a trusted advisory body to all stakeholders and sectors
  ➤ Embody a fully aligned system of supports

➤ Subject matter expert
  ➤ Represent the full spectrum of early childhood stakeholders and supporters
  ➤ Develop innovative tools, approaches and resources
  ➤ Provide systems-level thinking and oversight
  ➤ Hold constituents accountable and track progress against defined outcome metrics

➤ Communicator and connector
  ➤ Partner with key statewide entities in all sectors – public, nonprofit and private
  ➤ Be a credible, vocal advocate in support of early childhood in Colorado
  ➤ Coordinate the state’s interagency work and connect with community efforts
Build public will, awareness and community support for early childhood

COMPOSITION

The composition of the ECLC is twenty individuals representing the full spectrum of stakeholders and early childhood supporters. In accordance with authorizing legislation, members include:

- Parents and families, receiving early childhood supports or services
- State Department of Human Services
- State Department of Public Health and the Environment
- State Department of Health Care Policy and Financing
- Representatives of local public health community
- State Department of Higher Education
- State Department of Education and local educational agencies
- Representatives of local government groups
- State director of Head Start collaboration
- Providers of early childhood education & development services
- Business community
- Nonprofit and/or foundation community involved in early childhood issues

This list ensures compliance with the federal State Advisory Council requirements.

LOCATION AND LEADERSHIP

The Early Childhood Leadership Commission is housed within the Department of Human Services Office of Early Childhood. Three co-chairs are appointed by the Governor to include one representing business, one representing non-profit entities, and one representing public entities. The ECLC will maintain ties with the Lt. Governor’s office and current administration to further emphasize Colorado’s commitment to this cause. In fulfilling its duties, the ECLC shall collaborate, per authorizing legislation, at a minimum, with members of the early childhood councils and any other boards, commissions, and councils existing within the executive branch agencies that address services and supports for young children.

STATUTORY DUTIES

- Identify opportunities for, and barriers to, the alignment of standards, rules, policies, and procedures across programs and agencies that support young children.
⇒ Recommend to the appropriate committees of reference of the general assembly and to government and non-profit agencies and policy boards changes to enhance the alignment and provision of services and supports to young children.

⇒ Advise and make recommendations to the state department and other relevant early childhood entities concerning implementation of the Early Childhood Colorado Framework.

⇒ To assist public and private agencies in coordinating efforts on behalf of pregnant women and children, including securing funding and additional investments for services and supports for children and their families.

⇒ To consider and recommend waivers from state regulations on behalf of early childhood councils as provided in section 26-6.5-104 (1).

⇒ Monitor the ongoing development, promotion, and implementation of a quality, cohesive professional and career advancement system; high-quality, comprehensive early learning standards; and the sharing and use of common data for planning and accountability among early childhood programs.

⇒ Develop strategies and monitor efforts concerning increasing children’s school readiness.

⇒ Develop strategies and monitor efforts concerning increasing participation in and access to child care and early education programs.

⇒ Develop strategies and monitor efforts concerning promoting family and community engagement in children’s educational development.

PRIORITIES

NEAR-TERM PRIORITIES (2013)

⇒ Assist in the successful establishment of the Office of Early Childhood under the Department of Human Services

⇒ Support the Office of Early Childhood and its staff, including realigning programs, integrating services, supporting a statewide roll-out campaign and championing the transition overall

⇒ Oversee the development of the Strategic Plan in conjunction with the new Office and the Early Childhood Colorado Framework

⇒ Implement an external communications plan, including messaging platform, campaign strategies and media outreach

⇒ Secure additional funding and influence new investments in early childhood efforts

⇒ Develop, implement and track work underway: Early Childhood Cost Model, Comprehensive Data System, Early Learning and Development Guidelines, new QRIS implementation, Early Childhood Professional Competencies, Kindergarten Readiness Assessment, Results Matter, and Infant/Toddler Policy agenda

➤ Increase engagement with statewide partners (public entities, businesses, nonprofits and volunteers) for a holistic approach to serving children birth to age 8 across the Framework

➤ Set a statewide vision for early childhood in Colorado and influence a common policy agenda

➤ Define measurable outcomes for child and provider performance that can be tracked statewide

➤ Monitor progress against performance metrics and hold constituents accountable

➤ Mobilize a statewide movement for early childhood, from grassroots community support to state-level initiatives

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

The ECLC will organize membership, and invite non-member stakeholder involvement, committees including, but not limited to:

➤ Data

➤ Program Quality and Alignment

➤ Finance

SUCCESS MEASURES

By 2018, the Early Childhood Leadership Commission seeks to achieve the following measures of their success:

➤ The Office of Early Childhood is fully operational and stewarding a shared vision for early childhood in Colorado

➤ Parents and families experience comprehensive, integrated and seamless systems of services and supports for early childhood; they value this system and acknowledge its improvements

➤ Colorado has a sophisticated data system that informs public policy, monitors progress and educates the community on the importance of financing the full spectrum of early childhood services

➤ Early childhood supports and services are a valuable priority, from the state-level down to local communities and parents across Colorado

➤ The ECLC is viewed as the trusted voice on early childhood across Colorado

As a result of these measures of success, more children in Colorado are valued, healthy and thriving.
EARLY CHILDHOOD COLORADO FRAMEWORK UPDATE
KEY MESSAGES and TALKING POINTS

BACKGROUND

The Framework was originally developed in 2008 as a resource and guide for comprehensive early childhood systems work in Colorado.

Numerous logic models, strategic plans, and blueprints served as building blocks for the information included in the original Framework.

Since its release in 2008, state and local early childhood stakeholders have used the Framework as a resource to help identify needs, guide planning and decision making, and build partnerships.

THE PURPOSE

This newly updated Framework promotes a shared vision for state agencies, local communities, and partner coalitions – across early learning and development, health and well-being, and family support and education.

The Framework is intended to foster collaboration to ensure all children in Colorado reach their developmental potential. Stakeholders are encouraged to continue to use the updated Framework as a resource to mobilize action and enable highly effective community planning, resource development, and coordinated service delivery.

The Framework is intended to be used by partners across Colorado to guide community conversations and strengthen collaborations to enhance early childhood services and supports. It provides a roadmap for local communities to identify strengths, barriers, and gaps within local systems.

The newly updated Framework promotes a shared vision for local communities to better integrate early childhood services and education into a comprehensive system that ensures all children are valued, healthy, and thriving.

The Framework provides a roadmap for those who work with and on behalf of families across all settings to ensure all young children reach their developmental potential and succeed in school and in life.
THE NEED FOR UPDATING

Colorado received national recognition for the creation of the 2008 Framework and continues to be a leader in the early childhood field. Seven years later, new research, state investments, and initiatives inspired the Early Childhood Leadership Commission to refresh this valuable tool to reflect the current Colorado context and progress.

HOW THE FRAMEWORK WAS UPDATED

The Early Childhood Leadership Commission (ECLC) led the update the Framework and appointed a Framework Steering Committee with cross-sector experience and expertise to guide the content and graphic revisions.

The process to update the Framework engaged hundreds of stakeholders from across the state with cross-domain experience and expertise to ensure the second iteration of the Framework remains a valuable resource and guide for communities and partners in Colorado.

The Framework project was made possible by the generous support received from Buell Foundation, Chambers Family Fund, Marsico Family Foundation, Rose Community Foundation, and Colorado’s Office of Early Childhood. The Framework release was generously supported by The Ben and Lucy Ana Walton Fund at the Walton Family Foundation and The Colorado Health Foundation.

WHAT'S NEW

The Framework connects the essential components of a robust, prenatal through age eight, family-focused early childhood system to tangible results, including state and local economic and social benefits.

The Framework incorporates the latest research in early childhood, including the importance of development from prenatal to age three, transitions within and across programs, and the developmental continuum through age eight.

The Framework now has three domains instead of four to reflect the integration of social-emotional, mental and physical health. Emerging best practices emphasize the relationship between physical health and mental health.

The Framework highlights the value of having knowledgeable and responsive adults in licensed, non-traditional, and informal care settings.

The outcomes section is organized by access, quality, and equity to highlight the importance of a comprehensive and integrated early childhood system. Access recognizes that the availability of services is important. Quality recognizes that it is not enough for services to simply exist, but they must meet a quality standard. And equity recognizes that special populations need special attention.

This refreshed organization prompts partners from family support and education, health and well-being, and learning and development to consider the contributions made by all people working with and on behalf of children and families across the three domains.
The Framework includes a graphic that illustrates the developmental trajectory of children from prenatal through third grade. The focus is on the uniquely powerful relationship between the child and their parent/family. This relationship occurs within a context of other adults such as caregivers, teachers, and other professionals and the environment in which they live, work, and play. The graphic also highlights that these environments are impacted by local and state systems, including programmatic and public policies.

**WHY THIS MATTERS**

The Framework acknowledges that the family plays a critical role in a child’s education and development beginning at birth.

Woven throughout the Framework is the vital role of adults who interact with and on behalf of children and families within local communities.

As a shared vision, the Framework lays a roadmap for how individuals, organizations, and agencies can achieve broader community collaborations that lead to better child outcomes.

The Framework underscores the need for interconnectedness and alignment between learning and development, family support and education, and health and well-being to have a strong and comprehensive early childhood system for children prenatal to age eight.

Not one individual organization or agency can do it all, but together, with a collective vision to guide our work, we will achieve better outcomes for Colorado children.

The Framework is intended to help partners see how their work contributes to a comprehensive early childhood system and the role each of us plays in ensuring all children in Colorado are valued, healthy, and thriving.
EARLY CHILDHOOD COLORADO FRAMEWORK UPDATE

OVERVIEW

We know Colorado prospers when all children are healthy, valued and thriving. Communities rich in comprehensive early childhood services and learning experiences show greater prosperity and social gains. Creating a shared vision and pathways for collaboration is key to building successful early childhood systems and ultimately a successful Colorado. The Framework provides a pathway for those who work with and on behalf of families in all settings to ensure young children reach their developmental potential and are ready to succeed in school and in life.

BACKGROUND

The Early Childhood Colorado Framework (Framework) was originally developed in 2008 as a resource guide for comprehensive early childhood systems work in Colorado. Numerous logic models, strategic plans, and blueprints served as building blocks for the overarching Framework. Since its release, state and local early childhood stakeholders have used the Framework as a resource to help identify needs, guide planning and decision making, and build partnerships.

PURPOSE

The newly updated Framework promotes a shared vision for state agencies, local communities, and partner coalitions – across early learning and development, health and well-being, family support and education. Stakeholders are encouraged to continue to use the updated Framework as a resource to mobilize action and enable highly effective community planning, resource development, and coordinated service delivery. As a roadmap for collaboration and community conversations, this model presents opportunities for local organizations to recommit their support and refine comprehensive services for children prenatal through age eight across Colorado.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Colorado’s innovative and bold leadership in securing investments, increasing efficiencies, and launching new initiatives for early childhood inspired leaders to refresh this valuable tool. Not one individual, organization, or agency can do it all, but together our collective work at the state level, in local communities, and through public and private partnerships will help us achieve better outcomes for children. The Framework is intended to help us each see the value of our work in an early childhood system that ensures the economic and social success of all communities in Colorado.
WHAT’S NEW

- The Framework connects the essential components of a robust, prenatal through age eight, family-focused early childhood system to tangible results, including state and local economic and social benefits.

- The Framework incorporates the latest research in early childhood, including the importance of development from prenatal to age three, transitions within and across programs, and the developmental continuum through age eight.

- The Framework now has three domains instead of four to reflect the integration of social-emotional, mental and physical health. Emerging best practices emphasize the relationship between physical health and mental health.

- The Framework highlights the value of having knowledgeable and responsive adults in licensed, non-traditional, and informal care settings.

- The outcomes section is organized by access, quality, and equity to highlight the importance of a comprehensive and integrated early childhood system. Access recognizes that the availability of services is important. Quality recognizes that it is not enough for services to simply exist, but they must meet a quality standard. And equity recognizes that special populations need special attention.

- This refreshed organization prompts partners from family support and education, health and well-being, and learning and development to consider the contributions made by all people working with and on behalf of children and families across the three domains.

- The Framework includes a graphic that illustrates the developmental trajectory of children from prenatal through third grade. The focus is on the uniquely powerful relationship between the child and their parent/family. This relationship occurs within a context of other adults such as caregivers, teachers, and other professionals and the environment in which they live, work, and play. The graphic also highlights that these environments are impacted by local and state systems, including programmatic and public policies.

For more information:

[www.earlychildhoodframework.org](http://www.earlychildhoodframework.org) – Download the Framework (in English and Spanish), communications tools, success stories and resources.

[www.coloradoofficeofearlychildhood.com](http://www.coloradoofficeofearlychildhood.com) – Expand your knowledge of Colorado’s early childhood initiatives and successes, plus the latest updates from the Early Childhood Leadership Commission (ECLC).
1. **What is the Early Childhood Colorado Framework (Framework)?**

This newly updated Framework promotes a shared vision for state agencies, local communities, and partner coalitions – across early learning and development, health and well-being, and family support and education. It is intended to foster collaboration to ensure all children in Colorado reach their developmental potential. Stakeholders are encouraged to continue to use the updated Framework as a resource to mobilize action and enable highly effective community planning, resource development, and coordinated service delivery.

Updating the Framework presents an opportunity for communities to recommit to a shared vision for early childhood in Colorado. It provides a roadmap for local communities to identify strengths, barriers and gaps within their local system.

2. **How was the Framework developed?**

The Framework was originally developed in 2008 as a resource and guide for comprehensive early childhood systems work in Colorado. Numerous logic models, strategic plans, and blueprints served as building blocks for the information included in the original Framework. Since its release in 2008, state and local early childhood stakeholders have used the Framework as a resource to help identify needs, guide planning, and decision making and build partnerships.

3. **Why did the Framework need to be updated?**

Colorado received national recognition for the creation of the 2008 Framework and continues to be a leader in the early childhood field. Seven years later, new research, state investments, and initiatives inspired the Early Childhood Leadership Commission to refresh this valuable tool to reflect the current Colorado context and progress.

4. **What was the process for updating the Framework?**

The Early Childhood Leadership Commission (ECLC) led the project to update the Framework and appointed a Framework Steering Committee to oversee the process and ensure a high level of openness and transparency. The work of the Framework Steering Committee included:

- Researching the latest state and national models to inform the work.
- Revising the Framework to reflect Colorado’s early childhood expertise and current initiatives.
- Collecting input from hundreds of stakeholders across the state, including local early childhood councils, lawmakers, early childhood coalitions and partnerships, and state agencies.

The Framework project was made possible by the generous support received from Buell Foundation, Chambers Family Fund, Marsico Family Foundation, Rose Community Foundation, and Colorado’s Office of Early Childhood. The Framework release was generously supported by The Ben and Lucy Ana Walton Fund at the Walton Family
Foundation and The Colorado Health Foundation. The update process began in January 2015 and the final Early Childhood Colorado Framework was endorsed by the ECLC in July 2015.

5. **What sectors comprised the Framework Steering Committee?**

The following areas of expertise were represented in the membership of the Framework Steering Committee:

- Early learning
- Family support and parent education
- Social, emotional and mental health
- Health
- Home visitation
- Prenatal to age 3
- K-12 education
- Professional development
- Special education
- Philanthropy
- State agencies
- Coalitions and partnerships
- Research and advocacy

6. **What's new in the Framework?**

Notable updates in the revised Framework include:

- The Framework connects the essential components of a robust, prenatal through age eight, family-focused early childhood system to tangible results, including state and local economic and social benefits.
- The Framework incorporates the latest research in early childhood, including the importance of development from prenatal to age three, transitions within and across programs, and the developmental continuum through age eight.
- The Framework now has three domains instead of four to reflect the integration of social-emotional, mental and physical health. Emerging best practices emphasize the relationship between physical health and mental health.
- The Framework highlights the value of having knowledgeable and responsive adults in licensed, non-traditional, and informal care settings.
- The outcomes section is organized by access, quality, and equity to highlight the importance of a comprehensive and integrated early childhood system.
- This refreshed organization prompts partners from family support and education, health and well-being, and learning and development to consider the contributions made by all people working with and on behalf of children and families across the three domains.

7. **How can the Framework be used in my community?**

The Framework serves many purposes and can be utilized by state and local partners to:

- **Communicate**- to increase the understanding of stakeholders, leaders, and the public around the importance of early childhood systems and services.
- **Plan**- to identify strengths, barriers and gaps in early childhood systems and services. The Framework can be used to facilitate decision making around priorities, and to identify new and/or different funding, program, or policy efforts. Additionally, the Framework can be used as a model to support new partnerships.
- **Evaluate**- to measure change for children, families, and communities.

8. **Where can I get more information about the Framework?**

[www.earlychildhoodframework.org](http://www.earlychildhoodframework.org) – Download the Framework (in English and Spanish), communications tools, success stories and resources.
[www.coloradoofficeofearlychildhood.com](http://www.coloradoofficeofearlychildhood.com) – Expand your knowledge of Colorado’s early childhood initiatives and successes, plus the latest updates from the Early Childhood Leadership Commission (ECLC).
The “Elevator Pitch”

We all want the best outcomes for Colorado children. Finding effective ways to work together in early childhood settings is a challenge facing most local communities. Whether we’re talking with families, early learning centers, healthcare providers, state agencies, or nonprofit organizations – designing and implementing a comprehensive early childhood system takes a tremendous amount of community buy-in, planning and organization.

The Early Childhood Colorado Framework (Framework) promotes a shared vision for local communities to better integrate early childhood services and supports into a system that ensures all children are valued, healthy and thriving.

Developed by a broad coalition of stakeholders from across the state and multiple interest areas, the updated Framework connects essential components of a robust, family-focused early childhood system to tangible results which will lead to state and local economic and social benefits.

As a powerful pathway for community conversations and collaboration, the Framework prioritizes services and supports for children and families, and illustrates the connections between home, neighborhoods and schools. The Framework makes it clear - communities can better align early childhood learning and development, family support and education, and health and well-being to achieve better outcomes for children and all of Colorado.

Not one individual, organization, or agency can do it all, but together our collective work at the state level, in local communities, and through public-private partnerships will help us ensure all young children in Colorado are ready to succeed in school and in life.
<EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNCIL/NAME> supports newly updated *Early Childhood Colorado Framework*

*Creates a shared vision for early childhood in Colorado*
*Connects early childhood success to economic and social benefits*
*Identifies pathways for partner collaboration*

**(CITY/TOWN - DATE)** – On <DATE>, Governor Hickenlooper and the Early Childhood Leadership Commission (ECLC) released the newly updated *Early Childhood Colorado Framework (Framework)*. The Framework promotes a shared vision for local communities to better integrate early childhood services and education into a comprehensive system that ensures all children are valued, healthy and thriving.

“We know Colorado prospers when all children are valued, healthy and thriving,” said Lieutenant Governor Garcia, a co-chair of the ECLC. “The release of this Framework is an opportunity for communities across the state to recommit to a shared vision for young children.”

**<LOCAL ANGLE PARAGRAPH HERE: 1) Intended use of the Framework; 2) Announce meeting/event/celebration for the Framework; 3) Highlight local effort to share/disseminate the Framework>**

**<SAMPLE QUOTE FROM EC COUNCIL LEADER OR OTHER LOCAL EARLY CHILDHOOD LEADER>**

- “Our community continues to embrace the challenge of working with diverse partners to improve outcomes for children and families. The Early Childhood Colorado Framework is a valuable tool to help us build on existing efforts and achieve a strong, successful early childhood system.”
- “Children and families are the heart and soul of this work. Hundreds of passionate early childhood experts and key stakeholders engaged in a process to ensure the Framework reflects the latest research and progress in Colorado. “The investments we make in children prenatal through age eight help to achieve financial and social returns in our community, including savings on special education, increased high-school graduation rates, and decreased crime.
- The Framework provides a pathway for broader collaboration and ultimately better child outcomes. The Framework is embraced by business leaders, school districts, health and mental health providers, early childhood councils, foundations and others.
- We see our work in the Framework and will continue to use it to strengthen partnerships in our community to ensure all children are healthy, valued and thriving.”
The Framework will create better pathways for partner collaboration, inspire meaningful community conversations and serve as a useful resource for coordinated action at both state and local levels. Many Colorado communities used the original 2008 Framework for highly-effective community planning, resource development and service delivery.

The updated Framework incorporates the latest research in early childhood, including the importance of early learning and development prior to age three, the transition from preschool to kindergarten, and the integration of social-emotional well-being and health. Hundreds of stakeholders and content experts participated in the process to update the Framework to ensure it reflects what is happening in Colorado today.

The Early Childhood Leadership Commission led the project which was made possible because of the support received from Buell Foundation, Chambers Family Fund, Marsico Family Foundation, Rose Community Foundation, and Colorado’s Office of Early Childhood. The Framework release was supported by The Ben and Lucy Ana Walton Fund at the Walton Family Foundation and The Colorado Health Foundation.

###

About <Early Childhood Council or Organization Name>

About the Early Childhood Leadership Commission (ECLC)
The Early Childhood Leadership Commission serves as Colorado’s state early childhood advisory council. The ECLC strives to increase the alignment and coordination of programs and services for expectant mothers and young children up to the age of eight. This high-level Governor appointed leadership commission is co-chaired by Lt. Governor Joe Garcia, Anna Jo Haynes and Barbara Grogan.

About the Office of Early Childhood
The Office of Early Childhood was established in 2012 in the Colorado Department of Human Services to align resources for children, families and early care and learning professionals. The Office provides collaborative leadership to best prepare Coloradoans for future success, through access to coordinated early childhood programs and family supports.

About the Early Childhood Colorado Framework
The Early Childhood Colorado Framework was originally developed in 2008 as a resource and guide for a comprehensive early childhood system. Numerous logic models, strategic plans, and blueprints served as building blocks for the information included in the original Framework. The ECLC led the effort to update the Framework with more than 600 key stakeholders, including early childhood experts and providers, policymakers, funders, early childhood coalitions and state agencies and departments.
Sample Newsletter Article

SUGGESTIONS

Effective newsletters celebrate an organization’s accomplishments, inform and engage stakeholders, and promote the organization’s mission. These missives are an essential part of any communications plan. Here’s a few suggestions for sharing the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework* update in feature articles:

- **Local voice:** Conduct an interview with a business leader, educator or other local influential using the list of FAQs as a starting point. Make it quick and simple by printing both questions and responses.

- **Local impact:** Share a success story of how the original version of the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework* was implemented in the community.

- **Local perspective:** Use local data points to highlight challenges or needs in early childhood systems and services. Outline plans for utilizing the Framework in organizational and community collaboration.

- **Use or modify the attached sample article - “BUILDING ON SUCCESS”**.

SAMPLE TITLE: BUILDING ON SUCCESS

The research is clear that the early years are the most effective time to invest and lay a foundation for future learning and achievement. Our community has made great strides supporting young children and their families. <Insert local examples here>. But we have more to do to ensure that all children are healthy, valued and thriving.

Today, thanks to the dedicated hard work of hundreds of early childhood stakeholders across the state, we have an updated roadmap, the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework*, to help continue to build on our successes and achieve an integrated and comprehensive early childhood system – across early learning and development, family support and education, and health and well-being.

Developed by a broad coalition of stakeholders from across the state and multiple interest areas, the updated Framework connects essential components of a robust, family-focused early childhood system to tangible results, including state and local economic and social benefits.
As a powerful pathway for community collaboration and conversations, the Framework prioritizes services and supports for children and families, and illustrates the connections between home, neighborhoods and schools. The Framework makes it clear - communities can better align early childhood learning and development, family support and health to achieve better outcomes for children and all of Colorado.

Not one individual, organization, or agency can do it all, but together our collective work at the state level, in local communities, and through public-private partnerships will help us ensure all young children in Colorado are ready to succeed in school and in life.
John Christensen  
Principal  
Cornerstone Communications

Brings 30 years of experience as a strategic communications executive. John co-founded Cornerstone Communications after nearly 10 years at the Irvine Company, where he managed the company’s media relations activities and crisis management, provided strategic communications counsel to senior management, and participated in the creation of communication strategies and initiatives that advanced the company’s business objectives. Prior to the Irvine Company, John spent a decade with the Portland Trail Blazers of the National Basketball Association. John was selected by his peers to serve on the NBA’s Public Relations Advisory Board, which established and implemented league-wide communications policies, and was invited by USA Basketball to be part of the public relations team for the original Men’s Basketball “Dream Team” in 1992.

Contact Information  
Email: jchristensen@cornerstonecomms.com
Communications Assessment Overview
June 6, 2018

Background
S. Groner and Associates (SGA) was selected to conduct a one-time strategic assessment of the current communications programs, activities, strategies and content. Beginning in January 2018, the firm conducted internal and external interviews to determine the level of familiarity with the Commission and outreach materials. They conducted a scan of similar agencies’ communications strategies and evaluated internal metrics. The final report and recommendations was submitted in April 2018 and is included in the June Planning Meeting materials.

Recommendations
The Communications Assessment & Recommendations report submitted by S. Groner and Associates presented a fair and impartial review of the current communication strategies and options to expand outreach, with consideration to the limited resources and budget available. An ad-hoc subcommittee of Commission members previewed the following key items that are proposed in the report:

- Identify target audiences
- Build a network Commission champions
- Use of “First 5” in name
- Expand social media to include LinkedIn
- Develop evaluation metrics
- Allocate resources and budget for a Communications Plan

Next Steps
John Christiansen, the Commission’s communications consultant will present the recommendations for discussion and consideration. The results of the discussion will be included in a Communications Plan that will be presented for approval in August 2018.
Communications Assessment & Recommendations
Current Communications Approach

• The following examples of the current communications tools were developed to cast a wide net to reach multiple audiences:
  • Annual Report Summary Brochure
  • Social Media - Facebook
  • Press Releases/Newspaper & Magazine Articles
  • Website
  • Policy Briefs

• The current approach does not target messages to specific audiences.
New Communications Goal

Position the Commission as an expert in early childhood development and a trusted resource for related data.

Objectives

• Communication Approach—align with the Commission’s recent “pivot” to showcase the Commission’s leadership in early childhood development, centered on data and evaluation work.

• Develop a communication plan and build the necessary infrastructure to leverage Commission partnerships and relationships.
Key Recommendations

- **Audience Specific Strategy**
- Inspire Network of Champions that drive action
- Use Real Life Stories to inspire action
- Leverage the work and messages of First 5 California
Key Recommendations

Audience Specific Strategy

*Commissioner Discussion:*
Confirm and prioritize target audiences
Target Audiences

Align the target audiences with the current Community Engagement Plan and develop focused communications strategies to reach specific audiences.

- Foundations
- Business Leaders
- Community Based Organizations
- Government/Academic Institutions
Key Recommendations

Inspire a Network of Champions that drive action

Commissioner Discussion:
Cultivate plan of action that leverages key partners to advocate on behalf of the Commission
Key Recommendations

Use Real Life Stories to Inspire Action

**Commissioner Discussion:**
Develop requirements and/or incentives that commit organizations to provide success stories for the Commission to highlight through various channels.
Key Recommendations

**Commissioner Discussion:**
Consider changing or adding to the name of the organization to include First 5 Orange County
Next Steps

1. On-going discussion on a communications plan, incorporating the recommendations from Commission members and the Communications Assessment Report.

2. Direct the Communications Team to develop a communications plan and budget for FY 2018-19 for consideration at the August 2018 meeting.
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Appendix
I. Introduction

In 2018, S. Groner Associates (SGA), a strategic communications firm located in Long Beach, CA, was tasked with reviewing the Children and Families Commission of Orange County’s (hereto referred to as “the Commission” or “CFCOC”) communication efforts and recommending the appropriate methods to pivot their approach as a regional leader and hub of early childhood development. SGA’s report is intended to inform the development of a subsequent communication plan. The information herein is divided in two sections—SGA’s recommendations and the research that helped to inform said recommendations.

II. Recommendations

The recommendations are organized as follows: overarching strategies, tactics, tactic prioritization, evaluation/measurement, and resource allocation. Unless otherwise noted, the rationale for the recommendations can be found in Section III of this report.

In lieu of communication objectives (forthcoming in the Commission’s communications plan), the recommendations in this report center around the benchmarks of success provided by the Commission in SGA’s scope of work:

- Promote the Commission as an expert in early childhood development and a trusted resource for related data;
- Elevate the exposure of the Commission—generate positive media, drive awareness to the website and social media, and increase awareness of the reputation and brand;
- Enhance the Commission’s reputation and the use of the brand to generate awareness of the available resources.

The Commission’s audiences include: academics, early childhood educators, elected officials, business leaders, funded partners, community providers, media, and funders (see Appendix).

Overarching Strategies

Each strategy below provides recommendations for CFCOC to approach their upcoming communication efforts. In this context, the distinction between a strategy and a tactic is that strategies provide the mindset while tactics provide the “how.” Many tactics will need to work in concert with one another to accomplish a strategy.

Use a two-pronged outreach approach—umbrella & audience specific.

The umbrella approach to CFCOC’s communication is intended to reach all of CFCOC’s audiences, and primarily those who do not have a direct association with early childhood development (e.g., elected officials, general public). The audience-specific approach helps complement the umbrella approach with outreach that has a group in mind. For example, an audience-specific strategy might include outreach to academics to encourage them to use the Early Development Index (EDI) data. The umbrella
approach, on the other hand, promotes general awareness and benefits from its potential to touch a large number of people, but its generic messages are also limited in their ability to effectively engage CFCOC’s audiences. The wide range of CFCOC audiences (e.g., elected officials, businesses) are most likely to engage when they receive communication that directly speaks to their barriers and motivators. SGA recommends CFCOC prioritize its audiences to determine where to allocate resources for audience-specific outreach and that no more than two to three audience groups are a focus at any given time.

Create a network of champions and on-call supporters.

The Commission is a well-established presence in Orange County and people who work closely with the organization have a favorable opinion of its efforts. CFCOC should harness this opinion by cultivating CFCOC champions in different audience groups and sectors. These champions can help CFCOC disseminate information to their own networks and serve as success stories/testimonials in CFCOC’s marketing materials. Beyond identifying key champions, CFCOC should strive to build a robust online network of supporters (i.e., 10,000 supporters in the next five years). That is, people who have opted in to either receive an email from CFCOC or to follow the organization on social media. These on-call supporters allow CFCOC to quickly and efficiently spread news and information and this method of distribution carries the added benefit of maintaining a consistent brand presence.

Create “entry points” for audience engagement.

The most effective way to achieve engagement with CFCOC’s audiences is to provide them with a specific way to connect with the Commission, a sort of “entry point” into the organization. This entry point allows the Commission to capture the audiences’ attention, further its mission, and build a network of supporters. An example of a possible “entry point” are trainings for community providers on how to use EDI data to drive action. Note: The UCLA Center for Health Policy Research follows a similar model with trainings for the California Health Interview Survey data (see: https://bit.ly/2uN48Ms). Ultimately, the entry points need to fulfill two criteria: (1) Align with CFCOC’s brand and mission (2) Respond to the desires of the audience. The second criteria requires either audience research or trial & error to determine what information is of value to each of CFCOC’s audience. These so-called entry points are outside of the scope of what might be considered “communications;” however, their absence impedes CFCOC’s ability to achieve meaningful engagement from its audiences.

Use every interface with the community as a “communication” opportunity.

CFCOC has a relatively small full-time staff and as such the organization’s ability to harness every opportunity and person to contribute to its communication efforts is
critical. Communication cannot operate in a silo, but instead, needs to be woven into all aspects of the organization and the roles that each staff member, consultant, Commissioner, and funded partner plays. Some examples of how CFCOC’s internal network can contribute to communication efforts: (1) Are staff collecting email sign-ups when they do a community presentation? (2) Are funded partners helping CFCOC collect stories for marketing materials? (3) Are CFCOC email signatures directing people back to the website? (4) Are Commissioners posting CFCOC updates on their LinkedIn profiles? (5) Are consultants providing insight into CFCOC’s audiences barriers and motivators based on their experiences in the field?

*Dedicate additional effort to communication measurement and research.*

Measurement is the only definitive way to assess if CFCOC’s communication efforts are effective. The absence of measurement is akin to taking a road trip without a destination in mind—you may be driving around for days but will never actually know if you have arrived. The “Evaluation & Measurement” section of this report provides recommendations on how CFCOC can approach the evaluation of its efforts. In addition to measurement, additional communication research is needed to clearly define the actions (beyond awareness) that CFCOC would like each audience to take and to understand the barriers and motivators that prevent each audience from taking action (*see Appendix*).

**Messaging & Positioning**

CFCOC aims to position itself as the voice for zero-to-five issues, an expert in early childhood development, and a trusted resource for related data throughout the County. This section provides suggestions to use as CFCOC develops its core communication messages and solidifies how to position itself within Orange County.

*Create umbrella & audience-specific messages.*

In alignment with the two-pronged approach described in the “overarching strategies“ section, CFCOC needs two types of messages—umbrella and audience specific. Both the umbrella and audience-specific messages need to address the following three questions: (1) Why should I care? (2) Who are you? (3) What do you want me to do about it? The answers to the first and third questions will change depending on whether CFCOC is using it for umbrella or audience-specific outreach; however, the answer to the second question should remain consistent.

- **Umbrella/general awareness message:** CFCOC should focus on the importance of zero-to-five issues and how this critical time has a long-lasting impact on people’s lives. Becoming the voice of zero-to-five issues in the County will naturally position CFCOC as the leading authority in this space.
  - Example: (1) *Why should I care?* Focus on emphasizing why zero-to-five is so critical, especially as it relates to Orange County. (2) *Who are you?* Emphasize the role CFCOC plays as a hub for data and resources related to zero-to-five
development in the County. (3) *What do you want me to do about it?* Provide an opportunity for the audience to engage, such as by collecting an email sign up.

- **Audience-specific messages:** Create messages that speak directly to the barriers, motivators, and desired actions of each audience group *(see Appendix)*. Furthermore, this requires eight separate messages to appeal to each of CFCOC’s audiences.
  - Example: (1) *Why should I care?* Focus on a message that addresses a motivator or barrier (an example for a business would be “your future workforce hinges on the investments we make in children today”). (2) *Who are you?* Emphasize the role CFCOC plays as a hub for data and resources related to zero-to-five development in the County. (3) *What do you want me to do about it?* Recommend an action that is specific to each audience group.

*Add actions to CFCOC’s messages and materials.*
The question “what do you want me to do?” should be woven through CFCOC’s messages and materials. The actions can either be general, or specific to each audience. For example, an action for a community provider may be “Participate in our webinar and learn more about how the Early Development Index can help you evaluate the effectiveness of your program.” On the other hand, a general action may be as simple as “visit our website.” For the Commission to be perceived as the expert in zero-to-five issues, it is imperative to provide insightful and relevant content to its audiences; these call-to-actions supplement this content and give the audience a clear opportunity to engage.

*Use real stories to make the Commission’s work come to life.* SGA recommends that the Commission actively collect stories from the community and success stories from their audiences. Parents and children are the ultimate benefactors of the Commission’s efforts and as such their stories paint a vivid picture of the organization’s impact. Some examples of how the Commission might use real stories *(by audience type)*:

- **All audiences:** Include a story to supplement the data in the annual report materials, EDI presentations, etc.
- **Elected officials:** Share a story from the district of the policy maker to make the issue more concrete and relevant for the legislator.
- **Academics, early childhood educators, business leaders, community providers:** Use a success story from a person in each audience group to set a positive social norm for the others to follow. These stories can be collected from the “CFCOC Champions” *(see “Overarching Strategies” section)*
- **Media:** Connect the reporter with an interviewee that was directly affected by one of CFCOC’s efforts/programs.

Researchers at Carnegie-Mellon studied how effective stories vs. data were in driving people to act. Participants were asked to donate money. A third were presented with the story of a little girl named Rokia (donated $2.38), the other third with the Rokia story + data (donated $1.38) and the final third with only data (donated $1.14).
Adopt the First 5 name with a tagline.
SGA recommends CFCOC adopt the First 5 name and transition from “Children and Families Commission of Orange County” to “First 5 Orange County.” The name recognition already afforded to First 5 as well as its memorability and clear focus on zero-to-five issues make it more suitable to help reach the Commission’s communication goals of attaining greater brand recognition. The most significant “con” to adopting the First 5 name is that people associate the brand as a resource for parents and parents are not one of the Commission’s direct audiences. To reconcile this “con”, SGA recommends including a tagline to the new name. A tagline will help position the Commission as a hub for organizations and individuals who have an impact on the zero-to-five population rather than as a resource for parents. Moreover, the Commission has the option to direct people to First 5 California for parent resources. A list of the full pros and cons relative to this recommendation can be found on page 33 of this report.

TACTICS
The tactic categories appear in the general chronological order that SGA recommends implementation. For example, upgrades to the website should take place before launching a new online media platform.

Website
SGA has concerns regarding the complex navigation bar structure (e.g., three separate navigation bars) and the way the content of the site is organized (e.g., data spread throughout the site); however, the research revealed a mixed response. Different audience members seem to walk away with a dissimilar impression of the site—academics lauded it while a business leader found it unengaging. At 43%, the bounce rate for CFCOC’s homepage is slightly higher than the ideal range (25-40%) but not high enough to raise serious red flags about the site’s usability. In conclusion, SGA recommends leaving the site structure and content as is with the caveat that more investigation is needed to determine how CFCOC’s different audiences are engaging with the site and whether they find it to be user friendly. The research may take the form of a website survey, or simply collecting anecdotal feedback directly from the Commission’s audiences.
• **Increase website traffic.**
  Use search engine optimization, targeted Google ads, links from online media platforms, and offline promotions (e.g., embedded in email signatures, included in reports) to increase traffic to the website. Aim to reach at least 1,000 visitors per month (currently at 772/month) within the next year while ensuring that the site’s bounce rate remains consistent or declines. Search engine optimization may include tactics such as adding new content to the site on a regular basis and creating more dynamic page titles. Google ads are pay-per-click and allow CFCOC to target the campaign based on demographics (not as relevant to the Commission) and interests (potentially useful).

• **Optimize the website for mobile use.**
  Although the website is accessed primarily through desktop, approximately 25% of users access the website via mobile. The website is not mobile responsive and this likely explains the high bounce rate experienced by mobile users (67%). Since mobile use continues to rise across all industries, this is a critical step in retaining users who access the website using their cell phone. Apple devices are the number one mobile visitors according to the CFCOC Google Analytics data so it is paramount to test on these devices.

• **Augment “About Us” into a landing page.**
  The “About Us” page is one of the most visited pages on the site. This is a good opportunity for CFCOC to supplement the page with images and content boxes to help the page serve as a portal into other pages on the site.

• **Use the website as an opportunity to build CFCOC’s online network.**
  The website is a well-suited venue to collect email addresses and connect users to the Commission’s social media channels. Currently, a link to Facebook is absent and a newsletter sign up is buried at the bottom of the homepage and does not introduce new subscribers to the Commission with a welcome email.

**Online Media**

Social media is a great platform for thought leadership and the more channels CFCOC has a presence in the better. However, given the amount of resources needed to properly maintain a social media channel, SGA recommends a particular focus on LinkedIn and email newsletters as the optimum way to reach CFCOC’s audiences. All of CFCOC’s audiences are educated professionals and CFCOC’s communication is more closely aligned with a B-to-B (business to business) model rather than B-to-C (business to consumer) with the understanding that parents and children are the consumers. LinkedIn is the largest social media site for professionals and email remains the predominant communication tool amongst this audience.
• **Create a strong CFCOC presence on LinkedIn.**
  As the premier social media site for professionals, LinkedIn offers a number of opportunities to position CFCOC as a thought leader and resource for zero-to-five issues. A well-crafted LinkedIn company page, LinkedIn advertising, and seamless integration with CFCOC’s other efforts (e.g., link to LinkedIn page in company email signatures) can work together to create brand awareness for the Commission. The platform allows the Commission to establish itself as a thought leader in the zero-to-five space by sharing CFCOC content as well as by curating relevant content from other sources. LinkedIn also offers the opportunity for CFCOC staff to tap into their professional networks to share information from the CFCOC LinkedIn company page and, in general, to connect with like-minded influencers and build inroads with their networks.

• **Deploy email communications.**
  Email remains a reliable way to disseminate information and is not constrained by the advertising that is pervasive on many social media sites. Email is also an ideal means of integrating the people you meet in person into CFCOC’s online network. In addition to email address, CFCOC should collect zip code and occupation. This information provides CFCOC the flexibility to segment future email send outs as needed (e.g., email only to North County or only to academics). Aim to send out an email approximately once a month and they need not be lengthy newsletters. Instead, choose to focus on one or two topics per send out (a success story one month, a key EDI finding the next, the release of an important publication the following, etc). Fortunately, email marketing platforms provide built-in tracking through open and click through rates which allow CFCOC to determine which subject lines and content are most interesting to the audience and then adjust accordingly.

• **Maintain current Facebook activity.**
  Integrate a link to Facebook on the CFCOC website, as a standard in email signatures, and a “connect with us” slide in presentations but beyond this, SGA recommends CFCOC not expend additional effort in growing CFCOC’s Facebook presence. Paying to boost posts or running ad campaigns is recommended to promote specific events or key activities (e.g., release of a report), while the remainder of the posts may rely on organic reach.

• **Keep Twitter as an option, but do not seek to launch immediately.**
  Twitter is a powerful tool to increase brand awareness and connect with other like-minded organizations. Updates are expected to happen frequently and can be an effective way to reach journalists, business leaders, and elected officials. However,
because of the time involved to launch and maintain a new social media platform, SGA recommends introducing a single new social media platform at a time (in this case, LinkedIn, then Twitter).

- **Explore low-maintenance opportunities to spread the word.**
  Aim to post CFCOC content to as many online platforms as possible, not just the ones managed by CFCOC. For example, SlideShare is a website that hosts presentations created and submitted from around the web. CFCOC could post the EDI presentation to SlideShare as an easy way to help drive more traffic to the website.

- **Develop a shareable (ideally viral) video to promote awareness.**
  As an advocate for zero-to-five issues in the County, CFCOC is in a unique position to create content that people are compelled to share because of its emotional resonance. Videos are an ideal medium for sharing content since people often share links to videos on their social media channels. The video need not focus on the merits of CFCOC as an organization, but rather, on the issues the organization cares about (the latter of which is more likely to be shared). For examples of how other organizations have followed this model, search for “girl effect nike foundation” and “a wake-up story healthy child” on YouTube.

**Earned Media**

SGA recommends a two-tiered approach to earned media relations.

- **The steady drip approach**—positions **CFCOC as an expert in zero-to-five issues.**
  In this approach CFCOC would monitor news coverage (and/or use services such as HARO) and flag coverage that may have a tie-in with zero-to-five issues. CFCOC would then release statements that link the relevance of the selected topic to zero-to-five. The benefits of this approach are (a) to position CFCOC as the County’s authority on zero-to-five issues (b) to get on the radar of journalists (c) to increase awareness for CFCOC by linking the organization with issues that people are paying attention to (d) receive ongoing coverage which increases the likelihood of brand recognition. The drawbacks to this approach are that it requires timely responsiveness to reporters and it may “politicize” CFCOC’s stance by linking the organization with the issues of the day.

- **The flood approach**—adds **credibility to CFCOC’s position as the zero-to-five expert by highlighting initiatives the organization is involved with directly.**
  This type of outreach would happen once (maybe twice) a year and will focus on efforts CFCOC is involved with directly—a funded partner initiative, a large conference, findings from a new report, etc. Note, if CFCOC opts to focus on the programmatic efforts of a
funded partner it is important to position itself in a way so that it does not compete for coverage. The benefits to the flood approach are to allow CFCOC to control the message and timing of dissemination, and to highlight the impact CFCOC has on the community. The drawbacks are the potential for “losing” CFCOC in the story and the role the organization plays (beyond that of a funder) especially when the coverage relates to one of the Commission’s funded partners. In addition, the coverage happens infrequently and loses the impact that is gained when a reader views a message multiple times.

Materials (Print & Online)

Professional and visually appealing materials are a noted strength of CFCOC’s communications, and the Commission has an array of materials at its disposal. After CFCOC develops its communication plan and messaging, it should proceed with an assessment of the organization’s materials library. The purpose of the assessment is to determine what role each material plays relative to the new plan, modifications that need to be made, and materials that need to be created. SGA recommends the use of a checklist to examine each material and determine:

- Who is the intended audience? Is the language appropriate for this/these audience(s)?
- What purpose is it intended to fulfill?
- Is the messaging on target?
- What action does it drive?
- Is there a way to incorporate a story?
- What is the distribution mechanism?
- Is there a measure of effectiveness?

This materials assessment, in concert with the communication objectives and tactics (derived from the Commission’s communication plan), will help to determine if any gaps exist in CFCOC’s materials library. The development of any new materials should occur after CFCOC has established its communication goals, objectives, tactics, and messages.

Trainings

Although the number of CFCOC’s staff members is not sizable, the organization does have a fair amount of people who are employed through their network, namely consultants and the organization’s funded partners. It is imperative that all staff, consultants, Commissioners, and funded partners have a clear understanding of CFCOC’s goals and audiences so that they can serve as ambassadors for the organization’s brand. However, interviews with CFCOC staff and consultants revealed there is some confusion regarding who CFCOC is trying to reach.
Trainings—either in person, virtually, as a welcome packet (for funded partners), through distribution of a “cheat sheet,” etc—should be developed for CFCOC’s internal network. The training need not be combined into one and may be more effective if tailored for CFCOC’s different internal audiences. The timing of these trainings should occur after CFCOC develops its communication plan (including communication objectives) and crafts the messaging (both umbrella and audience-specific).

At minimum, each training should address:

1. What is the role CFCOC wants this internal audience (either Commissioner, staff member, consultant, funded partner) to play?
2. CFCOC’s organizational mission/goals and vision for success.
3. CFCOC’s key audiences—who are they and what does CFCOC want them to do.
4. CFCOC’s key messages including the umbrella/general message and the audience-specific messages.

**Tactic Prioritization**

In addition to the chronology of tactics described above, this qualitative rating matrix provides CFCOC with a means to rank individual tactics. Each category is weighted and CFCOC may adjust the percentages or categories (as dictated by the communication objectives) to determine priority. Note, this matrix is a single tool in the decision-making toolbox and need not serve as the only variable when CFCOC considers which tactics to pursue.
Table 1. Prioritization of Tactics with Weighting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tactic Options</th>
<th>Evaluative Criteria (5=Definitely Yes; 1=Definitely No)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inexpensive to maintain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website</td>
<td>Weighting: 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Increase website traffic</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weighted</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Optimize website for mobile use</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weighted</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Augment “About Us” page</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weighted</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Use website to build online network</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weighted</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Media</td>
<td>Weighting: 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Create LinkedIn presence</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weighted</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Deploy email communications</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weighted</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Maintain current Facebook activity</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weighted</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Launch Twitter</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weighted</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Low maintenance opps to spread the word</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weighted</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Viral video</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weighted</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earned Media</td>
<td>Weighting: 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Steady drip approach</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weighted</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Flood approach</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weighted</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trainings</td>
<td>Weighting: 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Conduct internal trainings</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weighted</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Evaluation & Measurement

An evaluation plan is traditionally created in concert with, or immediately following, the development of a communication plan. Evaluation requires a concerted effort (and dedicated budget) to appropriately determine the effectiveness of CFCOC’s communications. The importance of evaluation is not to be understated as it allows CFCOC to determine which communication efforts are worth replicating and which are not generating a return on investment. This section will highlight a possible framework for measurement, suggested metrics to track progress, and suggestions to establish communication objectives.
A Framework for Measurement

SGA created a scale to help CFCOC conceptualize how to evaluate effectiveness with measures that can be built in as part of the organization’s day-to-day communication efforts. This scale is not a validated measure—there may be overlap between the categories (particularly between “engagement” and “participation”) and not all audiences will follow a linear progression. Nevertheless, the crux of the visual is to demonstrate how CFCOC should strive to guide (and measure) the audience towards the “next step” on the continuum.

![Figure 1. Outreach and Evaluation Continuum](image)

If CFCOC’s communication goal is to increase awareness of the Commission as an expert in early childhood development (ages 0 to 5) and as a trusted resource for related data, then the definitive way to measure an increase in awareness is through surveys. Because surveys can be costly and occur infrequently, the “impressions,” “views,” and “engagement” categories serve as proxy measures to assess awareness. There are no proxy measures for “behaviors” as these must be measured through surveys or direct observation and need to be tailored to a specific audience.

Metrics to Track Progress

This is not an exhaustive list of metrics nor does SGA recommend that CFCOC track each one of these, rather, it provides examples of how evaluation can be woven into CFCOC’s communication efforts. Most of the metrics included are quantitative measures already available to CFCOC (or may be readily available with an add-on or plug in). Qualitative measures are also valuable in tracking progress and should be incorporated as appropriate. Metrics such as the ones listed below can be used to: (1) set communication objectives (e.g., double the number of online followers in the next year) or (2) establish guide post measures to assess the effectiveness of individual tactics (e.g., maintain a website bounce rate at 40% or below). A
general rule of thumb is that multiple tactics will need to work in concert with one another to accomplish a single objective.

- **Impressions:**
  - Circulation numbers of earned media placements
  - # of impressions from advertisements
  - # of community events attended
  - Quality of media outlets covering CFCOC
- **Views:**
  - Email open rate on par with industry standard
  - # of handouts distributed
  - # of document downloads on the website
  - # of people who viewed a CFCOC presentation
  - # of website visitors
  - # of video views
  - # of online ad clicks
  - CFCOC staff anecdotes reveal an increased awareness of the Commission in their interactions with the public
  - CFCOC website bounce rate percentage
- **Engagement:**
  - # of email subscribers
  - # of comments/likes on social media
  - # of online followers
  - CFCOC website conversion rate
  - Google search terms used to find CFCOC’s website
- **Participation:**
  - # of people who attend a CFCOC event/webinar/conference
  - Senator endorses CFCOC in a media article
  - # of organizations that re-share/re-tweet/forward CFCOC’s online content
  - Researcher agrees to serve as a champion for EDI
- **Behaviors:**
  - # of researchers that request EDI data (audience: researchers)
  - # of community providers that contact CFCOC to facilitate a partnership (audience: community providers)
  - 100% of media stories covering CFCOC are positive (audience: media)

**Recommendations to Develop & Measure Communication Objectives**

The foundation of an evaluation plan are the goals and objectives, both of which are inextricably linked with evaluation. Below are recommendations for CFCOC to consider as it develops communication objectives:
• **Make the objectives SMART.**
CFCOC’s objectives should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, & Time-bound) and tied to the organization’s communication goal which is to increase awareness.

• **Select a handful of objectives to measure.**
While it may be tempting to select a dozen objectives to monitor, choosing only a handful at any given time is a more sustainable strategy. However, it is appropriate to set interim objectives and to track dozens of guide post measures to assess the effectiveness of individual tactics.

• **Focus on outcomes more than outputs.**
Avoid objectives that solely track outputs (e.g., create four new brochures this year) and instead focus on objectives that track outcomes (e.g., get at least 10 inquiries/month from the brochures).

• **Set baselines.**
All objectives need baseline numbers to appropriately measure change over time.

**Example 1:**

**5-Year Objective**: Increase awareness of the CFCOC brand from XX% to XX% among target audiences by April 2023. (This type of objective can only be measured with a pre- and post-survey, thus, any interim objectives would serve as proxies in an attempt to measure progress.)

- **Year 1 Proxy-Objective**: Increase monthly average website users from 772 to 1,000 by April 2019.
  - **Quarter 1 Objective**: Increase monthly average website users from 772 to 800 by July 2018.
    - **Guide post measures by tactic**: bounce rate %, new visitor %, # of ad clicks, etc
  - **Year 1 Proxy-Objective**: Receive coverage in media outlets that position CFCOC as a zero-to-five authority and amount to 2 million impressions by April 2019 *(assumes a baseline of 0 impressions).*

**Example 2:**

**5-Year Objective**: Increase the number of people in CFCOC’s target audiences who are engaged online from 1,400 to 10,000 by April 2023.

- **Year 1 Objective**: Increase the number of email subscribers from 400 to 1,500 by April 2019.
  - **Quarter 1 Objective**: Increase the number of email subscribers from 400 to 600 by July 2018.
    - **Guide post measures by tactic**: % of opens for emails, # of email opt-outs, # of email sign-ups collected at each presentation, etc
  - **Year 1 Objective**: Increase online engagement from 9 likes/month to 25 likes/month by April 2019.
Five-year objectives are useful to reach agreement on the big picture and to create a “north star” for CFCOC’s communication efforts. However, for long-term objectives to drive action, they need to be parsed out into smaller time periods. SGA recommends evaluating progress towards objectives at a minimum of once per quarter. In addition to a quarterly assessment of objectives, CFCOC should perform an ongoing evaluation of its guide post measures to determine if each tactic is operating effectively.

**RESOURCE ALLOCATION**

The hours projections in Table 2 provide a guide rather than a definitive allocation of resources needed to accomplish the recommendations stated in this report. SGA assumed a moderate to high level of skill for the staff hours included in these projections. A person’s skill level will impact the number of hours needed to perform a task. For example, a novice social media manager will require more time compared to a seasoned practitioner. Moreover, the projections do not consider the adjustments that will inevitably occur after the tactics commence. For example, SGA estimated a Google ad budget of $500/quarter but whether this amount is excessive or insufficient will not be borne out until CFCOC does its first ad run.
### III. Background Research: Internal & External Assessment

SGA conducted a series of assessments of the Commission’s communications. The goal of these assessments was to determine the assets and areas for improvement/gaps of the Commission’s current communication tactics. The research methods included almost twenty interviews with Commission staff, external audiences, and other First 5 affiliates; a communication audit; an environmental scan of similar organizations; and a brand awareness assessment. SGA discovered the following themes that best highlight the Commission’s assets and areas for improvement:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Estimated Hours Required/Year</th>
<th>Estimated Out-of-Pocket Expenses*</th>
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<tbody>
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<td><strong>Website</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Increase website traffic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Create LinkedIn presence</td>
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<td>Deploy email communications</td>
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<td>Maintain current Facebook activity</td>
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<td>Launch Twitter</td>
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<td>Low maintenance opps to spread the word</td>
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<td>Viral video</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flood approach</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Trainings</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct internal trainings</td>
<td>70</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Materials</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checklist review of materials</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluation &amp; Measurement</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing tracking</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audience research</td>
<td>80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Only assumes costs for technical consultants (i.e., web programmer and videographer) and advertising expenses.

**Table 2. Projected Resources Needed for Implementation**
**OVERARCHING ASSETS**

*The Commission produces professional, high-quality materials.*

The aesthetic of their materials was identified as a strength by internal staff and their skilled use of infographics emerged as an area of distinction when CFCOC was compared with other similar organizations. The Commission’s materials utilize a consistent, distinctive design and a positive, informational tone that presents the Commission as a credible and professional source. CFCOC’s brand involves the use of stylized infographics and icons, a muted color scheme, and the Arial font. (*See internal interviews, communication audit, brand awareness, & environmental scan*)

*The Commission’s mastery of data is a key component of their brand.*

Most of the interviews with external audiences specifically mentioned the Commission’s focus on data as a strength in some capacity. Even interviewees who had little knowledge of the Commission cited data as the organization’s niche. This demonstrates that the Commission has done an effective job of incorporating data savviness as a key element of its public persona. The Commission uses data to support their public statements, publications, and Early Development Index (EDI) efforts. The emphasis on data fosters trust among partners and bolsters their standing as a leader in children’s development throughout Orange County. (*See external interviews, communication audit, brand awareness, & environmental scan*)

*The Commission has an opportunity to be seen as a model for other First 5 organizations.*

A decline in the Prop 10 revenue stream has required First 5 affiliates throughout the State to pivot their approach away from direct funding towards systems building. The focus on decision makers as the primary audience (rather than parents) seems to go hand-in-hand with this change. The communication that CFCOC deploys for key decision makers may therefore be used as a model for other First 5 organizations to follow as they increase their focus on reaching these audiences. (*See environmental scan*)

**OVERARCHING GAPS**

*Measurement not embedded in communication efforts.*

The communication audit revealed that many of the Commission’s communication efforts do not have a built-in measurement component. Measurement is critical in assessing the effectiveness of individual tactics and in tracking whether the Commission is meeting long-term communication goals. (*See communication audit*)
**Network of online supporters is insufficient.**

The Commission’s total number of Facebook followers and email subscribers is less than 1,500 people. This number is lacking when one considers the amount of time the Commission has been a part of the Orange County community, the number and size of the Commission’s target audiences, and the fact that the Commission offers an unparalleled perspective on zero-to-five issues in the County. Compared with similar organizations, the Commission has significantly less reach and engagement with its social media presence. *(See communication audit and environmental scan)*

**Lack of segmentation by audience.**

A consistent finding across all of the Commission’s communications was the lack of messaging for specific audiences. With the exception of the policy briefs and the Kid Builders app, the Commission’s materials are not tailored for specific target audiences, which is in contrast to other similar organizations and not optimal to gain audience engagement. Interviews with internal staff and with other First 5 affiliates highlighted the value of an audience-centric approach; however, the most poignant indication that an audience-centric approach is lacking came directly from the interviews with the Commission’s audiences. Many of the interviewees indicated that their busy schedules demand information that speaks directly to them as a business person, superintendent, policy maker, etc. The lack of customization had a significant effect on how well each audience understood what the Commission has to offer and the value they perceived in the materials distributed by the Commission. In short, audience members are averse to take the time and figure out how the Commission can help them, and instead expect the Commission to assume this role. *(See internal interviews, external interviews, communication audit, and environmental scan)*

**Inconsistent perception of Commission (and its offerings) among audiences.**

People who are well connected to the Commission have a positive (but myopic) view of what the organization has to offer while those who are not as connected struggle to understand how the Commission’s offerings are relevant to them. The good news is that the more familiar a person is with the Commission, the more positively the person views the CFCOC brand and is aware of what CFCOC has to offer. Unfortunately, interviews with people who had little to no knowledge of CFCOC revealed that these audiences did not believe the organization’s offerings were relevant to them. The reasons for this varied, including: (1) audience did not see the relevance of zero-to-five issues to their work (2) audience was unsure what the Commission wanted him/her to do (3) audience was aware of the Commission’s robust data sets but did not connect how they were relevant to the work the community stakeholders do. Additionally, the Commission’s audiences may not be aware of the organization’s involvement in multiple sectors. Audiences in the learning sector viewed the Commission as a support for early learning,
while those in the health sector related the Commission’s scope of work only to the health field. *(See internal & external interviews)*

*The CFCOC name is not recognized outside of the organization’s networks.*

Interviews with CFCOC staff indicated that the Commission’s name and purpose is well known only amongst its service partners. Some staff shared that they often use the “First 5” name (e.g., we are the First 5 of Orange County) when in the community to help the audience make an immediate connection between the Commission and zero-to-five issues. While a reference to the “First 5” name may work during one-on-one interactions, this approach is not effective when CFCOC does mass outreach such as through earned media placements where the CFCOC name stands alone. *(See internal interviews, communication audit & environmental scan)*

**Audience Identification**

The target audiences identified in this assessment include: academics, early childhood educators, elected officials, business leaders, funded partners, community providers, media, and funders. These audiences provided the basis by which we compared the effectiveness of the Commission’s communication efforts. A list of desired actions, barriers, and motivators for each audience can be found in the Appendix. It is important to note that many of the barriers and motivators included in the Appendix table are derived from a single data point *(see external interviews)*. As such, they are intended only to provide a glimpse into these audiences rather than a comprehensive list of identified themes.

**Internal Interviews**

SGA conducted interviews with staff and consultants who currently work or have worked with the Commission in the past. The purpose of the interviews was to determine internal perceptions regarding the Commission’s communication efforts and insights into CFCOC’s audiences. Staff have the most direct interaction with the Commission’s target audiences and as such provide insight into how the Commission is perceived in the community. Many staff also offered tactical suggestions which are included in the summary. A total of seven phone interviews were conducted with each interview lasting approximately thirty minutes.

**Assets Identified from the Internal Interviews**

- *Strong utilization of data to support their mission.*
  
  Half of the interviewees cited the Commission’s keen ability to break down technical information so it is understood by a variety of target markets.
● **Collaboration with a variety of partners.**
All interviewees highlighted the Commission’s partnerships in a range of sectors that contribute to a child’s readiness in their health, such as preschools, the utilization of EDI, and the early learning specialists at every school district to bridge different partnerships.

● **Production of professional-quality marketing materials.**
Half of the interviewees mentioned that the Commission is skilled at producing general pieces and leave behinds that look professional and have compelling infographics.

**Areas for Improvement Identified from the Internal Interviews**

● **The audience does not connect the Commission with its various services.**
All interviewees mentioned that the audience do not see the Commission’s involvement in its multiple sectors. Audiences in the learning sector view the Commission as a support for early learning, while those in the health sector relate the Commission’s work only to health. Note: Two interviewees voiced the concern that the Commission needs to be careful to not be seen as an organization with a political agenda and more as individuals trying to help the community, while another interviewee suggested that a stronger political agenda is what is needed to “move the needle” on zero-to-five issues in the County.
  ○ **Suggested tactic 1:** Two interviewees recommended that all efforts need to directly link people back to the Commission and/or its website.
  ○ **Suggested tactic 2:** Two interviewees highlighted that the Commission could capitalize the First 5 name or link more clearly to First 5 as it is well-known and can bring immediate clarity to the Commission’s services and role.
  ○ **Suggested tactic 3:** One interviewee suggested that the Commission could use its strong data to tell a story and better convey the Commission’s role in the zero-to-five field for children. These stories could answer the following questions: What is the Commission doing to help children be ready for kindergarten in a relatable, tangible way? What are the positive impacts that the Commission is making in the community with their partners?

● **Missing targeted communication efforts for its various audiences.**
A majority of interviewees noted that the Commission utilizes the same materials for all audiences instead of using messaging that the receiver can relate to, whether they are
Because of this, there is a tendency to use “impenetrable” language that some audiences may not be able to connect with.

○ **Suggested tactic 1:** Half of the interviewees recommended the Commission determine who its target audiences are, what the messaging will be for each audience, and what the most effective method of communicating with that audience may be.

○ **Suggestion tactic 2:** Provide each audience member with an action and opportunity to engage that is relevant to them. The Commission has a lot of great data but they need to take it a step further and spell out its relevance to each audience. For example, host trainings for community-based organizations to show them ways to use the EDI data for the purposes of pursuing grants or to measure the effectiveness of their programs.

- **No clear channel for the distribution of materials.**

  Three interviewees noted that the Commission does not have one mode of communication for sending out updates or information to its audiences. One interviewee mentioned a broader issue—the Commission does not have a dissemination plan for each material it develops. Proactive communication about what material is available, where it will be shared, and who it is relevant to would bridge that information gap amongst its audiences.

  ○ **Suggested tactic 1:** One interviewee mentioned that the Commission may benefit from having a segmented email list that can be used to send out e-blasts about key updates or materials that are relevant to the specified audience.

- **There is confusion surrounding the Commission’s target audiences.**

  Half of the interviewees mentioned parents as a key audience that the Commission is failing to reach effectively; however, parents are not one of the audiences identified as the focus of the Commission’s communication efforts moving forward (see audience identification).

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**EXTERNAL INTERVIEWS**

SGA conducted interviews with at least one key representative from each of the Commission’s identified audiences with the exception of “funded partners” (see audience identification). The purpose of the interviews was to determine external perceptions regarding the Commission’s communication efforts and to better understand how to improve the Commission’s communication approach. The pre-existing level of knowledge the interviewees had about the Commission varied, however, an effort was made to include people who do not have an intimate familiarity with the organization. All of the interviews were conducted over the phone and followed a semi-structured interview format with a general guide of questions that were
supplemented and amended based on the direction of the conversation. A total of ten interviews were conducted with each interview lasting approximately twenty minutes.

Assets Identified from the External Interviews

- **Audience understands the Commission is focused on data.**
  All but one of the interviewees specifically mentioned the Commission’s focus on data in some capacity. Even interviewees who had little knowledge of the Commission cited data as the organization’s niche. A number of people applauded the role the Commission plays in data for children ages zero-to-five in Orange County—both in the Commission’s ability to track its own data (EDI), but also in an untapped capacity to aggregate data from other sources and synthesize it in a way that is relevant to the Orange County community. This demonstrates that the Commission has done an effective job of incorporating data savviness as a key element of its public persona.

- **Audience see CFCOC as a well-established organization.**
  Even interviewees who cited little knowledge of the Commission were aware that the organization has been a part of the Orange County community for some time. An interviewee from the academic community with a moderate amount of familiarity with the Commission indicated that she has referred colleagues and other local organizations to the Commission to find the right resources for early childhood development in the County.

- **Audience is making the connection between CFCOC and First 5 network.**
  Of the interviewees who were familiar with First 5, all but one cited they knew the connection between CFCOC and First 5.

Areas for Improvement Identified from the External Interviews

- **People want audience-specific messages and actions.**
  One of the interview questions asked the respondents for ways the Commission could better reach them (and the audiences they represent) and most responded by asking “for what purpose?” That is, the participant wanted to know what information the Commission had that was relevant to them as a business leader, school superintendent, policy maker, etc. and then what action the Commission wanted them to take with that information. For example, a prominent business leader noted that business people are often so consumed with the everyday rigors of running a business that to capture their attention the message needs to be relevant to their needs.
• **The perceived value of the Commission’s materials varied greatly by audience.** Interviewees who cited a closer familiarity with the Commission, in general, saw greater value in the materials the Commission offers. In the absence of that familiarity, many of the audience members struggled to understand the relevance the Commission’s materials had for them. Many of the people interviewed mentioned at least one of the Commission’s published reports (even if they were unable to recall the report’s name). Beyond this similarity, the familiarity with and perceived value of the Commission’s materials varied widely by audience type:
  ○ A member from the education and media community with a high level of familiarity with the Commission indicated she *keeps the community indicators report at arm’s length*.
  ○ A prominent member of the business community suggested she did not find the *CFCOC website* to be engaging while members from academia noted that the website was a great resource to find data.
  ○ One of the interviewees mentioned that her role as the President of a local funding agency meant she was not usually the person on her staff to *seek the type of resources* the Commission might publish.
  ○ The interview with an elected official highlighted the importance of materials that are concise and easy to remember—“you have 10 seconds to grab someone’s attention”—which she felt was in *contrast to the current materials produced* by the Commission.
  ○ However, this desire for brevity was not shared by all of the interviewees. A school superintendent revealed that *access to raw data*, rather than reports with visual graphs, are more likely to drive action within a school district.
  ○ A government leader praised the EDI as a valuable resource but lamented that many City leaders *lack the resources and support* they need to use it as a decision-making tool.

• **Perceptions of the Commission’s role in the County are inconsistent.** Similar to the finding noted about the Commission’s materials, the better acquainted an audience member is with the Commission the better they understand what the Commission has to offer.
  ○ An interviewee from the media community (who is also a former funded partner) had extensive knowledge of the Commission and was aware of the Commission’s role in various sectors including health, advocacy, and early education.
On the other hand, an academic with moderate familiarity of the Commission had a firm grasp on the organization’s role as a hub for early childhood development but not with CFCOC’s work in other sectors (e.g., health).

Whereas interviews with representatives from sectors that have not engaged as closely with the Commission, such as healthcare and policy, did not have an understanding of what the Commission had to offer. The healthcare professional suggested that the Commission may have resources available but was unaware of what those resources might be, while the elected official had the perception that the Commission’s function was primarily as a pass-through organization to distribute Prop 10 funds to local non-profits.

**COMMUNICATION AUDIT**

The Commission’s print and digital materials were reviewed to assess their existing communication efforts. These materials included the CFCOC website, Facebook posts and videos, articles in news publications, reports, policy briefs, and an email alert. Each material was assessed individually for its messaging, call to action, frequency and reach, and tone and then reviewed in comparison with one another to determine CFCOC’s communication assets and gaps.

**Assets Identified from the Communication Audit**

- **The Commission has a variety of outlets for communication.**
  The Commission’s communication channels include both digital and print mediums, such as social media, news coverage, reports and policy briefs, and the website. This allows for the Commission to reach a variety of audiences on the platforms that they use to receive information and resources.

- **The Commission is data-rich.**
  In the Commission’s policy briefs, reports, and website, every finding is presented with supporting data (often in an infographic). This showcases the Commission as a reliable and credible source and as a leader in children’s development in ages zero-to-five. In addition, the EDI resources section of the website has the longest average visit time while “datanetwork.org” is the eighth most popular referral domain.

- **The Commission is transparent about their efforts and funding.**
  In their e-alert sent out on October 4, 2017, the Commission provided a timely announcement to its email list about disclosed budget information. The CFCOC website also provides internal information about the organization and its budget. The “Inside
Look” at the Commission video and multiple news articles include testimonials from various audiences, including from registered nurses, parents, educators, and their partners. These updates and testimonials create transparency around the Commission by providing internal and external insight into their efforts.

- **The Commission creates professional-quality marketing materials.**
  The Commission’s materials incorporate a consistent branding style (muted color scheme, one type of font) with a distinctive, professional tone, and frequently use visual infographics to present information. This helps the audience to associate the Commission’s materials with the Commission itself.

- **The Commission publishes information that (most) of their online audiences find valuable.**
  The CFCOC website and Facebook are the only tactics that provide built-in metrics to assess the level of engagement users have with CFCOC’s content. The largest source of traffic to the website is via an organic (non-paid) website search (half of all visitors). These users have a lower bounce rate (46%) and the longest time spent on the site which suggests they are searching and finding what they need on the CFCOC website. (Note: Because search console integration is not enabled as a feature of the website, SGA was unable to determine which type of search terms the audience used to find the CFCOC website). However, a statistic which is not in congruence with this demonstrated interest is the fact that direct traffic (e.g., user typed “occhildrenandfamilies.com” in URL) has the highest bounce rate at 65%. Additional trackers are needed to better explain the high bounce rate for direct traffic. The good news is that the bounce rate on the homepage is 43% and although the website average bounce rate (all of the pages on the site combined) is 53%, this is mitigated by the fact that the average session spent on most pages is more than a minute. In other words, the high bounce rate may simply be an indication that users are finding what they need on that one page and then leaving.

Areas for Improvement Identified from the Communication Audit

- **Lack of customization for specific audiences.**
  With the exception of the policy briefs and the Kid Builders app, the Commission’s materials are not tailored for specific target audiences. For example, the website does
not make it readily apparent where a user can find the information they need. While the website’s role as a hub for data is clear, the information is dispersed throughout the site in such a way that a user may struggle to find the information they seek. For instance, if a policy maker was searching for data on the website, should she visit the “Dashboard Data” page, the “Data & Info” page, or the “What we are Learning” page? The website’s average bounce rate of 53% exemplifies this disconnect (ideal is between 25-40% per industry average).

- **Lack of cross-promotion and connection between all materials.**
  The Commission misses key opportunities to connect and leverage its various communication materials. For example, the website should be a hub that encompasses all of the Commission’s efforts, but it is missing links to things such as the Commission’s Facebook and videos and the Kid Builders app.

- **The Commission’s role is not always well positioned.**
  While some of the Commission’s communication clearly state the organization’s role (e.g., the annual report), other tactics struggle to establish a clear connection between the Commission and the work it supports. For example, the media coverage the Commission received on the Healthy Smiles program spanned an impressive number of media outlets throughout the County and beyond; however, the role the Commission played in the program was not apparent in many of the stories and when it was made clear, the organization was presented as a funder.

- **Call-to-action is missing.**
  Most of the Commission’s communication materials lack a call-to-action to further engage the audience with the Commission’s mission and goals. For example, the Commission’s email signatures do not include a call to review a recently published report, the website does not have a specific conversion goal such as to recruit more Facebook followers, presentations delivered in the community are not used as a way to collect email addresses, the annual report (which is used as a leave behind after presentations) does not specifically list a call to action for the reader, etc. Call-to-actions are a critical way to directly engage the audience, track the effectiveness of individual communication tactics, and increase the Commission’s network of supporters.

- **Number of online followers is insufficient.**
  The Commission’s total number of Facebook followers and newsletter subscribers is less than 1,500 people. This number is not enough when one considers the amount of time the Commission has been a part of the Orange County community, the number and size
of the Commission’s target audiences, and the fact that the Commission offers an unparalleled perspective on zero-to-five issues in the County. A small online network inhibits the Commission’s ability to consistently showcase what the organization has to offer and to connect people with the brand.

- **Online engagement is low.**
  Although the Commission posts regularly on their Facebook page, the engagement on posts through likes and comments is low. The characteristics of their Facebook audience remains unclear as SGA was not able to obtain pertinent Facebook analytics data from the Commission’s Facebook page. Because the page does not have 100+ active monthly users, Facebook does not populate key audience reports such as: education level, job title, top liked pages, other similar liked pages, etc. Higher engagement on the page would populate these reports and lend insight as to who is currently interacting with the CFCOC Facebook page.

  **Important Note:** At the beginning of 2018, Facebook announced a new strategy to emphasize content from friends and family over that of brands and businesses. This change will affect businesses and organizations because it creates the need to purchase advertising in addition to developing engaging content worth sharing for their fans. As such, many organizations may find it difficult to obtain a satisfactory level of engagement without money spent on either promoting posts or attracting more users to the page.

- **Measurements of tactic effectiveness are not utilized.**
  Data tracking tools are not utilized to analyze which communication tactics are most effective in generating interest from the Commission’s audience. For example, the Healthy Smiles news coverage garnered substantial impressions but there was no tracking done to assess if the stories resulted in an increase of website traffic, Facebook followers, interest in funding, etc. Another example is the website, which is capable but not currently optimized to track conversions. Google analytics allows websites to set up custom goals, such as tracking newsletter sign ups, that are known as “conversions.” Conversion tracking would allow CFCOC to determine if visitors are engaging with the site in an optimal way. Measurement is crucial since it is the only way to definitively determine how effectively each of CFCOC’s communication tactics are performing.
BRAND AWARENESS ASSESSMENT

SGA conducted a brand awareness assessment by analyzing the following: Google Trends, Earned Media, Website, e-Alert, Social Media, Internal and External Interviews. The quantitative and qualitative analysis helped determine the level of brand awareness that the Commission holds in Orange County and statewide. Based on the quantitative metrics, the Commission’s brand is mentioned highly in the traditional media space. In this space, however, they are seen primarily as a funder. SGA’s website analysis shows that people are using the EDI resource, which creates an additional identity of a data-driven organization. Qualitatively, the Commission’s brand is seen as a funding organization that also dabbles in data. Both quantitative and qualitative analysis conclude that the Commission’s brand is one of transparency, but seen as a funder of service partners in the community. CFCOC audiences are not fully informed about the gamut of resources the Commission offers in zero-to-five child development. Lastly, SGA provides several pros and cons associated with the Commission’s decision to not adopt the First 5 name.

Google Trends
A Google Trends test was conducted to measure how often the organization was searched on Google in 2017 and during the past five years. The Google trends analysis provided results from searches made in California (no Orange County specific data are available).
At first glance, the Commission’s brand is rarely on people’s radar in both the 2017 and 5-year analysis (Figure 2 and 3). When the Commission is searched, the level of searches are typically grouped together within a specific time period. The brand is then no longer top of mind for several months unless a significant media push was present as it was for the Healthy Smiles program (see Figure 2). The recently earned media push occurred in May and maintained traction throughout June and July. Although the push was effective in getting the Commission's name out there, it did not result in a level of sustained interest or engagement above baseline. As for the 5-year overview, the peaks suggest some level of brand awareness, but no discernible pattern emerged from the peaks and valleys in these data.

Figure 2. Google searches for “Children and Families Commission of Orange County” in 2017
Google trends does not include geographic data, however, the CFCOC website analytics does contain a breakdown of site visitors by city. The data show that most of the site’s visitors are in fact from Orange County with a fair amount of traffic from surrounding jurisdictions (Los Angeles, San Diego, and Long Beach).

<table>
<thead>
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<th>New Users</th>
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<th>Bounce Rate</th>
<th>Pages / Session</th>
<th>Avg. Session Duration</th>
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*Figure 3. Google searches for “Children and Families Commission of Orange County” over a 5-year span (2013-2018)*

*Figure 4. Top 10 CFCOC website visitors by city (Dec 2017-Mar 2018)*
**Media**

The effectiveness of the Commission’s media coverage was analyzed through Google News search. Several recent articles were featured by the Los Angeles Times, OC Register, NBC Southern California, and Orange County Business Journal and a few other outlets. The Commission’s name was mentioned in the early child care education and health spaces: STEM and kindergarten readiness, mental health, and support for neurodevelopmental disorders research. In this news coverage, the Commission was front and center with their brand and name being clearly stated. According to some of the interviews with staff, traditional media is an outlet that the Commission performs well on due to well-established relationships with local and regional media outlets.

**Website**

All interviewees indicate that data are in fact one of the Commission’s key strengths. The referral source data point from Google Analytics indicates that the longest average session duration (i.e., how long a visitor is on the CFCOC website) comes from the website Datanetwork.org. The EDI webpage was also listed as one of the top five visited web pages on the CFCOC website. This confirms the interviewees’ claims that people are aware of the organization’s data offerings and reinforces the Commission’s brand perception of being a resource for data.

Commission’s Top Five Website Pages (Dec 2017-Mar 2018)

1. Homepage
2. /about-us/publications/kid-builder-resources/
3. /about-us/
4. /edi/
5. /about-us/commission-staff/

**E-newsletter**

The Commission has 400 subscribers to their e-newsletter, which has been discontinued. The last e-alert they provided was on an organizational update on October 4, 2017. The opening line of the e-alert was:

*Children and Families Commission unanimously voted to pay off its unfunded pension liability, saving more than $1.2 million immediately in interest and reducing at least $160,000 to the annual budget in benefit costs.*

This type of messaging promotes the Commission’s brand as a trustworthy and transparent organization. Unfortunately, the infrequency of emails sent may impede the Commission’s
ability to position themselves front and center with their audience as evidenced by the fact that none of the external interviewees recalled receiving email correspondence from the Commission.

**Social Media**
From the limited available Facebook data, the only conclusion drawn is that the Commission’s Facebook page is reaching Orange County cities although not at a reach level that is appropriate for its size. The top ten cities reached are: Irvine, Anaheim, Santa Ana, Orange, Mission Viejo, Huntington Beach, Costa Mesa, Tustin, Fullerton, and Newport Beach. Brand awareness is weak on social media due to low reach, low engagement, and lack of branding on CFCOC’s visuals when they post. Most of CFCOC’s Facebook audience are women, which may be typical of the early childhood development field.

**Commission’s Name and Aesthetic**
The Commission’s materials have a distinct design that shows consistency in their branding and presents the tone of the organization as credible and professional. CFCOC’s branding is infographic-heavy with the use of multiple muted colors and one designated font type. The only material identified that was not consistent with the Commission’s style guide was the STEM conference commercial that aired for PBS.

The Commission’s tone is different than other First 5 organizations profiled in the environmental scan, the latter of which strikes a friendlier, kid-friendly feel through their use of the First 5 hand logo. This difference can be seen not only in the aesthetic, but also in the type of content each organization includes in their materials. For example, the CFCOC website presents a clear emphasis on data while other First 5 organizations offer more parent-focused resources.

The Commission remains one of two Prop 10 funded commissions throughout the State that have **not adopted** the First 5 name. Below are the pros and cons SGA identified related to adopting “First 5 Orange County” as the Commission’s name:

**Pros**
- Compared to the CFCOC name, the First 5 name has greater recognition among people in the early childhood development network. Moreover, the statewide “Talk. Read. Sing.” ad buy commissioned by First 5 California has garnered larger name recognition with people in industries outside of education such as business and policy.
• The First 5 name is short, direct, and clearly communicates the organization's focus on zero-to-five issues. The Commission's name does not contain these elements, making it less memorable to the audience.

• The First 5 name has positive brand association throughout California. Interviews with other First 5 organizations and target audiences revealed that people enjoy the “Talk. Read. Sing.” commercials and that a larger network of people (outside of the education space) have a positive association with the brand.

• Adoption of the First 5 name is effective in reaching certain audiences. First 5 Ventura County indicated that use of the “First 5” name has been an effective way to reach local policy makers because of the name’s ability to leverage the recognition First 5 California has garnered with state-level policy work.

• People outside of the CFCOC network do not recognize the organization’s name. CFCOC staff and consultants mentioned the need to use the First 5 name when out in the community to gain understanding of who the organization is and what it represents. In these instances, “First 5 Orange County” is more widely recognized than the “Children and Families Commission of Orange County.”

Cons

• Because the Commission’s name does not include “First 5,” people do not mistake the Commission with First 5 California. An interview with First 5 Los Angeles revealed that the similarity of the names (First 5 Los Angeles vs. First 5 California) causes many people in their audience to mistakenly believe they are the same organization.

• People associate First 5 as being a resource for parents. Since parents are not a key audience for the Commission, having a name distinctive from First 5 may work in CFCOC’s favor. Incorporating First 5 may carry the implicit pressure to promote more parent-focused content in the Commission’s materials.

• There is a level of awareness of the connection between CFCOC and First 5. During interviews with CFCOC’s audiences, a majority of them cited knowing that CFCOC was the First 5 affiliate for Orange County.

Current Internal and External Brand Perceptions

The Commission as a resource for data rather than as an organization whose mission is to reach parents directly was well understood by the external audience. However, the internal interviews with staff and consultants revealed greater variation with some interviewees citing that more efforts are needed to reach parents while others focused on CFCOC as a funder of zero-to-five issues.

These are examples of phrases that staff used to describe the Commission’s role:
“Reaching out to our communities to assess the needs and address those the best we can...”
“Providing funding services for all children in OC zero to five...”
“An advocacy voice for young children...”

A fair number of internal staff perceive the Commission to be a funder and a finder of organizations that assist young children of Orange County. This is not in line with the Commission’s goal to position itself as the leader of all issues pertaining to children’s health and development for children ages zero-to-five that extends beyond direct funding efforts.

A consistent finding during the external interviews was the perception of CFCOC as a long-established presence in Orange County. In addition, all the interviewees indicated they were familiar with the Commission’s data resources. Some interviewees were closely familiar with the resources while others who have not worked with the Commission in the past are still able to connect the “data” concept with the Commission’s work. Although perceived positively for its tools, the Commission is not necessarily the go-to resource for early childhood development issues. This is due in part to the different needs of each audience in zero-to-five issues (e.g., a business person and a researcher do not have the same level of interest in the data) and lack of awareness regarding what the Commission has to offer each audience. Additionally, the school superintendent SGA interviewed stated that she receives close to 100 reports every year. Although she remembers seeing a report from the Commission, that material is competing for her attention among countless others she receives.

**ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN**

SGA conducted an environmental scan to determine how similar organizations in the children’s health and development field perform across their different communications platforms. The analysis covered First 5 San Diego, First 5 Ventura County, Zero to Three, Advancement Project, and Children Now. SGA measured the level of effectiveness for each organization’s target audience, website, social media, and media presence and compared these organization’s communications to that of the Commission. SGA also interviewed communication managers from First 5 Ventura County and First 5 Los Angeles to supplement the observational findings.

**Environmental Scan: Key Takeaways**

The five organizations included in this analysis have issue-focused or audience-focused layouts on their homepages and a satisfactory user-experience. In comparison, the Commission’s website lays out an incohesive list of resources that makes it difficult to navigate. Although the
topics listed on the Commission’s homepage relate to research, data, and outcomes, the flow of information is not clear for the visitor, thus not encouraging them to pursue further.

As for communicating directly with their target audiences, all but one of the organizations listed above have e-newsletters that are sent to audiences such as parents, service partners, funders, and policy makers. In SGA’s interviews, the First 5 affiliates of Ventura County and Los Angeles indicated that the e-newsletter channel was an effective communication tool for business partners and decision makers.

In the social media space, the Commission performs poorly on reach, number of followers, and engagement considering the number of communities it serves in Orange County. All examined organizations have more followers across all social media platforms; the lowest being First 5 Ventura County (~2000) and the highest being Zero To Three (~86,000). As of March 2018, the Commission currently has 1,043 followers on Facebook. Although these organizations have been affected by the latest Facebook algorithm change (see “Important Note”), their Facebook posts still receive high engagement. The First 5 affiliates that SGA interviewed indicated that Facebook has become a “pay to play” space so their organic reach has gone down, but that they are supplementing with other platforms to get their message across a wide audience. The more policy-focused organizations have a stronger following on Twitter than the First 5 organizations. This suggests that Twitter is a better platform than Facebook to get the message across to their desired audiences.

Relative to the other First 5 organizations included in this scan, the Commission is ahead of the curve in regard to their objective to focus on audiences that create long-term sustainability for their programs. The declining Prop 10 revenue stream has required First 5 affiliates throughout the State to pivot their approaches away from direct funding and towards systems building. The focus on decision makers as the audience, rather than parents, seems to go hand-in-hand with this pivot.

The Commission’s biggest strength is in communicating their data resources. Schools, nonprofit organizations, and even parents can benefit from this simple but effective tool to track children’s development. The data resources sets the Commission apart from other First 5 affiliates and places them on the same playing field as policy and research driven organizations like Zero To Three and the Advancement Project - California.

Another distinction of the Commission’s materials: policy briefs and engaging infographics. Four out the five organizations do not make use of visual content besides the Children Now organization. In one external interview, Children Now was brought up as a credible go-to
resource for statewide research and data. The visually appealing infographics that the Commission has available for download put them up on par with a policy-driven thought leader such as Children Now.

Environmental Scan: Findings by Organization and Tactic

Although the size of the organizations, annual operating budget, and internal capacity differ as seen in Table 3, the audience among all five organizations are similar: nonprofits, community stakeholders, decision-makers, business partners, and parents. Two out of the five organizations have prioritized their communications (website and social media) for parents. Both First 5 San Diego and Ventura County have designated pages located on their website for tips, tools, and tactics for current and new parents. This is consistent with their “talk, read, and sing together” messaging found prominently across all First 5 affiliates. If a parent was looking for tips on their child’s development, they can easily navigate to find resources specifically for them. While the First 5 affiliates also aim to equip community stakeholders with key resources for their organizations, they present themselves as primarily a resource for parents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>First 5 San Diego</th>
<th>First 5 Ventura County</th>
<th>Zero To Three</th>
<th>Advancement Project</th>
<th>Children Now</th>
<th>CFCOC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of Employees</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years Active</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Operating</td>
<td>$43 million</td>
<td>$5 million</td>
<td>$36 million</td>
<td>$3 million</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>$33.7 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget 2016-2017</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 3. Environmental Scan—Background Information*

While the Commission has interactions with parents in Orange County, their focus is to communicate directly with research institutions, potential business partners, and key decision-makers in the community to be considered the regional leader and hub of all zero-to-five children’s issues. This goal aligns more with how three other organizations in our analysis are performing. Groups like Zero To Three, Advancement Project, and Children Now are all poised to deliver research driven and policy focused information to children’s health and education.
professionals, policymakers, nonprofit organizations, and community activists. These three organizations market themselves as the hub of information by conducting their own research, providing evidence-based solutions, and fostering a space to discuss public policy.

**Communication Approaches**

Interviews with First 5 Ventura County and First 5 Los Angeles revealed key communication approaches each agency found to be successful in reaching audiences similar to those of CFCOC.

- First 5 Ventura County discussed their “Take 5 and Read” program which connects local celebrities (e.g., Fire Chief) with classrooms to go in and read a book. The focus of the program is to increase awareness of literacy and includes a number of partners such as the local newspaper, libraries, government agencies, etc. Although not a communication tactic in and of itself, the communication manager shared that it presents an ideal opportunity to unify all of the disparate audiences in the County for a specific cause. For example, a presentation at a local chamber of commerce encouraged businesses to donate books and volunteer to read to a classroom. This offered the business person a concrete and “feel good” way to get involved with First 5 efforts.

- First 5 Los Angeles discussed their approach of using real stories from parents and their children to bridge the gap between policy makers and the people they serve. The organization focuses on collecting stories at every opportunity and then includes the story in their marketing materials, but more importantly, aims to present the actual person with the policy maker to help put a face to the issue at hand. First 5 Los Angeles emphasized some best practices with this approach:
  1. Make it Hyperlocal. That is, look for a person that resides within the district of the policy maker you want to reach.
  2. Frame the Issue. Rather than appealing to policy makers with a call for greater investment, Los Angeles is careful to focus instead on the need to prioritize funding decisions. In this way appeals are not misconstrued with requests for more money.
  3. Enlist Funded Partners to Collect Stories. A possible next step for Los Angeles is to include the collection of stories as part of the contracts with their funded partners.

- Both First 5 Ventura and Los Angeles discussed the benefit of segmenting their audiences. Los Angeles has the greatest allocation of Prop 10 funds throughout the State and this availability of resources allows the organization to segment almost all of their communications by audience including the website, social media, and newsletters. On the other hand, Ventura County while much smaller also segments communications
and materials (to the extent possible) by audience. The communication manager at Ventura County indicated that she is more inclined to segment by target audience in printed materials and during in-person events and less so on the organization’s social media platforms. For example, while giving an overview presentation about First 5 she is always prepared with an ask or an opportunity for involvement that is appropriate for the audience she is speaking with.

Figure 5. Business-Focused Brochure from First 5 Ventura County

Website

SGA analyzed each organization’s website for content depth, usability (the ability to easily navigate its website to find resources), the presence of case studies, videos, e-newsletter sign up, and information on their blog.

Across the First 5 affiliates websites, their content mostly focuses on practical knowledge for parents on their children’s developmental milestones, oral health tips, nutrition tips, and several links to other resources such as free children’s story times, community events, and home visit programs in their respective communities.

The information on the First 5 San Diego website is organized by different resources such as calendar of events, organizational news, and a “featured program” section. Their slide reel features their most recent annual report indicating they regularly update their website with the latest news and resources. With a chalkboard color background, their website gives off an elementary school and learning environment look and feel. Although not organized by issue areas or topic, the First 5 San Diego is an easy to navigate website for each member of their intended audience.
The First 5 Ventura County website focuses their layout on topic areas versus resources available.

The websites for Zero to Three, Advancement Project, and Children Now are more closely aligned with the audiences CFCOC would like to reach. The websites for all three organizations
have content presented in a clear way by issue area: policy and advocacy, child developmental milestones, and campaign tools for professionals.

Case Studies & Policy Briefs
Organizations Zero To Three, Advancement Project, and Children Now have a myriad of case studies and policy briefs available on their website. On each of their respective home pages, the visitor is met with a series of resources or specific issue areas. Since these organizations are more policy-driven organizations, they each have sections on their websites dedicated to learning more about the organization’s stance on early childhood education and development policy.

The Zero To Three website has a clear section listing their policy agenda for the following topics: Good Health, Strong Families, Positive Early Learning Experiences, and Early Childhood Systems. To support each policy agenda item, Zero To Three has created several articles, reports, tools, and press releases detailing their research and stance on how child development should be a top priority for the United States. Zero To Three was established in 1977 and has the organizational capacity to conduct, publish, and develop their own research into policy briefs as well as advocate in person in Washington, D.C.

An organization similar to size of Zero To Three is the Advancement Project. A national organization, their California office is based in Los Angeles as well as Sacramento. Although they cover other issues areas such as health equity, equity in public funds, and helping others find their political voice, the Advancement Project strongly advocates for early care & education issues through their educational equity department. They do this by putting on the Birth to Five Water Cooler Conference, their annual 2-day conference for early care and education stakeholders. The organization has created a hub for key players in the field to convene and discuss the state of early care and education as well as facilitate discussions on how they can contribute to policy change in California. This well-known conference has existed for 10 years and in the early childhood education and development field is one of many strengths of the Advancement Projects.

Lastly, Children Now is another multi-issue advocacy group on the quest for improving all children’s lives now. Through national, state, and local research, Children Now equips youth-focused organizations with the data, tools, and campaign tools to advocate on behalf of young children in California. The organization gathers data and research and creates report cards, fact sheets, infographics, and reports for others to use at their respective organizations. A unique take on their organizational mission is their “Children’s Movement” to encourage organizations and individuals to join the fight for children’s health and education.
E-newsletter & Blog
Zero To Three has the most comprehensive e-newsletter and blog platforms found in SGA’s analysis. They have a wide variety of blog articles, reports, and videos featuring information such as home visit benefits, trauma-informed care, the case for paid leave for parents, and other relevant information for parents, community stakeholders, and policy makers. For example, they highlight how other states in the nation are undertaking multiple strategies to improve early childhood development standards and funding. They have strategically segmented their audiences by topic preference: Baby Steps (for parents and caregivers), Policy Updates, and Zero To Three Journal Updates for Professionals. Visitors are provided blog articles and newsletter updates on a frequent basis.

Interviews with two First 5 affiliates revealed that email newsletters either are or have been an effective tool in reaching certain target audiences. First 5 Ventura County shared that an e-newsletter geared towards parents was discontinued because of low participation; however, an e-newsletter previously geared towards the business community was found to be successful and will likely be reinstated. First 5 Los Angeles offers a few different newsletters segmented by topic and/or audience. These include a parent newsletter, career openings, media clips, and a newsletter with in-depth articles geared towards decision makers. The First 5 Communication
Director in Los Angeles emphasized the organization’s reliance on building their newsletter subscribers above social media because “you don’t want to build on rented land.” This analogy makes reference to the pay-to-play model that many social media sites, including Facebook and Twitter, require organizations to partake in to successfully engage with followers (see “Important Note”).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outlet</th>
<th>First 5 San Diego</th>
<th>First 5 Ventura County</th>
<th>Zero To Three</th>
<th>Advancement Project</th>
<th>Children Now</th>
<th>CFCOC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Engagement</strong></td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Followers</strong></td>
<td>10,494</td>
<td>1,978</td>
<td>86,847</td>
<td>5,905</td>
<td>11,930</td>
<td>1,043</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 4. Environmental Scan - Social Media and Engagement*

**Facebook**
SGA’s social media analysis was happening concurrently with the latest algorithm change (see “Important Note”). As such, the five organizations’ social media following and engagement may have been higher before SGA analyzed them. Listed in Table 4, Zero To Three has the highest following on Facebook which is to be expected given that they have national reach with the largest number of staff of the organizations profiled. They also post regularly: every day or every other day. Their audience is highly engaged with a proportional amount of interactions (likes, comments, shares). They cast a similar net of audiences (parents, professionals, and policymakers) to the ones they seek to reach through their website.

The First 5 affiliates have a lower following and their content primarily focuses on county specific updates, service partners updates, and several tips for parents such as the best night time routines, tooth-brushing best practices, etc.
Twitter
Twitter is a platform used for quick and digestible bits of information for the busy professional. As seen in Table 4 the policy-focused organizations (Zero To Three, Advancement Project, and Children Now) have a larger following than the First 5 organizations. An audience of influential community stakeholders, businesses, fellow service partners, elected officials, and decision makers gravitate towards this platform to be in the know in real-time.

Other Platforms
SGA also looked at other platforms that these organizations use and found that LinkedIn is utilized by all except for First 5 San Diego. LinkedIn Groups bring together like-minded professionals to share content, make new business contacts, and establish an additional network of experts in a particular field or topic. Groups like First 5 Ventura County and Children Now are utilizing LinkedIn to post employment opportunities, while the Advancement Project is not active on the platform. The organization with the most engagement is Zero To Three. In addition to job postings, Zero To Three provides policy and advocacy thought pieces and encourages engagement on their posts.
### Appendix: CFCOC’s Target Audiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audience Category</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Desired Behaviors</th>
<th>Barriers*</th>
<th>Motivators*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>Local and national research institutions (e.g., Chapman, UCI)</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>- Preference for using national data sets that have external validity</td>
<td>- Information that is easy to find through a Google search or on the website.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Professors have long standing, pre-established research interests and EDI may not be a fit</td>
<td>- Data that are available at the individual level (e.g., a specific child or classroom) rather than solely at the neighborhood level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Need access to raw EDI data—difficult to obtain permission for this through UCLA.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Childhood</td>
<td>Teachers &amp; school administrators of facilities and schools that cater to 0-5</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>- The relevance of 0 to 5 issues to their work (e.g., how do 0 to 5 issues relate to a school superintendent who oversees K-12?)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educators</td>
<td>State and local level (e.g., state delegation, board of trustees at schools, city council)</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>- Inundated with information from all different sectors (e.g., housing, transportation) and while there are plenty of organizations highlighting the problems, there is not enough support for the actions needed to make improvements.</td>
<td>- Seeing actual impact and outcomes in the districts served by the elected official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Information that is dense, lengthy, and not engaging (e.g., lack of stories or pictures).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Not having a firm understanding that CFCOC’s role in Orange County extends beyond that of a funder</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elected Officials</td>
<td></td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>- Need to make the issues relevant to businesses otherwise they will not pay attention—what's in it for them?</td>
<td>- Connect the issues to what businesses care about</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Long-term: determine how CFCOC ties in with issues that are of great concern to the business community such as a reliable workforce.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Leaders</td>
<td></td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Most of the barriers and motivators included in the table are derived from a single interview with a representative of each audience category. As such, the barriers and motivators are intended to serve as a *starting point* rather than a comprehensive list.
## Appendix: CFCOC’s Target Audiences

<table>
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<th>Examples</th>
<th>Desired Behaviors</th>
<th>Barriers*</th>
<th>Motivators*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Funded Partners</td>
<td>Organizations directly funded by the Commission (e.g., Bridges to maternal health)</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>– Unclear what the Commission has to offer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– May not see immediate relevance of 0 to 5 issues to their work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– Are aware of the resources (e.g., EDI) but unsure of how to use them in practice.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Providers</td>
<td>Organizations not directly funded by the Commission (e.g., hospitals, NPOs, government agencies)</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>– The shared purpose to improve people’s lives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td>Orange County based media outlets</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>– The Commission fills a niche in Orange County of providing reliable data and metrics related to the development of kids ages 0 to 5.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local and National Funders</td>
<td>Department of education, local funders roundtable</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>– The Commission fills a niche in Orange County of providing reliable data and metrics related to the development of kids ages 0 to 5.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Most of the barriers and motivators included in the table are derived from a single interview with a representative of each audience category. As such, the barriers and motivators are intended to serve as a *starting point* rather than a comprehensive list.
UP CLOSE

Briana’s Story

Residence: Santa Ana, CA

Program: Healthy Smiles for Kids of Orange County

Care duration: 13 years

Briana Felix flashes her beautiful smile — and any doubts about the critical importance of the Children and Families Commission’s focus on early-childhood oral health vanish. The care she received through Healthy Smiles for Kids of Orange County has instilled confidence, poise and strong oral hygiene habits in the 16-year-old.

Briana began receiving regular care from Healthy Smiles — funded by the Children and Families Commission of Orange County — when she was just 3 for a badly twisted tooth, other issues caused by crowded teeth, and painful cavities.

Sadly, Briana has plenty of company: Tooth decay is the most common chronic childhood disease, five times more common than asthma and seven times more common than hay fever not just in California, but across the nation. That’s why the Children and Families Commission has made access to quality oral health care among underserved children a top priority. In Orange County, Healthy Smiles provides services to more than 3,800 children each year and supports the recruitment and education of future pediatric dentists through its pediatric residency program, in partnership with USC Dental School.

“We’re so grateful for the excellent care our family has received from Healthy Smiles,” Briana’s mother, Elizabeth, says. “Besides giving Briana a beautiful smile, they’ve helped us understand the importance of prevention and taking good care of our teeth on a daily basis.”

“We’re so grateful for the excellent care our family has received from Healthy Smiles” — Briana’s, Mother
UP CLOSE

Jair’s Story

Residence: Orange, CA

Programs: Orange County’s Help Me Grow and The Center for Autism & Neurodevelopmental Disorders

After three failed pregnancies and a long eight-month bed rest during a fourth, Gabriela Velasco wasn’t about to give up on her son, Jair. He was born safely at 36 weeks — but the real challenges for Gabriela and her husband, Pedro, began when Jair was just a few months old.

When Gabriela noticed Jair missing some typical developmental milestones, she reached out for help. Help Me Grow, a free phone and online community resource that connects children and their families to developmental services, quickly referred the Velascos to UC Irvine’s Center for Autism & Neurodevelopmental Disorders.

Jair, now 11, is an inspiring example of what can be accomplished when children and families receive early intervention services. Today Jair is high-functioning, happy, loving and smart, and nurtures dreams of becoming a scientist or a high-end game developer. “It’s inspiring to see my son have so many dreams for the future,” Gabriela says.

The Children and Families Commission was instrumental in bringing Help Me Grow to Orange County. The program assists in identifying children at risk for developmental and behavioral concerns, helps families find community-based programs and services, and builds collaboration across sectors, including health care, early care and education, and family support. Help Me Grow Orange County was established in 2005 through a funding partnership with the Commission, CHOC Children’s and the University of California Irvine Medical Center to connect families to developmental services.

Orange County was the first site in the nation to replicate the Help Me Grow model that was originally established in Hartford, Connecticut in 1998. The Children and Families Commission of Orange County (the First 5 Commission in Orange County) has continued to support Help Me Grow with tobacco tax revenue made available through the Proposition 10 legislation that was passed by California voters in 1998. Over the past 20-years this funding has been allocated for programs that help families have healthy pregnancies and babies who are ready to learn.

“Pedro and I are so grateful to the Children and Families Commission’s support to organizations that have worked so hard with Jair to set him up for success and give him hope for the future.”
UP CLOSE

Cristina’s Story

Residence: Orange, CA

Program: MOMS Orange County High-Impact Home Visits and Group Classes

Home visiting and classes duration: Before and after the birth of both her daughter and son

Cristina Flores minces no words: “I was pregnant and completely overwhelmed. I was on Medi-Cal and needed help with everything,” she says. That was in 2009 when she was pregnant with her first baby. Today, Cristina and her husband, Ricardo, are the loving parents of two healthy, happy children — Allison, 8, and Richard, 6.

Cristina credits MOMS Orange County’s expert home-visiting services with helping her and Ricardo access quality prenatal and postpartum care, as well as infant caregiving skills for the baby’s first year. The Children and Families Commission of Orange County, (the First 5 Commission in Orange County) supports organizations with tobacco tax revenue made available through the Proposition 10 legislation that was passed by California voters in 1998. Over the past 20-years this funding has been allocated for programs that help families have healthy pregnancies and babies who are ready to learn.

Since MOMS Orange County was established in 1992, the organization has provided these critical services to more than 45,000 families. The organization has expanded significantly with the Commission’s funding. In 2017 3,348 women received support to ensure healthy pregnancies, followed by support for early childhood health. Meanwhile, more than 3,000 families received monthly home visits to improve their knowledge of healthy child development.

In a published study of more than 1,000 participants, mothers who participated in MOMS Orange County’s prenatal home visitation program had healthier birth outcomes than the county averages, with improvements in birth weight, gestational age and reduction in odds of spending at least one day in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. Babies with low weight or gestational age at birth are more likely to experience health complications and developmental delays.

“Thanks to MOMS Orange County, I have confidence and the skills I need to raise my children,” says Cristina, who volunteers at a non-profit consignment store for kids and serves at her children’s’ school. “I’m proud to share my experiences and help parents participate more fully in their children’s lives.”
Readying kids for kindergarten — and life

By SANDRA BARRY | Orange County Register
PUBLISHED: March 10, 2017| UPDATED: April 9, 2017

Orange County is not ready for kindergarten. We are not just talking about our 4- and 5-year-old residents. We mean all of us. From lawmakers to parents to school districts, we have not created an evidenced-based plan for ushering our community’s youngest children into a lifetime of learning, achieving and succeeding.

As a result, 62 percent of kindergarten-aged children in Orange County do not have the general knowledge needed to start school. A full 62 percent lack the prosocial, or “helping,” behavior they need to succeed in a classroom, and nearly 50 percent of kindergartners in the county don’t have the gross and fine motor skills needed to grasp a crayon.

And, yet, we are optimistic. Why? Because, for the first time, thanks to an effort pioneered by the Children and Families Commission of Orange County, this county has the quantifiable, actionable information we need to get ready — and get our young children ready — for school.

The Orange County Children’s Partnership recently released the 22nd Annual Conditions of Children Report. For the first time, this study includes a look at Kindergarten readiness, using the Early Development Index.

The EDI is a valid population measure of school readiness that drills down into five developmental areas known to affect well-being and school performance: physical health and well-being, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive skills and communication skills and general knowledge. Each of the five developmental criteria are broken down into several highly detailed subareas.

All Orange County public schools with a kindergarten population are included in the analysis. Never before have our community’s leaders had this level of detailed, county-wide information.

The information couldn’t be more valuable, and the stakes couldn’t be higher. Nationally, children who do not have access to high-quality early childhood opportunities and experiences are 25 percent more likely to drop out of high school, and 70 percent more likely to be arrested for a violent crime.
So, when we look at the state of our incoming kindergartners, we’re really taking a sneak peek into the future of our county. What we’re finding is a landscape of incredible variability: Based on all five of the measures, 72 percent of kindergarten-age children in one community are ready for school, while in a neighboring community, that number drops to 43 percent.

By breaking down the information across developmental measures as well as across geography for the entire county, the report can serve as a catalyst for bringing together parents, organizations and community leaders to improve school readiness and create more enriching environments for our children.

One district using the EDI data to take action is the Santa Ana Unified School District. “We are focusing heavily on early education to improve students’ third-grade reading and math proficiency and social-emotional development,” said John Palacio, president of the SAUSD Board of Trustees. “At the center of this effort is the EDI data, which will help us precisely measure if our students are on a positive trajectory for success in school and life.”

Kindergarten readiness information can help Orange County’s policymakers improve school readiness, make more strategic decisions about allocating resources, engage leaders and capitalize on the efforts, programs and movements that have been shown to work. By uncovering the areas of success and concern, we can meet challenges intelligently and effectively.

In other words, we — parents, teachers, lawmakers and stakeholders alike — can use this information to get ready for kindergarten.

Change needed to help preschoolers with mental health issues

By SANDRA PIERCE | Orange County Register
May 19, 2017

What do you picture when you hear that a child has been kicked out of school following a series of disruptive behaviors? My guess is that you’re imagining a troubled teenager. But that expelled student is three times more likely to be a toddler.

While that statistic might be startling to many, those of us who work in the early childhood education and health sectors have long been familiar with the challenges young children face in systems that were not designed to recognize or treat their unique emotional and mental health needs.

As a preschool director, I am encouraged by the recent efforts of Orange County’s Early Childhood Mental Health Collaborative. The collaborative is a new organization committed to creating system changes that address behavior concerns, underdiagnosed mental health issues, high expulsion and suspension rates, and other related needs of pre-kindergarten students.

As a member of the Children and Families Commission of Orange County I am encouraged with our participation in the collaboration and our partnership with other organizations that includes the Regional Center of Orange County, Children’s Home Society of California, the Orange County Department of Education, and Children’s Hospital of Orange County, to design a pilot program to address suspension and expulsion rates in pre-kindergarten childhood settings, to identify children in need of intervention at an earlier age, and to connect families, teachers and caregivers with early childhood mental health consultants and the training required to help young children succeed.

The need is critical. A survey conducted by the Social Science Research Center at California State University, Fullerton found that early childhood care providers are often not equipped to help children struggling with behavior and/or mental health needs. In fact, 37 percent of providers reported having asked a child to leave their program permanently due to problematic behavior, and a quarter of children with perceived special needs had not received intervention services.

The social, emotional and behavioral health of young children is associated with school readiness, strong relationships and even long-term health later in life. By giving families and caregivers access to early childhood mental health consultations, and building the capacity of teachers and
caregivers to address these unique needs, we as a county might not only ensure children are ready for kindergarten, we could potentially improve the course of countless lives.

Keeping children in the right programs, with the right resources, will be key. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Education recently released a joint statement on expulsion and suspension policies in early childhood settings in which they addressed one possible reason young children don’t receive the help they need: They’re kicked out too soon.

The collaborative intends to create sustainable systems change by making onsite behavior consultations and other resources integral to the system, which could eliminate the stigma of mental health, and identify ways to get targeted interventions where they are needed to prevent big problems in small children from getting worse.

I hope that in the future, should you hear of a child being expelled for disruptive behavior, the picture that will come to mind will neither be of a toddler or the troubled teen that toddler became. It will be a grainy, sepia-toned image from the distant past.

If you are a caregiver, teacher, service provider, concerned parent or philanthropist and would like to get involved in this effort, please send your contact information to the Collaborative at ecmh.oc@gmail.com.

_Sandra Pierce is commissioner of the Children and Families Commission of Orange County and director of Little Friends Preschool._
An $11 million grant gives kids something to smile about

By RICHARD MUNGO, DDS | Orange County Register
October 29, 2017

Witches, vampires and zombies don’t scare parents. After Halloween, the real frights come from possible cavities. Oral health is an integral part of overall health, especially in our young children.

One in 3 children in Orange County has untreated tooth decay, a rate higher than the statewide average, according to a Dental Health Foundation survey. Tooth decay is the most common chronic childhood disease, resulting in more than 51 million lost school hours each year and setting kids up for a host of educational, social and medical problems later in life.

In fact, dental disease is more common than childhood obesity and asthma, and it is almost entirely preventable. Unfortunately, too many children in Orange County lack access to regular preventive oral care.

To ensure our county’s trick-or-treaters don’t fall prey to sugar’s painful tricks, the California Department of Health Care Services recently awarded the Children and Families Commission of Orange County an $11 million grant to specifically improve access to dental care for people 20 and younger who are on Medi-Cal.

The Dental Transformation Initiative grant will significantly increase access to prevention and early interventional services through the use of a new, unique program of teledentistry. This onsite dental service can be set up at schools and other community sites throughout Orange County, thus bringing dental care directly to the children.

Teledentistry brings dentists, dental hygienists and equipment to children where they are, effectively eliminating many of the most common barriers to quality dental care. Some of those barriers are a lack of transportation and proximity to a provider, and parents being unable to miss work to take children to appointments. Through this funding, the current teledentistry program provided by local nonprofit Healthy Smiles for Kids of Orange County will be expanded, and local federally qualified health centers will begin offering the service as well.

As of August 2016, more than 400,000 Orange County youths age 20 or younger were living in poverty; 389,095 were Medi-Cal child beneficiaries. During the 3½-year grant period, the program expects to serve 19,970 children at schools, preschools and community sites.
That’s a lot of smiles that we hope will be saved by increased access to routine dental care. But this program has implications beyond pearly whites. If untreated, dental disease can compromise children’s ability to eat, sleep and function appropriately at home and at school.

In addition to the commission and Healthy Smiles for Kids of Orange County, program partners include six federally qualified health centers, which will implement their first teledentistry units in the county; the Coalition of Orange County Community Health Centers, which will offer technical assistance for the community health centers; and teledentistry developer Paul Glassman, DDS, of the University of the Pacific, whose team will provide training and assistance.

If this succeeds as we anticipate it will, this model could be replicated in other regions of the state. That would definitely bring a smile to my face — and to the faces of thousands of adorable children across California.

*Richard Mungo, DDS, is a pediatric dentist and the vice chair of the Children and Families Commission of Orange County, the lead partner in the rollout of teledentistry across Orange County.*
When we try to organize busy leaders to accomplish a goal, we often liken it to “herding cats.” But the truth is, herding cats is pretty simple if you have a bowl of milk.

For leaders of the county’s government agencies, nonprofits, school districts, business community and faith-based organizations who want to achieve the goal of boosting school readiness for kindergarten students in their communities, we can now — for the first time ever — gather around a new “milk bowl.”

This fresh milk bowl is the Early Development Index, a valid population measure of school readiness for kindergarten students that drills down into five developmental areas known to impact school performance, such as language and cognitive skills, communication skills and general knowledge, social competence, emotional maturity, and physical health and well-being. The EDI is a game-changer for those of us trying to mobilize our communities to improve school readiness.

For many years, researchers have shown that providing high-quality early childhood opportunities is the magic sauce to success. Put bluntly, if children experience high-quality early childhood opportunities in their first five years or so, it’s nearly impossible to stop them from being successful in life. The positive outcomes are astonishing.

Conversely, when young children lack these opportunities, they are much more likely to suffer from poor health, are 25 percent more likely to drop out of high school, and are 70 percent more likely to be arrested for a violent crime. These negative outcomes are equally staggering.

But mobilizing community leaders to improve school readiness suffers from an age-old problem: Simply knowing that something is good for our health, like regular exercise, doesn’t mean we’re going to do it.

Over the past year or so, a number of organizational leaders in Santa Ana — including myself — have gathered around the EDI milk bowl to try to improve school readiness. The EDI has helped us tackle this age-old problem in three innovative ways.

First, the EDI is very much like a weight scale. Instead of pounds, however, the EDI measures levels of school readiness in our neighborhoods, schools and cities. The EDI tells us where
we’re at with school readiness — the good, bad or ugly. And, as with any effective weight loss program, we begin by acknowledging where we’re at: we own it, don’t moan it. This is our starting point, our baseline.

The second way the EDI helped us is by literally moving forward. It prompted us to ask, “Where do we want to be in the future, say, five years from now?” Our collaborative thus established five-year, measurable goals starting with our baselines. For example, in 2016, 67 percent of entering kindergartners were ready in basic literacy. Over the next five years, we want to raise this to 85 percent, surpassing the county average.

Having a measurable five-year goal is critical for a collection of busy leaders. That’s because it gives us all a common destination. It’s like saying we have all agreed to go to the beach. Each person can drive, carpool or caravan; each drives in their own lane, but ultimately we are all going to the same destination. This is the first time we, as a community, have set a common and measurable school readiness destination point. And, because EDI data are collected regularly, we can also regularly check our progress along the way.

The EDI has helped us in a third way. We have been using the EDI mapping functions to examine school readiness levels by individual neighborhoods. Already the data are challenging many of our assumptions about certain neighborhoods. Some of the more “challenged” neighborhoods are doing better than the less “challenged.”

Based on this neighborhood-level analysis, we have selected a set of neighborhoods to begin our work. We will convene the whole set of leaders from different sectors to help us achieve our collective school readiness goals.

If you or your organization would like to learn from our efforts, or to join us, we’ll gladly make room around the milk bowl for you at our stakeholder meeting on December 4, 2017. Just contact Paola Padilla at paola@delhicenter.org or (714) 481-9640.

The most important point, however, is that you can also use the EDI to gather busy leaders in your community to improve school readiness in your neighborhoods and cities.

Indeed, the Children and Families Commission of Orange County has launched a public web site that allows community members and organizations to access the groundbreaking EDI data. Check out: http://occhildrenandfamilies.com/edi/.

The EDI is a wonderful way to gather as many cats in your community who have an itch to scratch regarding the well-being of young children. Ultimately, by providing high-quality early childhood opportunities to each and every child, we can give many of our vexing social issues a real licking!

Rigo Rodríguez, Ph.D., is a member of the Santa Ana Unified School District Governing Board, Associate Professor at California State University Long Beach and a board member for Delhi Center in Santa Ana.
The Commission pioneered the implementation of the Early Development Index (EDI) in the United States, making Orange County the vanguard site for collection of this comprehensive kindergarten readiness data. EDI data shows how children are doing and where additional resources are needed to ensure the success of the entire community. The EDI looks at five developmental areas that are known to affect well-being and school performance:

- Physical Health & Well-Being
- Social Competence
- Emotional Maturity
- General Knowledge & Communication Skills
- Language & Cognitive Development

The 2016/17 school year marks the third consecutive year of comprehensive data for every Orange County public school that serves kindergartners. The most recent school readiness data confirmed that:

- Orange County children are most ready in the area of Physical Health & Well-Being: 81% on track
- Orange County children are least ready in the area of General Knowledge & Communication Skills: 27% not on track
- Overall, more than half of Orange County children are on track in all five developmental areas: 52% on track

The commitment to collecting EDI data remains a priority to help policy makers, nonprofit groups, educators and child advocates quantify the need for early childhood development programs. The data can support new policies for young children, identify geographic areas where programs are most needed, and invite collaboration between community groups, school districts and nonprofit organizations to ensure programs are available and accessible for all young children and families.
Vision: All Children are Healthy and Ready to Learn

Since 2000, the Children and Families Commission of Orange County has identified, funded and supported programs with measurable positive impacts on young children’s health and school readiness. Its strategic partnerships have allowed the Commission to leverage collective resources to provide more opportunities to keep children healthy and ready to learn.

Strengthening the Systems of Care for Children

As tobacco tax revenue declines, the Commission is concentrating on sustainability strategies that effectively leverage key partnerships, ongoing data collection and rigorous local evaluation.

The Commission uses a multi-pronged approach to maintain a focus on the importance of early childhood development and further improve outcomes for young children:

- **Continue funding proven programs that are effective and foundational.**

- **Rigorously promote use of the Early Development Index (EDI) to assess children’s readiness for kindergarten within Orange County neighborhoods and geographic areas.**

- **Prioritize partnerships that improve outcomes for Orange County’s young children and develop new relationships for leveraging and sustainability.**

- **Fund initiatives and projects designed to improve the systems that serve young children.**
Healthy Children

Funded programs encompass prenatal care, health and developmental screenings, linkage to services, and early intervention services when needed to maximize each child’s potential.

Developmental Screenings for Hard-to-Reach Children
In 2016, Help Me Grow Orange County partnered with the Orange County Department of Education (OCDE) to improve developmental screening rates for hard-to-reach children in family childcare settings.

This innovative pilot project used:

- In-person visits with family child care providers for coaching and technical assistance
- Screenings completed by parents on mobile devices like cell phones
- Referral, care coordination and linkage to needed services

As a result:

- 63 family child care providers added standardized screenings to their routine practices.

Through Healthy Children Programs in fiscal year 2016/17:

- 54,791 parents received referrals to services for their children’s health and developmental concerns
- 23,523 children received oral health education and 13,465 children received preventative dental treatment
- 15,317 parents had office visits to improve their knowledge of healthy child development
- 15,120 children were screened for up-to-date immunizations
- 14,246 children received a vision screening
- 13,945 mothers received breastfeeding education, intervention and support
- 13,276 children received a screening for developmental milestones and/or behavior
- 8,583 pregnant women received support for a healthy pregnancy and early childhood health
Early Learning

Early learning skills lay the foundation for children’s success in school. Investments in school readiness, math and early literacy programs help Orange County’s children enter kindergarten on the best possible trajectory for success in school and life.

Early Learning Specialists and Unique Statewide Student Identifiers
To track how students are performing over time, the state of California utilizes a Statewide Student Identifier (SSID) to maintain data and monitor progression as children move through grades. Due largely to the work of Commission-funded Early Learning Specialists, the majority of school districts in Orange County now assign this unique number to young children before they enter kindergarten.

This identifier allows kindergarten teachers to access a child’s behavioral, academic and intervention history before the school year starts. This electronic record allows these early educators to provide a more tailored education approach to each individual child to set them on the trajectory for success in school and life.

Through Early Learning Programs in fiscal year 2016/17:

- 57,047 new and used books were distributed to children
- 47,577 children participated in early literacy programs
- 28,759 parents received tools, resources, information and/or training needed to transition their child to kindergarten
- 14,390 parents participated in a program designed to increase the frequency of reading at home
- 11,188 parents received literacy information or assistance in waiting rooms or at community events
- 3,263 children and 3,725 parents participated in a family-focused, drop-in early learning program (for example, a Learning Link)

Last year, more than 11,000 preschool children were assigned an SSID.

The data supports that children who have early learning experiences and interventions need fewer services, including special education and grade retention.
Strong Families

The Commission invests in programs that provide families in need with a safe and stable home environment, information on child development, and developmental screenings. This support includes funding for transitional and emergency shelters, and direct services with an emphasis on basic needs such as food, shelter and clothing.

Homeless Prevention

The Commission continues to invest and partner with shelter providers, government agencies, and public and private entities to ensure a holistic approach to homeless prevention for families with young children in Orange County.

In Fiscal Year 2016/17, Commission funding supported transitional and emergency beds throughout Orange County. The following new emergency shelters were added:

Through Strong Families Programs in fiscal year 2016/17:

- Children received 37,267 emergency or transitional shelter bed nights and their family members received 47,215 bed nights
- 959 at-risk children received developmental and/or behavioral screenings
- 681 parents received weekly case management services as they transitioned to stable housing
- 96 at-risk children were linked to a health care home and 91 were linked to a dental home

Family Assistance Ministries’ FAMily House – provides up to 11 units of emergency shelter at a time serving an estimated 44 families annually

Illumination Foundation’s Theriault House – provides up to eight units of emergency shelter at a time serving an estimated 32 families annually
To strengthen the network of nonprofit community service providers, the Commission awards small competitive grants focused on enhancing the capacity of an agency, provides technical assistance to achieve long-term sustainability, and integrates a performance evaluation process.

**Early Childhood Mental Health Collaborative**
The Early Childhood Mental Health Collaborative (ECMHC) was established in 2015 to address concerns such as:

- More than one-quarter of Orange County early education providers have behavior or mental health concerns about a child they serve.
- The expulsion rate of children in preschool for problematic behavior is three times the rate of children in kindergarten through 12th grade.
- A seven-year delay is typical between children showing symptoms and receiving mental health treatment.
- More than one-third have had to expel a child from their program for problematic behavior.

The five-organization collaborative, funded by the Commission, is working to better identify and address mental health issues as early as possible, and to ensure these young children are engaged appropriately in early care settings that have the capacity to understand, accommodate and address their behavioral issues. By doing so, these children will be enabled to progress academically, socially and emotionally, thereby reducing the need for costly crisis intervention later and throughout a child’s life.
### Program Funding Expenditures – Fiscal Year 2016/17

#### In fiscal year 2016/17, children ages 0-5 received 1.8 million services.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROGRAM EXPENDITURES</th>
<th>CATALYTIC EXPENDITURES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Healthy Children</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Bridges Maternal Child Health Network</td>
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<td>Pediatric Health Services</td>
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<td>School Readiness Nursing</td>
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<td>Community Clinics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Health Access and Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Childrens' Dental</td>
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<tr>
<td>Healthy Children Program Support</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Early Learning</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Early Learning Specialists</td>
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<td>School District/ Community Based Early Learning Programs</td>
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<td>Early Literacy Programs</td>
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<td>First 5 CA Early Learning Programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early Learning Program Support</td>
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<td>Americorps/VISTA Programs and Support</td>
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<td><strong>Strong Families</strong></td>
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<td>Homeless Prevention</td>
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<td>Family Support Services</td>
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<td>Strong Families Program Support</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Capacity Building</strong></td>
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<td>Technical Assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capacity Building Grants, Matching Funds, Fund Development and Program Support</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>$444,714</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total** | $24,843,757 | $7,031,729

Note: Catalytic expenditures are one-time funding actions designed to reduce ongoing demand on the Commission’s budget, while making system-wide impacts on services for young children.

Cover photo was provided by MOMS Orange County, a Commission-funded program.
Research has found that kindergarten readiness is an indicator for future academic and social success. Children who are developmentally ready when they start kindergarten are more likely to graduate high school, compete for higher paying jobs and reduce reliance on expensive social services. This doesn’t mean every kindergartner needs to know their numbers and letters on day one, but if we can equip children with the skills to learn before they even enter their first classroom, they will have a solid foundation for a thriving future.

In fact, children who are not proficient readers by the end of third grade are four times more likely to leave school without a diploma than proficient readers.¹ These high school dropouts earn approximately $8,000 a year less than graduates.²

Nationally, children who do not have access to high-quality early childhood opportunities and experiences are:

- 25% more likely to drop out of high school
- 40% more likely to become a teen parent
- 50% more likely to be placed in special education
- 60% more likely to never attend college
- 70% more likely to be arrested for a violent crime

The Early Development Index (EDI) is a valid and reliable school readiness measurement tool that provides community-level data on the strengths and vulnerabilities of children. The EDI provides information about children in five developmental areas that are known to affect well-being and school performance.

**How Do We Measure Kindergarten Readiness?**

**The Early Development Index (EDI)** is a valid and reliable school readiness measurement tool that provides community-level data on the strengths and vulnerabilities of children. The EDI provides information about children in five developmental areas that are known to affect well-being and school performance.

- **Physical Health & Well-Being**
  The child can hold a pencil and sustain energy throughout the full school day.

- **Language & Cognitive Development**
  The child knows how to handle a book and can attach sounds to some letters.

- **Emotional Maturity**
  The child pays attention to directions and is willing to help others.

- **Social Competence**
  The child gets along with others and follows rules and instructions.

- **Communication Skills & General Knowledge**
  The child can communicate his or her needs and takes part in imaginative play.

The Children and Families Commission of Orange County now has comprehensive data about how ready children are when they enter kindergarten. Never before have Orange County leaders and policy makers known how this entire population is doing.

**Percentage of Children Ready For Kindergarten, 2017 Orange County, CA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
<th>Color Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>61.0% or Greater</td>
<td>Light Yellow</td>
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<tr>
<td>54.0% - 60.9%</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
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<tr>
<td>46.0% - 53.9%</td>
<td>Dark Yellow</td>
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<tr>
<td>39.0% - 45.9%</td>
<td>Medium Brown</td>
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<tr>
<td>38.9% or Less</td>
<td>Dark Brown</td>
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<tr>
<td>Few Data (&lt;10 EDI Records)</td>
<td>Gray</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
What We’ve Learned

The **kindergarten readiness data** confirms that many Orange County children are not developmentally on-track when they enter kindergarten.

The Commission is using the kindergarten readiness data to educate parents and communities about how they can provide services and environments in which children and parents can learn and play together to foster healthy development.

Additionally, the Commission is digging deeper into the data to understand specific skills that need to be improved. For instance, more than one-third of kindergarteners in the county lack necessary gross and fine motor skills – a possible result of too much screen time and too little crayon-grasping. One out of three children are behind in their pro-social or “helping” behavior, and one out of 10 are not ready for school based on their overall approach to learning, which includes the ability to listen attentively, follow directions, and adjust to class routines.

Kindergarten Readiness Data Can Be Used To Create Positive Change For Young Children

The **results provide meaningful data** that can help Orange County policy makers, providers and community funding partners make more strategic, local decisions about allocating and prioritizing resources and services for young children.

This New Countywide Data Can Be Used To:

- **Provide a roadmap for targeted intervention and support for children and communities**
- **Improve grant making, needs assessments and other activities that benefit from real local data**
- **Facilitate community mobilization to create a “young children’s agenda” centered around improving outcomes**
- **Promote collaboration and integration of children’s services and service systems**
The Importance Of Early Learning Opportunities

The Commission is a leader in responding to children’s needs and supporting programs with demonstrable positive impacts on pediatric health and early learning opportunities to maximize children’s developmental trajectory.

High-quality early learning opportunities lay the foundation for children’s long-term success. Years of research show that early school readiness is a critical and crucial piece to setting children on the best possible trajectory for success in school and in life. Informed communities can pave the way for success for our young learners. The EDI data sounded the alarm on areas of great need in our city. As we make critical, targeted investments in early childhood, the data makes it easy for us to track progress over time to see how these investment changes influence our children’s development and overall preparedness when they enter the classroom for the first time.

– Teresa Egan, Assistant Superintendent, La Habra City School District

"Investing in quality early childhood development for disadvantaged children from birth through age 5 will help prevent achievement deficits and produce better education, health, social and economic outcomes. Such investments will reduce the need for costly remediation and social spending while increasing the value, productivity and earning potential of individuals. In fact, every dollar invested in quality early childhood development for disadvantaged children produces a 13 percent return, per child, per year."

– James J. Heckman, Nobel Prize winning University of Chicago Economics Professor

The kindergarten readiness data the EDI provides helps us identify and target areas of greatest vulnerability and opportunity in our city. We are able to analyze the data and develop strategic partnerships to maximize our impact and to better meet the needs of families in our community.

– Dennis Wilberg, City Manager, City of Mission Viejo

“The importance of investing in young children before they reach their first classroom is critical. With a sustained and comprehensive effort to optimize the developmental trajectories for all children, they can succeed in school, form strong social and family relationships, and live productive lives.”

– Neal Halfon, MD, MPH and founding director of the UCLA Center for Healthier Children, Families and Communities

The Children and Families Commission of Orange County receives funding from the 1998 Tobacco Tax (Proposition 10) that was passed by California voters to improve the health and early education of children from birth to 5-years of age.
Orange County children have never visited a dentist.

OC children have untreated tooth decay.

January 2015
Children’s Oral Health in Orange County
Policy Brief

One of three OC children have untreated tooth decay.

Tooth decay is the most common chronic childhood disease, resulting in 51+ million lost school hours each year.

One out of three OC children have never visited a dentist.

546 active general and pediatric dentists on the Orange County Denti-Cal roster.

321 general dentists.

4 offered sedation.

The average wait for children needing treatment under general anesthesia is:

4 months at Healthy Smiles
8 months at CHOC Children’s.

Denti-Cal reimbursement is 1/3 of the national average for Medicaid reimbursements.

One pediatric dentist per 4,900 Orange County children under six with Denti-Cal insurance.

Our Goal

Every child in Orange County has access to oral health care including screening, preventive care, and treatment.

We can do this, by:

1. Increase the number of dentists serving young children.
2. Reduce disparities in oral health care.
3. Reduce barriers that prevent access to dental services.

 DEVELOPED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH HEALTHY SMILES FOR KIDS OF ORANGE COUNTY AND DR. XENEXEZ CALILUNG, MEMBER AND FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE ORANGE COUNTY DENTAL SOCIETY.
Commission Investments in Oral Health

To support screenings, treatment, education and a dental residency program through Healthy Smiles for Kids of Orange County.

$15+ million since 2002/2003

$20 million catalytic investment for 2012-2020

Healthy Smiles works in partnership with a collaborative of countywide community clinics to provide education and treatment services annually to over 19,000 young children and over 8,000 family members to prevent and treat tooth decay.

Healthy Smiles Clinic Visits

Children Ages 0-5

The number of visits to the Healthy Smiles dental clinic for children under six has grown 528% in 10 years.

- 03/04: 566 visits
- 13/14: 3,556 visits

Healthy Smiles reports they are increasingly seeing children at an earlier age.

The average age of children at their first visit to a dentist has dropped from five years to 2.1 years old.

At Orange County has the highest percentage in the state of young children enrolled in Denti-Cal who received at least one preventive visit within the past year.

41% of young children had cavities, at the beginning of services in FY 13/14.

5% had cavities, at end of services.

Healthy Smiles for Kids of Orange County
Orange County children have never visited a dentist.

January 2015
Children’s Oral Health in Orange County
Policy Brief

One out of 10 Orange County children have never visited a dentist.

Tooth decay is the most common chronic childhood disease, resulting in 51+ million lost school hours each year.

One out of three OC children have untreated tooth decay.

Children’s Oral Health in Orange County
Policy Brief

The average wait for children needing treatment under general anesthesia is 4 months at Healthy Smiles and 8 months at CHOC Children’s.

Denti-Cal reimbursement is 1/3 of the national average for Medicaid reimbursements.

One pediatric dentist per 4,900 Orange County children under six with Denti-Cal insurance.

Our Goal
Every child in Orange County has access to oral health care including screening, preventive care, and treatment.

We can do this, by:

1. BUILDING THE LOCAL WORKFORCE
   Increase the number of dentists serving young children.

2. SERVING LOW-INCOME CHILDREN
   Reduce disparities in oral health care.

3. ADDRESSING FAMILY BARRIERS
   Reduce barriers that prevent access to dental services.

Developed in partnership with Healthy Smiles for Kids of Orange County and Dr. Xerxez Calikung, member and former president of the Orange County Dental Society.
Anne Olin
President and Chief Executive Officer
The Olin Group, Inc.

As President and Chief Executive Officer for The Olin Group, Anne works to strengthen collaborations between the public, private, and philanthropic sectors; secure funding for nonprofits; foster and incubate regional initiatives; and support the planning needs of nonprofit leadership. Her vision is a sustainable nonprofit sector that exercises its full power to help communities solve problems and bring about lasting change.

Anne founded The Olin Group in 2002. Since that time, she and her growing team have worked to strengthen their clients through services related to evaluation and needs assessment; fund development; grant strategy; marketing, branding, and communication; collective impact; executive recruitment; philanthropic strategy; and planning, assessment and facilitation.

In the last few years, The Olin Group has played a critical role in several notable initiatives including: the Anaheim Youth Needs Assessment and subsequent development of ACT Anaheim; the OC Opportunity Initiative which works to strengthen services to immigrants in the region; the establishment and management of the first multi-tenant nonprofit center in Orange County, The Village at 17th Street; the management of Families and Communities Together, the SSA-funded network of family resource centers; and the successful implementation of seven community health needs assessments on behalf of the St. Joseph Health System, among many others. Her firm raises millions annually for regional nonprofits.

In addition to serving nonprofits through The Olin Group, Anne has herself served in a leadership capacity for foundations such as The Nicholas Endowment, the Orange County Funders Roundtable, and the Swayne Family Foundation. Finally, for 10 years she served as the Founder and pro bono Executive Director of Charitable Ventures of Orange County, a nonprofit incubator for nonprofit initiatives that manages more than $10 million in project funds annually, and for which she currently serves as Board Chair.

Anne holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from the University of California, Irvine and a Master of Arts degree in American History with an emphasis in Immigration Policy from Claremont Graduate University and is a member of Phi Beta Kappa and Pi Sigma Alpha national societies. In 2017 she was awarded the OC Funders Roundtable Quiet Achiever Award for her work on behalf of Orange County.

Contact Information
Email: anne.olin@theolingroup.com
Website: www.theolingroup.com
2018-2019
Community Engagement Plan

Children & Families Commission of Orange County

June 6, 2018
Overview

• In February 2017, the Commission began a strategic pivot to direct a portion of Commission investments to accelerate systems change work.

• To develop a framework for this investment, The Commission worked with The Olin Group to engage community partners in a discussion about how the Commission might best support and engage on issues related to young children.

• Several stakeholder groups were or will be engaged to participate in discussions:
  • Consultants and Subject Matter Experts
  • CFCOC Funded Partners
  • Regional Funders and Foundations
  • Business Leaders
  • EDI Researchers
## What We Learned Through The Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Commission is already perceived as a LEADER</th>
<th>The Commission needs to INCREASE COMMUNICATION about its goals and achievements</th>
<th>The Commission needs to LEVERAGE its experience, partnerships and research to effect change</th>
<th>Many challenges are opportunities for COMMISSION ENGAGEMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong and respected voice in the field of early childhood</td>
<td>Lack of broad community awareness of Commission’s work and impact</td>
<td>Potential to leverage Commission efforts and expertise is huge and relatively untapped</td>
<td>Lack of alignment and coordination among efforts, services, programs, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader in generating early childhood investment in the region</td>
<td>Sense that the Commission has “got it covered” and often forget that its revenue source is declining</td>
<td>Many stakeholders could benefit from the Commission’s extensive experience and partnerships</td>
<td>Lack of ability to share data across agencies, and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership as a convener and advocate/educator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of public awareness about key issues related to early childhood</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From Dialogue to Action

• The findings from the Community Engagement Process point to the need for a **more formalized community engagement strategy** that leverages Commission expertise and currently funded initiatives, AND positions the Commission in a leadership role on critical issues related to young children in Orange County.

• The slides that follow offer a rationale and recommendations for piloting a **Community Engagement Plan**, in support of the Commission’s pivot to a catalytic focus, and in alignment with the Commission’s other strategic objectives.
Where Does Community Engagement Fit?

All children are healthy and ready to learn.

Strategic Plan

- Long Term Financial Plan
- Business Plan
- Evaluation Plan
- Community Engagement Plan
- Communication Plan
The Community Engagement Plan

WHEN THE COMMISSION ENGAGES WITH THE COMMUNITY...

• Advancement of Knowledge
• Collaboration
• Skill Building
• Innovation and Learning
• Effective Use of Data

...TO PROMOTE BEST PRACTICES AND...

...CREATE SYSTEMS CHANGE...

More Community Investment in Early Childhood
Increase in Champions
Aligned Agendas
Stronger Partnerships & Collaboration
Leveraged Resources
Data-Driven Programming
Better Policy & Legislation Supporting Early Childhood

Regional Funders
Funded Partners & other CBOs
Business & Government Leaders
Academic Institutions

...WE CAN CREATE A STRENGTHENED COMMUNITY EFFORT TOWARD IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR YOUNG CHILDREN
First Year Questions

In FY 2018-2019, we will begin intentional, targeted (to identified audiences), deployment of community engagement strategies to determine if we can move the needle on outcome goals.

- Are these the right strategies?
- Are these the right audiences?
- Do we have the capacity?
- How do we measure success? (short- and long-term)
Expanding Our Community Engagement Effort

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Activities</th>
<th>Expanded CEP</th>
<th>Vision in Three Years...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Providing technical assistance to current funded partners on an ad hoc basis</td>
<td>• Providing regular trainings to funded partners and other CBOs on sharing data, EDI, and best practices</td>
<td>Commission is recognized as a leader in:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Hosting trainings for regional funders on early childhood investments and systems change opportunities</td>
<td>• Skill-building for service providers on the use of data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Innovating best practices for early childhood programming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Funding models for systems-level impact</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Current Activities

- Convening current funded partners monthly to review outcome data, program design, etc.

### Expanded CEP

- Communicate proven outcomes of program to broad community audience
- Convene funded partners AND stakeholders who will be impacted by declining revenue and develop ways to stabilize outcomes and find new opportunities.

### Vision in Three Years...

- System partners and other community stakeholders are engaged and committed
- Solutions identified to offset declining revenue
- Other funding models for systems-level impact identified
A Reminder of WHY

Our declining revenue and pivot to system change efforts require new strategies – we cannot achieve the outcomes we seek without deepening our relationships and engagement with community stakeholders.
Questions, Feedback, Discussion
DATE:      May 17, 2018

TO:        Children and Families Commission of Orange County

FROM:      Kimberly Goll, Executive Director

ACTION:    Approve Fiscal Year 2018/2019 Business Plan

SUMMARY:
The Children and Families Commission of Orange County annually approves a business plan of
management and strategies that govern the organization’s operations. The business plan identifies
staffing levels, organizational structure, major initiatives planned for the year, and implementing
actions. This item requests approval of the Fiscal Year 2018/2019 Business Plan.

DISCUSSION:
The Business Plan complements the Strategic Plan by outlining how operational resources will be
deployed to support approved goals and objectives. It is intended to provide insight on how the
Commission will operate and carry out the mission and goals in the coming fiscal year. The Business
Plan, along with the Long Term Financial Plan and Evaluation Plan, supports the Strategic Plan that
provides the overall direction on how Proposition 10 (tobacco tax) revenues will be spent,
consistent with the voters’ intent.

2017/2018 Business Plan
The 2017/2018 Business Plan was the first year of a three-year cycle to pivot from a sole focus on
direct services to an expanded focus that includes systems level impacts. Five Strategic Intent
statements were approved in April 2017 with specific tasks to direct operational resources.

1. Focus on Organizational Effectiveness
2. Focus on Strengthen Systems Outcomes
3. Leverage and Expand Strategic Data Partnerships
4. Focus on Advancement of Knowledge
5. Develop a Communications Platform

Significant progress was made in each Strategic Intent area. Quarterly status reports were provided
in October, February, and April as part of the regular Commission agendas. The fourth quarter
report for the months of April, May and June is scheduled for the August 2018 meeting. As
objectives in the Business Plan were completed, some tasks were transitioned to regular operations
to ensure the work continued as appropriate. A summary of the 2017/2018 accomplishments are
included in the 2018/2019 Business Plan (Attachment 1).

2018-2019 Business Plan
In preparation for the second year of the three-year plan, the Strategic Intent statements and specific
tasks were reviewed and remain generally the same. The tasks that are still in progress will continue
in the 2018/2019 Plan. New tasks have also been developed that continue to prioritize the changing
environment of children and young families and the decline in tobacco tax revenue. A complete list of the operational objectives, Strategic Intent statements and tasks are included in the Business Plan. The plan also includes an overview of the Commission’s operating model, organizational approach, staffing structure and evaluation plan for the next fiscal year. Regular progress reports will continue to be presented each quarter to provide updates on each Strategic Intent area.

Approval of the proposed Fiscal Year 2018-2019 Business Plan is recommended. Should changes be required as a result of the planning activities at the June 2018 meeting, a revised Business Plan will be presented for ratification in August 2018.

STRATEGIC PLAN & FISCAL SUMMARY:
The recommended actions have been reviewed in relation to the Strategic Plan and are consistent with all goal areas. There is no funding action proposed for this item.

PRIOR COMMISSION ACTIONS:
- April 2018 – Conducted a public hearing to adopt resolution confirming the Children and Families Commission’s annual review and adoption of the Strategic Plan and Annual Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2018/2019.
- April 2017 - Adopted resolutions and received the annual review of the Strategic Plan, Fiscal Year 2017-2018 Business Plan

RECOMMENDED ACTION:
Approve Fiscal Year 2018/2019 Business Plan

ATTACHMENT:
1. Fiscal Year 2018/2019 Business Plan

Contact: Kelly Pijl
BUSINESS PLAN
FISCAL YEAR 2018/2019

June 6, 2018
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I. Executive Summary

The Business Plan complements the Strategic Plan by outlining how management will direct and deploy operational resources in the coming year to support the goal and objectives in the Strategic Plan. It is intended to provide insight to stakeholders, such as funded agencies and collaborative partners, on how the Commission will operate and carry out its mission and goals in the coming Fiscal Year. The Strategic Plan provides overall direction on how Orange County’s Proposition 10 dollars will be spent, consistent with the voters’ intent. Implementation of the Strategic Plan is supported by the annual Business Plan, Evaluation Plan, and Long Term Financial Plan.

The Fiscal Year 2018/2019 Business Plan represents the second year in a three year planning cycle. Commission staff and key consultants participated in the planning process to set priorities for the three year plan based on the changing environment of children and young families and the decline in Proposition 10 revenue. The business plan builds off the themes that were presented in the 2016 strategic assessment from the The Bridgespan Group and the February 2017 Report on Pivoting from Direct Services to Systems Level Impacts prepared by the Commission executive director.

The 2018/2019 Business Plan presents an ambitious plan focused on key growth areas including the communications platform, strengthening partnerships, and increasing knowledge. The Business Plan was developed as a three-year plan with the intent that annual updates would be presented to the Commission in parallel with consideration of the annual budget. The Business Plan is focused on building the organization, resources and partnerships to sustain, support and expand services for young children in Orange County. The Fiscal Year 2018/2019 Business Plan focuses on five strategic areas.

Strategic Intent 1: Focus on Organizational Efficiency

Strategic Intent 2: Focus on Strengthening Systems Outcomes

Strategic Intent 3: Leverage and Expand Strategic Data Partnerships

Strategic Intent 4: Focus on Advancement of Knowledge

Strategic Intent 5: Implement a Communications Plan

Each of these Strategic Intent statements is expanded in Section III, including specific objectives and target dates for completion. Action plans will also be developed that will define staff responsibilities, milestone dates, and annual measures of progress.
II. Introduction

Strategic Plan and Annual Business Plan

Since its inception, the Commission and staff have worked diligently to develop and refine the organizational and operational infrastructure necessary to achieve its stated mission and goals. The three main tools that are relied upon to plan and manage funding and operations are:

- Strategic Plan
- Long Term Financial Plan
- Business Plan

The Strategic Plan is the overall guiding document supported through the Long Term Financial Plan implemented through funding decisions detailed in the annual budget and supported through the Business Plan. The Business Plan is geared to informing the Commissioners on how management will direct and deploy operational resources in the coming year. It is intended to provide insight to other stakeholders, such as funded agencies and collaborative partners, on how the Commission will operate and carry out its mission and goals in the coming fiscal year.

The Business Plan is an operational document and may be amended and adjusted during the year based on emerging priorities that may be identified at the annual planning meeting or subsequently throughout the year.

Two supporting documents include:

- *Annual Budget* – The Annual Budget is integral to the successful implementation of the Business Plan. Although developed consistent with the Business Plan, it is approved as a separate document.

The Business Plan was also developed to ensure responsiveness to requirements of Proposition 10 – The Children and Families Act of 1998 and related statutory policies enacted by the State Legislature. The Business Plan ensures consistency with First 5 California Guidelines for County Commissions. The statutory and legislative requirements of Proposition 10 are summarized in the appendix.

As a public entity, the Commission’s financial management practices are fully compliant with all applicable Generally Accepted Accounting Principles for government and will be updated as the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) issues any new guidance or reporting requirements. The Governmental Accounting Standards Board issues accounting standards that ensure governmental accounting and reporting is conducted effectively and in the public interest. The Commission manages its financial responsibility in accordance with best practices and relies on the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Financial Management Guide for First 5 Commissions as guidance for all financial policies and procedures.
III. Fiscal Year 2018/2019 Business Plan Priorities

As defined in the Strategic Plan, the core functions are to:

- Fund services and programs to achieve desired results.
- Be a catalyst and leader for coordinating, integrating and leveraging existing resources.
- Build community and organizational capacity for the health and early learning of young children and their families.

This Business Plan defines how those core functions will be executed and addresses the strategic intents. Staff engaged in business planning process which included; establishing project teams around objectives, and leads to ensure successful implementation, quarterly reporting at Commission meetings, and management team meetings.

The 2018/2019 business plan builds on the guidance provided by The Bridgespan Group’s 2016 report and the supplemental discussion that reinforced these recommendations. The Bridgespan report outlined the following six focus areas for the work going forward:

- Using the Early Developmental Index as a summative indicator of progress.
- Sustaining the catalytic orientation to investment.
- Accelerating the transition from funding programs to building sustainable services.
- Continuing to bring supplemental financial resources to bear.
- Leveraging the Commission’s reputation and non-financial assets.
- Using the Early developmental Index to guide the allocation of the Commission’s own resources.

While a portfolio of funded projects is maintained that are core to the strategic plan, the business plan targets staff resources towards strengthening the ability of those strategic investment to impact the larger early childhood systems. The strategic intent objectives include targeted outcomes such as:

- Building a communication platform that disseminates knowledge and learnings on the issues that affect early childhood.
- Strengthening evaluation work to better assess systems impact and return on investment.
- Growing and realigning the internal capacity to meet the increasing needs of communication, policy, and evaluation work.

The following table summarizes the fiscal year 2018/2019 strategic intents and related objectives. Over the course of the fiscal year updates will be provided that monitor the progress made on each objective. The business plan and objectives are updated annually documenting revisions to existing objectives, additional objectives, or removal of completed objectives.
## Summary of Operational Objectives

### Strategic Intent #1: Focus on Organizational Efficiency

Improve internal administrative processes and investing in internal resources (e.g. staff, infrastructure, workplace environment, etc.)

1. By December 2018, capture policies and procedures related to Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and other data-sharing arrangements, revise health consent forms and research protocols accordingly, and conduct trainings on handling sensitive data.

2. By June 2019, conduct quarterly staff and consultant trainings to provide updates on key initiatives and community engagement plans, and training on consistent messaging.

3. By March 2019, review the long term financial plan to address increased staffing levels and/or consultant support for expanded communications and community engagement efforts while staying in compliance with the administrative cap policy.

### Strategic Intent #2: Focus on Strengthening Systems Outcomes

Work collectively with partners to strengthen systems-level impact, including modifying investments based on outcomes and impacts.

1. By June 2020, at least 50% of school districts with the highest proportion of vulnerable kindergartners will include the Early Developmental Index (EDI) as a metric in their Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP).

2. By June 2020, work with Dental Transformation Initiative contractors and county partners to increase the number of Denti-Cal dental providers who accept and provide care for new patients age six years and younger to 15% above 2017 baseline number [data pending].

### Strategic Intent #3: Leverage and Expand Strategic Data Partnerships

Develop and expand strategic partnerships to share and receive data in order to promote collaboration and build capacity to improve outcomes for young children.

1. By June 2020, develop the information infrastructure needed countywide to (1) link developmental screening data with age of entry into early intervention services and (2) estimate the return on investment in periodic screening, facilitated referral, and early linkage to services.

2. By December 2018, collaborate with at least one school district to determine the feasibility of linking educational and health data at an individual child level.
Strategic Intent #4: Focus on Advancement of Knowledge

Serve as a catalyst for development, exchange, and the strategic dissemination of data, findings, policies and best practices that promote positive outcomes for children.

1. By September 30, 2019, convene a series of meetings/community forums to present research and outcome data emphasizing the impact of Commission investment on Orange County children; and facilitate a discussion on opportunities for investment in the systems that effect outcomes for children.

2. By June 30, 2019, plan and host a Learners Today, Leaders Tomorrow Early Development Index event.

Strategic Intent #5: Develop a Communications Platform

Develop a communications platform to elevate children’s issues and champion child development and early education systems.

1. By August 2018, develop a communications plan based on the recommendations from the 2017/2018 communications assessment.

2. By June 2019, implement the communications tasks as defined in the 2018/2019 Communications Plan.
IV. Operating Model and Administrative Budget

Operating Model
A collaborative, dynamic model is employed to execute the policy direction provided by the Commission. Public and private agencies work collaboratively with staff to accomplish the Strategic Plan and regularly participate in planning and evaluation efforts. This process ensures that the strategies are informed by robust evaluation, lessons are learned from partners in the community, and there is an awareness of emerging knowledge around child development. The collaborative model allows the Commission to keep abreast of local, statewide, and national issues and trends, as well as proactively addressing long-term sustainability challenges for programs and grantees.

Innovative Sustainability Strategies
Since inception, the Commission has been deliberate and intentional to ensure that effective, proven strategies that have been created through the Commission’s funding are sustained beyond the cycle of direct funding. Examples of these strategies include the following:

- Transitioning an increasing portion of funding portfolio from sustaining to catalytic investments.
- Pursuing federal and state leveraging opportunities such as Medi-Cal Administrative Activities (MAA), Targeted Case Management (TCM), Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT), Dental Transformation Initiative (DTI), Intergovernmental Transfer (IGT) and AmeriCorps programs. Since inception, for example, the Commission and funded programs have increased local budgets by over $48 million through the leverage of Commission dollars with federal programs.
- Ensuring that the organizations that receive Commission funding are fiscally and administratively sound. Fund development, business planning, and sustainability efforts are supported through technical assistance offered to funded organizations.

The funding portfolio has been transitioning from sustaining to catalytic funding. Catalytic investments are one-time funding investments, which achieve one or more of the following outcomes: 1) reduce or eliminate ongoing funding allocations from the Commission; 2) innovative, high-impact projects that yield multi-year services with no additional funding from the Commission; or 3) provide the necessary infrastructure or start-up funding to allow for sustainability through external funding sources. Some of the most significant catalytic investments to date include allocations to emergency shelters, services to children with autism, early literacy, community clinics, Pretend City (healthy child development), and oral health.

Partnerships & Funding Collaboratives
Bringing together public and private philanthropy to support the health and development of young children has been a strategic focus area. A major focus of the Fiscal Year 2018/2019 Business Plan continues to be the development and implementation of sustainability strategies to support the Commission’s investments.

Partnerships have been successfully developed with Think Together, the Orange County Department of Education, the OC STEM Initiative, Samueli Foundation and PBS SoCal to support early STEM professional development. The Early Childhood STEM Symposium annually attracts over 400 early educators and administrators for panel presentations and workshops to support STEM early education. The HomeAid Essentials Diaper Drive brings together corporate sponsors to support the donation and delivery of diapers and other essential items for mothers with babies to homeless shelters in Orange County. The sponsors have
include the Automobile Club of Southern California, Bank of America, CHOC Children’s, Cox Communications, NBC4, St. Joseph Health Systems, Time Warner Cable, UPS and the YMCA of Orange County. The Orange County Sheriff serves as honorary chair of the annual diaper drive.

Participating with other grant makers, several local and regional efforts have been launched to develop joint matching fund opportunities and sharing of best practices. Participation in several local planning and evaluation groups include the OC Funders Roundtable, Health Funders Partnership, and the OC STEM Initiative. Participating as one of many public and community agencies, the Orange County Children’s Partnership (OCCP) focuses on common goals related to improving the conditions of Orange County’s children.

**Participation in National Networks Related to Innovative Programs**

Successful programs developed and implemented in Orange County serve as models that can be brought to scale at the state and/or national level. Participation in these national networks benefits both funding strategies and the broader national landscape of funders working to improve child outcomes. One example has been the participation in the leadership team for the national Early Childhood Learning and Innovation Network for Communities (EC-LINC) in partnership with the Center for the Study of Social Policy and other national early childhood experts. EC-LINC is dedicated to improving results for young children by accelerating the development of community-based integrated early childhood systems including: tackling shared challenges, building and disseminating knowledge of strategies used, and developing opportunities for local leaders and state and federal policy makers to work together to accelerate deployment of strategies.

The Commission has also been an active partner in supporting the spread and scale of the Help Me Grow program across the state and nation. Help Me Grow is a national effort that connects children at risk for developmental and behavioral issues by providing a comprehensive, statewide, coordinated system for early identification and referral to services. The HMG system building activities includes the cultivation of affiliates along with providing support for the collection and analysis of program data. A joint policy statement, released by the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services, included a recommendation for states to adopt a centralized intake, screening and referral process, specifically naming the Help Me Grow® as an effective system model. Help Me Grow Orange County was established in 2005 through a funding partnership with the Commission, CHOC Children’s and the University of California Irvine Medical Center to connect families to developmental services. Orange County was the first site in the nation to replicate the Help Me Grow model that was originally established in Hartford, Connecticut in 1998.

**Strategic Communications**

Generating national, regional and local support for Commission investments requires a proactive strategy to inform policymakers, local funders, and the public about the impact of Commission investments on the lives of children and families in Orange County. Through a combination of staff and professional services, the communications plan focus on three strategies:

- **Community Partnerships** - Develop and maintain relationships and support with key organizations, local elected officials, and community leaders. Provides information on the programs supported by the Orange County Commission and the impact of the programs to the overall health and education to young children and families. The objective is to create a broad awareness among Orange County leaders regarding the programs and services funded with local Proposition 10 revenues.

- **Public Awareness** - Manage and promote events and activities supported by the Commission, such as the HomeAid Essentials Donation Drive that promotes public awareness of the partnership with HomeAid Orange County. The objective is to broaden the base of support for critical programs through additional direct funding support, individual donations and in-kind corporate support.

- **Government Relations** - Outreach activities with the Orange County State Legislative Delegation both in Sacramento and at the local district offices, including activities related to the State Budget or other legislative actions that may have a potential impact to Proposition 10. Government relations also
include informational briefings and site visits to Commission funded programs and briefings with city and school district leaders. The objective is to protect local funding and decision making to Proposition 10 investments.

**Reliance on Evaluation Results**

Proposition 10 requires each county commission to have a plan that describes the goals and objectives to be achieved; the programs, services and projects to be provided; and how measurable outcomes of programs, services, and projects will be determined using appropriate and reliable indicators. To address this mandate, the Commission’s Evaluation Team measures progress toward achievement of the goals and objectives in the Commission’s Strategic Plan. Each year, the Evaluation Team provides an update of its accomplishments (page 16) and recommends priority evaluation items for the coming year (Appendix C).

The Evaluation Priority Area is organized in sections related to the four goal areas and other high priority topics such as the Early Development Index and Overall Evaluation which, aligns with the goal areas and provides more information on the project, planned evaluation activities and funding sources.

The Evaluation Priority Areas have been developed to support the priorities in Strategic Intent 2: Focus on Strengthening Systems Outcomes; and, Strategic Intent 4: Focus on Advancement of Knowledge. Resources to support these evaluation-related projects are reflected in the Fiscal Year 2018/2019 Budget. Planned resources include staff, and on-call evaluation consultant resources.

**Organizational Approach**

Three operating principles have guided the organizational structure and budget planning since its inception:

1. Maintain a core internal staff of limited size, made up of experienced and dedicated personnel. This structure is intended to be flexible and responsive to issues and challenges as they arise and change overtime.

2. Leverage consultants to provide specialized technical expertise and assist with implementation of certain programs. Three types of consultants are engaged to support the business operations:
   - Project managers – supplement staff and assist in reviewing funded programs for compliance with approved scope of work, budget and all contract requirements.
   - Evaluation consultants – provide expertise on evaluation-related matters.
   - On call/special technical consultants - provide short-term or one-time needed expertise on a particular matter before the Commission.
   - Professional support services consultants - provide financial planning, strategic communications, administrative, and legal counsel services.

3. Utilize county support and fiscal services as needed. The Commission has a standing agreement with the County of Orange whereby the County provides critical, required services such as treasury/investment management, general accounting, purchasing, risk management, information technology, and other support services. The agreement with the Orange County Health Care Agency provides for a full-time evaluation manager dedicated to the Commission.

Other County staff resources are utilized, as needed, on a fee-for-service basis to supplement workload peaks and balance the availability of the core internal staff. The Orange County Human Resources Department continues to assist in the recruitment and hiring processes, and complex or technical matters.
Administrative Budget and Operations

The proposed staffing plan for Fiscal Year 2018/2019 includes 11 regular staff positions. Currently, one position is vacant. Recruitment for the additional position will be initiated following further analysis of programmatic needs and the Long Term Financial Plan. The Evaluation Manager is a loaned position from the Orange County Health Care Agency. Extra help and limited term positions can be used to support core staff and address peaks in workload requirements, as needed.

The Fiscal Year 2018/2019 budget proposal represents the second year of the three-year funding actions approved in February 2017. The proposed base program budget for Fiscal Year 2018/2019 is $19.8 million and is consistent with the Long-Term Financial Plan assumptions.

Tobacco tax revenue is projected by First 5 California to experience an increase for Fiscal Year 2018/19 following a large decline in 2017/2018. The decline was a result of the timing of Proposition 56 backfill calculations and take into account the prior year of actual revenue lost attributable to the increased sales tax. The final actual decline in Fiscal Year 2017/2018 is projected by First 5 California to be as high as 19.65% followed by an increase of 16.20% in 2018/2019. After a highly volatile two years, the ongoing annual decline is expected to stabilize at 2.9%, just under the Commission long-term assumption of 3.5% decline.

The recommendation for Fiscal Year 2018/2019 is to initially budget for a 16.20% increase in tobacco tax revenue following First 5 California’s lead. Budgeted revenue can be revisited at a later date and after more experience under the new legislation has been gained and new information becomes available.

The Commission administrative budget and Long-Term Financial Plan adheres to the strict limit of 10-percent limit of administrative costs to the operating budget. The Commission complies with the administrative cost definitions as defined by the First 5 Association Financial Management Guide (Appendix A).
V. Fiscal Year 2017/2018 Accomplishments

The Fiscal Year 2017/18 Business Plan implementation was marked by continuing progress towards the strategic intent objects and efforts to sustain programs and strengthen program evaluation. Progress and completion of the plan objectives are regularly monitored and reviewed against the plan. Regular progress reports are presented each quarter on the status of the business plan and each objective against the proposed timeline. All Commission staff are involved in the accomplishments of the objectives, functioning either as a team member or a team lead. All team members provide input on each other’s performance on the business plan team as a component of the annual review process. As strategic plan objectives are completed specific plans to transition or operationalize each objective are developed to ensure that the work continues, as appropriate. Fiscal year 2017/2018 was marked by the following accomplishments:

Strategic Intent 1 – Organizational Efficiency

- Paying off the Commission’s unfunded pension liability was unanimously approved at the October 2017 meeting. The Unfunded Actuarial Accrued Liability (UAAL) is the difference between the actuarial values of pension plan assets and the actuarial accrued liabilities of the defined pension plan administered by the Orange County Employees Retirement System (OCERS). By taking this action more than $1.2 million was immediately saved in interest, and a minimum reduction of $160,000 will be realized in the annual budget in benefit costs. The one-time payment of nearly $1.8 million for the UAAL was funded from reserves held for long-term sustainability commitments. The more than $13 million reserve balance remains well above the required 25 percent of the annual budget that was established to ease the financial impact to programs as tobacco tax revenue declines. This action will allow the Commission to maintain leadership in funding programs for young children’s health and development.

- An automated performance evaluation system was finalized for the upcoming performance review process. The new system was modeled after the County of Orange’s process and adapted for the Commission. The automated performance evaluation reviews progress on annual performance goals, self and supervisor ratings in five core competency areas, team reviews, and goal setting for the next year. The performance review form includes important feedback prompts to help the reviewer provide effective comments. Other organizational efficiency activities continue with concerted efforts to systemize shared computer files, develop onboarding practices for new employees, and create a process and flow for commission meeting agenda items. Opportunities to improve and refine organizational operations continue for optimal efficiencies. The automated system will be completed for use in the upcoming performance evaluation process at the end of the year and will have the capacity to include performance bonuses and staff development.

Strategic Intent 2 – Strengthening Systems Outcomes

- An evaluation plan was developed for two projects: the capacity building and catalytic programs; and the School Readiness Nursing and Early Learning programs. Harder+Company Community Research and NP Strategies were selected to evaluate if capacity building and catalytic programs will determine the level of investments to achieve systems sustainability impact and provide a recommendation as to what funding strategy yields the highest impact and most sustainable investments. Harder+Company was also selected for the School Readiness Nursing and Early Learning program evaluation.

- The process to standardize methods for assessing systems impact in the four goal areas began. Early childhood mental health (ECMH) was the first area of focus. Schemas were developed for how the Commission is currently funding ECMH activities; how the Commission could, or does, act as a
convener, catalyst or partner for ECMH in the County; and an ideal systems impact orientation for ECMH. These schemas will be tested out with other initiatives such as oral health. Focusing on systems-level impact will allow engagement in valuable community relationships that can serve as a platform for developing innovative system structures and pathways to measure big change; leverage other funding sources and resources to gain synergy; and, advocate for the integration of research and evidence-based practices into program and system design.

- An internal work group was convened to identify indicators of return on investment (ROI) for some of the Commission’s largest programs. The goal is to be able to present data that quantifies the ways in which programs result in improved health and educational outcomes for children, and the extent to which better outcomes may result in cost savings for public programs. The work group outlined several next steps, beginning with an assessment of program investments, with an emphasis on high-intensity interventions, to identify indicators that most lend themselves to calculation of ROI. A literature search is underway to determine if this work can be guided by other studies.

**Strategic Intent 3– Leverage and Expand Strategic Data Partnerships**

- The Children’s Data Network was selected to link multiple administrative data sets to provide a complete characterization of births in the county. The purpose is to determine the prevalence of risk factors correlated with later child maltreatment at birth, the proportion of children receiving services at, or shortly after birth based on maltreatment stratifications, and the cumulative incidence of child maltreatment before age five. The project will determine how the Bridges Network families compare to non-Bridges Network, and their prevalence of maltreatment. The goal is to generate new knowledge about the Bridges Network and to support data-driven program and policy development. An Ad-hoc Subcommittee evaluated the risks and benefits of a data sharing partnership with the Children’s Data Network research project led by Dr. Emily Putnam-Hornstein at the USC School of Social Work. The partnership was approved with specific direction to meet with the 10 hospitals that participate in the Bridges program to explain the project and obtain approval.

- The data collected for the Early Development Index (EDI) has been presented to almost 650 people at 15 different organizations that include school districts, cities, community colleges, Boys and Girls Clubs, and family resource centers. Requests for presentations about the population-based measure of early child development and school readiness continue at a rapid rate as interest in EDI data increases. Since 2015, in partnership with the county’s 24 elementary school districts with kindergarten teachers, data has been collected in all of the public schools that have a kindergarten population. Collecting EDI data tells how children are doing when entering kindergarten and where to deploy additional resources in the community. The EDI data helps policy makers, nonprofit groups, educators and child advocates to quantify the success of programs and policies, uncover pockets of need and collaborate to ensure necessary support reaches all children.

**Strategic Intent 4 – Advancement of Knowledge**

- A task force of professionals in early childhood development drafted a countywide policy framework to optimize the systems that impact children’s outcomes. The policy borrows heavily from the Early Childhood Colorado model that mirrored the expectations for an Orange County framework. The intended outcome of the Policy Framework is to increase access, quality and equity in three focus areas: Family Support and Education; Early Learning and Development; and Health and Well-being. The Policy Framework is expected to help Orange County stakeholders identify strengths and gaps, guide planning and decision making, and improve communication and coordination to improve the lives of young children. A community forum is scheduled for April 2018 to present the draft Early Childhood Policy Framework and the research supporting the benefits of investments in early childhood development.
• A video has been taped to highlight the use of the Early Development Index (EDI) in the Santa Ana Early Learning Initiative led by Rigo Rodriquez, Ph.D. The video includes a series of two-minute segments and is expected to be the vehicle for community groups and organizations to understand EDI and how to apply the data to improve outcomes for children. Dr. Rodriquez is featured throughout the series, which model his presentation to the Commission at the planning meeting held last June. Each segment includes a call to action and access information to the Commission’s EDI microsite. The video will be presented at the June 2018 meeting.

• Community forums featuring the Annual Report on the Conditions of Children were held throughout the year. Chairman Andrew Do held the first Community Forum in Santa Ana and Supervisor Lisa Bartlett held the second event in Mission Viejo. The final forum attracted over 200 people and was presented by Supervisor Shawn Nelson and the Orange County Children’s Partnership at California State University, Fullerton. Dr. Anne Light from the Orange County Health Care Agency provided the overview of the Conditions of Children report. The Commission led the development of the report that was released in October and tracks how children are faring in the areas of health, economic well-being, education and safety.

**Strategic Intent 5 – Develop a Communications Platform**

• A notice of Request for Qualifications (RFQ) was issued on November 1 to seek a consultant to conduct a one-time strategic communications assessment of the current communications programs and activities. S. Groner and Associates was hired in January to assess the current communications strategies and content. From the assessment, SGA will provide insight and recommendations for a communications plan that focuses on policy and advocacy issues that support the goal that all children are healthy and ready to learn when they enter school. The firm has conducted internal and external interviews to determine the level of familiarity with the Commission and outreach materials. They have conducted a scan of similar agencies communications strategies and evaluated internal evaluation metrics. The final report and recommendations are expected by mid-April 2018 and will be presented at the planning meeting in June 2018.
Fiscal Year 2017/2018 Evaluation Accomplishments

In addition to meeting the state evaluation reporting requirements, the Commission participated in several high priority evaluations-related activities that focused on assisting the Commission and its funded programs support the Operational Imperatives set forth in the Strategic Plan. Highlighted evaluation accomplishments from Fiscal Year 2017/2018 in the four goal areas include:

**Healthy Children**

- Hired evaluator, Abt Associates to implement two quasi-experimental design methodologies to evaluate Bridges outcomes as they relate to utilization of preventive health services and healthcare cost avoidance for a four year period. Worked with CalOptima to expand the data-sharing relationship and conduct the data transfer.

- In August 2017, an agreement was approved with the Children’s Data Network at the University of Southern California to link multiple administrative data sets to provide a more complete characterization of births in Orange County. This study will determine the prevalence of child maltreatment risk factors and the proportion of children receiving services.

- Selected by the Center for Study of Social Policy to participate in a pilot study of Project DULCE, a clinic-based intervention designed to address infant and family risks through enhanced primary care. The pilot study will compare healthcare utilization patterns and child health outcomes between Project DULCE participants and nonparticipants.

- An evaluation firm was selected to evaluate the School Readiness Nursing (SRN) initiative. This evaluation will assess the systems level impact of the SRN initiative and provide recommendations for future program enhancements.

**Strong Families**

- Completed an 18-month “Neighborhood Resource Network” pilot to serve families with at least one child age 0-5, which had an initial Child Abuse Report and would not receive further services from the Orange County Social Services Agency. Funding was obtained from the Arnold Foundation to conduct a randomized clinical trial of the Neighborhood Resource Network program. Preliminary finding and redesign recommendations were presented at the December 2017 meeting.

**Early Learning**

- An evaluation firm was selected to evaluate the Early Learning Specialist (ELS) initiatives. This evaluation will assess the systems level impact of the ELS initiative and provide recommendations for future program enhancements.

- Continued attainment of 100-percent participation in the Early Development Index (EDI) with public schools that have a kindergarten population, providing the third year of county-wide assessment of school readiness of children in Orange County. This will allow for the Commission to begin exploring trend analysis to examine changes in EDI scores over time.

- The Early Development Index (EDI) results have been presented to almost 650 people at 15 different organizations that include school districts, cities, community colleges, Boys and Girls Clubs, and family resource centers. Requests for presentations about the population-based measure of early child development and school readiness continue at a rapid rate as interest in EDI data increases.
Capacity Building

- Hired evaluator, Harder+Company, to implement an evaluation of the Commission’s Capacity Building and Catalytic funded programs. This evaluation is intended to assist in understanding the context in which each funding strategy is most effective and what level of investments are necessary to achieve systems sustainability impact. Preliminary findings were presented at the April 2018 meeting, with the final report due June 2018.

- Continued to participate in a leadership team for the Early Childhood Learning and Innovative Network for Communities. Work included development of a set of common indicators of early childhood well-being.
### VI. Appendix

#### A. Statutory and Legislative Mandates

|---|---|---|
| • Adopt an adequate and complete county strategic plan for the support and improvement of early childhood development within county, as well as for implementation of programs. Minimum requirements contained in H&S Code, section 130140(a)(1)(C)(ii). | The State will adopt guidelines for an integrated and comprehensive statewide program, define the results to be achieved by the adopted guidelines, and collect and analyze data to measure progress toward attaining such results. According to state level guidelines that have been established, four strategic results should be pursued: 1. Improved Child Health: Healthy Children 2. Improved Child Development: Children Learning and Ready for School 3. Improved Family Functioning: Strong Families 4. Improved Systems: Integrated, Consumer-Oriented, Accessible Services | • **AB 109** (Chapter 284, Statutes of 2005) - requires county commissions to adopt policies on employee salaries and benefits, conflict of interest, procurement and contracting, and define the percent of the commission’s operating budget that may be spent on administrative functions.  
• **AB 2932** (Chapter 111, Statutes of 2006) specifies the conflict of interest and contracting/procurement statutes with which commission policies must comply.  
• **SB 35** (Chapter 243, Statutes of 2005) requires every commission to be audited to determine whether it has adopted the required policies and is applying them appropriately, is adhering to the county ordinance that established it, is operating consistently with its strategic plan, and has a long-range financial plan. This “expanded audit” must also indicate the commission's financial condition, the amount it expends on evaluation, and the documented results of that evaluation. |
| • At least annually, review county strategic plan and revise the plan as necessary/appropriate. |  |  |
| • Conduct at least one public hearing before the plan is adopted, and before any revisions to the plan are adopted. |  |  |
| • Submit adopted plans and any subsequent revisions to the State Commission. |  |  |
## B. Definition of Costs


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADMINISTRATIVE COST</th>
<th>PROGRAM COST</th>
<th>EVALUATION COST</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Costs incurred in support of the general management and administration of a First 5 commission, for a common or joint purpose that benefits more than one cost objective (other than evaluation activities), and/or those costs not readily assignable to a specifically benefited cost objective.</td>
<td>Costs incurred by local First 5 commissions readily assignable to a program, grantee, contractor, or service provider (other than evaluation activities) and/or in the execution of direct service provision.</td>
<td>Costs incurred by local First 5 commissions in the evaluation of funded programs based upon their accountability framework and data collection and evaluation for required reporting to state and local stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General accounting/financial reporting</td>
<td>Direct services</td>
<td>Evaluation technical assistance</td>
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<td>Local annual reporting activities</td>
<td>Program outreach and education</td>
<td>Evaluation database</td>
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<tr>
<td>Financial planning</td>
<td>Program planning</td>
<td>Travel and training related to evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commission/association meetings and travel</td>
<td>Program grants and contracts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Payroll/benefits</td>
<td>Program/provider technical assistance and support (formerly Quality Assurance)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Human resources services</td>
<td>Program database management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Costs: Legal services/consulting</td>
<td>Contract Compliance</td>
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<td>Contract compliance</td>
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<td>Audit</td>
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<td>Strategic planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Procurement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rent and building maintenance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
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<td>Insurance</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cleaning/Janitorial</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## C. Fiscal Year 2018/2019 Evaluation Priority Areas

The following table contains high priority evaluation activities planned for fiscal year 2018/2019. Included is information about the project, planned activities and funding sources. High priority evaluation projects are included for each of the Goal areas: Healthy Children, Strong Families, Early Learning, and Capacity Building. In addition, high priority evaluation efforts that fall outside the Goal areas are also described below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal/Priority Area</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Project Description</th>
<th>Planned Activities</th>
<th>Funding Source(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Healthy Children</td>
<td>Dental Transformation Initiative</td>
<td>Pilot project to improve dental care for children on Medi-Cal in Orange County.</td>
<td>Hired analyst to collect dental services utilization data and document learnings.</td>
<td>Fully funded from the California Department of Health Care Services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridges Maternal Child Health Network</td>
<td>Study of effect of Bridges services on key maternal child health indicators.</td>
<td>Conduct data analysis of healthcare utilization rates and related cost analyses for Bridges participants and non-participants.</td>
<td>Funded by Commission evaluation budget; $5,000 funded by Nonprofit Finance Fund grant.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children's Data Network</td>
<td>Linkage of birth records to Bridges Network data, Statewide administrative data such as Child Protective Services, CalWorks data, Dental/Medical, developmental service, and parental tax and employment records.</td>
<td>Conduction of the study by the Children's Data Network at the University of Southern California.</td>
<td>To be funded by Commission evaluation budget.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project DULCE</td>
<td>Pilot study to compare healthcare utilization patterns and child health outcomes between Project DULCE participants and nonparticipants.</td>
<td>Work collaboratively with the Center for Study of Social Policy to conduct the pilot study.</td>
<td>Fully funded by the Center for Study of Social Policy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goal/Priority Area</td>
<td>Project Title</td>
<td>Project Description</td>
<td>Planned Activities</td>
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<td>Strong Families</td>
<td>Neighborhood Resource Network</td>
<td>A voluntary referral opportunity to community-based services for all Orange County families who have a child 0-5 with an initial report to the county Child Abuse Registry but who will not receive any further services.</td>
<td>Implement redesign recommendations resulting from the pilot project.</td>
<td>Fully funded by the Arnold Foundation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Learning</td>
<td>OC Reads</td>
<td>Three organizations that provide services to the 0-5 population selected to implement programs and interventions to ensure that children in Orange County are reading at grade level by third grade. The school districts in the most vulnerable areas were identified using the Commission’s Early Development Index (EDI) and the California Department of Education’s Smarter Balance (CAASPP) test scores.</td>
<td>Work collaboratively with United Way evaluators to develop recommendations for an evidence-based curriculum for the FY17/18 funding cycle; develop short-term and long-term goals for the new funding cycle; monitor data collection; and provide evaluation technical assistance to sites as needed.</td>
<td>Co-funded by the United Way, the Commission, and the Orange County Community Foundation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Effective integration of early learning into Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAPs).</td>
<td>Examine models across California which have effectively integrated early learning into the LCAP and successfully funded early learning through LCAP funding.</td>
<td>Coordinate with the Orange County Department of Education to analyze their review of all LCAPs to assess the impact of using LCAP funding to fund early learning.</td>
<td>Funded by the OCDE Early Learning agreement, in-kind Commission staff time and Commission evaluation budget.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goal/Priority Area</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early Development Index (EDI)</td>
<td>EDI as a communication tool and planning tool.</td>
<td>Facilitate the expanded use of the EDI for community planning such as with the Association of California Cities, Orange County.</td>
<td>Commission staff to continue providing technical assistance and training on the EDI as needed. Begin conducting trend analysis of data.</td>
<td>Funded by in-kind Commission staff time and Commission evaluation budget.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Evaluation</td>
<td>Annual Report on the Conditions of Children.</td>
<td>Develop community indicators to provide a comprehensive look at how children in Orange County are faring in terms of health, socioeconomics, education and safety.</td>
<td>Provide program management and evaluation leadership regarding the form and content of the Annual Report.</td>
<td>Funded by Orange County Social Services Agency and the Commission.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Indicators Report.</td>
<td>Community Indicators Report.</td>
<td>Develop community indicators, which focus on pivotal issues that impact the well-being of residents in Orange County.</td>
<td>Provide program management and evaluation leadership regarding the form and content of the Community Indicators Report.</td>
<td>Co-funded by various funders in the county.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DATE: May 16, 2018

TO: Children and Families Commission of Orange County

FROM: Kimberly Goll, Executive Director

ACTION: Elect the Children and Families Commission Chair and Vice-Chair for Fiscal Year 2018/2019

SUMMARY:
The Children and Families Commission of Orange County by-laws require the election of officers before the beginning of each fiscal year. This item requests the Commissioner members to elect two officers to serve as the chair and vice-chair for one-year terms beginning July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019.

DISCUSSION:
Sandra Barry and Dr. Richard Mungo where elected chair and vice-chair, respectively in June 2017. Chair Barry has served two consecutive years in this position. Dr. Mungo’s term on the Commission concluded on March 31, 2018.

At the June 6, 2018 meeting, Commission members are requested to nominate and elect a chair and vice-chair for the upcoming fiscal year. The elected officers will serve one-year terms beginning July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019.

STRATEGIC PLAN & FISCAL SUMMARY:
There are no funding actions proposed for this item.

PRIOR COMMISSION ACTIONS:
- June 2017 - Elected Commission Chair and Vice-Chair for Fiscal Year 2017/18.
- April 2017 – Elected the Commission Vice-Chair to serve for the remainder of fiscal year 2016/17.
- June 2016 - Elected the Commission Chair and Vice-Chair for Fiscal Year 2016/17.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:
Elect the Children and Families Commission Chair and Vice-Chair for Fiscal Year 2018/2019.

Contact: Kelly Pijl