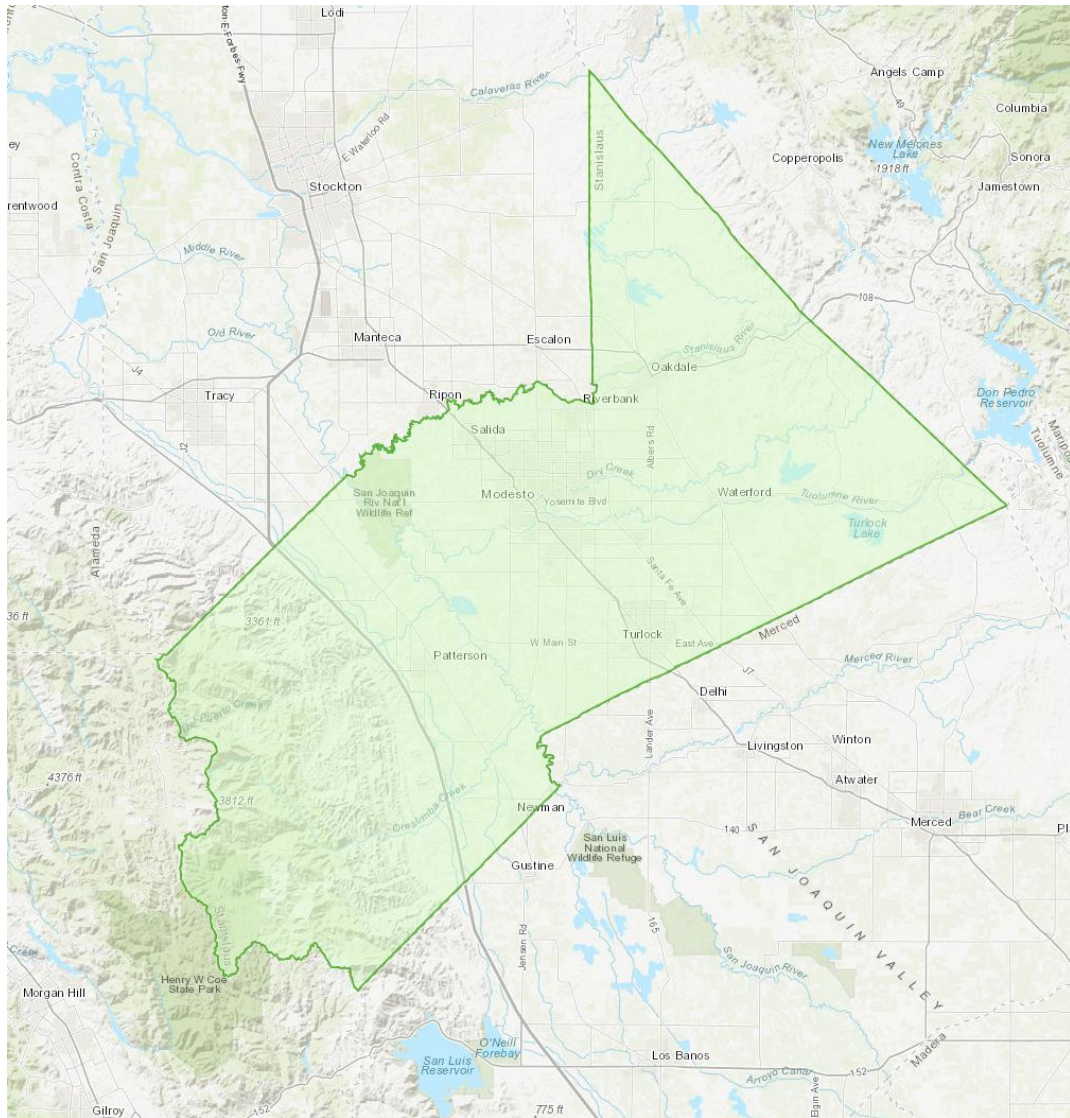


First 5 Stanislaus Strategic Direction & Planning

Discovery Report



August 2018

Prepared by the Glen Price Group (GPG)

First 5 Stanislaus Discovery Report

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Executive Summary

First 5 Stanislaus has engaged in an ongoing discovery and stakeholder engagement process to examine, inform, and re-establish its strategic direction and to develop an associated strategic plan. The process began in 2017 through multiple stakeholder interviews and meetings conducted by the First 5 Stanislaus Executive Director that created a context for moving forward. The formal strategic direction and planning process currently underway was then created through contracting with the Glen Price Group (GPG) after a request for proposal process. The strategic direction and planning process is structured in three phases: I: Discovery, II: Planning, and III: Plan Development and Finalization. This report contains results from Phase I: Discovery, including results and analysis of extensive stakeholder input and information from secondary source materials.

The purpose of this report is to inform subsequent planning phases. Key takeaways and contextual considerations are presented below, along with strategy considerations for First 5 Stanislaus' future strategic direction.

Stanislaus County Context

First 5 Stanislaus is an important asset in Stanislaus County. Stakeholders across the county noted the importance of First 5 Stanislaus' investments on children and families. They also noted great future potential and were pleased to participate in the input process. There is a growing awareness in the Stanislaus County educational community on the importance of early childhood experiences on longer-term outcomes and there is a corresponding willingness to collaborate to support young children from birth to age five and their families. First 5 Stanislaus can serve to enhance, amplify, and complement local collaborative efforts focused on improving outcomes for Stanislaus County residents, notably efforts focused on prevention and the cradle to career continuum. Furthermore, the birth rate in Stanislaus County is projected to increase over the next two decades while the state birth rate is projected to decrease over this period, making it all the more important for Stanislaus county to establish strong systems of support for young children and their families.

Strong systems of support for young children and their families are critical in Stanislaus County because residents face significant economic challenges compared to residents of California generally. A lower median income, lower levels of educational attainment, and high rates of unemployment contribute to economic instability in Stanislaus county and correlate highly with other negative outcomes for children and families. The discovery process revealed the following:

Discovery Process Methodology

The following stakeholder engagement mechanisms and activities contributed to the development of this report. See Appendix II for more information.

- GPG-conducted Interviews (16)
- Stakeholder Surveys
 - Comprehensive online survey (372 responses)
 - Short-version online Facebook survey (34 responses)
 - A 2018 survey of early childhood educators and child care providers (190 responses)
 - A 2018 survey of front-line service providers from Family Resource Centers in Stanislaus County (26 responses)
- Focus Groups:
 - Two focus groups with Spanish-speaking parents (22 participants)
 - One focus group with First 5 Stanislaus grantees / funded partners (18 participants)
 - One focus group of child care educational leaders through the Local Planning Council (10 participants)
- First 5 Stanislaus Executive Director-conducted listening sessions/meetings with a broad range of close to 50 community leaders.

- Both domestic violence reports and child abuse and neglect reports and substantiated cases have higher rates in the county than the statewide average. For Black and Native American children these rates more than twice the rate of any other racial/ethnic group.
- Measures on a number of key indicators (such as adverse childhood experience rates, instances of child abuse, etc.) indicate the need to strengthen families.
- Educational attainment in the county is overall lower than the state, and parents of young children (0-5) have lower formal education levels than others in the county.
- Stanislaus County trails the state in third grade reading proficiency and in preschool and kindergarten attendance rates.
- The ratios of residents to primary care physicians, dentists, and mental health providers in Stanislaus County are higher (each medical professional serves more people) than the statewide ratios. The county ratio for mental health providers (550:1) is more than 70% higher than the state ratio (320:1).
- With regard to health outcomes, there are considerable health disparities among different demographic groups, with particularly poor health outcomes for African Americans.

Stakeholder perspectives about the key issues facing children and families generally (though not universally) aligned with data on social determinants of health in the county (see Section 3.C.III). Stakeholders prioritized these issues differently but suggested that First 5 Stanislaus has an important role in addressing the key issues facing children and families in the county.

Key Themes Across Stakeholder Input

Key themes from the stakeholder engagement process include the following (See Appendix III for more information)

- Parenting skills are a key factor in long-term child outcomes and parents need support in improving these skills. Many families in Stanislaus county face considerable economic challenges and need support to develop the Protective Factors.
- Many families in Stanislaus county face considerable economic challenges and need support to develop the Protective Factors.¹
- Children and families need access to more early education and enrichment opportunities, ranging from accessible and affordable childcare and preschool, to more cultural and educational activities and events for families.
- More communication and awareness building is needed about the needs of young children and their families, and the services and opportunities that are available to them.
- Family Resource Centers play a critical role in reaching families where they are across the county.
- First 5 Stanislaus should be a more visible champion for children and families while also being a leader and partner to ongoing collaboration efforts.
- First 5 Stanislaus should identify clear focus areas and objectives, identify outcomes, and support data coordination to drive towards those outcomes.

Key Issues Facing Young Children and Families in Stanislaus County

The discovery process revealed challenges affecting children and families in Stanislaus county in the following key issues areas:

- Basic needs (ex: Wages, housing, food security, etc.)
- Parent education and involvement
- Child education and care
- Other factors such as drug and alcohol abuse, domestic violence, and immigration status.

Strategy Considerations

First 5 Stanislaus should examine the results of the discovery process as it develops a strategic direction that: 1) is responsive to community needs, 2) prioritizes high-impact investments and strategies, and 3) amplifies and leverages other community assets and investments to create sustained impact on young children and families in the county.

- **Community Need:** The discovery process identified a number of key issues affecting young children and their families (see Key Issues Facing Young Children and Families in Stanislaus County text box). While parent education and involvement and child education and care are most aligned with the Children and Families Act, and thus First 5 Stanislaus' mandate, First 5 Stanislaus must assess which of these areas it can most effectively influence and through what roles and strategies (See Section 4.B.II).
- **Roles:** There are opportunities for First 5 Stanislaus to play a number of different roles that go beyond the role of funding direct services. The following roles are strategically sound (see Section 4.B.I) :
 - **Systems Builder:** Support efforts to integrate, streamline, and design systems to maximize cost-effectiveness and outcomes.
 - **Capacity Builder:** Support service providers to increase their capacity to better support and serve children birth to age five and their families.
 - **Convener/Collaborator:** Bring together partner organizations to find energy and alignment around common priorities impacting children from birth to age five and their families.
 - **Policy Advocate:** Advocate for greater support and increased resources for children birth to age five and their families.
 - **Funder:** Fund service providers and organizations to provide direct services.
 - **Data Management Support:** Lead and/or partner with efforts to create and align data across Stanislaus County that is related to long-term outcome measures for children birth to age five and their families.
- **Leveraging Collaborative Strategies:** First 5 Stanislaus has an opportunity to align with the First 5 Network Strategy as a way to better affiliate with, align with, and leverage the work of First 5 efforts across the state (See Section 4.A). There are also significant opportunities to align with local collaborative work occurring in Stanislaus County.

National and State Context

- Growing public support for paid family leave and increased investments in early learning at the national, state, and local levels
- Recent funding increases for services to young children and their families.
 - Federal: One-time increase to the Child Care and Development Block Grant, funding to expand Head Start, and the Preschool Development Grant as part of the Every Student Succeed Act.
 - California: increases to child care provider reimbursement rates, increases in the number of children served through the California State Preschool Program and CalWORKs child care vouchers, and overall increases to state education funding through its Local Control Funding Formula.
- California's Transitional Kindergarten (TK) program creates a bridge between early learning and K-12 systems. Furthermore, local decision-making through the Local Control Accountability Planning process allows districts to prioritize early childhood education.
- Demographic changes in California:
 - Declining birth rates in many parts of the state but increasing birth rates in the Central and San Joaquin Valley.
 - Increasing numbers of young children that speak a language other than English at home.

First 5 Stanislaus funding is spread across numerous priorities, such as mental health, school readiness, dental services, family resource centers, prenatal programs, etc. In light of the need to significantly decrease future community investment, the Commission should give serious consideration to refining its investment priorities.

- Consider priorities that address root cause issues.
- Discuss the idea of funding systems versus organizations.
- Identify a strategic balance of prevention and intervention goals.
- Identify opportunities to increase and coordinate funding for services for children from birth to age five in Stanislaus County.
- Identify other strategies that promote a sustainable system of support for children birth to age five and their families.
- Consider examining long-term population-based outcomes as well as program-based outcomes that have historically been used to assess progress and organize the community around key metrics of success.

Finally, given significant community need, declining First 5 Stanislaus revenue, and an overall lack of necessary funding for services for young children and families in the county, First 5 Stanislaus should consider ways to maximize existing funding and secure additional funding. Depending on the priorities established in the strategic direction setting/planning process, First 5 Stanislaus could consider the following strategies (See Section 4.B.III):

- Create strategies to maximize existing funding in the 0-5 system through system efficiencies and coordination of resources.
- Collaborate to secure additional funding for systems priority areas by seeking joint funding opportunities with partners.
- Support partners, through building partner capacity or providing direct support services to partners, to secure additional funding for the system of care for young children and their families and to promote system sustainability.
- Build internal fund development capacity in order to secure additional funding for First 5 Stanislaus.

First 5 Stanislaus has examined considerable evidence and data at the local, state, and federal levels surrounding supports, services, and policies for children birth to age five and their families. It must now use this information to make decisions about its future strategic directions.

1. Introduction

In June 2018, First 5 Stanislaus launched a six-month process to examine and re-establish its strategic direction, and to develop an associated strategic plan. This process is structured in three phases: I: Discovery, II: Planning, and III: Plan Development and Finalization. First 5 Stanislaus has engaged the [Glen Price Group \(GPG\)](#) to facilitate this planning process.

This report contains results from Phase I: Discovery, including results and analysis of extensive stakeholder input and information from secondary source materials. As its primary purpose, this report will inform subsequent planning phases, and in particular will be a key source of information for the Commission's discussions related to First 5 Stanislaus' future strategic direction.

Discovery Phase activities included:

- Phone interviews with key stakeholders
- Online stakeholder surveys
- Two focus groups of Spanish-speaking parents of young children
- One focus group of organizations funded by First 5 Stanislaus
- A review of stakeholder input previously collected through multiple mechanisms by First 5 Stanislaus Executive Director David Jones, including interviews and surveys
- A review of secondary source materials and data at the county, state, and national levels

Appendix II: Discovery Process and Stakeholder Engagement Methodology provides details about these various forms of stakeholder engagement.

Section 2 of the report (National and State Context) offers background and contextual information at the state and national levels, including information about the structure California's subsidized early childhood programs.

Section 3 (Stanislaus County Context) includes information about ongoing initiatives and collaborative efforts in the county, includes basic demographic information about county residents, and presents a more extensive analysis of the social determinants of health among county residents. The latter section aligns with indicators in use by other county and statewide efforts and draws on multiple county, state, and national data sources. Finally, Section 3 includes an accounting of community needs/challenges and assets/opportunities based on stakeholder input and community data.

Section 4 (Strategy Considerations) presents information about strategies being used or recommended by First 5 in California (at the First 5 Network, state, and individual county commission levels), and goes on to provide an exploratory analysis of potential future roles, issue areas, and fund development considerations for First 5 Stanislaus. This analysis is based on stakeholder input; community data (social determinants of health); and county, state, and national contexts.

Section 5 (Moving Forward: Strategic Direction Setting Questions) offers a recommended set of questions for First 5 Stanislaus Commissioners to discuss and address as they proceed through this planning process to set the agency's strategic direction and plans.

The appendices include a list of tables and figures (Appendix I.) and a summary of the discovery process and stakeholder engagement methodology (Appendix II.). They also include more detailed summaries of stakeholder input with a summary of stakeholder feedback by engagement opportunity (Appendix III.), a summary of parent focus group results (Appendix IV.), and a summary of results from the far-reaching stakeholder survey (Appendix V.). Endnotes and references are included in Appendix VI.

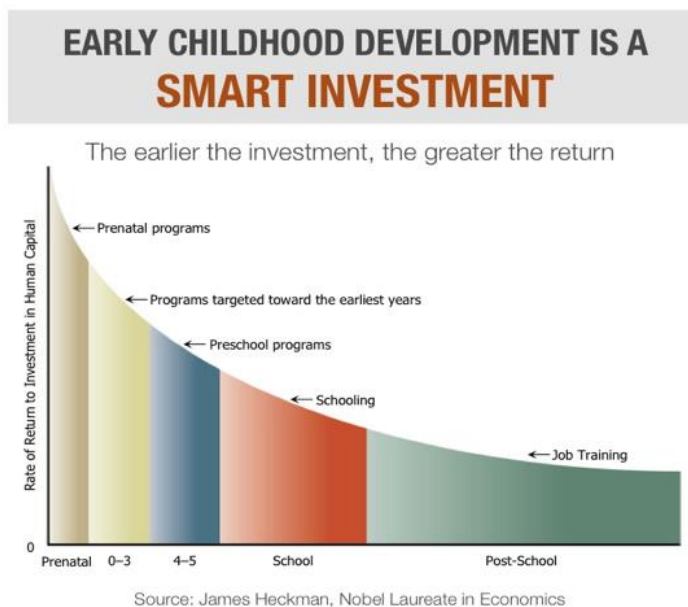
2. National and State Context

Key Takeaways and Considerations: National and State Context

- Growing public support for paid family leave and increased investments in early learning at the national, state, and local levels can be leveraged to increase investments for young children and their families.
- Significant advancements in brain science and a growing body of research by the National Academies of Sciences Engineering and Medicine and others demonstrate the clear impact of early investment in children on future life outcomes.
- There have been recent funding increases for services to young children and their families. Federally this includes a one-time increase to the Child Care and Development Block Grant, additional funding to expand Head Start, and the Preschool Development Grant as part of the Every Student Succeed Act. In California, this includes increases to child care provider reimbursement rates, increases in the number of children served through the California State Preschool Program and CalWorks child care vouchers, and overall increases to state education funding through its Local Control Funding Formula. Despite funding increases, access to services is still a major challenge for young children and their families.
- California faces demographic changes that will make it more important to target services to areas with significant numbers of young children, ensure services and programs support multilingualism and dual language development, and advance school readiness.

A growing body of research across disciplines demonstrates the importance of early brain development and the impact that high-quality early learning opportunities has on future outcomes for children. In the first few years of life, babies and toddlers form 700 new neural connections every second. These connections are formed and strengthened by interactions with adults, other children, and through their environment.¹ By the time children are 18-months-old, differences emerge in the size of children's

Figure 1: Heckman Curve



vocabulary based on the types of early learning and early experiences they have had. By the time children who have not had high-quality early learning experiences get to kindergarten they are already behind their peers.²

Physical Health, emotional health, social skills, and cognitive-linguistic capacities that emerge in the early years are all important for success in school, the workplace, and in the larger community. Importantly, high levels of stress (toxic stress) limits brain development, which can lead to long-term learning, behavior, and physical and mental health issues. While experiencing stress is a normal part of healthy

development, if the stress response remains activated at high levels for significant periods of time, the development of neural connections, especially in the areas of the brain dedicated to higher-order skills, can be limited or impeded.³ **This makes comprehensive services that address family functioning and early learning all the more important for young children and their families.**

The impact of supporting child development in the earliest years has been quantified through the work of Nobel Prize-winning economist James Heckman. The Heckman curve (see Figure 1 above) clearly demonstrates that the wisest dollar spent is one spent on quality early childhood programs.

In their newest research, Professor Heckman and his colleagues find a 13% return on investment for comprehensive, high-quality, birth-to-five early education. The research analyzes a wide variety of life outcomes, such as health, crime, income, IQ, schooling, and the increase in a mother's income after returning to work due to child care. This new ROI, representing high-quality, comprehensive programs from birth to five, is substantially higher than the 7-10% return previously established for preschool programs serving 3- to 4-year-olds.⁴

2.A Federal and National

At the national level, public discourse on the needs of young children and their families has been elevated in recent years. While in some cases, public support has translated to increased federal investments, notably the Child Care and Development Fund, there have been other areas where the interests of young children and their families have been neglected, such as immigration enforcement. Highlighted below are areas of forward progress at the national level:

Increased Public Support and Political Discourse: There is growing public support for increasing paid family leave and access to affordable child care and early education. These topics were elevated in the 2016 presidential election as leading issues for both parties and there is growing bipartisan support in the legislature. One example of this is the Child Care for Working Families Act, sponsored by Senator Patty Murray and Representative Robert C. Scott, which would guarantee child care assistance for families earning less than 150% of their state's median income and limit family payments to seven percent of their income.⁵ The bill would also provide a living wage to child care workers through compensation parity with elementary school teachers.⁶

Growing Body of Research: Nationally, a growing body of research clearly demonstrates the impact of quality early learning experiences. Advancements in brain science and neurological research provides striking evidence about how young children can be best supported to learn and develop. The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine is also elevating ways to improve early education systems and supports for families of young children:

- [*Transforming the Financing of Early Care and Education*](#) (2018) concludes that transforming the financing structure for early care and education to meet the needs of all children and families will require greater coordination among financing mechanisms, as well as significant investment and mobilization of resources across the public and private sectors. The report offers specific recommendations for making early childhood education and care more affordable for families, linking funding to high quality-standards, and financing the improvement of the early education and care workforce.
- [*Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation*](#) (2015) presents research about what professionals who provide care and education for children need to know and be able to do, and what professional learning supports they need; it defines a “unifying foundation” of child development knowledge that these professionals should have. The report demonstrates that this foundational knowledge is not fully reflected in the current workforce. In exploring the reasons for this, the report reveals deficiencies in the settings in which these professionals work the policies and infrastructure that set their qualifications and structure professional learning, and the government agencies that support and oversee these systems. The

report offers recommendations for building a workforce that understands the science of child development and early learning and has the knowledge and competencies that are needed to provide consistent, high-quality support for the development and learning of children from birth through age 8.

- [Parenting Matters](#) (2016) identifies parenting knowledge, attitudes, and practices associated with positive developmental outcomes in children ages 0-8, and universal/preventive and targeted strategies used in a variety of settings that have been effective with parents of young children to build and strengthen their knowledge, attitudes, and practices. The report also identifies barriers to and facilitators for parents' use of practices that lead to healthy child outcomes as well as barriers to parental participation in effective programs and services. This report makes recommendations directed at an array of stakeholders, for promoting the wide-scale adoption of effective programs and services for parents and for conducting further research to inform policy and practice.
- [Promoting the Educational Success of Children and Youth Learning English: Promising Futures](#) (2017) examines how evidence based on research relevant to the development of Dual Language Learners and English Learners can inform education and health policies and related practices that can result in better educational outcomes. The report makes recommendations for policy, practice, and research and data collection focused on addressing the challenges in caring for and educating Dual Language Learners and English Learners from birth to grade 12.

Increase and/or Reauthorized Federal Funding: The [bipartisan budget deal](#) passed on February 9, 2018 included some forward progress on budget priorities for young children and their families. This included:

- A one-time increase of **\$5.8 billion for the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG)** program over two years (\$2.9 billion per year), enabling states to expand child care assistance to nearly 230,000 additional children and bolster the safety and quality of child care.
- The reauthorization of the [Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program](#) (MIECHV) for five years.
- An **extension to the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)** through 2028.
- **\$6 billion to fight opioid and mental health crises** which could include funding for local prevention efforts.
- Extending funding for community health centers, the National Health Service Corps, and teaching health centers that operate Graduate Medical Education programs.
- **\$1 billion more for the Title I federal education funding**, which supports low-income students (totaling \$15 billion), which can be used for early learning services.

Shift in Federal Policy to Local Decision-making and Systems Building: The **Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)** reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and gave states more flexibility to invest in state-identified priorities and use multiple measures of student success for accountability purposes. ESSA also allows states to make investments to increase access to high-quality preschool through the **Preschool Development Grant Program**. On July 3, 2018, the Administration for Children and Families released a forecast for another round of funding of \$242,500,000 to be available for states on August 14, 2018. The new round, Preschool Development Grant Birth Through Five (PDG B-5) is intended to fund state efforts to coordinate existing early care and learning programs and services to meet identified needs.⁷

This progress is tempered by limited access to federal services, ongoing underinvestment, and harmful rhetoric around immigration at the highest levels of the federal government.

Limited access to services: While there has been some increase in funding, most families that qualify for federal services are still unable to access them. For instance, nationally, only 31% of eligible children ages 3 - 5 had access to Head Start and 7% of eligible children under 3 had access to Early Head Start).⁸

Furthermore, according to the National Home Visiting Resource Center, less than half of U.S. counties have evidence-based home visiting programs available for families.⁹

Significant levels of poverty: The United States ranks 31 of the 38 OECD countries with regard to levels of child poverty.¹⁰ Federal economic policy, combined with the challenge related to access to services outlined above, contribute to significant levels of child poverty across the country. These rates were impacted considerably during the Great Recession, with areas like Stanislaus County and the Central Valley hit particularly hard and for extended periods of time.

Harmful rhetoric about immigrants and immigration: The hostile discourse from both the White House and media outlets on immigrants – refugees, undocumented immigrants, and legal immigrants alike – has created fear among families and communities. As a result, local communities have experienced decreased engagement with these populations as a result of their fear.

2.B California

In California, the state’s system of care for young children and their families is disparate and fractured. Similar to the national context, California has made some significant progress in supporting young children and their families but significant challenges remain. Access to affordable and high-quality child care remains an important issue in the state. In a recent survey, 47% of California families with young children said that a parent left the job market to address child care needs.¹¹ Furthermore, demographic changes in the Golden State generally and in the Central Valley more specifically play an important role in considering ways the state and local regions can best meet the needs of children and families in the future.

I. Policy Landscape

California’s system of care for young children and their families has significant assets and the state has made progress in rebuilding this system since the deep and harmful cuts of the Great Recession.

Significant public support: Californians are supportive of increasing the state’s investment in early education. Overwhelming majorities of California adults (75%) and likely voters surveyed (71%) believe that the California state government should fund voluntary preschool programs for all four-year-olds.¹² Polling by the Silicon Valley Community Foundation’s Choose Children 2018 Campaign found that “Statewide, three-quarters of voters (75.4%) support dedicating a portion of the taxes generated from marijuana to help fund early childhood education programs while 70.6% of voters believe that paying for early childhood education programs should come from existing state funds.”¹³ Furthermore, a number of local efforts and ballot initiatives around the state have been successful at increasing investments in early learning and care. Recent victories include the Richmond Kids Initiative (passed with 76.6%), a marijuana tax to fund early childhood intervention and prevention in Yolo County (passed with 79%), and a gross receipts tax for businesses making over a million dollars to fund early care in San Francisco (passed with 50.3%). A measure in Alameda County came up short by 0.4% and will likely appear on the ballot again in November 2018.¹⁴ Given strong momentum and public support, early childhood education is likely to be an election issue for 2018 Gubernatorial and State Superintendent of Public Instruction candidates.

First 5 Commissions and Proposition 10: Proposition 10, the “Children and Families Act of 1998”, levied a tax on tobacco products and created a dedicated funding stream for a system of commissions dedicated to programs for early childhood development. The Act created the statewide commission, First 5 California, to support statewide programs, and local commissions for each county. Of the Proposition 10 revenue collected, 20% is allocated to First 5 California and 80% of the revenue is distributed to counties based on annual birth rates. While tobacco tax revenue is declining, First 5 Commissions remain a major asset to local and state early childhood system-building efforts.

Establishment of Transitional Kindergarten: Transitional Kindergarten (TK) is the first year of a two-year kindergarten sequence for some children in California. Established by the Kindergarten Readiness Act of 2010, TK is for children whose birthday falls between September and December, but districts are able to offer expanded TK to serve children outside of that age range. TK is a bridge between preschool and serves as an opportunity to better align the early learning and K-12 systems while also allowing more children to participate in early learning programs.

Local decision-making and priority-setting: California's state government devolves control to county agencies and school districts to set local priorities and make funding decisions. With regard to early learning, at the county level, county First 5 Commissions set strategic goals and objectives and invest tobacco tax revenue to achieve these local priorities related to issues affecting children from birth to age five. Additionally, local child care planning councils, housed in the County Offices of Education (COE), are responsible for identifying child care priorities for the county. COEs are also often involved in child care and early education services through the provision and/or coordination of professional development and technical assistance to early educators. Additionally, the COEs are responsible for supporting the development of and approving Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAPs) for districts within the county. Districts must engage families in the development of the LCAPs and are also able to prioritize early education and family strengthening efforts in the LCAP.

Diversity of Programs and Funding Streams: California has a significant number of Early Care and Education (ECE) programs that serve different purposes and different children. These programs are funded through a combination of federal, state, local, and private dollars and are required to meet a variety of program requirements. Importantly, there are two primary types of subsidized programs, those that primarily focus on child development and have to meet higher curricular and professional qualification requirements, and those designed to support working parents, which need to meet health and safety requirements. These programs can be administered in center-based settings, schools settings, licensed family child care homes, and license-exempt homes. Programs include:

- Alternative Payment Program (CalWORKs and non-CalWORKs)
- California State Preschool Program (CSPP)
- District-based Preschool (Usually Title 1)
- General Child Care and Development
- Head Start / Early Head Start
- Transitional Kindergarten

State Investments in Early Learning and Family Support Programs: **The state budget has been increasing funding for early care and education since 2013**, including:¹⁵

- An increase in child care and early education provider rates in 2014 to better reflect the current cost of care. The prior reimbursement rates were based on the cost of care in 2005. For providers that contract directly with the California Department of Education, reimbursement rates increased by more than 26%.
- The addition of more than 58,000 subsidized child care and education slots between 2013 and 2018 for eligible children.
- The increase of income eligibility ceilings for families receiving child care subsidies, reduced the number of eligibility redeterminations to once a year, and increased State Preschool income eligibility ceilings for children with disabilities.
- The Elimination of fees for families participating in part-day State Preschool in 2014
- The provision of grants and loans in 2014-15 and 2015-16 to improve quality, including \$50 million for the California State Preschool Program (CSPP) Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) Block Grants, \$24.2 million for the Infant/Toddler Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) Grant Program, and \$25 million for State Preschool and transitional kindergarten teacher training

- The provision \$10 million in loans for State Preschool facility expansion

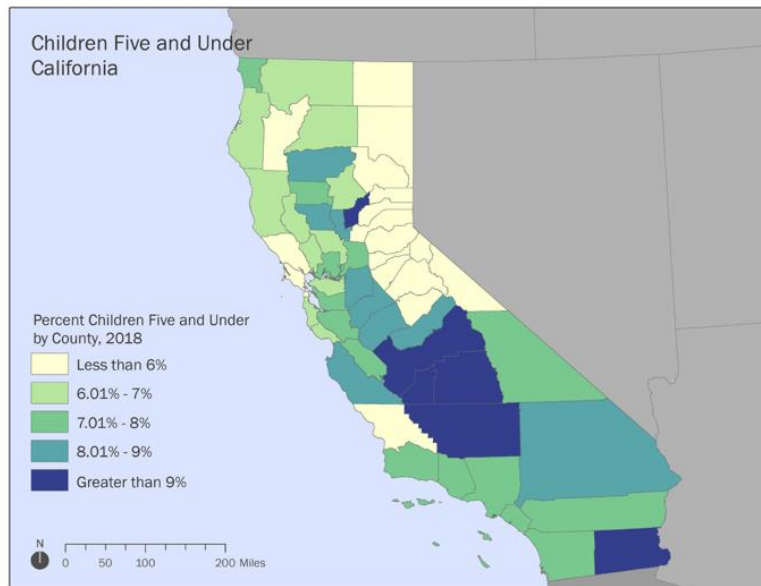
The **California State Budget for 2018-2019** was enacted on June, 27, 2018 and included approximately \$1 billion in new child care investments for 2018-19 and 2019-20.¹⁶ This included:

- The final reimbursement rate increases of a multi-year commitment for providers that contract directly with the Department of Education of approximately 2.8 percent
- The addition of 2,959 full-day slots to the State Preschool Program
- An increase of 13,407 child care vouchers through \$15.8 million of non-Prop 98 General Fund and \$204.6 million from the federal Child Care and Development Fund
- The creation of the Inclusive Early Education Expansion Program, which provides \$167.2 million in competitive grants to increase the availability of inclusive early education and care for children from birth to five, especially in low-income areas and in areas with relatively low access to care
- An increase of \$26.4 million in the federal Child Care and Development Fund in both 2018-19 and 2019-20 to increase inspections of licensed child care providers to happen annually
- A \$20 million allocation to the County Pilot for Inclusive Early Care, the Child Care Initiative Project, and licensed child care teacher professional development
- An increase of \$109.2 million in 2018-19 for increases in the number of CalWORKs Stage 2 and Stage 3 Child Care cases
- A \$26.7 million investment in a voluntary CalWORKs Home Visiting pilot program. The pilot program will provide home visitation services for up to 24 months to pregnant women and those with children under the age of two.

II. Demographic Changes

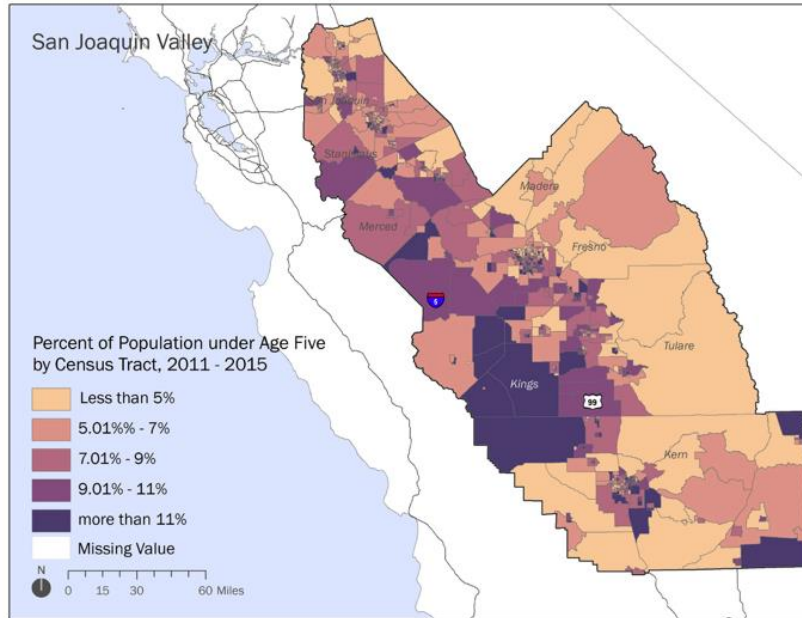
The state is facing demographic changes that will impact its early learning and family support systems in important ways. However, these **trends vary across the state, and localized demographic trends differ in important ways**. First, the percent of the population ages five and under in each county varies considerably across the state. The Central Valley has a higher proportion of children than other areas of the state, but this is highly variable within small areas as well.

Figure 2
California, % of Population Under Age 5 by County, 2018



Source: Pastor, Manuel. (2018, July). *Assembly Blue Ribbon Commission on Childhood Education*. [PowerPoint Slides]. Retrieved from: <https://speaker.asmdc.org/blue-ribbon-commission-early-childhood-education>

Figure 3
San Joaquin Valley, % of Population Under Age 5 by Census Tract, 2011-2015



Source: Pastor, Manuel. (2018, July). *Assembly Blue Ribbon Commission on Childhood Education*. [PowerPoint Slides]. Retrieved from: <https://speaker.asmdc.org/blue-ribbon-commission-early-childhood-education>

And, while many areas of the state are experiencing reductions in the birth to five population, the Central Valley is seeing growth:

Table 1: Growth Rates in State Population of Children Age Five and Under¹⁷	
CA Regions	2010-2040
Bay Area	0.6%
Central Coast	-4.5%
Central Sierra	-3.8%
Greater Sacramento	7.9%
Northern California	-1.9%
Northern Sacramento	1.1%
San Joaquin Valley	10.1%
Southern Border	-1.6%
Southern California	-15.6%

California also has considerable cultural and linguistic diversity across the state. Currently, 60% of children birth to age five in California live in a household where a language other than English is spoken.¹⁸ In certain regions of the state this is considerably higher.

Table 2: Race and Ethnicity in California, the San Joaquin Valley, and Stanislaus County			
Measure¹⁹	Stanislaus County	San Joaquin Valley²⁰	California
<i>Race and Ethnicity</i>			
White alone	74.6%	68.05%	59.7%
Black or African American alone	2.7%	4.70%	5.8%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	0.7%	0.99%	0.7%
Asian alone	5.4%	7.73%	14.3%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	0.7%	0.32%	0.4%
Some other race alone	11.5%	14.00%	14.4%
Two or more races	4.3%	4.70%	4.8%
Hispanic or Latino (regardless of race)	44.3%	51.04%	38.6%

Over time, California demographics will look similar to what the demographics of the Central Valley look like today, with greater numbers of young children from Hispanic/Latino families, many of whom will speak Spanish as their first language. The state will need to consider how to best meet the linguistic needs of its population while also ensuring that areas with growing numbers of young children have adequate services to meet those children’s and families’ needs.

This will be all the more imperative due to another demographic trend in the state and nation overall: The greying of the population. As the baby boomer generation retires and ages, it’s economically imperative that California prepare children today as much as possible to contribute economically. In fact, Californian demographer Dowell Myers notes, “Given the number of seniors they’ll be supporting, kids born in 2015 are literally twice as important as children born before 1985.”²¹

3. Stanislaus County Context

Key Takeaways and Considerations: Stanislaus County Context

- First 5 Stanislaus is an important asset in Stanislaus County and can serve to enhance, amplify, and complement local collaborative efforts focused on improving outcomes for Stanislaus County residents, notably efforts focused on prevention and the cradle to career continuum. With declining revenue, First 5 Stanislaus must be strategic about how it prioritizes its investments.
- Residents of Stanislaus County face significant economic challenges compared to residents of California generally. Specifically, a lower median income, lower levels of educational attainment, and high rates of unemployment contribute to economic instability and correlate highly with other negative outcomes for children and families.
- Both domestic violence reports and child abuse and neglect reports and substantiated cases have higher rates in the county than the statewide average. Child abuse and neglect rates are particularly high for Black and Native American children at more than twice the rate of any other racial/ethnic group.
- While Stanislaus County generally has health outcomes on par with state levels, there are considerable health disparities among different demographic groups- notable African Americans.
- Stanislaus County trails the state in third grade reading proficiency and in preschool attendance rates. Educational attainment in the county is overall lower than the state, and parents of young children (0-5) have lower formal education levels than others in the county.
- There is a growing awareness in the Stanislaus County educational community that what happens to a child before they reach kindergarten has significant impact on longer-term outcomes.
- Measures on a number of key indicators (such as adverse childhood experience rates, instances of child abuse, etc.) indicate the need to strengthen families.
- Stakeholder perspectives about community challenges generally (though not universally) align with the data on social determinants of health, and across stakeholder groups (notably those identifying as only parents/caregivers of children 0-5 compared to all others) there are areas of both agreement and disagreement on the priority level of different community needs.
- A number of community assets and opportunities exist for First 5 Stanislaus to consider in its strategic direction setting and planning work, especially pertaining to ongoing collaborative and cross-sector efforts.

3.A First 5 Stanislaus

After the passage of Proposition 10, the California Children and Families Act, in November of 1998 the Stanislaus County Children and Families Commission / First 5 Stanislaus was established by the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors on December 8, 1998. Since its inception, the Commission has invested more than \$120 million into the community with the mission of giving children 0-5 their best start in life. These investments have been through multiple programs and services.

First 5 Stanislaus' most recent strategic plan includes the following areas of focus:

1. Families are supported and safe in communities that are capable of supporting safe families
2. Children are eager and ready learners
3. Children are born healthy and stay healthy
4. Sustainable and coordinated systems are in place that promote the well-being of children 0-5

Between 2012 and 2017, First 5 Stanislaus funding has primarily supported Improved Family Functioning (Focus Area 1) and Improved Health (Focus Area 3) at approximately 60-62% and 20-23% respectively of the agency budget in each year during this period. Within Result Area 1, First 5 Stanislaus funding has shifted over this period to reduce funding for distribution of kits for new parents and increase funding for community resource and referral. Funding priorities within Result Area 3 also changed during this period with a significant reduction in funding for health access and increases to funding for oral health and maternal and child health care.²²

In relation to the continuum of prevention and intervention programs, in 2016-17 the First 5 Stanislaus program budget was dedicated as follows: 46% to Broad Intervention, 43% to Intense Intervention, and 11% to Prevention.²³ The First 5 Stanislaus 2016-17 Annual Program Evaluation defines these levels along the continuum of prevention and intervention as follows:

- **Prevention:** Strategies delivered to the 0-5 population and their families without consideration of individual differences in need/risk of not thriving.
- **Broad Intervention:** Strategies delivered to sub-groups of the 0-5 population and their families identified on the basis of elevated risk factors for not thriving.
- **Intense Intervention:** Strategies delivered to sub-groups of the 0-5 population and their families identified on the basis of initiated or existing conditions that place them at high risk for not thriving

First 5 Stanislaus also co-funds community services. First 5 Stanislaus currently has seven three-year contracts with organizations providing family support services, including Differential Response services. These contracts are partly funded by the Commission and partly funded by the Community Services Agency. The Community Services Agency funding is for differential response work and is \$900,000 per year of the total contract amount for all Differential Response Family Resource Center contracts. First 5 Stanislaus funding is \$1,559,357 per year. Total combined contract funding is \$2,459,357 per year.²⁴

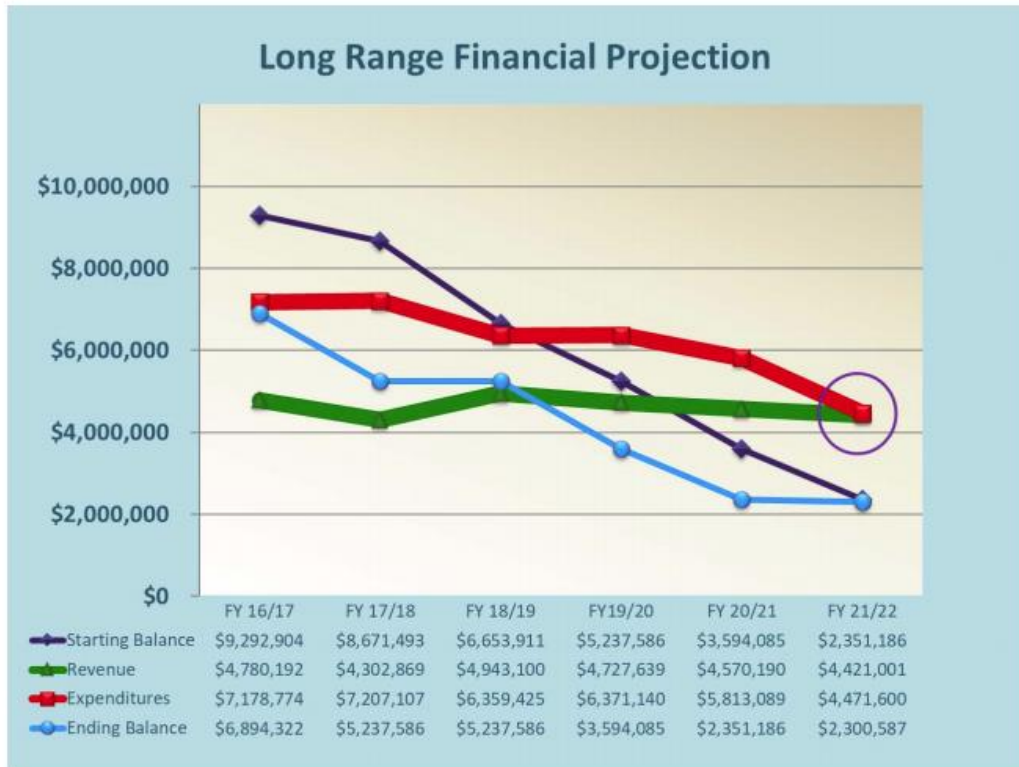
In 2016-2017, First 5 Stanislaus invested in programs that reached 31,178 children, parents, and providers, provided parents support and education to the parents of 2,490 children, provided pregnancy education and support to 457 women, and delivered developmental screenings to 1,681 children.²⁵

First 5 Stanislaus, like all First 5 Commissions across the state, faces declining revenues and rising expenditures. Proposition 10 funding from state tobacco revenue is expected to continue to decline. For Fiscal Year 2017-2018, First 5 Stanislaus spending was budgeted for \$7.2 million while revenues were projected to be \$4.3 million.²⁶

First 5 Stanislaus has done long range financial projections with the assumption of a “spend down” of the Commission Fund Balance (from \$6.9 million in FY 16-17 to \$2.3 million in FY 21/22). The long-term strategic spend down has been implemented to “provide stability to its funded programs and to protect Commission funds from being redirected by the State for other uses outside of Stanislaus County. This type of strategic spend-down has been mirrored by other First 5’s throughout the state over the past 10 years.”²⁷ Nevertheless, First 5 Stanislaus must examine its budget to ensure future sustainability. This has caused First 5 Stanislaus to reduce annual contractual obligations to service providers and Family Resource Centers (FRCs) and consider significant changes to its strategic direction.

The 2018-2020 strategic plan includes the following long-range financial projection:

Figure 4



3.B. Community Initiatives

Stanislaus county has a number of important collaborative efforts underway that seek to improve outcomes for the people of Stanislaus. These initiatives may provide good opportunities for First 5 Stanislaus to partner with other services providers, funders, and public entities to best serve the region’s young children.

- The **Stanislaus County Focus on Prevention Movement (FOP)** is a ten-year collective impact initiative focused on community transformation and prosperity. While led by a Stewardship Council reflecting ten different sectors of the community, the effort has a long-term funding commitment from the Board of Supervisors. This effort is focused on improving the quality of life of all Stanislaus County residents and families through coordinated prevention efforts working across multiple sectors. Four levers of change have been identified for the community, and two are underway - reducing homelessness and strengthening families. The FOP’s backbone agencies are Stanislaus County and the United Way of Stanislaus.
- The **Stanislaus County Cradle to Career (C2C) Partnership** is a collective impact partnership with a mission of aligning sectors and systems in Stanislaus County to ensure successful outcomes from cradle to career. As a collective impact initiative, C2C is organized by two backbone agencies, the Stanislaus Community Foundation and the Stanislaus County Office of Education; a leadership network; and four action teams. The four action teams are: **StanReady!**, which focuses on kindergarten readiness; **StanReads!/StanMath!**, which focuses on K-8 learning and success; **StanFutures!**, which focuses on high school and postsecondary educational success; and **StanCareers!**, which focuses on successful entrance to self-sustaining careers.
- The Stanislaus County Public Health Department is taking significant steps through their **Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP)** process and implementation of the results of the Health Services Agency strategic visioning process. The

Public Health Department is operating the Framework for a **Thriving Stanislaus** project which commenced in 2009 as more than 100 partners from 50 organizations met together to discuss findings from the Community Health Assessment and to plan for the future. The Framework project is a plan designed to focus attention on key areas related to the four broad determinants of health. The Department of Public Health is also considering a significant effort to move toward population-based outcomes and initiatives as a result of the recent strategic visioning process.

- The **Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparity (R.E.D.)** grant through the Stanislaus County Probation Department is a multi-year project with a multi-phase approach to reduce over representation of youth of color coming into contact with the criminal justice system. This project is now in Phase 4 which includes the involvement of multiple community and agency stakeholders. Probation staff work in partnership with the Prison Law Office for technical guidance. The project uses work groups to help advance priorities including offering mentoring, re-entry, and recreational and family-like programs to help engage identified at-risk youth.
- The **Legacy Health Endowment** was created in 2014 after the sale of non-profit Emanuel Medical Center to Tenet Health and proceeds were placed in a charitable foundation. The Endowment exists to improve the health and healthcare of all residents residing within Stanislaus and Merced Counties by increasing access to various healthcare services and educating people about healthy lifestyle decisions. Their stated objective is to dramatically improve quality of life within the community.

Stanislaus County also has networks of resource centers and service providers positioned geographically around the county to meet the needs of the population generally, and serve families with young children more specifically.

- First 5 Stanislaus currently provides funding support for 12 of the **Family Resource Centers (FRCs)** sites operating in the County. Seven are Differential Response FRCs. Each FRC provides core services including, community resources and referrals, strength-based assessments, parent support, school readiness information dissemination, etc. Each site also provides unique services that address the needs of the community in which it is located.²⁸ In February 2018, the First 5 Stanislaus Commission approved a 10% reduction to Commission funding in Fiscal Year 2018-2019 for each of the FRC providers. Some of the FRCs are co-funded with the Community Services Agency (CSA), and CSA funding amounts for FRCs were not impacted by this change.
- First 5 Stanislaus provides funding support to 10 **Healthy Start** sites through a subcontract operated by the Stanislaus County Office of Education. Healthy Start sites operate during the school year and support and strengthen families by improving and integrating systems of care to enhance the well-being of children from birth to age five. Healthy Start families learn about current health and wellness information to improve their family's health. They also learn about community resources available to assist them.
- The **Stanislaus County Health Services Agency (HSA)** administers a network of primary care, specialty, and physical rehabilitation clinics to provide medical services for the underserved community. These clinics serve as a safety net provider of healthcare for medically indigent adults in the county. However, the future of the clinic system is in question. As a result of considerable changes in operating context over time, the HSA has gone through a strategic visioning and business and facility planning process. Part of this process was focused on the future of the clinic system, which will require more funding support in future years. Evaluation of the clinic system showed that "there has been a declining patient volume for the HSA clinics and an increase in total expenses"²⁹ due to growing numbers of alternative safety net providers. The HSA has been advised to "explore clinical care alternatives by other mission-driven safety net providers that may be better positioned than HSA in the future to provide sustainable, high-quality clinical services in multiple community locations."³⁰ In this scenario, services provided directly by the county would focus on community health promotion and protection, and health services would be provided through a Request for Qualifications/Proposals process to fund

continued access to care for low-income residents. Of note, Golden Valley Health Centers operate 10 locations in Stanislaus County targeting medical services for the underserved community and Livingston Community Health operates two sites in the County.

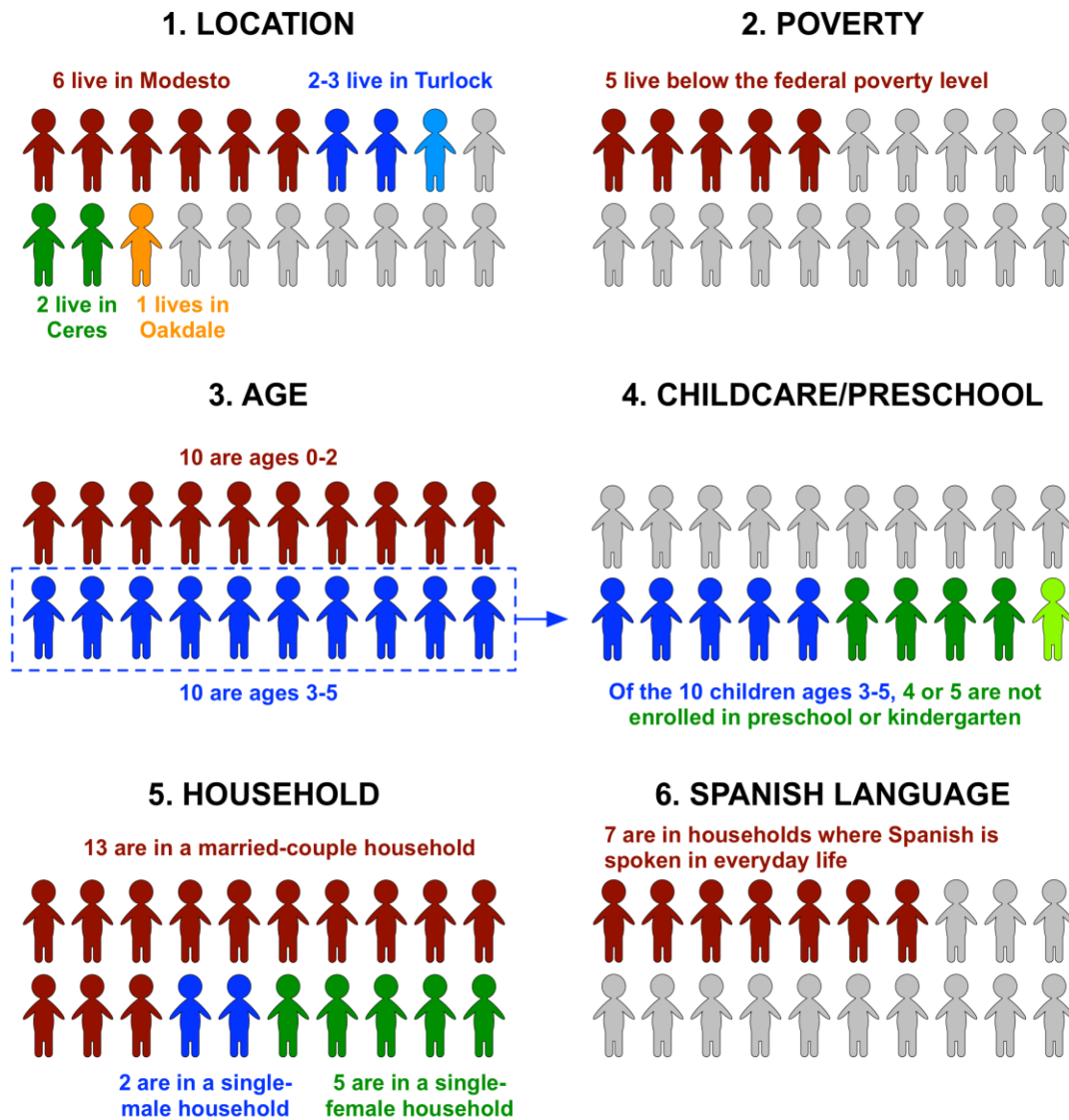
3.C. Demographics & Social Determinants of Health in Stanislaus County

In order to identify the right strategies for supporting young children and their families in Stanislaus County, it is first critical to understand who these young children and their families are.

I. A Snapshot of Young Children

As an example, imagine a playground in the heart of Stanislaus County. There are 20 young children age five and under playing, learning, and interacting with one another.³¹ Of the 20 children on the playground:

Figure 5



Sources: 1) US Census Bureau Population Estimates (V2017); 2) 2016 5-Year ACS S1701; 3) 2016 5-Year ACS B09001; 4) Kidsdata.org: Population Reference Bureau, analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey microdata files (Mar. 2016); 5) 2016 5-Year ACS B11003; 6)

While the playground example above is a way to more symbolically understand the different circumstances and diversity of children and families in Stanislaus’ County, it’s important to dig deeper into data on the demographics and social determinants of health in the region.

A Snapshot of Parents of Young Children (0-5) in Stanislaus County

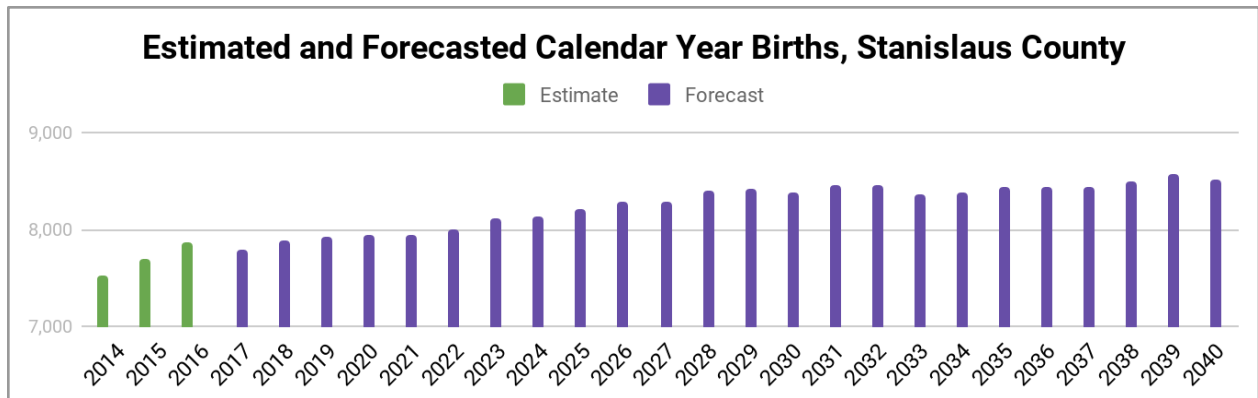
Of Stanislaus County **adults with children from birth to age five:**³²

- 13.6% went without at least one basic need in past 12 months
- 50.2% are employed full-time
- 9.3% reported less than \$929 in monthly household income
- 42% have a HS diploma / GED or less in formal education
- 45.4% are Hispanic/Latino (vs. 34.3% of all county adults)
- 9.6% are Asian (vs. 6.6% of all county adults)
- 65.5% are married or in a registered domestic partnership (vs. 59.1% of all county adults)
- 17.6% are in a long-term relationship and/or living together (vs. 13.8% of all county adults)
- 73.6% speak English in everyday life (vs. 84.3% of all county adults)
- 36.7% speak Spanish in everyday life (vs. 25.6% of all county adults)
- 20.2% of women experienced prenatal depressive symptoms and 16.8% experienced postpartum depressive symptoms

II. Demographics

California’s annual number of births is projected to decrease from 488,490 in 2016 to 464,957 in 2030 and then increase slightly to 474,034 by 2040. In contrast, **the birth rate for Stanislaus County is projected to increase from 7,867 in 2016 to 8,384 in 2030 and to 8,507 by 2040.**³³

Figure 6



Source: California Department of Finance. Demographic Research Unit. 2018. Historical and Projected Fertility Rates and Births, 1990-2040. Sacramento: California Department of Finance. January 2018.

Stanislaus County has a population of 547,899. The tables below provide data on the population of major cities in the county (Table 3); race and ethnicity, and median income (Table 4); and language spoken at home and English learner student status (Table 5).

Table 3: Population of Major Cities in Stanislaus County

City	Population	Percent of County Population
Modesto	214,221	39%
Turlock	73,556	13%
Ceres	48,697	9%
Oakdale	23,150	4%

Table 4: Race and Ethnicity and Median Household Income

Measure ³⁴	Stanislaus County	California
<i>Race and Ethnicity</i>		
White alone	74.6%	59.7%
Black or African American alone	2.7%	5.8%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	0.7%	0.7%
Asian alone	5.4%	14.3%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	0.7%	0.4%
Some other race alone	11.5%	14.4%
Two or more races	4.3%	4.8%
Hispanic or Latino (regardless of race)	44.3%	38.6%
<i>Income</i>		
Median household income (in 2016 dollars), 2012-2016	\$51,591	\$63,783

Table 5: Language Spoken at Home and English Learner Students

Measure ³⁵	Stanislaus County	California
<i>Language Spoken at Home</i>		
English only	59.1%	55.4%
Spanish	32.2%	29.0%
Other Indo-European languages	3.8%	4.5%
Asian and Pacific Islander languages	2.9%	10.0%
Other languages	2.0%	1.1%
<i>English Learner Students (Source: DataQuest, 2017-18 School Year Data)</i>		
English Learners in Kindergarten	35.1%	32.1%
English Learners in K-12	24.0%	20.4%

III. Social Determinants of Health

Social determinants of health are conditions in the environments in which people spend considerable time that affect a wide range of health outcomes and risks. They include issues related to economic stability, education, social and community context, health and health care, and neighborhood and built environment.³⁶ The social determinants of health in this report include a processed set of indicators with considerable relevance to Stanislaus County and First 5 Stanislaus.

The social determinants of health below were identified by compiling indicators from aligned initiatives and organizations in Stanislaus County and California (including Focus on Prevention, Cradle to Career Partnership, and the First 5 Association). After compiling, GPG reviewed the list of indicators to remove duplicative and less relevant indicators. In addition, GPG added indicators relevant for First 5 Stanislaus' strategic direction-setting and planning work, and then evaluated all indicators based on the availability of data.³⁷ The indicators were then grouped into five categories:

1. Economic conditions
2. Safety/community
3. Child, parent, and community health
4. Child education

After establishing its strategic direction and priorities, First 5 Stanislaus might return to the indicators presented below and consider adopting a subset of them as indicators of success.³⁸

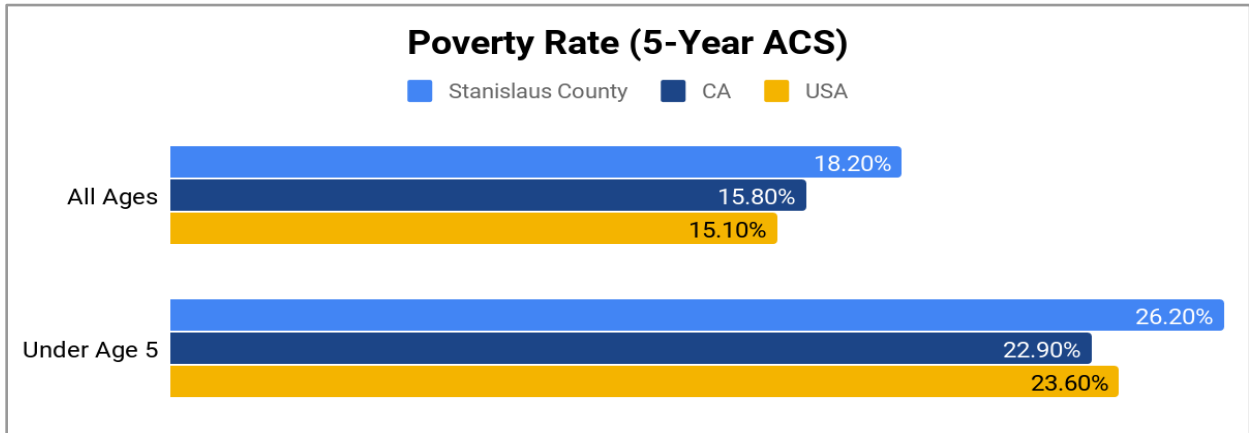
ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Economic conditions in the county contribute significantly to the health and well-being of young children and their future outcomes. The indicators included below are measurable indicators of economic conditions, such prevalence of poverty, to give a portrait of how children and their families are likely to be living. Stanislaus County has a history of challenging economic conditions with greater rates of poverty, unemployment, and foreclosure than the state averages.

1. Federal Poverty Rate

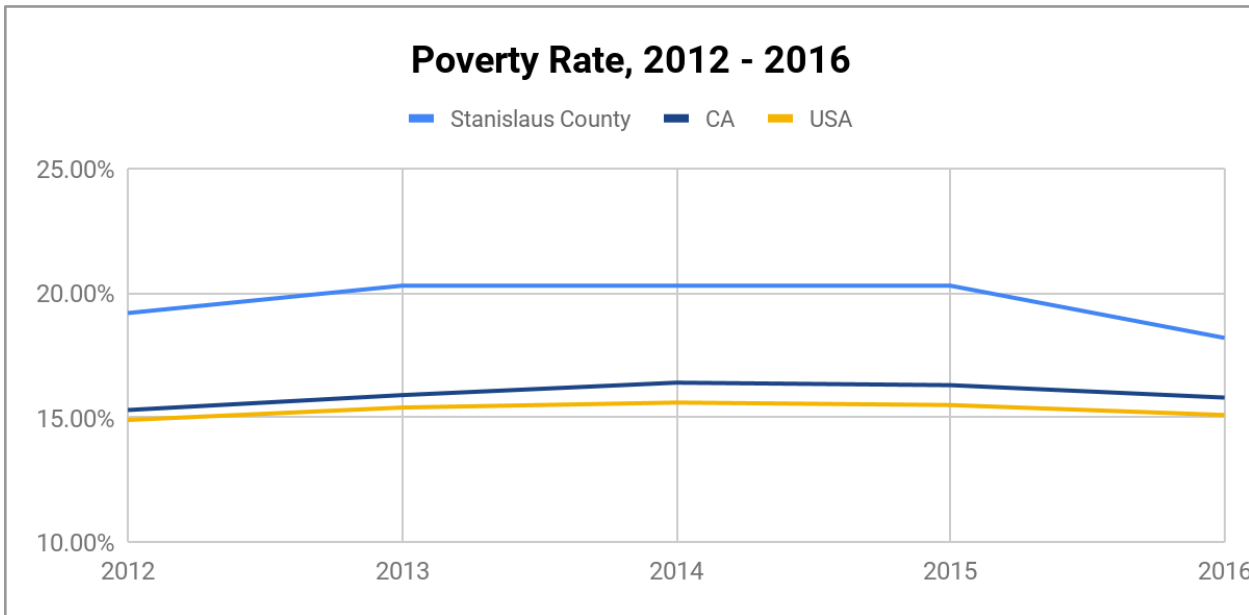
California's Central Valley is one of the poorest areas in the nation and has been compared to Appalachia due to its reliance on a single extractive industry, its high levels of unemployment and poverty, and a relatively unskilled workforce.³⁹ **The population of Stanislaus county faces more challenging economic circumstances than the state overall with a lower median income and higher rates of poverty in the last twelve months and historically over time.** The Stanislaus County poverty rate was fairly consistent between 2012 and 2016 and in 2016 the county rate was significantly higher than both the statewide and national poverty rates. As noted in the 2018 MCAH Stanislaus County Needs Assessment, during this period, **poverty increased among Indian/Alaska Natives, Asians, those of multiple races, and Non-Latinos.**

Figure 7



Source: 5-Year ACS 2012-2016, Table S1701

Figure 8



Source: 5-Year ACS 2012-2016

The poverty rate in the county for families with a female householder and no husband present, with related children of the householder under five years old, is 44.3% (CA rate is 39.3%). Expanding this to include households with children under 5 years that also have children between 5 and 17 raises the poverty rate to 59.6% (the California rate is 54.8%).⁴⁰

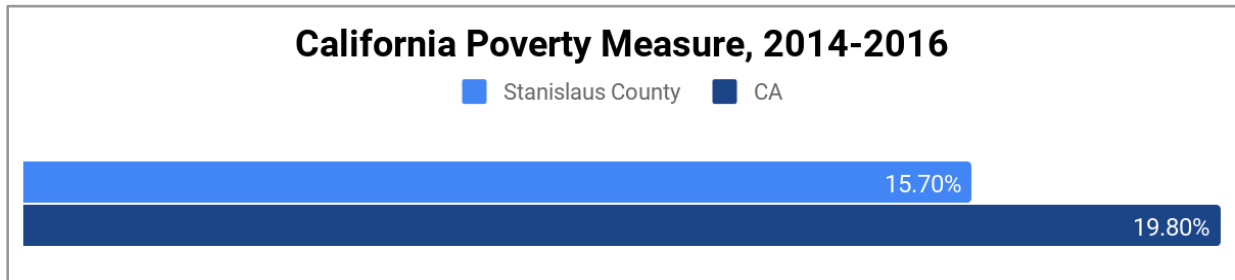
2. California Poverty Measure (CPM)

The California Poverty Measure (CPM), jointly produced by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) and Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality, “draws on administrative and survey data to deliver the state’s most comprehensive measure of poverty.” The CPM incorporates elements like housing costs, food stamps, and other non-cash benefits in order to provide more accuracy in calculating poverty in California.

The 2014-2016 average CPM rate for Stanislaus County was 15.7% compared to 19.8% for the state as a whole, indicating that when additional factors like cost of living and public benefits are accounted for,

Stanislaus fares slightly better than the state average. Notably, the CPM takes into account social safety net programs. PPIC estimated that in the Central Valley and Sierra region, the CPM would be 13.9% higher without the social safety net. These data suggest a possible combination of lower cost of living and higher take-up rate of safety-net services in Stanislaus County (see also 3. CalFresh and SNAP Enrollment), both of which would result in lower the CPM rate for the county. Other counties that would be considered relatively wealthy, such as Los Angeles and Santa Cruz, have the highest poverty rates in California, potentially due to high costs of living.

Figure 9



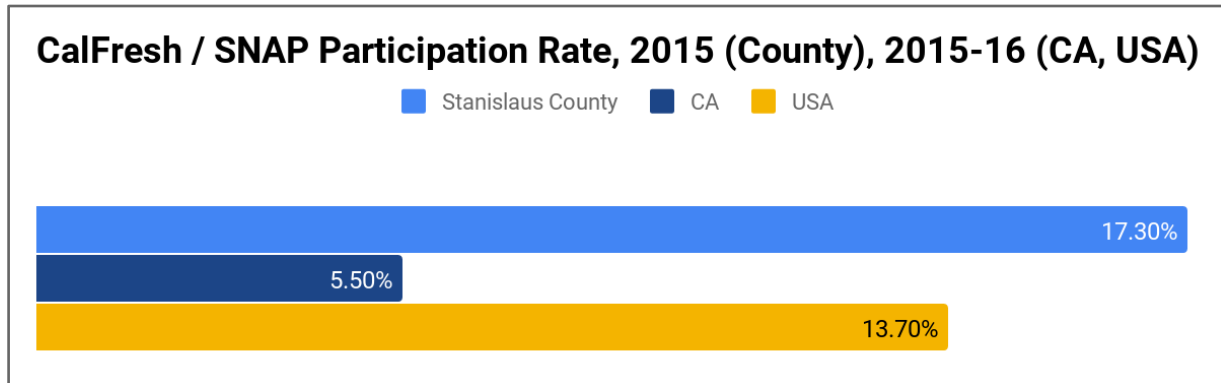
Source: PPIC

3. CalFresh and SNAP Enrollment

CalFresh enrollment has increased dramatically over time in Stanislaus County from 39,926 in 2005 to 92,572 in 2015.⁴¹ Some of the increase in enrollment can be explained by increase in population and changes in eligibility requirements.⁴²

Meanwhile, CalFresh enrollment across the state has declined over the past three years from 2.14 million in 2015-16 to 1.87 million in 2017-18.⁴³ **The County's CalFresh benefits rate is substantially higher than the state rate and the federal SNAP participation rate.**

Figure 10



Sources: Kidsdata.org, California Department of Social Services, USDA

4. Housing: Median Value, Median Rent, Foreclosure Rate, Vacant Housing Units, Rent as Percentage of Household Income

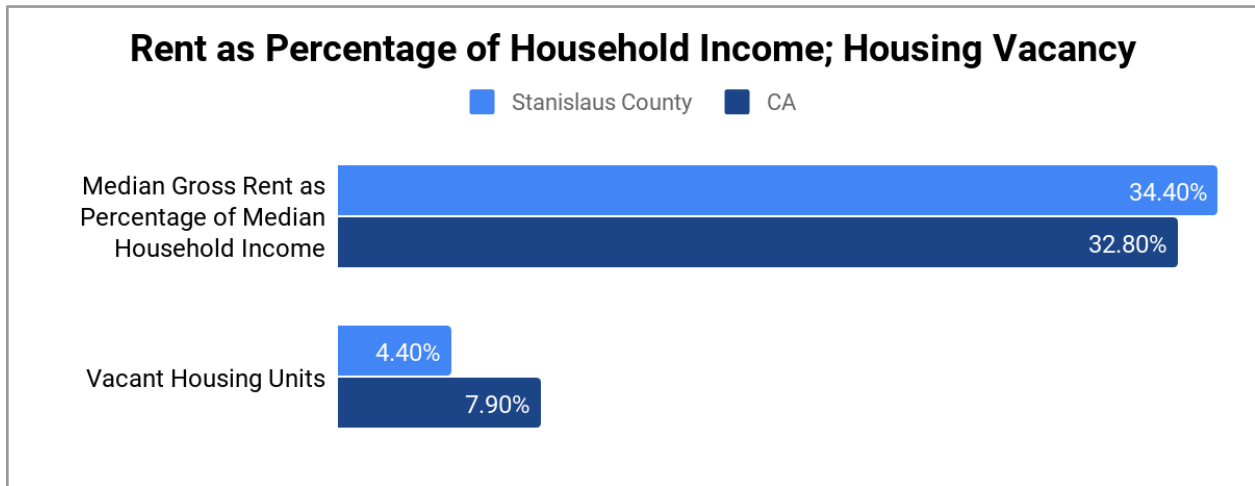
The median value of owner-occupied housing units in Stanislaus County (\$274,300) is 57% of the statewide median value of \$477,500.⁴⁴ Trulia's Stanislaus County market profile indicates a median sales price between May 2 and Aug 1, 2018, of \$290,000 based on 767 home sales.⁴⁵

Median rent in the county is \$1,036, which is only moderately lower than the statewide median of \$1,375. Despite the lower median rent in the county, **median gross rent as a percentage of household income is higher for Stanislaus County (34.4%) than the statewide average (32.8%).** In the county, 4.4% of

housing units are vacant compared to 7.9% in the state.⁴⁶ Trulia’s Stanislaus County market profile indicates much higher rent amounts with a median rent of \$1,600 between July 7 and August 7, 2018, but does not provide comparison data at the statewide level.⁴⁷ Zillow data for June 2018 indicates average rent list prices of \$1,456 for Stanislaus County and \$2,507 for California.⁴⁸ Based on U.S. Census Bureau data as well as median sales price and rent information from Trulia and Zillow, **there is a clear trend of increasing housing costs both at the county and state levels.**

Despite population growth in the county, the estimated housing units available has remained relatively flat between 2010 and 2017, with an estimated 179,579 units available in 2010, and 181,602 available in 2017.⁴⁹ Housing development has declined in recent years, with 179 housing units estimated built in 2014 or later, and 1,416 built between 2010 and 2013.⁵⁰ Between 2000 and 2009, 30,300 housing units were built.⁵¹ Both renters and owners in Stanislaus County have less income left after housing expenses than the statewide averages, though there is a much greater difference between the county and state amounts for owners.

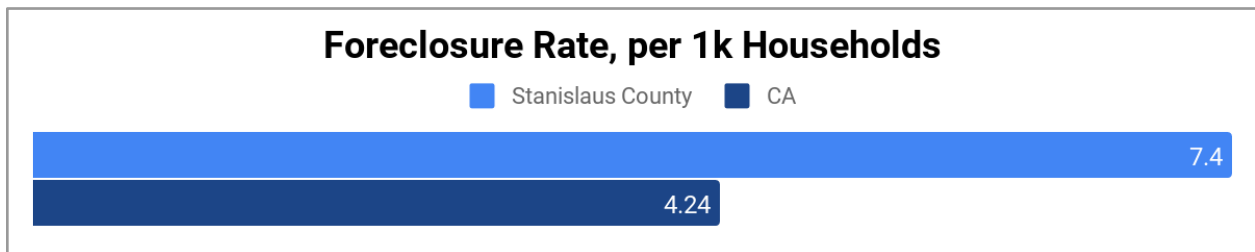
Figure 11



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2016 1-Year Estimates

The great recession had a disproportionate impact on home values and foreclosures in the Central and San Joaquin Valley. At the start of the recession, home prices barely declined in 2007 in most coastal areas, while prices tumbled in the valley. Prices in the San Francisco metro area fell 0.9% and less than 4% in Santa Cruz, San Jose, and Los Angeles while prices fell more than 15% in the northern San Joaquin Valley areas of Merced, Modesto, and Stockton. This was the largest one-year decline of any California metro area in previous 30 years, reversing some of the rapid gains in home prices in the Central Valley in the early 2000s.⁵² This has had long-term lasting consequences. More recently, **the rate of home foreclosures in Stanislaus County was nearly 1.75 times the state rate between 2010-2014.** Within the county the **rate was highest for Latino homeowners with 8.69 foreclosures per 1,000 households.**⁵³

Figure 12

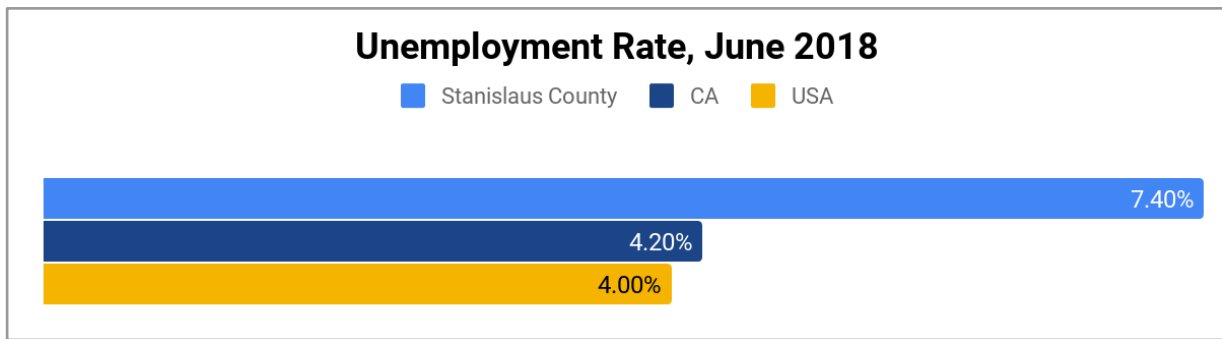


Source: Race Counts with raw data from Dataquick

5. Unemployment Rate

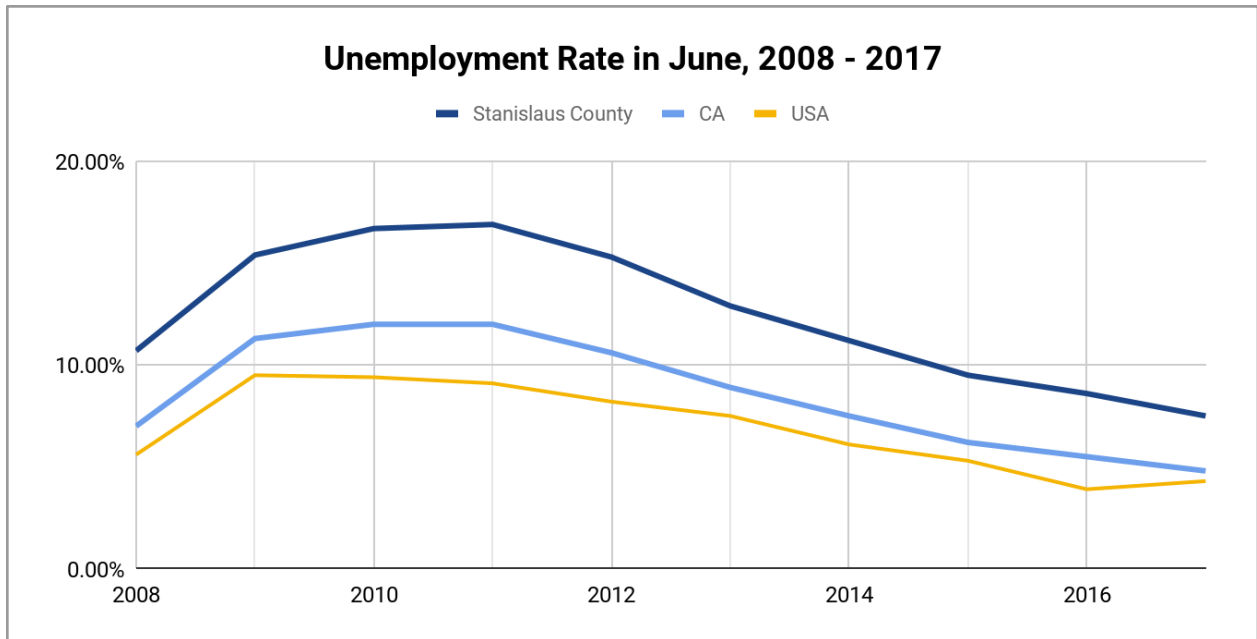
The **unemployment rate is substantially higher in Stanislaus County (7.4%) than the average rates for the state and nation (4.1% and 4.0% respectively)**. Unemployment in Stanislaus County has been significantly higher than the state and national rates for decades, with the county rate frequently surpassing two times the national rate.⁵⁴

Figure 13



Sources: California Employment Development Department June 2018 California Labor Force & Unemployment Rates by County and U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey

Figure 14



Sources: California Employment Development Department, California Labor Force & Unemployment Rates by County, and U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey

Importantly, 2014 data indicates that the percentage of children without secure parental employment is higher in Stanislaus County (39.5%) than California (32.8%). This percentage is even higher in the city of Modesto (45.8%).⁵⁵

6. Internet Access at Home

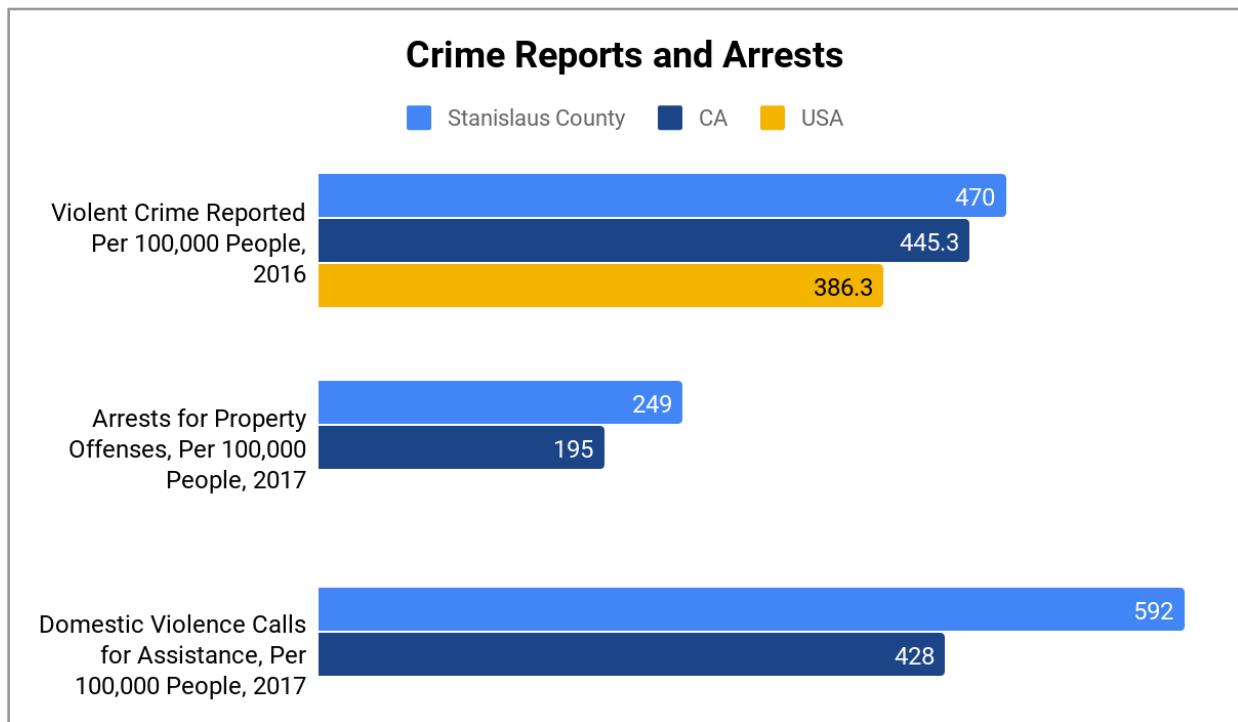
In Stanislaus county, 83.2% of households have an Internet subscription compared to 85.6% of households in California and 81.9% of households nationally. While the overall rate of household subscriptions is similar to the statewide and national figures, Stanislaus County has achieved a significant increase in home Internet connection rates - from 71% in 2013 to 83.2% in 2016.⁵⁶

SAFETY/COMMUNITY

1. Crime Reports and Arrests

In 2016, the **rate of violent crime reported, arrests for property offenses, and domestic violence-related calls for assistance in Stanislaus County was higher than the statewide average.** Furthermore, the total number of domestic violence-related calls in the county has increased significantly from 2,447 (466 per 100,000) in 2013 to 3,244 (592 per 100,000) in 2017.⁵⁷

Figure 15

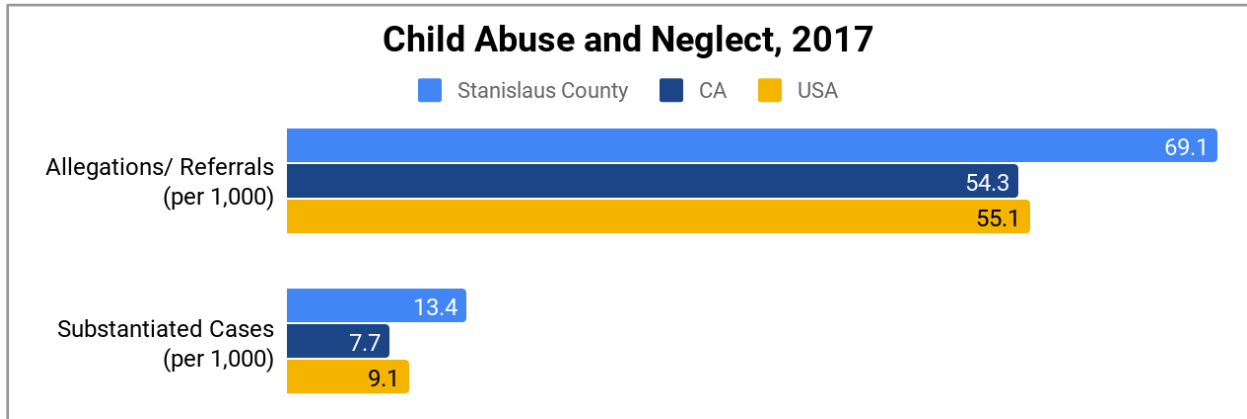


Source: FBI 2016 Crime in the US (violent crime), CA DOJ Crime Statistics 2008-2017 - Arrests (property crime) in 2017, CA DOJ Crime Statistics 2008-2017 - Domestic Violence calls for assistance in 2017

2. Child Abuse and Neglect: Reports and Substantiated Cases

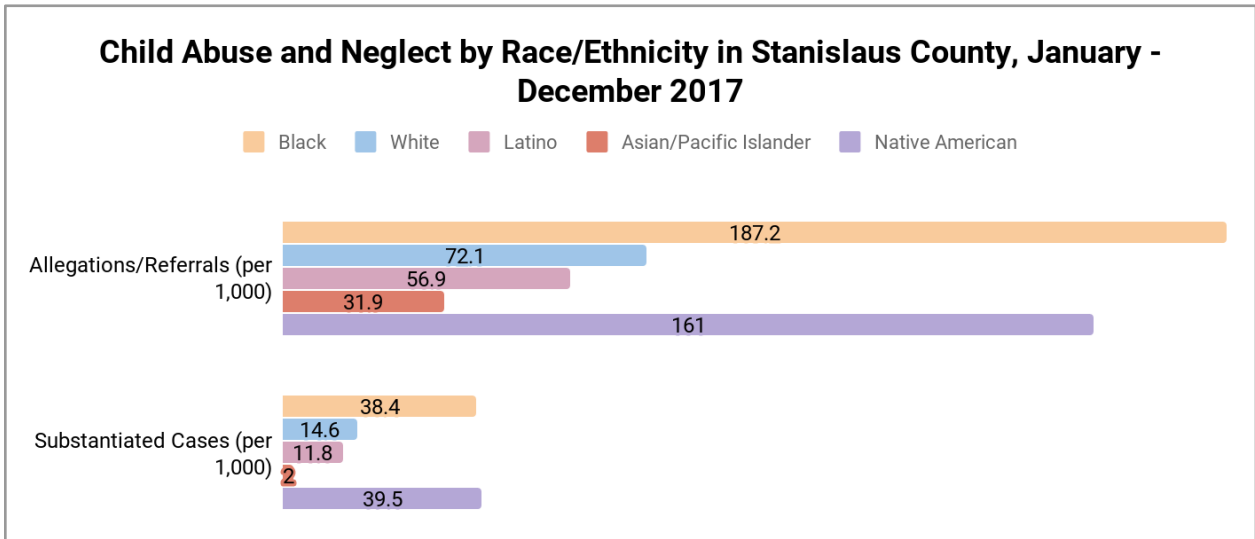
Both the rates of child abuse or neglect allegations and substantiated cases are higher in Stanislaus County than the state or nation. The rate of substantiated cases in the county is nearly 75% higher than the state rate. Within the county, **these rates are much higher for Black and Native American children (38.4 and 39.5 per 1,000 people) compared to the county average of 13.5 per 1,000 people. (more than twice the county average)** and much lower than the county average for Asian/Pacific Islander children (2 per 1,000 people).

Figure 16



Source: Webster, D., Lee, S., Dawson, W., Magruder, J., Exel, M., Cuccaro-Alamin, S., Putnam-Hornstein, E., Wiegmann, W., Saika, G., Eyre, M., Chambers, J., Min, S., Randhawa, P., Sandoval, A., Yee, H., Tran, M., Benton, C., White, J., & Lee, H. (2018). CCWIP reports. Retrieved 7/31/2018, from University of California at Berkeley California Child Welfare Indicators Project website. URL: <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb_childwelfare>, and U.S. Department of Health, Administration for Children and Families, Children’s Bureau, “Child Maltreatment 2016.”

Figure 17



Source: Webster, D., Lee, S., Dawson, W., Magruder, J., Exel, M., Cuccaro-Alamin, S., Putnam-Hornstein, E., Wiegmann, W., Saika, G., Eyre, M., Chambers, J., Min, S., Randhawa, P., Sandoval, A., Yee, H., Tran, M., Benton, C., White, J., & Lee, H. (2018). CCWIP reports. Retrieved 7/31/2018, from University of California at Berkeley California Child Welfare Indicators Project website. URL: <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb_childwelfare>

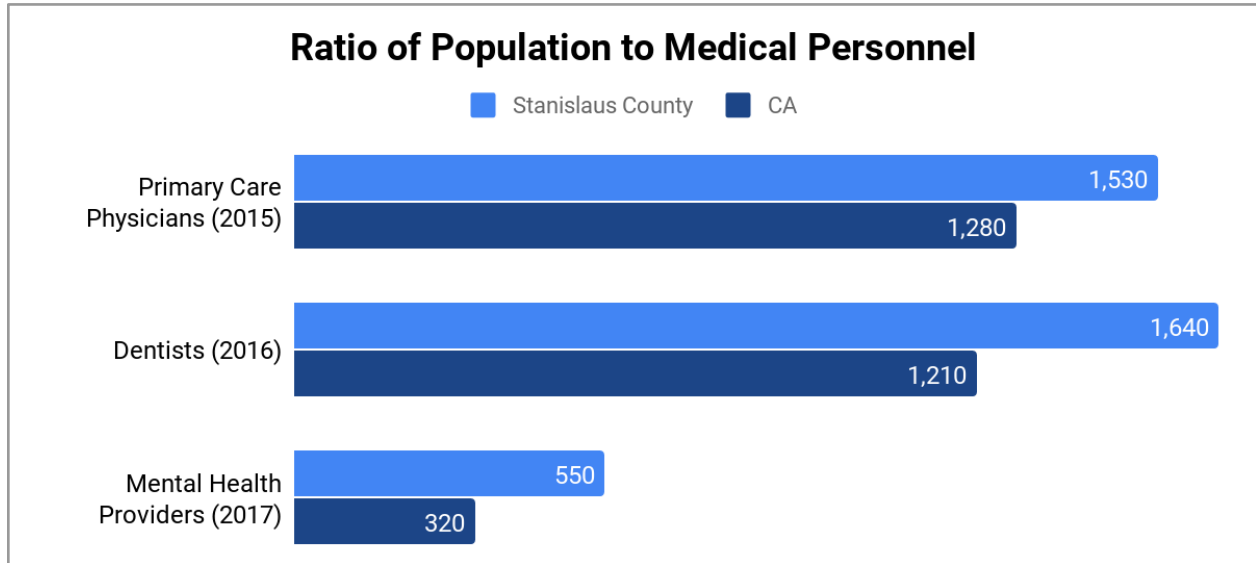
CHILD, PARENT, AND COMMUNITY HEALTH

1. Health Care Access

In Children Now’s 2016-17 California County Scorecard, Stanislaus was lowest among all counties for the percentage of children who have a usual source of health care (83% in Stanislaus County compared to 93% statewide). This indicator declined from 2014 (85%) to 2016 (83%) in the county and is even lower for the Latino population (77%).⁵⁸ For children under 6 years old, the uninsured rate for the county (3.1%) is slightly higher than for the state (2.4%).⁵⁹

The 2015 ratio of population to primary care physicians is higher (i.e., the number of people served by one physician) is 1,530:1 in Stanislaus compared to 1,280:1 for the state. For dentists, the 2016 ratio is 1,640:1 for the county and 1,210:1 for the state. The 2017 ratios for mental health providers are 550:1 for the county and 320:1 for the state.⁶⁰ Across all three of these categories, and particularly for dentists and mental health providers, there are more people per medical professional in Stanislaus County than the state average.

Figure 18



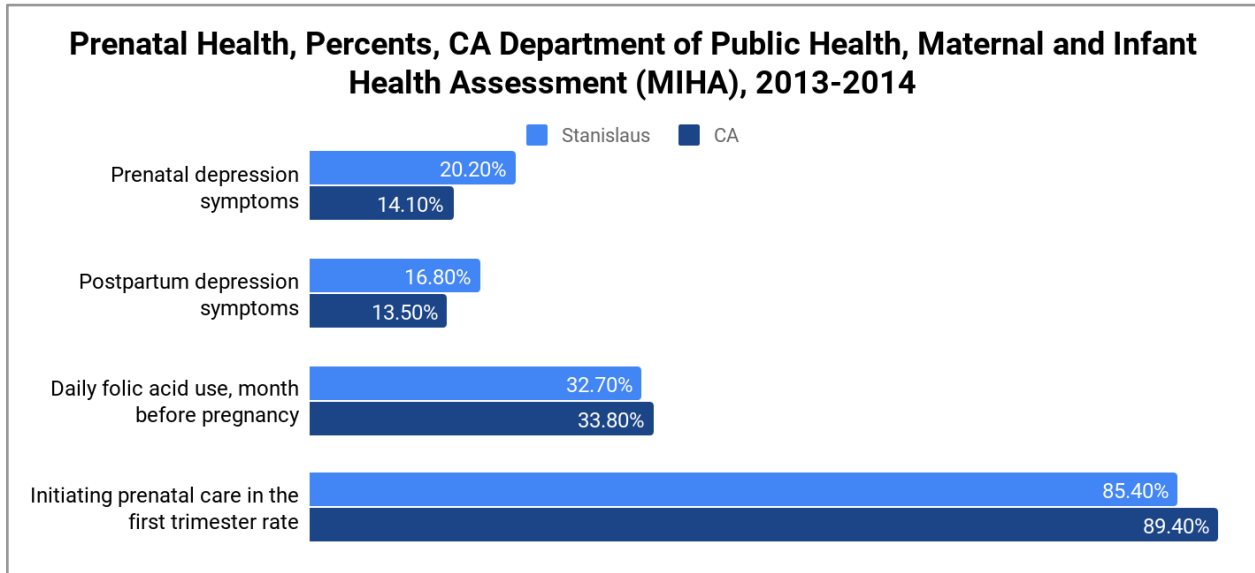
Sources: US DHHS HRSA Area Health Resource File (primary care physicians and dentists), NPI Registry – as presented on County Health Rankings & Roadmaps

[Race Counts](#), a project to maintain a comprehensive tracking tool of racial disparities across California in seven key issue areas, indicates that Stanislaus County has both low performance and high racial disparity in health access, placing the county in the quadrant that Race Counts refers to as “stuck and unequal.”⁶¹ Among California counties, Stanislaus is 53rd of 58 (lower number is better) for Health Access performance and 6th of 58 (higher number is better) for disparity.⁶²

2. Prenatal Care, and Prenatal and Postpartum Depression Rates

Based on the California Department of Public Health, Maternal and Infant Health Assessment (MIHA) Data Snapshot for Stanislaus County, 2013-2014, **pregnant women in Stanislaus County were more likely to experience prenatal and/or postpartum depression compared to the state average.** The county rates for both prenatal and postpartum depression symptoms are substantially higher than the state rates. The rates for daily folic acid use in the month before pregnancy and initiation of prenatal care in the first trimester are both somewhat lower for the county than the state.

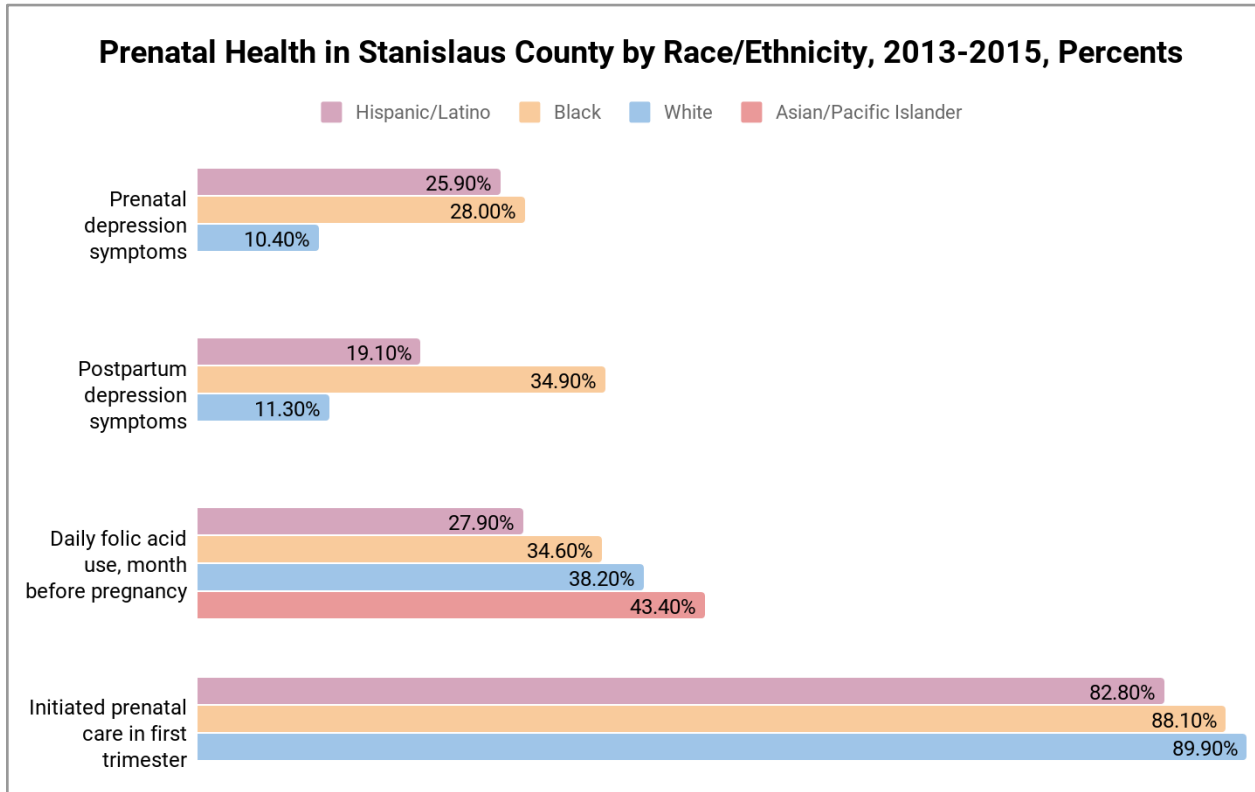
Figure 19



Source: California Department of Public Health, Maternal and Infant Health Assessment (MIHA), Draft Snapshot for Stanislaus County, 2013-2014.

When disaggregated by race, **prenatal and postpartum depression symptoms are much more common for Black and Latino mothers. The postpartum depression symptoms rate for Black mothers in Stanislaus County is more than twice the county average and more than 2.5 times the state average. Nearly 2 in 10 Latina mothers do not initiate prenatal care in the first trimester.** These trends are also present at the statewide level: in summer 2018 the California Department of Public Health noted that “Women who are Black or Latina, or have low incomes or Medi-Cal for prenatal care are more likely to have prenatal and postpartum symptoms of depression. However, these women are less likely to receive the care they need.”⁶³

Figure 20

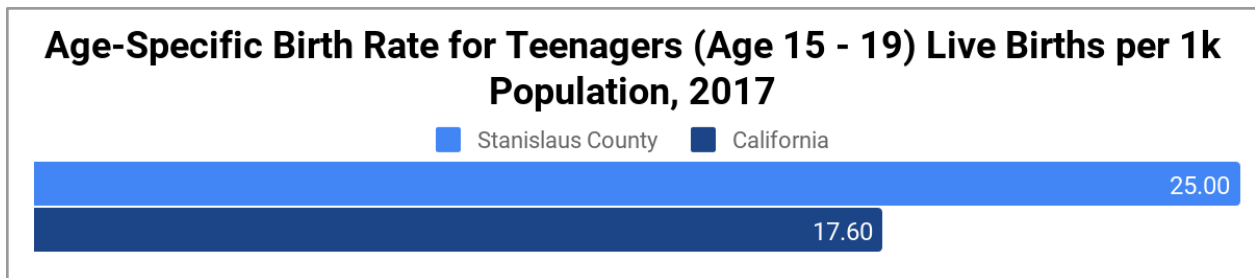


Source: California Department of Public Health, Maternal and Infant Health Assessment (MIHA), Data Snapshot, Stanislaus County by Race/Ethnicity, 2013-2015.

3. Teenage Birth Rate

Stanislaus County's age-specific birth rate for teenagers (aged 15-19) is 42% higher than the rate for California as a whole. Stanislaus had 25.0 live births per 1,000 15-19 year-old women compared to 17.6 for the state.

Figure 21

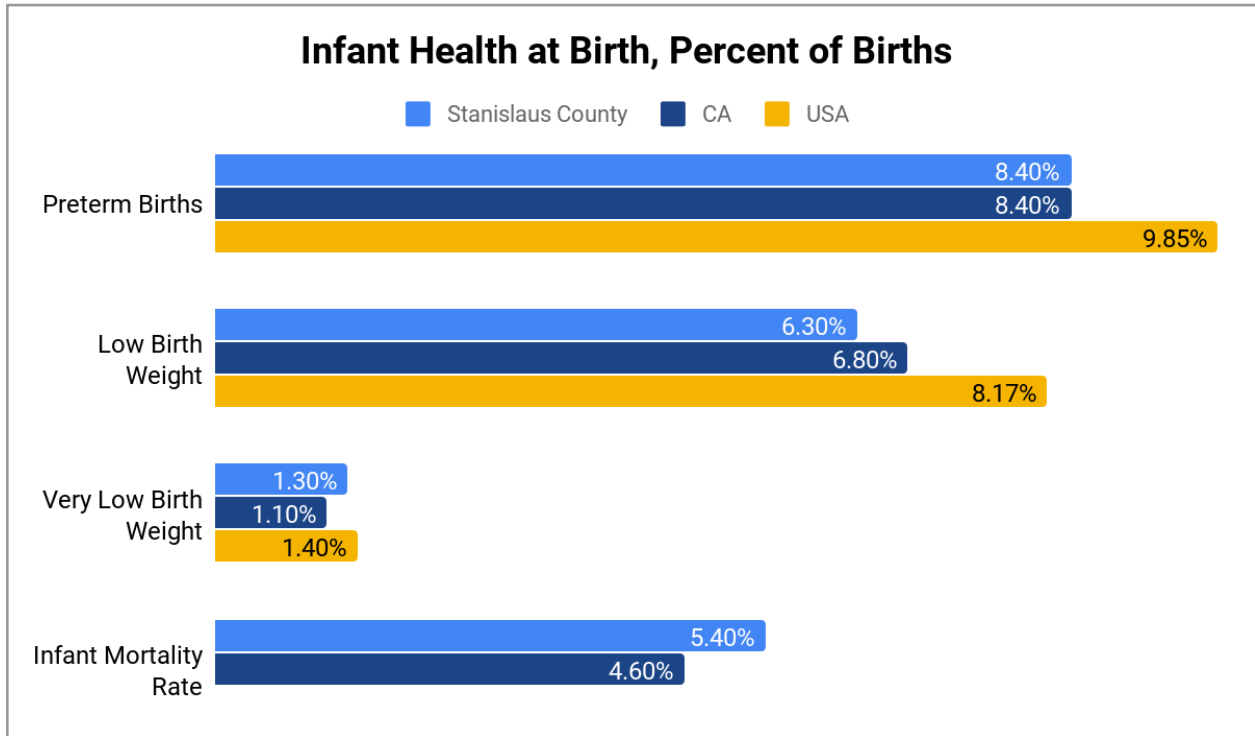


Source: California Department of Public Health, Stanislaus County's Health Status Profile for 2018.

4. Health at Birth - Birth Weight, Preterm Rate, Infant Mortality

Stanislaus County has lower rates of preterm births, low birthweight births, and very low birthweight births than the national average, with rates similar to that of California as a whole. The infant mortality rate in the county is just above the state rate.

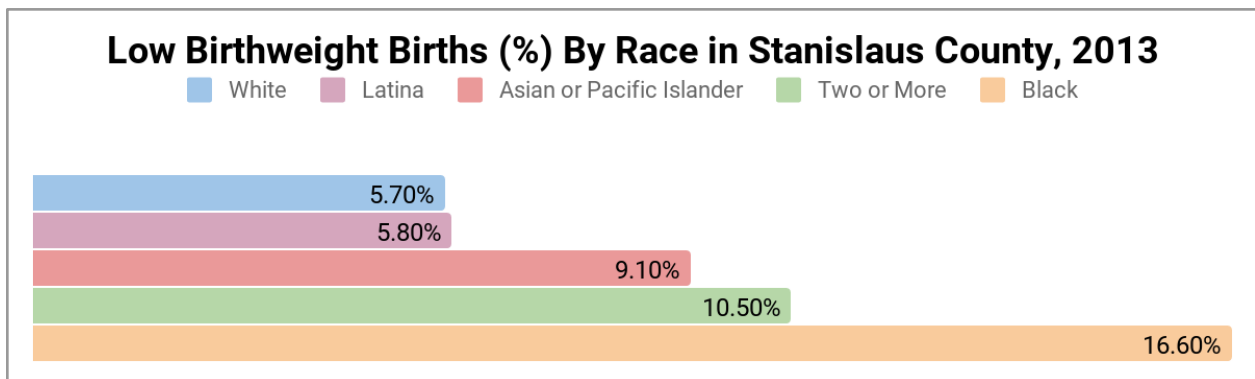
Figure 22



Sources: DRAFT 2018 Stanislaus County Maternal Child and Adolescent Need Assessment Report via California Center for Health Statistics, Vital Statistics, Births Statistical Master File, California Department of Public Health, Stanislaus County’s Health Status Profile for 2018, and CDC National Vital Statistics Reports, Volume 67, Number 1, Births: Final Data for 2016.

While Stanislaus County’s rate of low birthweight births is lower than the state and country, this is an area of high disparity across racial groups. **The rate for Black county residents is nearly three times the rate for White county residents and more than twice the national rate.** This rate is also higher than the national low birthweight birth rate for non-Hispanic Black women of 13.68%.⁶⁴

Figure 23



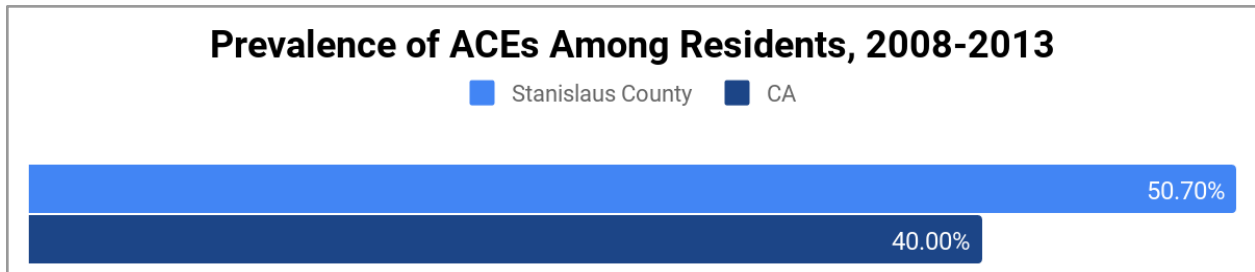
Source: California Department of Public Health via Kidsdata.org via Race Counts

5. Prevalence of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

The prevalence of ACEs has a strong relationship with numerous future health, social, and behavioral problems, such as substance abuse, depressive episodes, suicide attempts, fetal mortality, pregnancy outcomes, poor dental health, and long-term physical health problems.⁶⁵

Based on data from the 2008, 2009, 2011, and 2013 California Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System surveys, **more than half (50.7%) of adults in Stanislaus County have 2 or more ACEs, with nearly a quarter (23.7%) of adults in the county having 4 or more ACEs. These rates are notably higher than the state averages of 40% and 16.7% respectively.**⁶⁶ More recent and specific data are needed at both the state and county levels to better understand the prevalence of ACEs, particularly for young children and their parents.

Figure 24

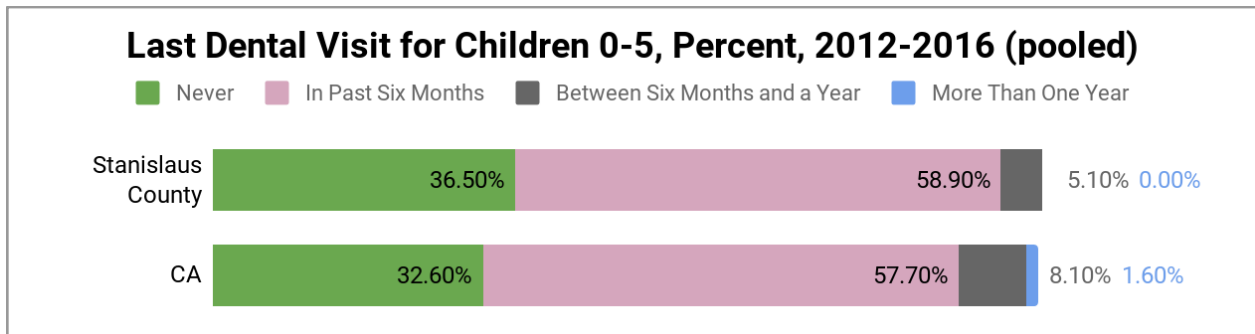


Source: "A Hidden Crisis: Findings on Adverse Childhood Experiences in California," Center for Youth Wellness, 2014

6. Dental Care Visits in Children, 0-5

Data on time since last dental visit from the California Health Interview Survey (CHIS) shows similar results for Stanislaus County and the state. Notably, the survey data for a single year (and for fewer than the four-year period presented below) is statistically unstable. Given this, it is not possible to investigate trends in recent years at the county level for this indicator.

Figure 25



Source: California Health Interview Survey

CHILD EDUCATION

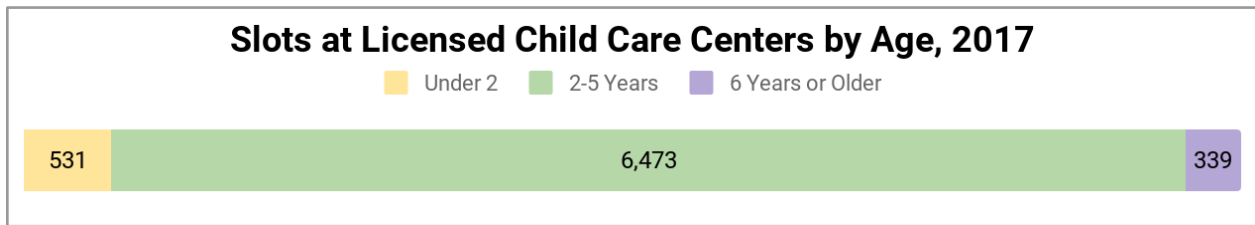
1. Licensed Child Care Center Slots

In Stanislaus County, the number of sites and slots at licensed child care centers has increased slightly between 2014 and 2017. The number of sites increased 5%, from 128 in 2014 to 135 in 2017. There were 7,343 slots available in 2017, a 3% increase from the 7,110 slots available in 2014. Table 6 presents a breakdown of licensed slots by the age group they serve, clearly indicating a dearth of licensed care opportunities for infants and toddlers and school age children.

Table 6: Licensed Child Care Center Slots by Age

Age	# of slots	% of slots
< 2	531	7.2%
2 - 5	6,473	88.2%
6+	339	4.6%
Total	7,343	100%

Figure 26



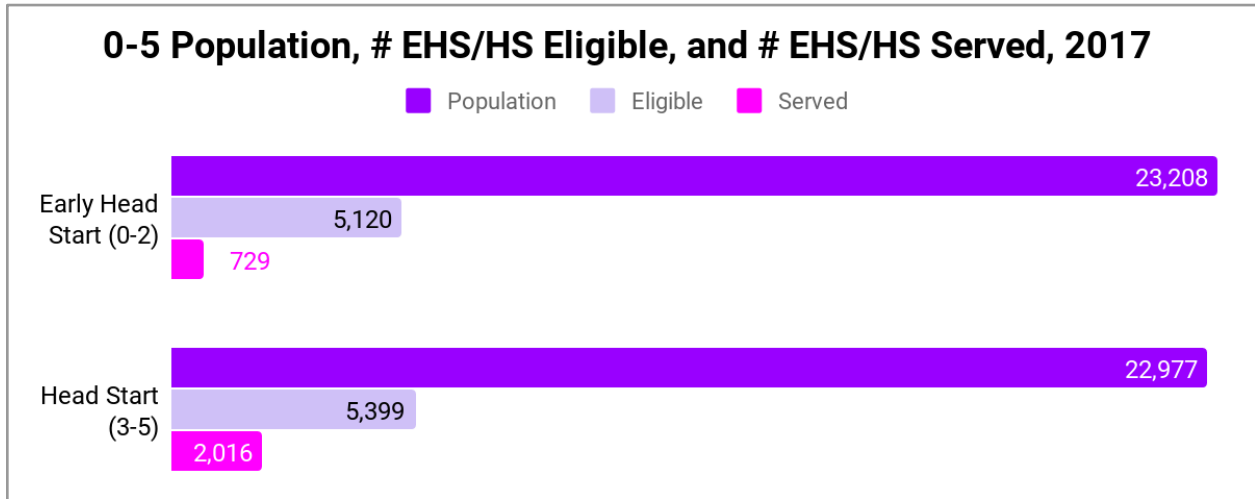
Source: DRAFT 2018 Stanislaus County Maternal Child and Adolescent Need Assessment Report via California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, 2013 California Child Care Portfolio Child Care Resource and Referral Databases 2017.

The number of infant/toddler (“under 2”) slots in centers decreased from 1,006 in 2014 to 531 in 2017. Over the same period, the number of family child care (FCC) home sites decreased 10% between, from 359 sites in 2014 to 324 in 2017, and the number of FCC slots decreased 5% from 3,788 in 2014 to 2,582 in 2017. This is important because infants and toddlers are most often cared for in FCCs and a decrease in FCCs generally translates to a decrease in care available for very young children. A July 2018 report indicated that statewide only 12% of infants and toddlers (0-2) attend a licensed ECE program (including both centers and family child care homes).⁶⁷ The decreasing sites and slots for infants and toddlers in Stanislaus County exacerbates the supply gap for infant/toddler care.

2. Early Head Start, Head Start, and Preschool Eligibility and Enrollment/Attendance

In 2017, 22% of 0-2 year olds in the county were eligible for Early Head Start, though only 14% of those eligible (less than 3% of the total 0-2 year old population) were served. For 3-5 year olds in the county, 23% were eligible for Head Start, and 37% of those eligible (9% of the total 3-5 year old population) were served.⁶⁸

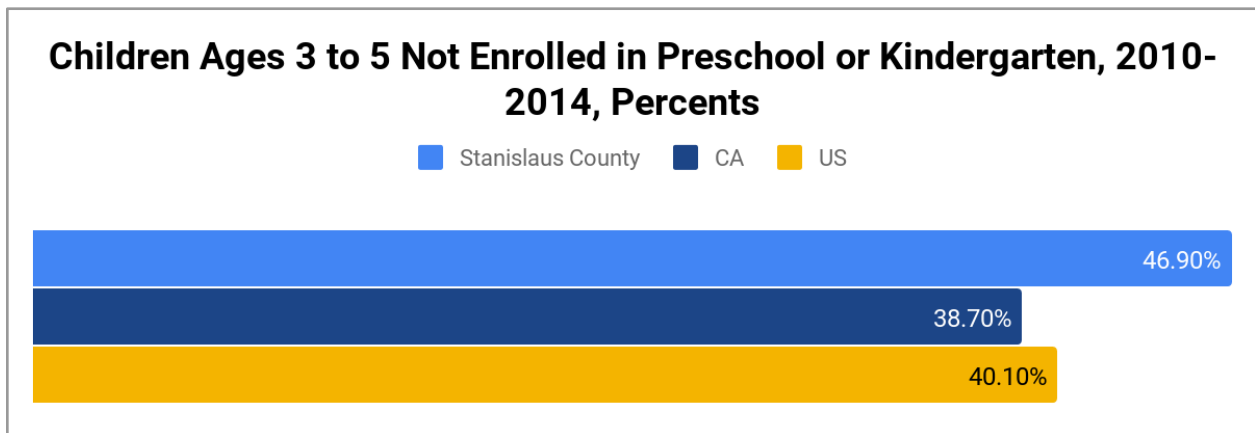
Figure 27



Sources: Stanislaus County Office of Education, Child and Family Services. Give Your Child a Head Start in School, Work & Life, Public Report 2017; US Census Bureau 5-Year ACS B09001.

Children in Stanislaus County ages 3 to 5 were less likely than their counterparts in California and nationally to be enrolled in preschool or kindergarten. Nearly half (46.9%) of children ages 3 to 5 were not enrolled in preschool or kindergarten, while 38.7% of California children 3 to 5 and 40.1% of children 3 to 5 nationally were not enrolled in preschool or kindergarten between 2010 and 2014.

Figure 28



Source: DRAFT 2018 Stanislaus County Maternal Child and Adolescent Need Assessment Report via Population Reference Bureau, Analysis of Data from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey Microdata Files (Mar. 2015).

3. Kindergarten Readiness

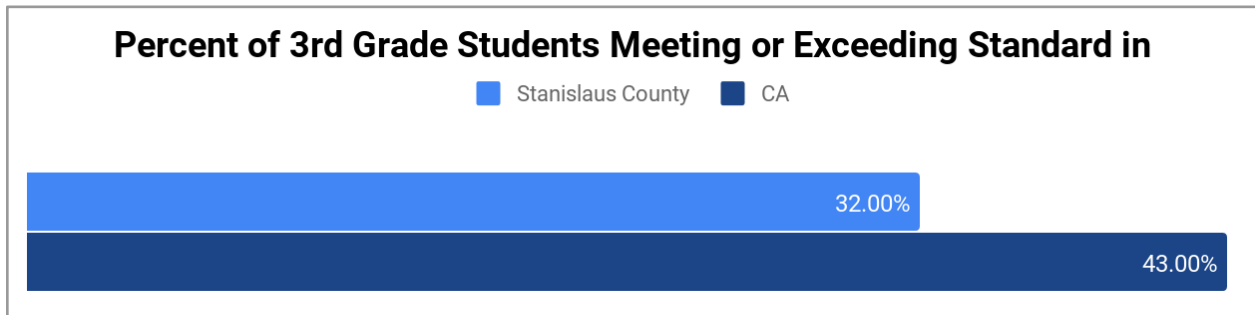
Early learning programs are funded by different public and private funding streams. Because requirements differ by funding stream, regulations and guidance about what types of assessments programs can (optional) or must (required) administered differ across programs. While there is not full county-level data on kindergarten readiness, StanislausREADS! has begun kindergarten assessments at its pilot schools and in Head Start programs. StanislausREADS! uses Ready4School (formerly known as the Kindergarten Student Entrance Profile or KSEP) as its universal school readiness tool to measure academic and social-emotional development. According to the StanislausREADS! Progress Report 2016, StanislausREADS! Conducted kindergarten readiness assessments in the spring of 2015 and fall of 2015.

In spring 2015, Head Start teachers assessed over 1,000 kids going to kindergarten, and StanislausREADS! assessed all transitional kindergarten students at its pilot elementary schools. In fall 2015, StanislausREADS! assessed all kindergarten students within the first six weeks of instruction. StanislausREADS! found that **70% of all kindergarten students at its pilot schools were not “Ready to Go.”**

4. Third Grade Reading Level

Considerably fewer third grade students in Stanislaus County meet or exceed standards in English Language Arts/Literacy on the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress than students in California overall. Research shows that proficiency in reading by the end of third grade matters. Most students who unable to read by the end of third grade face significant challenges in later grades and are more likely to drop out school before earning a high school diploma.⁶⁹

Figure 29

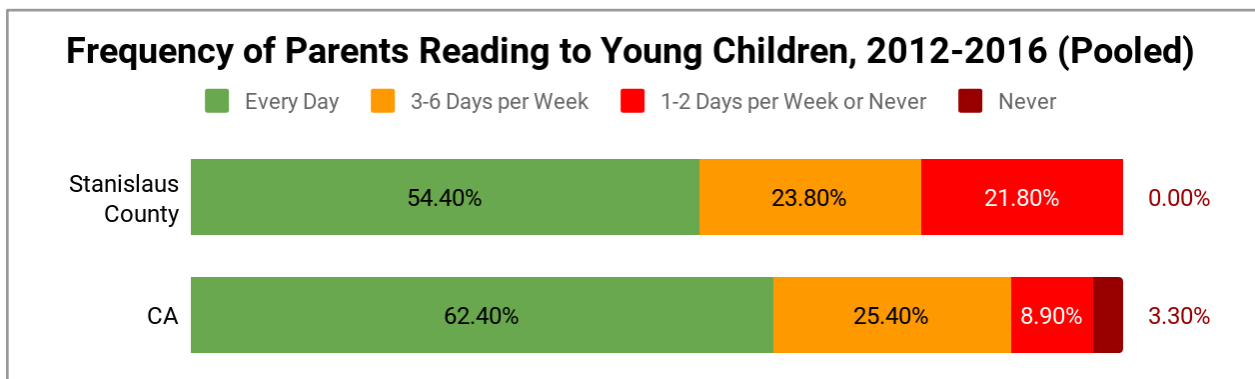


Source: California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP), Test Results for English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics. 2016.

5. Frequency of Parents Reading to Children

Children in Stanislaus County are less likely to be read to everyday by their parents than children in California overall. Stanislaus County children were more likely to be read to by their parents 1-2 days per week or never.

Figure 30



Source: DRAFT 2018 Stanislaus County Maternal Child and Adolescent Need Assessment Report via UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, California Health Interview Survey (June 2018).

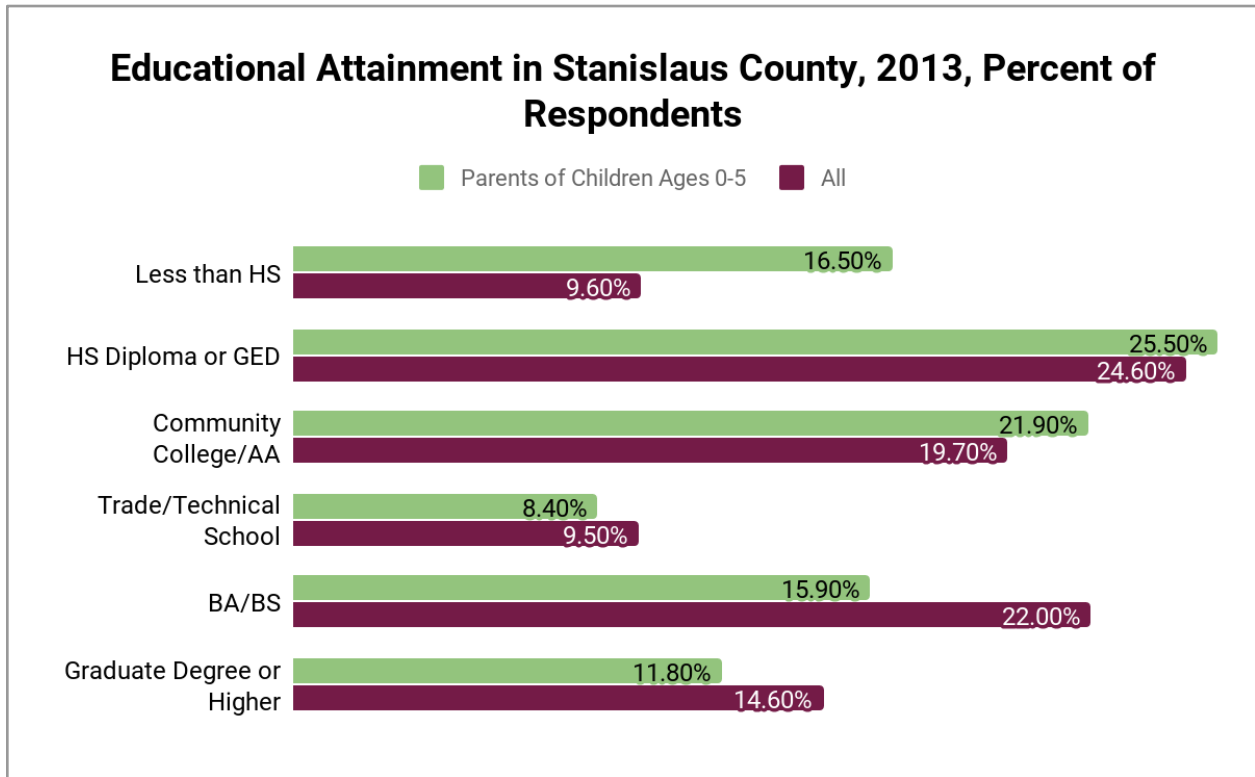
6. Kindergarten Chronic Absenteeism

Baseline data collected by StanislausREADS! in 2014-15 indicate that 18% of kindergarteners in pilot schools were chronically absent (equal to missing month or more of school).⁷⁰ In the same report, StanislausREADS! notes that 83% of students chronically absent in kindergarten will not read at grade level by third grade (see #4 above).

7. Parent Educational Attainment

In Stanislaus County, parents with children ages birth to five years old are more likely to have lower levels of education (less than a high school diploma through community college/associates degrees) than the population in the county generally. Parents of young children in the county are less likely to have completed a technical program, bachelor’s degree or graduate degree.

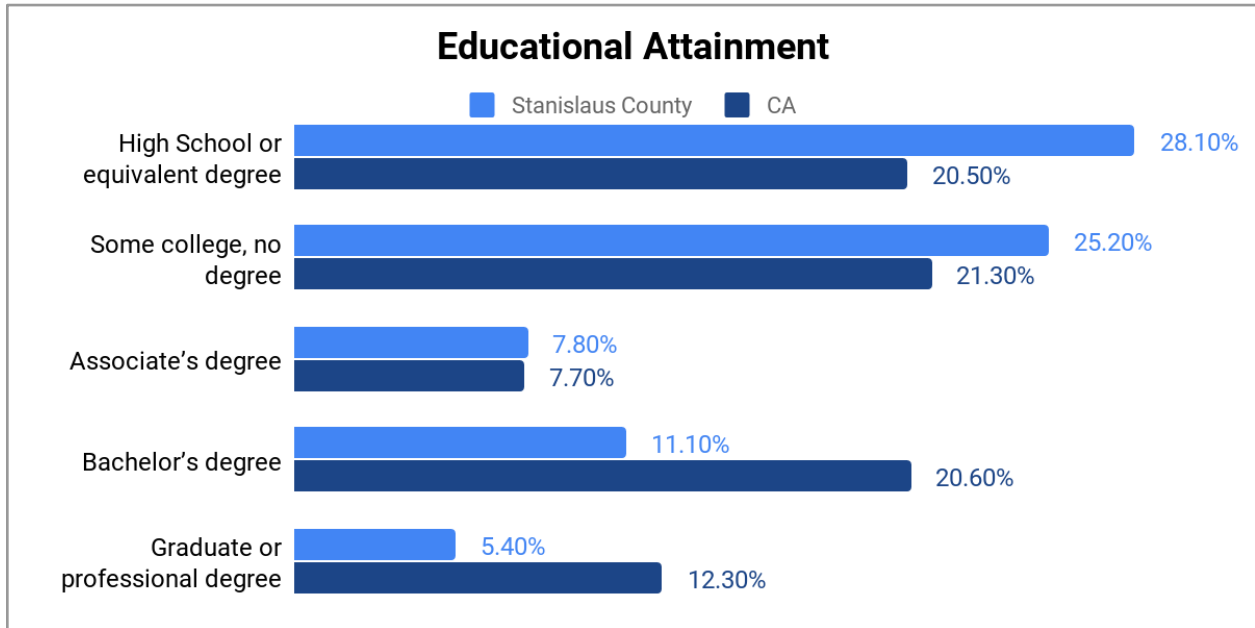
Figure 31



Source: DRAFT 2018 Stanislaus County Maternal Child and Adolescent Need Assessment Report via FHOP, Stanislaus County CHIA Community Survey 2013.

More generally, educational attainment is lower in Stanislaus County than California with more much lower percentages of the population with bachelor’s or higher degrees.

Figure 32



Data Source: 5-Year ACS 2012-2016

3.D. Community Needs and Opportunities in Stanislaus County

The community needs, challenges, and opportunities described below are representative of broad themes that emerged from the data presented above and across stakeholder engagement efforts for the First 5 Stanislaus strategic direction and planning process. This included surveys, interviews, and focus groups, as well as earlier interviews and surveys conducted by First 5 Stanislaus Executive Director David Jones starting in May 2017 (See Appendix II for a full description of the stakeholder engagement methodology).

I. Community Needs and Challenges

The perception of challenges facing children and families in the Stanislaus County community varies based on stakeholder contact. This is important to note, as each perspective can yield different ideas as well as common themes.

See [Appendix II. Discovery Process and Stakeholder Engagement Methodology](#) for a description of the various stakeholder input mechanisms used, and [Appendix III. Stakeholder Feedback Summary](#) for a summary of results from each of these mechanisms. Across the discovery process, a number of themes emerged related to community needs and challenges:

- Many families in Stanislaus county face considerable economic challenges.
- Families need support to develop the Protective Factors.⁷¹
- Parents especially need help with parenting skills and how to interact with their children.
- Children and families need access to more early education and enrichment opportunities, ranging from accessible and affordable childcare and preschool, to more cultural and educational activities and events for families.
- More communication and awareness building is needed on both the needs of young children and their families, and the services and opportunities that are available to them.
- More communications and coordination across service-providers would provide greater consistency and alignment.

A number of specific challenges are listed below alongside relevant information from the discovery process. These challenges are grouped into general categories of Basic Needs, Parent Education and Involvement, Child Education and Care, and Other (including the impacts of substance abuse, impacts of abuse in the home, and immigration issues).

BASIC NEEDS: MONEY, FOOD, HOUSING, AND HEALTH CARE

Not enough money is a common theme across multiple data collection tools. Not having enough money has also been identified as a key cause and driver of other challenges such as food and housing insecurity, unemployment and long work hours which have been established as important challenges (see below).

- **2018 Stakeholder Survey (GPG):** Respondents noted that wages are low, and that parents have low educational attainment and are unable to find higher-paying work; that unemployment is high; and that the cost of living is high. One survey respondent noted: *“Families don’t make enough money to cover their basic needs and if they do their employment has removed them from their families for long periods of time.”* Furthermore, in a broader facebook survey, 74% of respondents thought poverty was one of the biggest challenges facing children and families in Stanislaus county.
- **GPG Interviews:** One interviewee said: *“Many parents are in survival mode. When they’re choosing between buying groceries or children’s books you can see why they make the choices they do.”*
- **Social Determinants Data:**⁷² Stanislaus has an extended history of high poverty levels compared to the state average, and between 2012 and 2015 the poverty rate in the county was above 20%. In addition, the poverty rate for young children (under age 5) is much higher than the total population (26.2% compared to 18.2%). The median income for the county (\$51,591) is significantly less than the state average (\$63,783). Unemployment is also very high in the county at nearly twice the state rate. Educational attainment in the county is lower than the state, and within the county educational attainment levels are lower for parents of young children.

Not enough food was cited less frequently as a core need by stakeholders, and when mentioned was generally in relation to not having enough money. This issue has been frequently identified by multiple contracted First 5 service providers as significant among those people being served at their locations as well as at community Parent Cafes. The phrase “people are hungry” was used many times.

- **Focus Groups:** Participants valued having access to a food pantry, even if it was only for peace of mind that they could access food in an emergency. The food pantry was cited by participants as a service to retain.
- **Social Determinants Data:** The county has a high rate of CalFresh enrollment (more than three times the state rate), enabling low-income individuals and families to have assistance in purchasing needed food. While this points to a large low-income population, it also suggests that the county is more effectively identifying and enrolling people in CalFresh.

Lack of affordable or stable housing emerged as a key challenge based on stakeholder input and relevant social determinants of health data.

- **2018 Stakeholder Survey (GPG):** Respondents commented that there is not enough affordable housing supply available in the county, especially for low-income families; and that housing costs are especially unaffordable for parents with low-wage jobs. One respondent connected this challenge to other issues of substance abuse, domestic violence, and homelessness: *“Lack of affordable housing is a huge issue. Many families are homeless due to domestic violence, lack of money and/or substance abuse problems.”* Among survey respondents identifying as employees and board members at organizations serving children 0-5 and their families, lack of stable and affordable housing was rated as the greatest challenge.

- **Focus Groups:** Participants mentioned that the rise in the cost of housing and living makes it difficult to keep their family stable.
- **Social Determinants Data:** The county has a high foreclosure rate relative the state, and Stanislaus County residents have a comparatively low amount of income left after housing expenses.

Lack of access to health care was most frequently identified as a challenge in relation to specific forms of care such as dental care and mental health services. The affordability of health care also emerged as a challenge associated with not having enough money (see above).

- **2018 Stakeholder Survey (GPG):** Respondents called out that there is a shortage of healthcare providers (and pediatricians specifically), particularly of healthcare providers available to patients without insurance: *“Not enough medical providers to service those with little or no insurance.”* In addition, survey respondents noted that health care is not affordable for many community members. Mental health was noted as a specific area of need with one respondent noted that parents have a *“fear of asking for support in community such as classes for parenting and counseling to improve mental health stability among the parents,”* and another writing that there is a *“lack of access to mental health counseling and couples counseling due to long waits and not enough providers.”* Dental health was also noted specifically, particularly a *“lack of dental services for Adults of low income households.”*
- **Focus Groups:** Mental health classes and health clinics are among the list of services parents identified that they currently have access to and feel are very important.
- **Social Determinants Data:** On average, each primary care physician, dentist, and mental health provider in Stanislaus County serves more people than the statewide average – or, put another way, there is a shortage of these medical professionals in the county in comparison to the state. Compared to all counties in the state, Stanislaus has the lowest percentage (83%) of children who have a usual source of health; this percentage is lower among the Latino population in the county (77%).

PARENT EDUCATION AND INVOLVEMENT: PARENT EDUCATION AND TIME SPENT WITH FAMILY

Parents/caregivers lack the information, knowledge, and experience they need to be good parents/caregivers is a significant challenge that presented in multiple surveys and focus groups, as well as stakeholder interviews. Specific aspects of this challenge include a stigma associated with seeking parenting help, and a low level of awareness among parents of the information and education opportunities available to them in the community.

- **2018 Executive Director (E.D.) Stakeholder Surveys:** In the survey of early childhood educators and child care providers, 35% indicated that *parenting skills in the home needing improvement* was the top issue, and an additional 15% indicated that *children not being taught enough at home* was the top issue. In the survey of front-line service providers from FRCs, only 19% thought children were adequately taught in the home, 19% thought family communication skills were adequate, and 23% thought kids have good role models in the home.
- **2018 Stakeholder Survey (GPG):** Some respondents suggested that parents are not ready to have children (or that there is a lack of family planning) and do not have the necessary “life skills.” Many respondents commented that parents need more information and knowledge to support their parenting and to help them change their parenting approach in order to achieve better outcomes for their families. One respondent wrote: *“Parents do not have the knowledge or resources to meet their children's needs.”* Another noted a lack of practical knowledge more broadly: *“Lack of education for parents regarding the running of a household, getting job training, and understanding the impacts of violence and immediate reward from technology on the development of young brains.”* In the broader Facebook survey, 53% of respondents thought parenting was one of the biggest challenges facing children and families in Stanislaus county.

- **Focus Groups:** In focus groups, participants indicated that they are challenged in effectively communicating with children, monitoring technology, dealing with tantrums, and disciplining children. Participants also noted that classes or workshops on co-parenting and having effective communication between partners can be very useful, and resources like family counseling or parent support groups can help them improve their relationships with their partners.
- **GPG Interviews:** Many interview participants pointed out that both lack of formal education and lack of parenting knowledge and skills are multi-generational issues facing families. Other individuals have expressed that trauma is becoming an increasing problem and is now extending into multiple generations. Other individuals stressed the importance of specific parenting supports for fathers and the importance of better engaging fathers in Stanislaus County.

Parent education level is a key challenge and has been identified as a driver of other challenges such as not having enough money, unemployment, lack of access to health care, and not having enough time to spend with family.

- **2018 Stakeholder Survey (GPG):** Multiple respondents commented on the reduced ability of parents to secure well-paying employment with low educational attainment levels:
 - *“Undereducated parents, leading to low paying jobs.”*
 - *“Lack of education which results in low wage employment and then causes a snowball effect.”*
 - *“Many parents do not have the education (HS Diploma) to seek good paying employment which impacts their accessibility to housing, food and other necessities.”*
- **GPG Interviews:** The power of education to break the cycle of poverty and increase opportunity for children birth to age five and their families was stressed by interview participants, with one interviewee noting: *“Education is the key to getting our community out of this cycle. If parents don’t value education, no matter how many free books you give them, it’s not going to do any good.”*
- **Social Determinants Data:** In Stanislaus County, 42% of parents of children birth to age five have a high school diploma (or equivalent) or less (compared to 34.2% of the total county population). Within the county, only 16.5% have a bachelor’s degree or higher, compared to 32.9% for the state.

Not enough time to spend with family was identified across multiple data sources as a significant challenge. It is often referenced in relation to the need for parents to work long hours to financially support their families, resulting in less time available to spend with their children and partners.

- **2018 E.D. Surveys:** In the survey of early childhood educators and child care providers, 25% thought *parents not spending enough time with children* was the top issue.
- **2018 Stakeholder Survey (GPG):** A frequent sentiment in survey responses is that parents are working too many hours which impacts their available time to spend with their families. Some respondents also commented that the *quality* of time spent with children/family could be improved. In the broader facebook survey, 65% of respondents thought time with family was one of the biggest challenges facing children and families in Stanislaus county. Relevant responses from the stakeholder survey include:
 - *“Parents not engaged in young child education because of working more the 40 hours per week, or parents distracted with personal issues unrelated to family matters.”*
 - *“No matter the socio-economical [sic] level, family lives are far too busy and stressful.”*
- **2018 E.D. Focus Group (Local Planning Council):** Participants raised the issue of lack of parent engagement.
- **Focus Groups:** Parents at focus groups also identified time as a key barrier, indicating that the amount of time required for work makes it difficult to spend time with their children/family. Participant remarks included:

- *“We live in a country with many opportunities but not everyone can access them. We have to work all the time just to make ends meet. If we had better opportunities we could possibly have more time. I wish I had a 9-5 job.”*
- *“It’s important for me to find time to talk to my husband and talk about the progress of our kids or something that happened that day, but most days don’t have the time or we are too tired.”*
- **Social Determinants Data:** In Stanislaus County, 54.4% of parents of young children read to their child daily compared to 62.4% in California. On the other end of the spectrum, 21.8% of county parents of young children read to their children 1-2 times a week or never, compared to 13.2% statewide.

CHILD EDUCATION AND CARE: ACCESS TO CHILD CARE/PRESCHOOL AND ACTIVITIES, KINDERGARTEN READINESS

Lack of access to affordable child care/preschool

- **2018 Stakeholder Survey (GPG):** Among survey respondents identifying as employees or board members at organizations supporting children 0-5 and their families, lack of access to affordable child care/preschool was rated as the second-biggest challenge. In the broader Facebook survey, 56% of respondents thought school readiness was one of the biggest challenges facing children and families in Stanislaus county. Stakeholder survey respondents indicated that there is not enough affordable care options in the county:
 - *“There are just SO FEW options for affordable childcare in the county. Any places that are affordable usually have huge waiting lists. How is a parent supposed to get a job if they have nowhere to take their child during their interview?”*
 - *“Struggling to provide basic necessities makes parenting even more difficult. Finding affordable child care for children 0-5 so parents can work and actually make a decent wage, so they are not only working to put their kids in childcare.”*
- **Social Determinants Data:** The county has low rates of 3-5 year old preschool enrollment and low rates of serving Early Head Start- and Head Start-eligible children. Only 14% of children eligible for Early Head Start were served in 2017.

Kindergarten readiness is an area of concern and focus. However, there is only limited data on kindergarten readiness in Stanislaus County coming from a relatively recent pilot project. A number of associated challenges relate to parent knowledge and awareness of resources to help prepare their children for kindergarten (see below).

- **2018 Stakeholder Survey (GPG):** Respondents expressed concern that children are not receiving the preparation they need to start school. One respondent wrote that *“Children [are] not receiving the necessary skills and supports needed to begin their time at school and to continue their schooling.”*
- **GPG Interviews:** Interview results suggest that increased participation and coordination among all agencies and partners serving children birth to age five is required to ensure children prepared for kindergarten.
- **Social Determinants Data:** Using the Ready4School kindergarten readiness assessment, StanislausREADS! found that 70% of all kindergarten students at its pilot schools were not “Ready to Go.” Additional data on kindergarten readiness will help define the severity of this challenge.

OTHER: IMPACTS OF ALCOHOL/DRUGS, IMPACTS OF ABUSE IN THE HOME, AND IMMIGRATION ISSUES

Impact of alcohol/drugs was referenced frequently in stakeholder input in relation to other challenges such as unemployment, lack of access to health care, and impacts of abuse in the home. Stakeholders also called out the need for more substance abuse treatment services.

- **2018 E.D. Surveys:** In the survey of front-line service providers from FRCs, 85% expressed that the kids they serve have problems as a result of trauma in the home.
- **2018 Stakeholder Survey (GPG):** Respondents indicated that drugs are prevalent in the county: *“High unemployment rate in the County and drug usage is at epidemic levels.”* Another respondent addressed multiple challenges (including the Adverse Childhood Experience of an incarcerated household member): *“Children are witnessing and experiencing life altering trauma in their lives due to domestic violence and drug use but more importantly they are being raised by grandparents due to parents being incarcerated.”*
- **Social Determinants Data:** In Stanislaus County, 50.7% of residents (compared to 40.0% of residents statewide) have experienced two or more Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), which include substance abuse misuse within household. In 2014-2016, there were 15 drug overdose deaths in Stanislaus County per 100,000 population compared to a state overall rate of 12 drug overdose deaths per 100,000 population.⁷³

Impacts of abuse in the home

- **2018 E.D. Surveys:** As noted above, in the survey of front-line service providers from FRCs, 85% expressed that the kids they serve have problems as a result of trauma in the home.
- **2018 Stakeholder Survey (GPG):** Respondents referenced multi-generational cycles of abuse and that the combination of domestic violence and substance abuse creates compound trauma for young children in the household: *“Children are witnessing and experiencing life altering trauma in their lives due to domestic violence and drug use but more importantly they are being raised by grandparents due to parents being incarcerated.”*
- **GPG Interviews:** Trauma in the home has been a recurring theme in First 5 interviews with service providers.
- **Social Determinants Data:** The total number of domestic violence-related calls in the county has increased significantly from 2,447 (466 per 100,000) in 2013 to 3,244 (592 per 100,000) in 2017, which is also substantially higher than the state average (see Section 3.C.III for details). As noted above, 16.9% of children in the county have experienced two or more ACEs, which include physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, as well as intimate partner violence and mother treated violently.

Immigration issues were cited in focus groups, interviews, and survey responses as a barrier to accessing services. In addition, multiple stakeholders

- **2018 Stakeholder Survey (GPG):** Respondents commented about the fear of immigration status being reported and the fear of deportation as sources of stress. These are also barriers to seeking out services, particularly those provided by public agencies. One respondent wrote: *“Parents are afraid to approach County or any of its resources. Our population in the Central Valley is mostly undocumented Latinos, which are afraid of deportation.”* Furthermore, in the broader facebook survey, 44% of respondents thought immigration was one of the biggest challenges facing children and families in Stanislaus county.
- **Focus Groups:** Focus group participants discussed the challenge of living in fear of being separated from their children and the difficulty of securing and maintaining well-paying jobs as an immigrant. Participants explained that immigration status impacts the types of opportunities they have access to, and that jobs available to immigrant parents often involve long hours of labor. Participant remarks included:

- *“I week after my baby was born I got my papers. It’s a relief, I can walk without fear.”*
- *“For immigrant families is about knowing where the resources exist, many parents like me didn’t or don’t know how to find resources, I got lucky.”*
- **2017 - 2018 E.D. Interviews:** Immigration was an ongoing theme through 2017 and into 2018 for First 5 providers. There were significant local impacts in 2017 which continued into 2018, while appearing to somewhat lessen, yet still be an issue.
- **GPG Interviews:** One interviewee indicated that people are scared to go to the dentist because of immigration concerns.

II. Community Assets and Opportunities

Survey and interview results illustrate key opportunities present in Stanislaus County. When asked to provide the three greatest assets or resources in Stanislaus County, survey respondents identified community resources such as schools and libraries; county and partner agencies such as First 5, Community Services Agency, Family Resources Centers, nonprofit organizations; and a range of programs and services, such as CalFresh, Medi-Cal, Head Start, California State Preschool Program and Healthy Birth Outcomes.

Results from the discovery process reveal a number of opportunities to build upon assets and positive momentum in the community that First 5 Stanislaus can consider and leverage.

FAMILY RESOURCE CENTERS AND HEALTHY START SITES

Stakeholders suggested that First 5 Stanislaus was instrumental in bringing Family Resource Centers and Healthy Start sites to the community. Partners, community leaders, and families alike see the Family Resource Centers and Healthy Start sites as key community assets. One survey respondent wrote: *“I can also see the positive effect that Family Resource Centers due [sic] to each member of the community. Many successful stories have been shared of positive outcomes and I still believe it can get better with the high amount of resources in our community to decrease the chances of future generations to fall into these challenging categories.”* Another respondent suggested that First 5 Stanislaus should *“continue to fund school site-based resource[s] such as Healthy Start.”*

In response to the question about the single most important thing First 5 Stanislaus should do to achieve long-term outcomes for children and families, one survey respondent wrote *“Places to go like the resource centers, without them I would have nobody to talk with.”* Other respondents suggested that additional activities for children and families could be provided by increasing space at FRCs. There is an opportunity to strengthen the FRCs through training, facilitation of a peer learning network, and awareness-building to ensure the community knows about services available to them through the FRCs.

COLLABORATION WITHIN AND ACROSS STANISLAUS COUNTY

Stanislaus County has long had a history of collaboration as a community. There is currently a nationally recognized wave of energy in Stanislaus County for collaborative work and making long-term community impact. Community leaders have been quietly talking and working for nearly a decade about how to work together to move the community forward. For example, *Love Modesto* formed ten years ago with a vision of bringing the community together for a common goal of service. Now, thousands upon thousands of Stanislaus County residents volunteer each year as part of the love your city project. Over the past five years, more specific examples of formal collaborative work have emerged in the County.

A number of stakeholders elevated specific and ongoing collaborative efforts in the county that are focused on improving the social welfare of Stanislaus’ population. Additionally, stakeholders suggested there were opportunities for partners in Stanislaus County to better promote and share each other’s services for children birth to age five, and that there were opportunities for deeper collaboration across schools, faith-based organizations, businesses, probation and law-enforcement, mental health providers, among others. One survey respondent suggested that *“Link[ing] providers to reduce silos!”* is the single

most important thing First 5 Stanislaus should do. Specific examples of current collaboration efforts and opportunities for future collaboration are described below.

- **Collaboration among First 5 Stanislaus' funded partners:** First 5 Stanislaus funded partners pointed to a shift in their roles from that of contractor to partner. Funded partners pointed to increased collaboration among partners and the ability to better serve clients as a direct result of that collaboration.
- **Collaboration with Stanislaus County agencies to co-fund support services:** The unique ability of First 5 Stanislaus to leverage funding from county agencies was viewed as a strength and opportunity that could be expanded and built upon as part of First 5 Stanislaus' strategic direction (see Sections 3.A above and 4.B below for more discussion).
- **Collaboration within Stanislaus County:** Stanislaus County has adopted a measure of kindergarten readiness, Ready4School (formerly known as the Kindergarten Student Entrance Profile or KSEP), and districts within the county are beginning to implement and pilot the measure. Partners view this as an opportunity to expand awareness among parents about what is required to prepare children for kindergarten and see First 5 Stanislaus as an important partner in sharing this information with parents.
- **Collaboration across Stanislaus County:** Focus on Prevention and C2C are two collective impact initiatives that bring together multi-sector participation from across the county; additionally, the Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP) and Thriving Stanislaus project and the Legacy Health Endowment engage stakeholders across the county to focus on improving healthcare access and health outcomes. The Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities (R.E.D.) project is engaging community stakeholder groups to reduce over representation of youth of color in the criminal justice system (See Section 3.B above for a discussion of these and other key initiatives throughout the county). C2C and StanREADY! in particular are well-aligned with First 5 Stanislaus' focus on children birth to age five and their families and are currently in the process of identifying indicators to measure success.. Survey respondent wrote that First 5 Stanislaus should “*Align their work with Cradle to Career and Focus on Prevention efforts*” and “*Step into a leadership role with the Cradle to Career movement and focus on building alignment between sectors to better support families.*”

Given the extensive ongoing collaboration including multiple collective impact initiatives, First 5 Stanislaus has an opportunity to align its work with these efforts to leverage their work and minimize duplication.

SYSTEM-BUILDING APPROACHES AND A FOCUS ON CHILD AND FAMILY OUTCOMES

Stakeholders consistently discussed that First 5 Stanislaus is uniquely positioned to help build and strengthen systems in support of service providers, advocates, and other organizations working with young children and their families. This could include working to coordinate and strengthen data systems and tracking processes across organizations and collaborative efforts (see above) throughout the County. Beyond participating in and aligning with collective impact and other collaborative efforts, there is an opportunity for First 5 Stanislaus to lead efforts to build and/or strengthen systems. Stakeholders also highlighted the importance of identifying child or family level outcomes that could be tracked over time to better assess the impact of First 5 Stanislaus investments. These outcomes could be shared across other initiatives as appropriate and would require strong data infrastructure and practices to monitor progress. Multiple interview participants have suggested that the Strengthening Families Protective Factors framework could serve a shared set of outcomes.⁷⁴

PARENT AND CAREGIVER EDUCATION AND SUPPORTS

Results from focus groups with Spanish-speaking parents helped reveal family strengths as well as opportunities for expanded support. Parents discussed different activities that make them feel like they are being a good parent, and shared stories about spending quality time with their children to teach them and

help them grow. Participant shared that being an effective parent is important to them and acknowledged that various supports are necessary in order to be a successful parent. Specific supports noted by participants include: a responsible partner, family and community, access to other people who can care for their children and provide parenting advice, and access to resource centers that offer classes and information on parenting as well as financial services and food pantry access. One participant said, *“it is important for me to spend time with my kids and be their role model. I set at least half an hour of my day to talk to each of my kids. My baby and I like to sing together, since she can’t talk yet.”*

Parents identified a number of areas where there is opportunity to expand supports to parents and caregivers:

- Additional child activities for low income families, such as dance or art classes;
- Increased access to information about the education system, how they can prepare their child to be successful at school, and how to talk to their child’s pre-K teacher about their child’s development;
- Classes and workshops on co-parenting and having better communication with partners; and
- More financial resources like job fairs, financial coaching, etc.

Parents also suggested that information should be made available in a variety of formats to accommodate different time commitments (i.e., in addition to workshops or classes, information should be available through print and digital materials).

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INPUT

Among the 47 respondents who answered Q15 (What is the most important thing First 5 Stanislaus can do to achieve long-term outcomes?) who also indicated that they were not familiar with First 5 Stanislaus, many recommended more communication about what First 5 Stanislaus is doing and what programs and supports are available. More than 28% of survey respondents indicating they are not familiar with First 5 Stanislaus, suggested that there is a significant opportunity to more broadly communicate about the organization and its work, and the services and supports available to parents and children. This type of outreach provides an opportunity to engage diverse children and families, including those from subgroups at heightened levels of risk (see social determinants of health in section 3.C.III above). Multiple interviewees also noted the need to engage fathers of young children specifically.

In addition to engaging community members, a number of survey respondents commended First 5 Stanislaus on its efforts to gather stakeholder input to date and suggested building on this work in the future:

- *“Spearhead conversation like this Survey but hold quarterly stakeholder meetings or as needed.”*
- *“Work with the community find out what families need with regard to 0-5”*
- *“First you need to relook at what is important to our community - which you are doing through your focus groups, identify what the needs are.”*

There is an opportunity to build upon past and ongoing stakeholder input efforts to maintain engagement and offer regular opportunities for community input, guidance, and feedback.

4. Strategy Considerations

Key Takeaways and Considerations: Strategy Considerations

- There are opportunities for First 5 Stanislaus to play a number of different roles that go beyond the role of funder, which is the role it has typically played. First 5 Stanislaus should evaluate its strategic direction and priorities as they pertain to systems building, capacity building, convening and collaborating, data management support, building awareness around issues and opportunities for young children and their families, and advocacy (see Section 4.B for an analysis of opportunities and risks associated with each of these roles).
- First 5 Stanislaus has an opportunity to align with the First 5 Network Strategy as a way to better affiliate with First 5 efforts across the state. The Network Strategy is well-aligned with the roles and issue areas identified through First 5 Stanislaus' discovery process.
- First 5 Stanislaus funding is spread across numerous priorities and the Commission should give serious consideration to refining its investment focus as its annual investments will significantly decrease. Funding decisions will need to incorporate a strong look at primary prevention versus intervention strategies given trends, resources, priorities and outcomes goals. This also means consideration should be given for priorities that address root cause issues. Discussion needs to occur about funding systems versus organizations as well as opportunities to increase and coordinate funding for services for children from birth to age five in Stanislaus County.
- First 5 Stanislaus will need to give serious consideration to implementation of long-term population-based outcomes as well as program-based outcomes that have historically been used.
- Stakeholder feedback identified the following key issues areas affecting children and families in Stanislaus county: Basic needs, parent education and involvement, child education and care, and other factors such as drug and alcohol abuse, domestic violence, and immigration status. There are opportunities and challenges to working in each of these areas. While parent education and involvement and child education and care are most aligned with the Children and Families Act, and thus First 5 Stanislaus' mandate, First 5 Stanislaus must assess which of these areas it is well positioned to influence and through what roles and strategies.

4.A Strategy Considerations: First 5 Network in California

As First 5 Stanislaus determines its future strategic direction and areas of focus, it may consider the ongoing and planned strategies of others within the First 5 Network. The following sections include an overview of the recently articulated First 5 Network Strategy, trends and other observations emerging from a review of other relevant First 5 County Commission strategic plans, and information about First 5 California's roles and strategic planning efforts.

First 5 Network Strategy

In 2017, the First 5 Association engaged Open Impact to craft a strategy for the First 5 Network (inclusive of First 5 California [F5CA], First 5 County Commissions, and the First 5 Association [F5A]) as a whole. Open Impact reviewed County Commission plans, conducted interviews, and facilitated convenings of First 5 Network members to gather input and feedback. Findings from this process suggest that the work of the 58 First 5 county commissions is more similar than different, and that greater impact can be achieved by closer coordination and collaboration of the 58 commissions across the state. The First 5 Network Strategy that resulted seeks to codify the strategies that are common across First 5s to promote greater alignment internally and facilitate coherent communications externally and provide

recommendations on how First 5 can organize itself collectively for greater statewide impact. The First 5 Network Strategy is guided by the following vision statement: “*One day, California’s success will be measured by the wellbeing of its youngest children.*” In order to make progress toward this vision, “*First 5 builds the early childhood systems and supports needed to ensure California’s young children are safe, healthy and ready to succeed in school and life*” (First 5 Network Mission).

In order to fulfill this mission, the Network Strategy identifies three high-level goals:

1. Increase funding for 0-5 and First 5
2. Build an integrated system of care for young children
3. Level inequalities through focused investments.

The Network Strategy also identifies three key developmental areas that the First 5 Network should seek to generate positive outcomes:

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

The strategy includes more specific priorities within each of these areas and specifies a set of outcome indicators for each.⁷⁵ It also provides additional framing of the First 5 Network’s role in strengthening systems, by identifying five categories of system-strengthening work. Within each category, the Network Strategy provides recommended roles for F5CA, F5A, and First 5 county commissions.

Table 7: First 5 Network Strategy: System Strengthening Strategy and Action Areas	
Strategy/Activity Area	Suggested County Commission Role(s) within Network Strategy
1. Communications - <i>provide communications that educate, promote and shift attitudes and behaviors re: early childhood development</i>	Contribute to message development, adapt and customize to local context, and distribute materials to key local stakeholders; share resources with Association and other commissions; serve as local megaphone for First 5
2. Advocacy - <i>strengthen policies, increase funding, and elevate early childhood priorities in state and local decision-making</i>	Contribute insights and expertise that shape network policy agenda; align activities with agenda; engage, educate and cultivate local relationships; participate, provide feedback, data and stories when requested
3. Collaboration - <i>bridge sectors, agencies and providers to create an integrated system of care for kids and families</i>	Continually monitor local landscape for new champions; cultivate own local networks; share engagement best practices with peers and Association; share strategic relationships and partnerships as inputs to system
4. Skill Building - <i>support capacity of partners and families, increase skills, and help local providers improve quality standards</i>	Participate in communities of practice and trainings; support key staff to attend; extend support and mentorship to colleagues; engage with Association in ED transition conversations
5. Innovation and Learning - <i>use a data-driven approach to support continuous improvement and development of best practices across the network</i>	Pilot innovations and report on success; plug into data systems; lift up and share data, stories, and best practices; align with impact assessment metrics and methods

First 5 Stanislaus should consider aligning its strategic direction and plan with the Network Strategy, while ensuring that its work is responsive to the specific needs of young children and families in the county.

First 5 County Commission Strategic Plans

An analysis of several recent and relevant county commission strategic plans shows a number of trends and patterns for First 5 Stanislaus consideration.⁷⁶ First, plans have several structural commonalities. Although not required by Proposition 10, many plans outline the priorities or guidelines they will follow when making funding decisions, describing factors such as prioritizing evidence-based programs, programs that address disparities in the community, and programs that have potential to leverage other funding sources. A few plans have set aside funding for innovation or special projects, to allow the county commission greater flexibility in responding to changing circumstances. Similarly, though also not required, many of the reviewed plans contain indicators of success associated with plan goals or objectives, often *outcome-focused* indicators for tracking longer-term impact, rather than output-focused indicators. Many plans reviewed also contain lists of values or guiding principles.

There are several notable trends in terms of programmatic focus among the county commission plans reviewed for this analysis. These plans commonly describe partnering with other agencies, initiatives, and community leaders as a strategy for stretching funding and increasing the impact of their efforts. Most plans reviewed include prevention and early intervention as key strategies while some plans call out sustainability or increased funding as a goal of their work.

Many plans identify the same four focus areas for their work (though exact language varies), based on the Children and Families Act that established First 5s. These areas include strong families, health, quality early childhood learning, and systems change. Plans that do not include systems change as an explicit area of focus often include systems-focused approaches within the strategies for other focus areas. This aligns with the key developmental areas specified in the First 5 Network Plan (see above). More recently developed plans (2016 forward) often have a greater focus on facilitating systems change, compared with plans developed earlier (2013-2015). For example, First 5 Los Angeles, First 5 Contra Costa, and First 5 Alameda call out a reduced emphasis on funding discrete services and a greater emphasis on funding systems change, building capacity, acting as a catalyst, supporting collaboration, and engaging in policy advocacy. Other county commissions have developed approaches that include a blend of funding for direct services and systems change. First 5 Fresno describes a three-tiered investment framework that focuses on children and families, community partners, and the system of care.

First 5 Butte has an innovative approach to framing their efforts. Their plan names three “levers for change” (developed by the Strengthening Families National Network) that can “encourage local programs and service systems to build the five Protective Factors within families, organizations, and communities. The levers create a systemic, scalable, and sustainable way to implement the Protective Factors.” These levers include 1) parent partnerships that involve parents in program planning, implementation, and assessment; 2) professional development that infuses the Protective Factors into all trainings for people who work with children and families; and 3) policies and systems work to create platforms for coordinating across diverse initiatives and reinforce linkages among agencies using Strengthening Families as the basis for their work.

Not all plans directly address inequality or disparities within communities or specify plans for reaching specific populations (such as Dual Language Learners), though a number of plans reference cultural and/or linguistic sensitivity. First 5 Kern has an objective on providing parents/guardians with culturally relevant parenting education and supportive services. First 5 Tulare mentions provision of culturally and linguistically responsive services and parent education programs, while First 5 Monterey includes the language “culturally and linguistically appropriate” as part of their guiding principles and essential characteristics of programs. First 5 Alameda describes wanting to expand their work to focus on eliminating persistent inequalities and disparities and includes several focus areas intended to achieve this. First 5 Los Angeles specifically mentioned the need to better serve dual language learners (DLLs) and the need for a workforce better trained to serve the needs of DLLs.

First 5 California

First 5 California play an important role at the state level as an advocate and expert for and about the needs of young children and their families. The state commission receives 20% of Prop 10 revenue, which is allocated into seven accounts, each slated for a specific purpose.⁷⁷ These include:

- Six percent in a **Mass Media Communications Account** for expenditures for communications to the general public utilizing television, radio, newspapers, and other mass media on subjects relating to and furthering the goals and purposes of the act.
- Five percent in an **Education Account** for expenditures to ensure that children are ready to enter school and for programs relating to education, including, but not limited to, the development of educational materials, professional and parental education and training, and technical support for county commissions in the areas.
- Three percent in a **Child Care Account** for expenditures to ensure that children are ready to enter school and for programs relating to child care, including, but not limited to, the education and training of child care providers and the development of educational materials and guidelines for child care workers.
- Three percent in a **Research and Development Account** for expenditures to ensure that children are ready to enter school and for the research and development of best practices and standards for all programs and services relating to early childhood development and for the assessment and quality evaluation of those programs and services.
- One percent in an **Administration Account** for expenditures for the administrative functions of the state commission.
- Two percent in an **Unallocated Account** for expenditure by the state commission for any of the purposes of the act.⁷⁸

In recent years, First 5 California has made considerable investments in the state's Quality Rating and Improvement System, now known as Quality Counts California and associated local efforts funded by First 5 IMPACT. The state commission is also investing in data systems, research on how to best serve young Dual Language Learners, coordination of ECE workforce efforts through the *Transforming the Workforce, California Implementation Effort*, and advocacy at the state level in a variety of policy areas affecting young children in California.

First 5 California is also re-embarking on a strategic planning process to guide the work of the Commission over the five years. Like First 5 Stanislaus, First 5 California is looking to engage stakeholders over a planning period and anticipated that the Commission will adopt a new strategic plan in April 2019.

First 5 Stanislaus should consider developing a strategic plan that leverages investments and infrastructure developed by First 5 California and identifies areas where work completed by the state commission can complement and further advance the outcomes First 5 Stanislaus seeks to achieve for the county's young children and families.

4.B Strategy Considerations for First 5 Stanislaus

As described earlier in this report, First 5 Stanislaus faces a challenging fiscal climate with declining levels of tobacco tax revenue and a significantly declining fund balance. There are also a number of additional adaptive change elements in Stanislaus County that make for a changing early care and education landscape. At the same time, First 5 Stanislaus serves a high-need county in which nearly all social determinants of health are lower than the state average. The Commission has already taken some actions, including initiating expenditure reductions and the inception of a strategic direction/planning process to determine its future direction. The Commission should re-evaluate the roles and priorities of the commission in light of its future financial outlook and the current context of the county, state, and nation.

The following sections explore potential **roles and natures of work** for First 5 Stanislaus, including input about these roles from stakeholders and opportunities and risks associated with each role that the Commission should consider; **issue areas** that First 5 Stanislaus might work to improve (sourced from Section 3.D.I above) along with opportunities and challenges associated with each area; and considerations about how First 5 Stanislaus might secure **additional funding**.⁷⁹

I. Role / Nature of Work: Opportunities and Risks

In determining its strategic direction and future work, First 5 Stanislaus should revisit its role in the county and the nature of its work. Important considerations include:

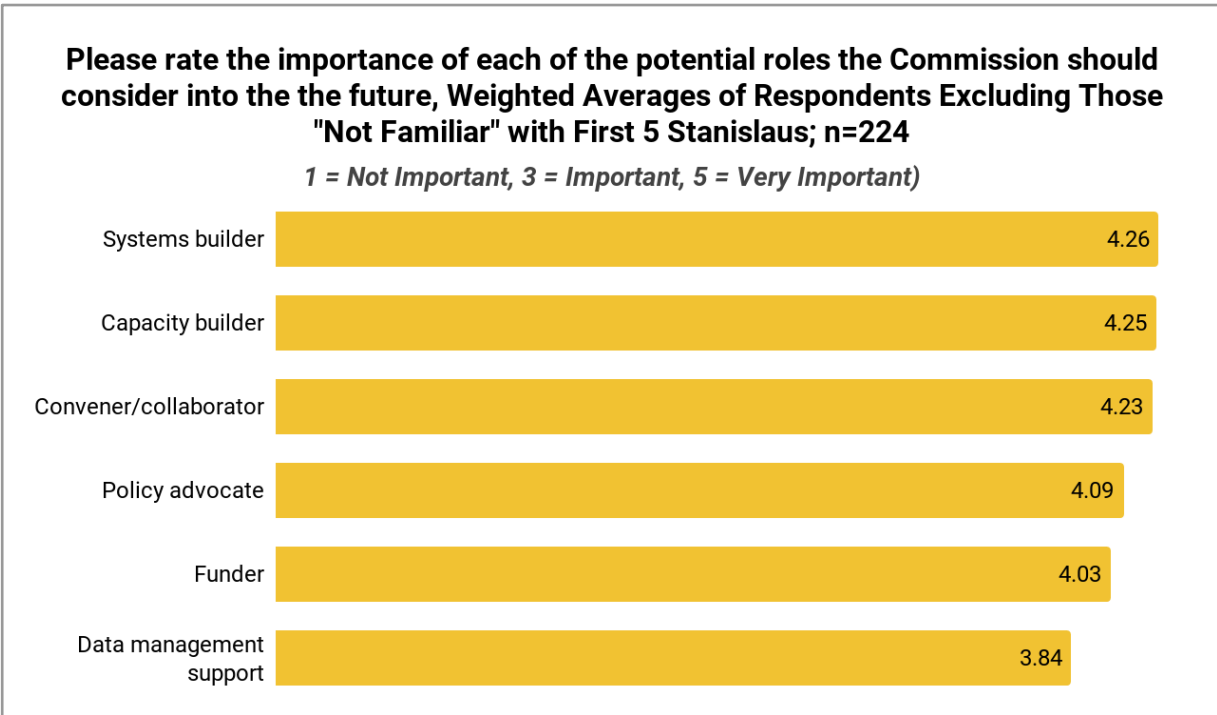
- Identifying highest leveraged activities to help deliver long-term community change.
- The opportunity to align Commission priorities and investment with root-cause issues impacting 0-5.
- Reduced tobacco tax revenue that will require changes to funding priorities
- A trend in the county toward community-level outcomes which will require systems-level changes to achieve.
- Alignment with the First 5 Network Strategy which recommends multiple roles for county commissions.

The Commission should work to answer the question: **“What should First 5 Stanislaus prioritize to maximize its impact on young children and families in the county?”** Through this discovery process, stakeholders have offered some input on this question. Interviewees and survey respondents were asked to rate and comment on the importance of different potential roles for First 5 Stanislaus:

- **Systems Builder:** Support efforts to integrate, streamline and design systems to maximize cost-effectiveness and outcomes.
- **Capacity Builder:** Support service providers to increase their capacity to better support and serve children birth to age five and their families.
- **Convener/Collaborator:** Bring together partner organizations to find energy and alignment around common priorities impacting children from birth to age five and their families.
- **Policy Advocate:** Advocate for greater support and increased resources for children birth to age five and their families.
- **Funder:** Continue to fund service providers and organizations for direct services.
- **Data Management Support:** Lead and/or partner efforts to align data across Stanislaus County that is related to long-term outcome measures for children birth to age five and their families.

The chart below provides a summary of how survey respondents rated the importance of each potential role. The average rating for each role was between “important” and “very important.” While there is not a wide range in average rating, it is notable that role of funder did not receive the highest average rating, with capacity builder, systems builder, convener/collaborator, and policy advocate each receiving higher average ratings.

Figure 33



FIRST 5 STANISLAUS AS CAPACITY BUILDER

Support service providers to increase their capacity to better support and serve children birth to age five and their families.

First 5 Stanislaus could leverage its expertise and resources to inform and build capacity in areas where other organizations cannot. The role of First 5 Stanislaus as a capacity builder was of exceptional interest at the funded partners focus group. Funded partners noted that the investment First 5 Stanislaus made in supporting partners to develop sustainability plans during the recession was a very helpful and appreciated investment. Additionally, one survey respondent suggested that First 5 Stanislaus could maximize impact by “*help[ing] each FRC create a long term self sufficiency plan.*” Participants in the funded partners focus groups offered a range of suggestions for how First 5 Stanislaus could implement this role:

- **Communications and promotion:** Serve as a clearinghouse for training information, and publicize/promote available trainings.
- **Fund development:** Build provider and partner capacity related to fund development and proposal writing, potentially providing match funding that may be leveraged.
- **Backbone capacity:** Provide the institutional capacity to support partnerships/collaborations that require institutional and ongoing coordination and support.
- **Commissioner leadership development:** Ensure that everyone on the commission has deep knowledge of what is going on in the county both in terms of funded programs and services and related partnerships and initiatives.
- **Invest in trainings and technical assistance:** Fund trainings and technical assistance efforts for service providers in the county that they could not otherwise fund or participate in, helping to increase overall capacity and support alignment across the county.

Table 8: Capacity Builder	
Opportunities	Risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This role would enable First 5 Stanislaus to provide targeted support to direct service providers that may lead to more sustainable funding for services. • Communicating about training information and opportunities may not require significant time or funding and could have a major impact on service provider capacity. • Working to increase service provider capacity extends First 5 Stanislaus’ reach to the children and families served by providers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are multiple ongoing collective impact and other collaborative efforts in the county, and First 5 Stanislaus should be careful to avoid duplication of backbone support functions. • Building fund development capacity building does not guarantee the desired level of resource generation.

FIRST 5 STANISLAUS AS SYSTEMS BUILDER

Work across systems within Stanislaus County to ensure that the systems that touch and support children birth to age five and their families are coordinated and provide a comprehensive system of care for children birth to age five and their families.

Coordination of systems is a multi-faceted strategy. One survey respondent wrote: “*How are you being the leader to ensure systems are being coordinated where families are able to access them? How are you making that accessibility easier? Why do families have to apply to 10 different agencies to get their needs met?*” First 5 Stanislaus may be uniquely positioned to play this system-builder role given that it already touches those agencies and organizations that touch the lives of children birth to age five and their families. Many interview participants commented on the opportunity to align data systems across sectors through collaboration with Focus on Prevention and the C2C initiatives (see “First 5 Stanislaus as Data Management Supporter” below). This opportunity may be especially timely for C2C given the initiative is in the beginning phase of its work and starting to identify common indicators and currently there is not one organization responsible for pulling together the data for children from birth to age five and their families to track change over time. Related to data, interview and funded partner focus group participants commented on the need to move away from program outcomes and toward community-level outcomes.

With regard to systems building and coordination, interview respondents and funded partner focus group participants indicated that First 5 Stanislaus is already working across agencies and sectors, and is therefore well positioned to build, strengthen, and streamline cross-sector systems. For example, according to one interview response, “*... there may be 26 county departments supporting approximately 30 homelessness programs and those programs have 6-7 contracts for each program without an integrative strategy to align that work. The same could potentially said about the 0-5 arena and First 5 Stanislaus could lead the integration and alignment of this work, especially through C2C.*”

Table 9: Systems Builder	
Opportunities	Risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First 5 Stanislaus is well positioned to lead efforts to build/develop, strengthen, and streamline systems. • Improvements at the systems level can yield broad impact and community-wide benefits. • System building is identified in the First 5 Network Strategy with specific roles noted for county commissions; this is an opportunity to more closely align with the Network Strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systems building can be time intensive and requires buy-in from relevant organizations and decision-makers. • Systems building work can take a long time to make change, creating a longer delay between investment and results.

FIRST 5 STANISLAUS AS CONVENER/COLLABORATOR

Bring together organizations to find and identify and develop alignment and leverage assets toward common goals to support children birth to age five and their families.

As described in Section 3.D.II above, existing collaboration within and across Stanislaus County is an asset that First 5 Stanislaus could build upon in its future work. No one entity can impact the major, systemic, and multigenerational challenges within Stanislaus County, and First 5 Stanislaus has a history or partnering with multiple providers working toward shared goals. Moving forward, First 5 Stanislaus could play an instrumental role in convening and fostering collaboration among other agencies to address these complex issues. One interviewee remarked, “*First 5 is one agency that partners with multiple agencies that touch the lives of children 0-5 and their families.*”

Results from surveys, interviews, and a focus group with funded partners overwhelmingly elevated the importance of First 5 Stanislaus collaborating and aligning with work that is already underway in Stanislaus County. One interviewee suggested that First 5 Stanislaus should play a leading role in existing collaboratives, offering concern that these bodies are moving forward with decisions-making on priorities and indicators, and that First 5 Stanislaus might miss an important opportunity to lead and align if it does not take on a greater role soon. Interview participants highlighted the value of First 5 Stanislaus’ participation and leadership in existing collaborations and indicated a concern that First 5 Stanislaus may choose to focus on priorities and indicators that were not aligned with ongoing efforts. This was particularly true as it pertains to the Focus on Prevention and C2C efforts. One interviewee noted, “*We need First 5 to be aligned and engaged.*”

Interview and funded partner focus group respondents envisioned First 5 Stanislaus aligning its resources with what’s already underway locally, seizing the opportunity to be a leader in the birth to age five space among partners, and informing and contributing to the development of a common agenda and the identification of community-level indicators for children birth to age five and their families.

Table 10: Convener/Collaborator	
Opportunities	Risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First 5 Stanislaus has the opportunity to increase its presence at existing “tables” or collaborative initiatives. • This role has synergy with the role of “Systems builder” described above, as impacting systems often requires collaboration. • With its focus on young children and their families, First 5 Stanislaus can be a thread that ties disparate social services and community development organizations and efforts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First 5 Stanislaus should be cautious in any efforts to establish new teams or “tables” and before doing so should check for existing efforts with similar intents. • Convening partners may not result in the direct improvement of outcomes for children and families in the short term. • Convening and collaborating take a considerable amount of time and may take months/years to see desired impact. • Aligning resources with community efforts could potentially mean less funding control for Commissioners.

FIRST 5 STANISLAUS AS POLICY ADVOCATE

Advocate for greater support and increased resources for children birth to age five and their families.

Interview and funded partner focus group participants want to see First 5 Stanislaus as *THE* voice for children birth to age five and their families and suggested that the strategic direction and planning process is an opportunity to move beyond funder to champion. Interview participants and funded partners that participated in a focus group indicated the critical importance of First 5 Stanislaus taking on this role of leader, advocate, and champion. First 5 Stanislaus is seen as the “rightful owner” of the birth to age five space and is in a position to educate others about First 5 and the healthy development of children and families.⁸⁰

Survey respondents suggested that First 5 Stanislaus might “*work towards creating policy changes at a macro level*” and engage in “*strong advocacy and policy development and implementation.*” Some survey respondents also suggested that First 5 Stanislaus should expand to advocacy work at the state and

federal levels and can serve as a beacon for local voices: *“As a well-respected organization throughout the State, your policy advocacy work will be incredibly helpful to all of us at the local level. Thank you for elevating our voices at the Capitol and beyond!”*

Table 11: Policy Advocate	
Opportunities	Risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking on this role would enable First 5 Stanislaus to strengthen its leadership at the local and state levels. • This role has synergies with some other roles above, in particular with convener/collaborator and systems builder as there is a need in both of those roles to educate decision-makers about the needs of young children and their families. • Advocacy has the potential to impact policy change at the local, state, and/or federal levels which can dramatically improve outcomes for young children and families in Stanislaus County; it also has the potential to yield significant increases in funding for services to support for young children and families in the county. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy for policy change can be time-intensive and can require long-term endeavors, the results of which are not guaranteed. • Policy advocates often need to craft specific messages and detail their positions on particular issues; this has the potential to create tension between organizations and individuals that disagree on specific approaches. • Serving in an advocacy role at the state and national levels has the potential to dilute First 5 Stanislaus’ ability to focus on local issues.

FIRST 5 STANISLAUS AS FUNDER

Continue to fund service providers and organizations (at decreased levels).

Currently the Commission is primarily a funder of direct intervention services through contracts with specific partner organizations. According to the 2016-2017 First 5 Stanislaus Annual Program Evaluation, 46% of program investments focus on broad intervention, 43% goes towards intense intervention, and 11% is allocated to prevention strategies.⁸¹ Moving forward, First 5 Stanislaus could play a different type of funding role, making more direct investment in systems-building, data management, and local capacity building. Future investment decisions will need to be made including consideration variables such as long-term outcomes, a focus on root-cause issues, and appropriate allocation of prevention and intervention funding, etc.

Many survey respondents commented on the importance of First 5 Stanislaus’ role as a funder, and the value of the services it currently funds. Individual responses include:

- *“The Commission is the one funding support that enables these agencies that serve children and families to exist. Without a funding source much of what is happening would not exist.” (Community member, Employee or Board member at an organization that supports children birth through age 5 and/or their families)*
- *“More programs are being cut because the county cannot afford to pay the community health workers and Public Health Nurses, etc., who provide direct care.” (Community member)*
- *“Look carefully at the Resource center’s [sic] that support our pregnant woman. The HBO program has made a huge difference in terms of babies. Almost all of our babies have been born term, many moms are breastfeeding and moms are taking better care of themselves and their families.” (Parent or caregiver of a child age five or younger, Community member, Employee or Board member at an organization that supports children birth through age 5 and/or their families)*
- *“I think that the Commission should consider supporting even more the Family Resource Centers. For some members of the community, it is hard for them to reach for services/resources at the County because they are embarrassed or scared to seek for resources, but when they attend Family Resource Centers they feel more identified and comfortable because it is a place that is in their neighborhood and they feel part of it.” (Community member, Employee or Board member at*

an organization that supports children birth through age 5 and/or their families, Employee or Board member at an organization that supports children age 6 and older and their families)

This theme was also echoed by parents during the two Spanish-speaking parent focus groups. One parent noted, “The services that First 5 has offered, have been crucial to my family. I know that I have support and that alone means the world. They really have an impact on my family and I can be a better parent because of them.” Other parents emphasized the importance of the Family Resource Centers, which receive First 5 Stanislaus Funding, as a critical support: “Sometimes you try your best as a parent but sometimes you go through hard times. I know I can count on this resource center for emergencies. Maybe I just need formula or a couple of groceries to get me through the next couple of days, it’s a relief knowing that I have someone that can help me.”

Interview and funded partner participants did not focus on First 5 Stanislaus’ role as funder. However, the majority of those who offered input recognized that First 5 Stanislaus is uniquely positioned with a dedicated funding stream. Funded partners in particular expressed a desire for increased clarity and transparency regarding First 5 Stanislaus’ priorities and strategic direction for the future, with the understanding that funding decisions would follow those priorities. Many pointed to the importance of learning from other similar and neighboring First 5 County Commissions to learn how they are funding their programs or how they are shifting their strategic directions. Participants recognized that some Commissions have stopped funding services altogether but felt it was important to understand the trends in the Central Valley.

Opportunities	Risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding direct services provides a clear opportunity to directly impact those served. • First 5 Stanislaus might explore opportunities to use its available funding for direct services as leverage to secure additional funding from other sources to support direct service provision. • Serving as a funder of broader systems-building or capacity-building efforts could allow First 5 Stanislaus to create more efficient community-wide mechanisms to serve children and families • First 5 Stanislaus’ ongoing and projected revenue decrease presents both the challenge and opportunity to assess its funding of direct services in relation to a new strategic direction and priorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing or eliminating its role as a funder of direct services may result in the downsizing or closure of providers and programs, resulting in fewer supports for young children and their families. • Reducing funding for service providers too quickly will decrease the likelihood that those providers can locate and secure replacement funding from other sources. • Funding programs that do not show long-term outcomes to the community could potentially

FIRST 5 STANISLAUS AS DATA MANAGEMENT SUPPORTER

Work to align data and data systems across Stanislaus County to collect and examine long-term outcome measures for children birth to age five and their families.

Stakeholders noted in survey responses, interviews, and funded partner focus groups that First 5 Stanislaus could play an important role in supporting data management systems specifically (in addition to the broader Systems Builder role described above). Stakeholder noted that better data and a focus on child and family outcomes should be institutionalized across providers that serve children from birth to age five and their families. Currently, systems are not coordinated, and data is not uniformly collected, aggregated, analyzed, and acted upon.

Although survey results indicate the least support for the data management support role, many interview and funded partner focus group participants recognized an increased need for an organization to step into this role to address the current lack of leadership and expertise in this area. This type of data work

presents an opportunity to align outcomes with the First 5 Network Strategy and/or Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework. The Commission’s current funded partners also indicated the opportunity to refine current data being collected to ensure relevant outcomes are being tracked and aligned to the Protective Factors.

Table 13: Data Management Supporter	
Opportunities	Risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvements to data collection and data sharing efforts that focus on child and family outcomes can yield more coordinated improvement efforts across agencies and partners. Improving or streamlining data collection and reporting mechanism may free up organizational time/capacity of service providers to focus more on directly serving the people of Stanislaus County. Supporting efforts to examine data based on the proposed indicators in the First 5 Network Strategy presents an opportunity to more closely align with other First 5s across the state. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data system management requires specific expertise and can require significant technical investments. Existing data systems and data collection approaches may be dictated by grant requirements, protocols of a larger/parent organization, or other guidelines that may prove challenging and time-intensive to modify.

ADDITIONAL POTENTIAL ROLE: COMMUNICATOR AND AWARENESS BUILDER

Communicator and awareness builder is an additional potential role that emerged from stakeholder input and discussions. This role would directly address a gap identified by stakeholders that parents of young children are not aware of the resources available to them and are often hesitant to seek this information on their own for various reasons (lack of time, stigma around asking for help, etc.). It could also address the gap that many in the community is not aware of what First 5 Stanislaus does.

This role was highlighted through some of the themes from the two Spanish-speaking parent focus groups. For instance, many parents expressed the need to have more access to information on the education system and on how to prepare their child to be successful at school. They also said they don’t know about a lot of children’s activities for low-income families and would like to be able to find enrichment opportunities for family activities more easily. While some parents said they knew a lot about the services that were available to them, they recognized that many of their peers are unfamiliar with these services and that more communication and outreach was necessary. Parents in the focus group suggested that this type of outreach was particularly important for immigrant families, with one participant noting *“For immigrant families is about knowing where the resources exist, many parents like me didn’t or don’t know how to find resources, I got lucky.”* Another participant suggested that First 5 Stanislaus should, *“Make its presence, resources and program known. I never see or hear anything about First Five initiatives in the community.”*

While this role has some similarities to the role of capacity builder and advocate described above, the communicator and awareness builder role focuses on direct communication to community members while the capacity builder and advocate roles focus on providing information, training, and other supports to direct service providers or communicating with policy makers respectively. This role could also involve a scalable approach for presenting important information and education (for example parenting education or Protective Factors) to more parts of the community than are currently being reached, which could also reinforce First 5 Stanislaus’ position as a leader in early childhood in the community.

Table 14: Communicator and Awareness Builder	
Opportunities	Risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This role provides a potentially low-cost opportunity to connect more children and families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other organizations are likely trying to communicate already with the target population,

<p>with services that are already being provided.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establishing lines of communication with children, parents, and families would enable First 5 Stanislaus to deliver targeted messages such as parenting tips and guidance. ● Messages and materials developed as part of this work could be provided to partner organizations, collaborative efforts, and others, enabling First 5 Stanislaus to magnify the reach of its messages for minimal cost. ● First 5 could use their own resources to increase the reach of education and information beyond where funded partners can reach. 	<p>and First 5 Stanislaus should examine and learn from these efforts prior to launching its own communications / awareness building work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reaching certain populations may require a “trusted messenger” and it is not clear to what extent First 5 Stanislaus could serve in this role. Given stakeholder input noting that First 5 Stanislaus is not well known, direct communication from the agency may not receive the desired level of attention and/or would require considerable outreach and marketing before it could be successful.
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II. Issue Areas: Opportunities and Challenges

As First 5 Stanislaus defines its strategic direction and focus, it should consider the needs and assets/opportunities identified in Section 3.D above. **In particular, the more pronounced community needs, as identified through social determinants of health data and stakeholder input, should be central to the discussion of the Commission’s strategic direction and plans. This discussion should also include a significant focus on root cause issues versus downstream impacts.** The table below presents opportunities and challenges that First 5 Stanislaus should consider in setting its strategic direction as it pertains to focusing on specific issue areas:

Table 15: Opportunities and Challenges	
Opportunities	Challenges
Basic Needs: Money, Food, Housing, and Health Care	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This area is a significant driver of negative social factors. ● Potential for community-level impact ● Opportunity to address these issues through collective impact and systems change efforts ● Potential to create more linkages from existing programs to 0-5 clients. ● Increasing the ability of families to meet basic needs would impact other issues such as to parenting knowledge, stress, etc. ● This is a broad area of need and there is opportunity for First 5 Stanislaus to focus on more specific aspects such as access to mental health services, which stakeholders noted as a challenge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work in this area would require policy and advocacy interventions which the Commission has not focused on in the past. ● These are systemic issues that are challenging to address through family-level interventions ● Working in this area is less aligned to the Children and Families Act and therefore less aligned to First 5 Stanislaus’ mandate. ● Direct services in this area are highly resource intensive (ex: housing subsidies, cash-transfers, etc.) ● This area is more firmly within the purview of other agencies and organizations at the county and state level
Parent Education and Involvement: Parent Education and Time Spent with Family	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identified by stakeholders as a major need / challenge for Stanislaus county ● Is a significant root cause issue for negative outcomes ● Potential to for high impact on child outcomes s by establishing a strong foundation for families of young children to support future success ● Could be influenced through a range of services and investment levels (ex: general awareness building, communications efforts, formal parenting education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There are a number of organizations working in this space so ensuring alignment will need to be addressed ● Changes in parent behavior can be challenging to assess ● Parent education requires a time investment from parents, and stakeholders noted that many parents have limited time available due to long work hours. As a result, parent

Table 15: Opportunities and Challenges	
Opportunities	Challenges
<p>supports)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Opportunity to significantly broaden the reach of parenting support beyond just funded partners ● Could utilize existing frameworks such as the Strengthening Families approach, draw on existing materials, and contribute to a coordinated effort in the county ● Opportunity to address these issues through collective impact and systems change efforts ● Significant alignment with the Children and Families Act 	<p>education may not reach some of the most at-risk parents / families.</p>
Child Education and Care: Access to Child Care/Preschool and Activities, Kindergarten Readiness	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Potential for high impact on child outcomes (see Heckman Curve in Section 2) ● Strong driver of other desired outcomes for families (ex: child care enables workforce participation) ● Established ongoing community efforts in this area (Ex: Ready4School) to build upon / work with ● Significant alignment with the Children and Families Act ● Opportunity for systems advocacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Direct services in this area are highly resource intensive (ex: slots for children to access preschool, subsidies for childcare, funding for professional development) ● Other partners working in this space may lead to the duplication of efforts.
Other: Impacts of Alcohol/Drugs, Impacts of Abuse in the Home, and Immigration Issues	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identified as a major need / challenge by parents ● Contributes to other challenges (ex: ability to meet basic needs, parent engagement and involvement, kindergarten readiness) ● Some alignment with the Children and Families Act ● Opportunity for systems advocacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This area is more within the purview of other agencies and organizations at the county and state level ● Issues such as immigration are challenging to affect at the local level ● May contribute to some mission drift given only proximal alignment with the Children and Families Act

III. Securing Additional Funding

When considering its strategic direction, First 5 Stanislaus faces several important financial realities:

1. The tobacco tax revenue that is collected through Prop 10 and funds First 5 Stanislaus has declined considerably and will continue to decline.
2. There is a considerable need for increased funding to support community intervention services for young children and their families in the county. Given eligibility criteria and need, its possible that hundreds of millions of dollars are required to meet community need. This far exceeds the amount of funding First 5 Stanislaus could contribute.
3. Regardless of the role First 5 Stanislaus plays, there could always be a need for additional funding.
4. First 5 Stanislaus has a targeted revenue stream (used for children birth to age five and their families) but has significant flexibility in how it uses this revenue stream, making it a significant and unique strategic asset.

Depending on the priorities establish in the strategic direction/planning process, First 5 Stanislaus could have greater impact if it is able to 1) secure additional funding for itself; 2) collaborate to secure additional funding for systems priority areas; and; 3) facilitate capacity development and sustainability for

systems priorities, including birth to age five program providers in the county. First 5 Stanislaus should consider how its strategic direction could support these funding needs.

SECURING ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR FIRST 5 STANISLAUS

First 5 Stanislaus should consider its internal capacity to secure funding from new sources. This could include building staff grant-writing capacity, establishing monitoring processes for funding opportunities, establishing necessary conditions to be competitive for grant or contract funding (ex: increasing internal capacity, building grants management experience and establishing a record of successful grant implementation by starting with smaller grants, etc.), and/or reserving a budget to be used as matching funds to secure funding from other sources.

COLLABORATING TO SECURE ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR SYSTEMS IN STANISLAUS COUNTY

First 5 Stanislaus is also well-positioned to support fund development coordination efforts and partner with other agencies and organizations to secure additional funding to serve the county's young children and families. As one survey respondent noted, "*[First 5 Stanislaus should] find other funds to continue providing services. If there is no funding program will be reduced or eliminated.*" First 5 Stanislaus might consider the following strategies:

- Serving as or identifying a lead applicant for funding opportunities
- Coordinating partners in the development of joint grant applications
- Directly providing or contracting to provide grant-writing services
- Sponsoring fund development workshops and capacity building opportunities for partners
- Contributing or identifying matching funds for specific opportunities
- Cultivating relationships with philanthropic partners and making connections between funders and local partners

SPECIFIC FUNDING STREAMS OR OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONSIDERATION

Specific suggestions for potential alternative funding sources for First 5 Stanislaus and its community partners include:

- Exploring Mental Health Services Act-Prevention & Early Intervention (MHSA-PEI) funding to support mental health services and child abuse prevention
- Coordinating with Stanislaus County departments, the Stanislaus County Office of Education, nonprofits and other non-government organizations for coordinated budgeting and funding opportunities
- Exploring possibilities for increased prevention funding through the renewal of the [Medi-Cal 2020 waiver](#)
- Exploring the potential for regional partnerships and co-funding opportunities with other First 5 County Commissions that are also contending with diminished resources
- Leveraging Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) and County Office of Education funding to support kindergarten readiness activities
- Increasing contributions from the Community Services Agency to support already co-funded services
- Identifying alternative methods for funding and delivering high-risk prenatal care including public health funding, Community Corrections/public safety funding or other sources of funding, as well as coordination with Medi-Cal managed care plans and other health systems with high prenatal caseloads for larger-scale impact.
- Ensuring Medi-Cal is billed for all allowable services including mental health
- Prop 56 oral health funding through the Health Services Agency
- Ensuring all appropriate clients are enrolled in WIC and CalFresh to ensure they are maximizing eligible benefits
- Exploring other regional efforts for coordination and funding including

5. Moving Forward: Questions for First 5 Stanislaus

First 5 Stanislaus has examined considerable evidence and data at the local, state, and federal levels surrounding supports, services, and policies for children birth to age five and their families. This has been coupled with a robust “listening process” and the engagement of local parents, leaders, and stakeholders. While this document outlines key issues and considerations and presents a thorough analysis of potential strategies and areas for focus, First 5 Stanislaus must now wrestle with some important questions and make decisions about the future strategic direction of First 5 Stanislaus.

The following questions are meant to provoke thought and discussion and could be used to assist First 5 Stanislaus in its direction setting and should be considered in light of the evidence provided above. Broad questions are italicized and followed by more specific questions to dig deeper.

- *Based on all the data presented and analysis that has been done, what specific things are resonating?*
 - *What opportunities sound exciting or important?*
 - *What issues are most compelling?*
- *What are some positive things you hope to see for children and families in Stanislaus county in five years? Ten years?*
 - What long-term outcomes for children and families do we want to see in the future?
 - What type of data do we want to emphasize?
 - To what extent should First 5 Stanislaus continue to collect program-based outcomes
 - To what extent/how should we First 5 Stanislaus use population-level metrics?
- *What does the Commission hope will be true about First 5 Stanislaus in five years?*
 - What roles should First 5 Stanislaus play in the county in order to have the greatest effect on improving outcomes for young children and families in the county?
 - What does First 5 Stanislaus need to do to move from its current state to achieve the hoped-for attributes/conditions?
- *Given community need and declining revenue, where can First 5 Stanislaus dollars have the greatest effect?*
 - Given what we know from the data, where is the potential for the greatest impact from First 5 investment?
 - What issue areas should First 5 Stanislaus pursue/influence?
 - Should First 5 Stanislaus prioritize prevention or intervention?
- *How can First 5 Stanislaus leverage existing resources and community collaborations?*
 - (Should) might the Strengthening Families Protective Factors approach be applied to First 5 Stanislaus’ strategic direction?
 - What should be First 5 Stanislaus’ roles in the Stanislaus County Focus on Prevention Movement, and other collaborative efforts currently underway?
 - To what extent and in what ways should First 5 Stanislaus’ strategic direction align with the First 5 Network Strategy?

As First 5 Stanislaus moves into the next phase of its strategic direction setting, it is strongly positioned to use the results of this analysis and the input it has received from its community and partners to craft a plan that best meets the needs of young children and their families.

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Appendix II. Discovery Process and Stakeholder Engagement Methodology

First 5 Stanislaus' strategic direction and planning process included an extensive stakeholder engagement phase designed to gather input from local stakeholders in linguistically and culturally responsive ways to ensure that the resulting plan is informed by community input. This document outlines detailed of the stakeholder engagement methodology.

In addition to stakeholder engagement, the planning process included the review and analysis of key resources, such as First 5 Stanislaus' current and past strategic plans, financial information and projections; other pertinent First 5 strategic plans; information on current work and collaborative efforts in the local community impacting children birth to age five and their families; information from listening sessions, interviews, and surveys conducted by First 5 Stanislaus Executive Director David Jones in his first twelve months of leadership; and existing data and literature on key issues impacting children birth to age five and their families locally and more broadly. In order to ensure a broad range of data were considered, both GPG and First 5 Stanislaus researched and contributed data sources. First 5 Stanislaus also formally requested data from all contracted First 5 Stanislaus providers and Commissioners verbally and in writing multiple times.

Stakeholder Engagement Plan

First 5 Stanislaus Commissioners decided to gather information on the following areas inform the strategic direction and planning process:

- **First 5 Stanislaus' Strategic Direction**, such as opportunities for innovation, ideas about the agency's potential future role(s), and suggestions for future work priorities
- **Community Needs in Stanislaus County**, based on stakeholder observations of trends and needs in the community
- **Lived Experience of Parents / Caregivers of Young Children in Stanislaus County**, including information about the challenges they face and the existing resources that they use and find most helpful

GPG gathered stakeholder input through the following mechanisms in July and August 2018:

- Interviews (16)
- Online survey (372 responses)
- Short-version online survey (distributed by First 5 Stanislaus via social media) (34 responses)
- Two focus groups with Spanish-speaking parents (22 participants)
- One focus group with First 5 Stanislaus grantees / funded partners (18 participants)

In addition, GPG reviewed key results from stakeholder input previously collected by David Jones through:

- Listening sessions/meetings with a broad range of close to 50 community leaders and representatives serving young children and their families in the county, held between May 2017 and May 2018
- A 2018 focus group of child care educational leaders through the Local Planning Council (10 participants)
- A 2018 survey of 190 early childhood educators and child care providers
- A 2018 survey of 26 front-line service providers from Family Resource Centers in Stanislaus County

Identified stakeholder groups that could provide input on strategic direction, community needs, and lived experience included:

- Parents and caregivers of children age 5 and under
- Community members

- Organizations serving children birth to age five and their families
- Organizations serving children ages 6 and older and their families
- Other organizations in the county (e.g., health, social services, etc., including public, non-profit, and faith-based organizations)
- Internal stakeholders (Commissioners, Commission staff)
- Key external advisors

In addition, this stakeholder engagement process was structured to ensure input from Spanish-speaking parents/caregivers, community members, and organizational representatives; and to gather input from organizations currently receiving funding; and organizations currently not receiving funding from First 5 Stanislaus.

The matrix below describes how each data collection tool was used to elicit specific information from each stakeholder group:

Stakeholder Group	Mechanism(s)	Data Gathered
Parents and caregivers of children age 5 and under	Survey, Focus Groups	Lived experience
Community members	Survey	Strategic Direction, Community Needs
Organizations serving children birth to age five and their families	Survey, Interviews, Focus Group (for funded partners only)	
Organizations serving children ages 6 and older and their families	Survey, Interviews	
Other organizations in the county (e.g., health, social services, etc., including public, non-profit, and faith-based organizations)	Survey, Interviews	
Internal stakeholders (Commissioners, Commission staff)	Interviews	
Key external stakeholders	Interviews	

More details is provided below for each of the stakeholder engagement mechanisms.

Interviews

Over a two week period in July 2018, GPG conducted 45 minute phone interviews with 16 external and internal stakeholders identified and approved by the Strategic Direction and Planning Steering Committee. Commissioners were given an opportunity to submit names to GPG and First 5 Stanislaus Executive Director David Jones for suggested people to interview. The table below provides more information on the interview sample.

Category	Interview Respondents
Total	16 individuals
Stakeholder Type ⁸²	4 Organizations serving children birth to age five and their families (funded partners) 7 Other organizations in the county (health, social services; non-profit, faith-based) 4 Key external stakeholders 2 Internal Stakeholders

Interviewees		
First Name	Last Name	Organization
Rick	DeGette	Behavioral Health & Recovery Services
Cindy	Duenas	Center for Human Services
Coleen	Garcia	Children’s Crisis Center
Kathy	Harwell	Community Services Agency / First 5 Stanislaus Commissioner
Teresa	Guerrero	El Concilio
Moira	Kenney	First 5 Association
David	Jones	First 5 Stanislaus, ED
Ruben	Imperial	Focus on Prevention
Jeff	Pishney	Love Modesto
Hon. Ann	Ameral	Oversees Foster Care court
Julie	Falkenstein	Public Health Maternal Child Health
Joe	Duran	Self Help Credit Union
Marian	Kaanon	Stanislaus Community Foundation
Jody	Hayes	Stanislaus County CEO
Tom	Changnon	Stanislaus County Office of Education, Superintendent
Oscar	Cabello	Wells Fargo Bank

Surveys

Two online surveys were conducted as part of the stakeholder engagement process. The first survey, open for two weeks in late July and early August 2018, was distributed through the First 5 Stanislaus website, partners, Commissioners, and other contacts. It was designed to elicit a range of information from both partner organizations as well as community members at large and parent/caregivers. The survey was distributed to over 150 individuals and more than 50 groups/listservs. Request were also made for individuals to share the survey with their networks as well.

The survey was available in Spanish and English and took fewer than 15 minutes to complete. Participants were given different questions based on the⁸³ stakeholder group that they selected in the first question of the survey. For example, parents/caregivers were given questions related to their lived experience and not those related to First 5 Stanislaus’ strategic direction.

Category	Survey Respondents
Total	372
Stakeholder Type <i>(multiple selection)</i>	87 (23%) Parent or caregiver of a child five or younger 114 (31%) Community member 165 (45%) Employee or board member at an organization that supports children birth through age five and/or their families 115 (31%) Employee or board member at an organization that supports children age six or older and their families 54 (15%) Employee or board member at another type of organization
Receiving Funding from First 5	147 (40%) Yes 145 (40%) No

Stanislaus	71 (20%) Not Applicable
Community <i>(multiple selection)</i>	86 (23%) Ceres 34 (9%) Crows Landing 35 (9%) Denair 40 (13%) Empire 37 (10%) Grayson 30 (8%) Hickman 56 (15%) Hughson 262 (70%) Modesto 53 (14%) Newman 69 (19%) Oakdale 67 (18%) Patterson 64 (17%) Riverbank 55 (15%) Salida 111 (30%) Turlock 66 (18%) Waterford 36 (10%) Westley 36 (10%) Other unincorporated area of Stanislaus County 34 (9%) Outside of Stanislaus County
Familiar with First 5 Stanislaus	104 (28%) Not familiar 159 (43%) Somewhat familiar 109 (29%) Very familiar

The survey was send directly to the following organizations, and organizations were asked to distribute the survey to their staff and networks:

- Advancing Vibrant Communities
- Behavioral Health Board
- Behavioral Health and Recovery Services
- Big Smiles
- Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)
- Casa del Rio Family Resource Center
- Catholic Charities
- Center for Human Services
- Ceres Park & Recreation
- Ceres Unified School Board
- Child Abuse Prevention Council
- Stanislaus County Child Protective Services/Foster Care
- Children's Crisis Center
- City Ministry Network
- City of Modesto
- City of Modesto Park & Recreation
- Commission on Aging
- Community Services Agency
- Cradle to Career
- Del Puerto Healthcare District
- Delta Dental of California
- Dennis Earl Elementary School
- Doctors Medical Center
- Doctors Medical Center Birth Center
- El Concilio
- Emanuel Medical Center
- Faith in the Valley
- Family Support Network
- First 5 Merced
- First 5 San Joaquin
- Focus on Prevention
- Fuzio Restaurant
- Gallo Center for the Arts
- Golden Valley Health Center
- Grayson Westley Family Resource Center
- Great Valley Academy
- Haven Women's Center
- Head Start Empire
- Health Plan of San Joaquin
- HealthNet
- Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Hispanic Youth Leadership Council
- Housing Authority
- Imagination Library Turlock
- Interfaith Ministries
- Irvine Leadership Cohort
- Jessica's House
- Kaiser Permanente
- Latinas Stanislaus
- Latino Emergency Council

- Legacy Health
- Love Modesto/Love Our Cities
- Manos Unidos
- Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships
- Memorial Birth Center
- Mi Familia Vota
- Modesto Bee
- Modesto Chamber of Commerce
- Modesto City Schools
- Modesto Gospel Mission
- Modesto Junior College
- Modesto Police Department - Neighborhood Watch
- ModestoView
- Mujeres Latinas de Stanislaus
- Newman Park & Recreation
- Non-funded Family Resource Centers
- O'Brien's Market
- Oak Valley Hospital
- Oakdale Chamber of Commerce
- Oakdale Park & Recreation
- Opportunity Stanislaus
- Oral Health Advisory Board
- Patterson Chamber of Commerce
- Patterson Park & Rec
- Probation
- Promotoras
- QRIS Coordinator in Stanislaus County
- Riverbank Church
- Riverbank Parks & Recreation
- Ross Lee Law Corporation
- Safe Kids Stanislaus
- Salida Elementary
- Salida Unified School District
- Scenic Faculty Medical Group
- Sierra Vista
- Smile America Partners
- Big Smiles
- Society for Disabilities
- Solecon
- South Modesto Business United
- South Modesto Partnership
- Stanislaus Council of Governments
- Stanislaus Community Foundation
- Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors
- Stanislaus County Departments
- Stanislaus County Department of Workforce Development
- Stanislaus County Fair
- Stanislaus County Library
- Stanislaus County Local Planning Council
- Stanislaus County Office of Education
- Stanislaus County Parks & Recreation
- Stanislaus County Probation Office
- Stanislaus County Sheriff's Office
- Stanislaus Health Foundation
- Stanislaus Housing Authority
- Stanislaus Literacy Center
- Stanislaus Medical Society
- Stanislaus Regional Transit – StaRT
- Stanislaus Sheriff
- Sunlight Giving
- Sutter Health
- Sutter Memorial Medical Center
- Turlock Chamber of Commerce
- Turlock Parks & Recreation
- Turlock Police Chief
- Turning Point Community Programs – mental health & recovery
- UC Merced
- United Samaritan Foundation
- United Way
- Valley Children's Hospital
- Valley Family Medicine Program
- Valley Oak Pediatrics
- Waterford Park & Recreation
- West Modesto King-Kenney Collaborative
- West Modesto Partnership
- Westside Healthcare District
- Women Infants and Children (WIC)
- Youth For Christ

The second survey, open for one week in August after the first survey closed, was designed to reach a much broader audience who may not have any connection with First 5 Stanislaus but still be able to offer their perceptions on community needs and lived experience. A Facebook ad targeted people who lived throughout Stanislaus county using zip codes. The ad did not target individuals by gender, age, income, or whether they had children. The survey, available in English and Spanish, took fewer than five minutes to complete. This survey did not collect demographic information (beyond location/community) so as not to deter people from taking the survey. There were 34 respondents that completed the Facebook survey.

Focus Groups

Focus groups were conducted, one with funded partners and two with Spanish speaking parents.

FUNDED PARTNERS FOCUS GROUP

All First 5 Stanislaus funded partners were invited to send one leadership representative to attend a two-hour focus group. The focus group was held at a neutral location: the Sutter Health Education and Conference Center in Modesto, on July 30, 2018. First 5 Stanislaus Executive Director David Jones sent an email invitation as well as follow-up emails and phone calls. GPG senior associates Mara Mahmood and Maggie Steakley facilitated this focus group, which was attended by 18 individuals from 14 organizations. Questions centered on First 5 Stanislaus' strengths, challenges, and its strategic direction. The focus group also allowed participants to suggest additional topics to discuss; these topics were generally related to exploring First 5 Stanislaus' role as a capacity builder and engaging the community voice. The focus group included small group and whole group discussions, individual reflections, and a meeting evaluation to collect additional thoughts and considerations from participants.

SPANISH SPEAKING PARENT FOCUS GROUPS

First 5 Stanislaus worked with Waterford and Patterson Family Resource Centers on the east and west sides of Stanislaus County (respectively) to recruit Spanish speaking parents to attend a two-hour focus group in one of the two locations. Light refreshments and child care were provided at the focus groups. Lucia Obregon facilitated both focus groups. Questions centered on family strengths and assets, parenting challenges, and family supports and resources. Ten parents participated at the Waterford focus group and twelve parents participated in the Patterson focus group.

Appendix III. Stakeholder Feedback Summary

First 5 Stanislaus’ strategic direction and planning process includes an extensive stakeholder engagement process designed to gather input from local stakeholders in linguistically and culturally responsive ways to ensure the resulting plan is informed by community input (See Appendix II: Stakeholder Engagement Methodology). Key themes that emerged from the stakeholder engagement process are summarized below.

Key Themes Across Stakeholder Input

- Parenting skills are a key factor in long-term child outcomes and parents need support in improving these skills. Many families in Stanislaus county face considerable economic challenges and need support to develop the Protective Factors.
- Children and families need access to more early education and enrichment opportunities, ranging from accessible and affordable childcare and preschool, to more cultural and educational activities and events for families.
- More communication and awareness building is needed on both the needs of young children and their families, and the services and opportunities that are available to them.
- Family Resource Centers play a critical role in reaching families where they are across the county.
- First 5 Stanislaus should be a more visible champion for children and families while also being a leader and partner to ongoing collaboration efforts.
- First 5 Stanislaus should identify clear focus areas and objectives, identify outcomes, and support data coordination to drive towards those outcomes.

Major Themes by Stakeholder Engagement Tools

2018 Executive Director Stakeholder Survey Results

<p>2018 First 5 Stanislaus Focus Group (10 educational leaders, held through Local Planning Council)</p>	<p>Most significant issues facing parents and children that participants engage with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Poor resilience ● Impacts of trauma ● Lack of parent engagement ● Lack of concrete supports for families ● Lack of basic needs like food ● Abuse of technology
<p>2018 First 5 Stanislaus Survey of 190 Early Childhood Educators and Child Care Providers</p>	<p>When asked to select a “top issue” from a list of six issues impacting children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 35% of respondents agreed that <i>parenting skills in the home needing improvement</i> was the top issue; ● 25% thought <i>parents not spending enough time with children</i> was the top issue; and ● 15% indicated that <i>children not being taught enough at home</i> was the top issue.
<p>2018 First 5 Stanislaus Survey of 26 Front-line Service Providers from Family Resource Centers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 19% thought that children were adequately taught at home ● 19% thought that family communication skills were adequate ● 23% thought that kids have good role models in the home ● 85% expressed that kids they serve have problems as a result of trauma in the home

2017 Executive Director Stakeholder Interviews

COMMON THEMES

- Family resilience is critical, but also lacking for many families.
- The home environment is critical for child learning and development, but many parents lack knowledge of child development and strong parenting skills.
- First 5 Stanislaus needs to align with collaborative movements.
- First 5 Stanislaus' vision should expand to include to systems builder/systems change.
- The quality and appropriateness of First 5 outcomes indicators including long-term indicators should be improved.
- First 5 should help support training/education gaps for providers serving children from birth to age five and their families.
- Significant work is needed with father engagement.
- The Strengthening Families Protective Factors should be woven into all the work of First 5 Stanislaus.

COMMUNITY CHALLENGES

- Families face the impacts of low income including food and housing insecurity, and challenges to meet basic needs.
- Trauma has a considerable impact on family resilience and parents are overwhelmed.
- Many parents lack parenting skills
 - “Parents need to take a class before they have kids.”
 - “You need to start with parents because everything is reflected to the kids.”
 - “Anybody coming to a parenting class says they wished they had it sooner.”
 - “children are raising children.”
- Parents also need support building other skills, including budgeting, how to have healthy relationships, how to communicate, how to protect your relationships, and additional training like vocational opportunities.
- Father engagement needs to be bolstered.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

- First 5 Stanislaus should improve outcome indicators and move toward long-term outcomes.
- First 5 Stanislaus should align with collaboration movements in the county.
- First 5 should move into a systems change/development role.
- First 5 can help meet training and education needs/fill gaps for providers serving children from birth to age five and their families.

LANDSCAPE CHALLENGES:

- There is a considerable shortage of services for children birth to age five and their families:
 - Limited number of dentists that take Medi-Cal.
 - Lack of mental health services for children and families.
- Funding: Local government funding for some services has significantly changed over the years and/or could be more focused on the needs of children birth to age five and their families.
 - There is an overall lack of funding coordination across county departments.
 - Nonprofit providers heavily rely on grant funding for providing services.
- There is no real discussion about the quality of services for children birth to age five and their families.
- There is no asset map for services in the county for children birth to age five and their families.
- There used to be school readiness sites across the county that were beneficial.
- People used to access CHDP services in multiple sites, which was well-received

- There is inconsistent school support for Healthy Start sites. is not consistent
- 2009 sustainability efforts were very appreciated by partners but are not necessarily yielding expected results

2018 GPG Stakeholder Interviews

COMMUNITY CHALLENGES

- **Lack of affordable child care/preschool:** There are very limited options for affordable child care in Stanislaus County.
- **Basic needs / not enough money:** Persistent and pervasive poverty faced by many families and may be related to additional challenges such as lack of stable housing and substance abuse issues.
- **Parents/caregivers are not prepared or do not have the information/knowledge they need to be good parents/caregivers:** Lack of formal education and lack of parenting knowledge/skills is a multi-generational challenge facing families .

COMMUNITY ASSETS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- **Family Resource Centers:** First 5 Stanislaus was instrumental in bringing FRCs to the community and stakeholders agree they are a key community asset.
- **Collaboration within and across Stanislaus County:** There is a perceived increase in collaboration among First 5 Stanislaus’ funded partners and co-funded agencies as well as within and across the County including growing collective impact initiatives aligned with First 5 Stanislaus’ work and focus

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

- **Alignment with existing efforts:** First 5 Stanislaus should examine how it can align with and leverage ongoing initiatives such as Focus in Prevention and Cradle 2 Career.
- **Future role - systems builder:** First 5 Stanislaus is uniquely positioned to work across sectors to align and integrate cross-sector systems that touch the lives of children birth to age five and their families. This role might include supporting data management and coherence of tracked outcomes across efforts throughout the county.
- **Future role - convener/collaborator:** First 5 Stanislaus’ new strategic direction should not “go it alone” and instead should join and lead initiatives such as FoP and C2C where partners are already at the table and efforts are already underway.

2018 Online Stakeholder Survey (GPG Administered)

Survey Demographics:

372 Responses Total

Roles (multiple selection)

- 23% identified as parents/caregivers of a young child
- 31% identified as a community member
- 45% identified as an employee or board member of an organization serving children 0-5 and families
- 31% identified as an employee or board member of an organizational serving children ages 6+ and their families
- 15% identified as an employee or board member at another type of organization

Race/Ethnicity

- 45.14% identified as white
- 40.86% identified as Hispanic or Latino
- All other race/ethnicity options provided were 5% or less of respondents each

Communities

- All community options provided were represented (community percentage of respondents ranged from 8.06% to 70.43%)
- 70.43% of respondents live or work in Modesto
- The lowest represented community was Hickman, with 8.06% of respondents reporting to live or work there

COMMUNITY CHALLENGES

- **Meeting basic needs (housing, money, work, and food), especially housing:** lack of affordable housing options for low-income families; parents work low-wage jobs due to low-educational attainment.
- **Not enough affordable child care options** available to meet need; **child care options that exist are not within the financial means of many families.**
- **Substance abuse and abuse in the home-** leads to poor outcomes for children, occurrence leads to generational recurrence.
- **Immigration** fears causing stress in the home and leading families not to seek services for which they are eligible.

COMMUNITY ASSETS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- **Available programs for children from birth to age five and their families:** Family Resource Centers and specific programs like WIC, Head Start, and Healthy Birth Outcomes were listed as top assets in Stanislaus County
- **Opportunity to serve as a convener, collaborator, and systems builder:** First 5 Stanislaus can help streamline and align services and efforts to serve children birth to age five and their families in a cohesive and accessible way
- **Increase community awareness of services and First 5 Stanislaus:** Opportunity for First 5 Stanislaus to further develop community awareness of its work, services, and knowledge about child development

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Survey respondents suggested that First 5 Stanislaus should play the following roles. There was little variation across stakeholder groups and no one role was identified with significantly stronger support than the others.

- **Future role - capacity builder:** coordinate/provide training for service providers, hold service providers to achieving outcomes, support providers in sustainability work
- **Future role - convener/collaborator:** partner and collaborative with providers and organizations with similar goals to align and streamline system of supports for children birth to age five and their families
- **Future role - systems builder** - potential to support building systems in ECE workforce pipeline, quality ECE system, and coordinated system of supports for children birth to age five and their families; align data systems across collaborative efforts, reduce fragmentation of early childhood data available
- **Future role - funder** - continue to provide funding for existing services, especially Family Resource Centers and programs that provide parenting education and information, look for alternative funding sources to continue this funding

2018 Population-based Facebook Survey

A survey for the general population of Stanislaus County was developed based on the full stakeholder

survey and shared using targeted Facebook ads. There were 34 complete responses to this four-question survey.

- When asked if things have gotten better or worse for children in Stanislaus county over the last three to five years, 44.12% of respondents think things have gotten worse, 29.41% think things have gotten better, and 26.47% think things have stayed the same.
- The majority of respondents (64.71%) think most learning should be taking place for children birth to age 5 should take place with parents and family at home, followed by other location than the options provided (14.71%), teachers in a formal care setting (preschool) (11.76%), and lastly with caregivers in informal care settings (daycare/babysitting) (8.82%); the 'other' option provided by respondents was a combination of home and formal care.
- The biggest challenges identified were poverty (73.53%), parents not having enough time with children (64.71%), school readiness (55.88%), and parenting knowledge and skills needing improvement (52.94%); children experiencing trauma was the least identified biggest challenge (29.41%).
- The most community respondents live or work in was Modesto (57.58%), then Turlock (33.33%); other communities included Ceres, Patterson, Waterford, Oakdale, Salida, Denair, other unincorporated area, Crows Landing, Riverbank, and outside of Stanislaus County.

Spanish-speaking Parent Focus Groups

PARENTING CHALLENGES

- **Having enough time to spend with their children** due to long work hours of one or both parents.
- **Co-parenting** (including consistency in messaging to children) and distributing parenting responsibilities can be challenging, especially when one parent takes most of the responsibility for bringing income to the household.
- **Communication** between parents and between parents and children and finding ways to teach children to share, get along with siblings, etc.

FAMILY SUPPORTS AND RESOURCES

- Parents indicated a lack of **access to children activities** like dance or art classes, especially for low income families as these activities can be expensive and/or far away.
- Parents wanted **more information about the education system** and how they can prepare their child to be successful at school.
- More **classes on co-parenting and partner communication**.
- Parents suggested having more job fairs, access to financial health resources and coaching, and other **financial supports** would be helpful.
- Given parents' lack of time, information should be communicated in multiple ways including classes, brochures, magazines, text messages, Facebook, etc.

Funded Partners Focus Group

- Recent **improvements with how First 5 Stanislaus partners with community organizations** and strong **support for the stakeholder engagement process** around strategic direction and planning.
- First 5 Stanislaus as a **champion for children in the county**, a **strong voice in communicating with the public** about the importance of early learning, child development, and family engagement, and a **more visible advocate** for children and families.
- Importance of **building local agency/organization capacity** and **funding or delivering trainings across organizations** that are difficult or organizations to fund individually.
- **Focus on child-outcomes** and **coordination of data** across service providers to better **paint a picture of impact**.
- Need and desire for **clear organizational focus areas and objectives that are communicated with partners**.

Appendix IV. Parent Focus Groups Results

Purpose

To hear from Family Resource Center clients about:

- What is going well for their families and their children ages five and younger,
- Challenges they face raising children, and
- The types of resources that are most important or useful to their families.

Structure:

Participants engaged in a series of interactive discussions that used a variety of activities to support idea sharing about each topic.

- **Number of participants:** 22
- **Duration:** two hours
- **Facilitator:** Lucia Obregon

Family Strengths and Assets

Parents from Waterford Resource Center and Patterson Resource Center participated in a focus group to share their ideas about parenting and the support needed to be an effective parent. Participants shared their stories and discussed different activities that makes them feel like they are being a good parent. Many stories revolved around spending quality time with their child to teach and help them grow. Parents feel successful when they see their child succeed, when they are being polite or when they can help them through a problem. Quality time also allows them to engage in different activities with their children to build family values. Things like going to the park, eating dinner together or playing with them gives them an opportunity to talk their children. It is important to parents that they are a role model to their children and teach them about honesty, hard work and family. When children exemplify these values through their behavior, it makes the parent feel like they are being effective.

Participants noted the importance of being an effective parent and acknowledged that in order to be successful a parent must count on various supports. Having the support of a responsible partner is essential to being a successful parent. It provides stability to the household and allows them to share responsibility. Having family and community or network is also important to be successful parent. Having access to other people who can give care for their children, give them advice and share stories about their own parenting experience helps them grow as a parent. Another crucial support is having access to resource centers that offer services that help them become a better parent, things like classes and information on parenting but also financial services or a access to a food pantry in case there's an emergency. Having access to services and a network of other parents is a huge support, especially since many immigrant families don't have family here.

Highlighted Quotes:

- "It is important for me to spend time with my children and be their role model. I set at least half an hour of my day to talk to each of my kids. My baby and I like to sing together, since she can't talk yet."
- "The birth of my child was the most important day of my life. I don't have family here, they are all in Mexico but having my child brought me closer to my husband's family. When he was born the family was united. I felt supported and loved."
- "Last year, we went to go see the snow for the first time. It was our first time for all of us. It was great to see their smiles and it was great that we all got to share the same experience for the first time."

Parenting Challenges

Participants were asked to share and vote to select some of the biggest challenges parents face when raising young children. They identified three main challenges:

- **Time.** Most parents expressed that the biggest barrier is to have enough time to spend with their children. Many parents work long hours and it makes it hard to spend quality time with their families. In many cases the mother is able to stay at home but that also means that the father of the household is working twice as long. Many parents explained that immigration status has a lot to do with the types of opportunities they have access to. The jobs that are available to immigrant parents often involve long hours of labor. Being low-income also means that you take on several jobs. Devoting enough time to their children is important and sometimes the time they spend with their children is not always quality time.
- **Co-parenting.** Co-parenting is a challenge for most participants. It is important that the responsibility of parenting is shared equally. Often times distributing the responsibilities can be difficult because the father of the household takes most of the responsibility of bringing income to the household. Something that is also challenging is making sure the communication between each individual parent and their children is consistent and sends the same message. Coming up with agreements between parents can be challenging if they have different ways to deal with situations or have conflicting values. Often times it is often the mother that takes all of the responsibility of the family's education and discipline. Parents attribute this challenge to the lack of education and access to tools that can improve their partnership's communication. Many people aren't taught how to co-parent, it is something that they often have to figure out for themselves and there's a lack of access to resources like family counseling or classes on co-parenting.
- **Communication.** Communication between parents and their child can be a big barrier. When children are younger, parents have a difficulty coming up with ways to communicate with their child in an effective manner. Sometimes it is hard to discipline them or calm them. It's hard to find ways to teach them things like how to share or get along with siblings. They also want to find ways to communicate in positive ways and find activities that help them grow. Similar to co-parenting, parents attribute this to the lack of education on how to successfully communicate with a baby.

When asked about the challenges of parenting, participants had many similar challenges. Some of the other challenges parents brought up is being a single parent. A lot of parents also agreed the use of technology is a challenge, particularly how to regulate the use of technology and find useful and educational ways to use a phone or a tablet. There is a cultural and generational gap that parents feel like they don't fully understand technology. Participants also mentioned socio-economic barriers, like rising housing costs, rising costs of living, that make it difficult to keep their family stable. Access to better job opportunities and being able to obtain capital can be difficult when you live in underserved communities.

When asked how to rate their confidence in overcoming challenges from 1 to 5, 1 being really easy, to 5 really difficult to overcome challenges. The average answer from all parents was a 3. When asked to explain why they selected a 3 a parent explained, "I feel capable overcoming challenges but I think some challenges I don't have a lot of control over, like my job or the type of job I have. I feel like the job you have, you really hold on to it because we have to feed our family. Some challenges like improving the communication between my child or my husband, that I can work on and I think it's more doable and obtainable."

Highlighted Quotes:

- "We live in a country with many opportunities but not everyone can access them. We have to work all the time just to make ends meet. If we had better opportunities we could possibly had more time. I wish I had a 9-5 job"

- “It’s important for me to find time to talk to my husband and talk about the progress of our kids or something that happened that day but most days don’t have the time or we are too tired.”
- “My husband and I get in disagreements, he works a lot, so when he is at home he wants to be the fun parent. I need him to help me with discipline too, I can’t be the only bad guy.”
- “One week after my baby was born I got my papers. It’s a relief, I can walk without fear.”
- “I love that my child has a unique personality, but it’s challenging. I want her to be who she is but I also want her to learn things like get along, to share, not to be picky about food, or go to bed on time. I want to discipline her in a positive way.”

Family Supports and Resources

Overcoming challenges through **access**:

- Parents feel like there’s not a lot of children activities for low income families. Parents would like to see more dance classes or art classes, things that can help their child’s development. Often times classes like this are expensive and or far away. They expressed a desired to have classes they can participate along with their child so they can continue to grow their relationship. Sessions in the evening or Saturday in the morning would be appreciated.
- Many parents expressed the need to have more access to information on the education system. They need to know how they can prepare their child to be successful at school. They also wanted support on how to talk to their pre-k teacher about their child’s development and how to improve it if they need help.
- Classes or workshops on co-parenting or on communication with your partner would be very useful. Also resources like family counseling or parent support groups can help them improve their relationships with their partner.
- Something that can also remove barriers is access to financial resources, such as resources or event like job fairs, access to financial health resources or coaching. Parents feel like the services they have access to need to be expanded. A lot of the resources centers are often understaffed and the resources are limited.
- Often due to the lack of time, parents (especially the father of the households) can’t attend workshops or classes. Parents feel like information should be shared in many ways not just through classes. Participants encouraged creative ways so that parents can still be informed even they can’t attend. Parents suggested different outlets like brochures, magazines, texting or Facebook.

Resources: Parents also noted the important of retaining resources. Services parents already have access to and felt they are important:

- Transitional Kindergarten/0-5 workshops
- Promotoras
- Food pantry
- Counseling
- Mental health classes
- Rental assistance
- Health clinic

Knowledge of Services: Most parents rated access to these resources as a 5, being very available. Most of the parents knew about the resources centers through their transitional kindergarten groups. They consider themselves lucky but recognize that more people need to know about them. In Stanislaus county, many families have to travel to have access these resources. Parents suggested the need for outreach to families, increased resources, and more flexible hours for services.

Highlighted Quotes:

- “The services that First 5 has offered have been crucial to my family. I know that I have support and that alone means the world. They really have an impact on my family and I can be a better parent because of them.”
- “For immigrant families is about knowing where the resources exist, many parents like me didn’t or don’t know how to find resources. I got lucky.”
- “Sometimes you try your best as a parent but sometimes you go through hard times. I know I can count on this resource center for emergencies. Maybe I just need formula or a couple of groceries to get me through the next couple of days, it’s a relief knowing that I have someone that can help me.”
- “Promotoras have taught me a lot about not just being a child, but about myself and how to take care of myself. Most of the time I put myself second.”

Appendix V. Stakeholder Survey Summary Results

The survey received a total of 372 complete responses.

Opening Questions (all Stakeholder Groups)

Please select the option(s) that describe you [please select all that apply]:

Respondents were able to choose more than one answer to describe which stakeholder group(s) they belonged to.

Key	Stakeholder Group	Count	% of Respondents
A	Parent or caregiver of a child age five or younger	87	23.51%
B	Community member	114	30.81%
C	Employee or Board member at an organization that supports children birth through age 5 and/or their families	165	44.59%
D	Employee or Board member at an organization that supports children age 6 and older and their families	115	31.08%
E	Employee or Board member at another type of organization	54	14.59%
Total Responses		370	NA

Does your organization currently receive funding from the Children and Families Commission / First 5 Stanislaus?

Response	Count	% of Responses
Yes	147	40.50%
No	145	39.94%
Not Applicable	71	19.56%
Total Responses		363
		100%

In which community/communities do you live or work? [please select all that apply]

Respondents could choose multiple locations to accurately describe the community or communities in which they reside and/or work.

Community	Count	% of Responses
Ceres	86	23.12%
Crows Landing	34	9.14%
Denair	35	9.41%
Empire	40	13.17%
Grayson	37	9.95%
Hickman	30	8.06%
Hughson	56	15.05%
Modesto	262	70.43%

Community	Count	% of Responses
Newman	53	14.25%
Oakdale	69	18.55%
Patterson	67	18.01%
Riverbank	64	17.20%
Salida	55	14.78%
Turlock	111	29.84%
Waterford	66	17.74%
Westley	36	9.68%
Other unincorporated area of Stanislaus County	36	9.68%
Outside of Stanislaus County	34	9.14%
Total Responses	372	NA

How familiar are you with what the Children and Families Commission / First 5 Stanislaus does as an organization?

Response	Count	% of Responses
Not Familiar	104	27.9%
Somewhat Familiar	159	42.74%
Very Familiar	109	29.30%
Total Responses	372	100%

Community Needs (Stakeholder Groups B-E)

What are the three greatest assets or resources in Stanislaus County for children birth to age five and their families?

245 respondents provided assets or resources for this question. The most commonly identified assets or resources were types of organizations or programs:

- Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program
- Family Resource Centers
- Libraries
- Head Start / State Preschool
- Healthy Birth Outcomes
- Leaps & Bounds
- Medi-Cal
- Health care

What do you see as the biggest challenges for children birth to age five and their families in Stanislaus County? Please rate each of the issues below.

302 respondents rated issues for this question. Ratings were given on a 1-5 scale: 1= not a very big challenge, 3=challenge, 5=very big challenge.

Challenge	Weighted Average	1	2	3	4	5
Lack of stable or affordable housing	4.16	2	18	59	70	147
Impacts of alcohol/drugs	3.86	2	22	83	94	91
Lack of access to affordable child care/preschool	3.84	11	22	77	79	106
Not enough money	3.84	7	22	84	89	97
Parents/caregivers are not prepared or do not have the information/knowledge they need to be good parents/caregivers	3.63	4	28	111	84	70
Impacts of abuse in the home (witnessing or experiencing domestic violence or abuse/child abuse)	3.61	3	27	115	83	65
Immigration issues	3.54	17	26	109	62	77
Not enough time to spend with children/family	3.49	9	38	108	75	63
Not enough work	3.45	11	45	103	74	63
Impacts of technology use among children	3.29	16	58	93	70	52
Children are not ready to start kindergarten	3.26	20	45	109	67	46
Not enough food	3.19	17	49	121	67	35
Lack of access to health care	2.97	33	63	111	47	37

In their comments, respondents also identified additional challenges for children birth to age five:

- **Funding and accessibility of community resources:** not enough funding to support existing community resources for families; not enough existing resources available for families and those in need; not enough culturally/linguistically appropriate services and easily accessible services (geographically)
- **Access to specific services:** mental health counseling/services; couples counseling; affordable dental services for children and adults; drug rehabilitation centers; resources for children with autism; parenting classes in specific locations
- **Mental health/illness:** not enough mental health services available, especially to assist with diagnosing conditions in children; mental and emotional wellness of parents or primary caregiver
- **Transportation:** limited transportation options affects accessibility of resources
- **Workforce development:** lack of job training opportunities and apprenticeship programs
- **Family structure:** single parent households; grandparents acting as primary caregivers

What do you see as the main causes or reasons behind the biggest challenges that you identified above?

There were 256 responses to this question.

Respondents identified the following causes and reasons behind the challenges identified:

- **Lack of stable or affordable housing:** not enough affordable housing supply available in the county, especially for low-income families; housing costs are especially unaffordable for parents with low-wage jobs
- **Impacts of alcohol/drugs:** drugs are prevalent in the county; the abuse of alcohol and drugs by parents negatively impacts outcomes of children

- **Lack of access to affordable childcare/preschool:** not enough affordable childcare options available in the county, subsidized or unsubsidized; parents are unable to pay for what childcare options are available, whether they are employed or not
- **Not enough money / not enough work:** wages are low; parents have low educational attainment and are unable to find higher-paying work; unemployment is high; the cost of living is high
- **Parents/caregivers are not prepared or do not have the information/knowledge they need to be good parents/caregivers:** some respondents suggested that parents are not “ready” to have children and do not have the necessary “life skills”; many respondents commented that parents needed more education, information, and/or knowledge to support their parenting and change their parenting approach in order to achieve better outcomes for their families
- **Impacts of abuse in the home (witnessing or experiencing domestic violence or abuse/child abuse):** experiencing abuse and/or trauma as a child results in perpetuating or continuing to experience abuse and/or trauma as an adult/parent; lack of prevention work to mitigate impacts/perpetuation of abuse in the home
- **Immigration:** fear of immigration status reported or deportation; immigration creating stress and/or fear can reduce the quality of life for families, job opportunities for parents, and prevent families from seeking out services for which they are eligible
- **Not enough time to spend with children/family:** high living costs coupled with low wages results in parents working long hours and having not enough time to spend with their children/family
- **Impacts of technology use among children:** parent usage of technology distracts them from parenting / diverts attention that would otherwise be given to their children
- **Children are not ready to start kindergarten:** children aren’t receiving the preparation they need to start school
- **Not enough food:** while food was included in comments, no specific causes were identified; food availability was often connected to lack of money and/or work
- **Lack of access to health care:** not enough health care providers in the county due to lower wages available for providers; health care is unaffordable even for those with insurance

Lived Experience [Stakeholder Group A - Parent or Caregiver]

What do you like most about living in Stanislaus County?

69 respondents provided an answer to this question.

Respondents identified the following:

- **Community:** sense of community is similar to that of a small town and/or rural/agricultural area; people are friendly and helpful; availability of parks; family and friends are living in the community
- **Services available:** many family supports and resources for children available; helpful information is available; support for the community
- **Affordability:** housing/rent is affordable, especially in comparison to the Bay Area
- **Family-friendly:** good place to raise children; community has events and resources for children

What challenges does your family face? [please choose all that apply]

Respondents were able to choose as many answer options applicable for their family.

Challenge	Count	% of Responses
Not enough time to spend with children/family	31	40.26%
Not enough money	31	40.26%
Lack of access to affordable child care/preschool	24	31.17%

Impacts of technology use among children	18	23.38%
Lack of stable or affordable housing	17	22.08%
Not enough work	16	20.78%
Immigration issues	15	19.48%
Impacts of alcohol/drugs	14	18.18%
Parents/caregivers are not prepared or do not have the information/knowledge they need to be good parents/caregivers	12	15.58%
Not enough food	9	11.69%
Lack of access to health care	9	11.69%
Impacts of abuse in the home (witnessing or experiencing domestic violence or abuse/child abuse)	7	9.09%
Other	7	9.09%
Children are not ready to start kindergarten	6	7.79%
Total Responses	77	NA

Other challenges identified by respondents were:

- Not enough community resources, including drug rehabilitation resources for parents
- Need more for children's' activities
- Lack of steady work options
- Cost and timeliness of healthcare
- Crime due to substance abuse and homelessness

Please choose the number that best describes how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

88 respondents rated their agreement or disagreement with each of the statements provided. Respondents rated their agreement on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 = strongly disagree, 3 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree. Respondents may not have rated their agreement for each statement provided.

Statement	Weighted Average	1	2	3	4	5
I am happy when I am with my child.	4.28	4	3	12	14	54
I feel positive about being a parent/caregiver.	4.17	2	6	18	11	51
I play with my child when we are together.	3.95	2	6	25	16	39
I have the strength within myself to solve problems that happen in my life.	3.91	3	6	25	15	38
I have someone I can ask for help when I need it.	3.87	4	7	25	11	40
I know where to go if my child needs help.	3.79	7	7	21	14	38
I am willing to ask for help from community programs or agencies.	3.70	7	10	21	13	36
I have someone who will tell me in a caring way if I need to be a better parent/caregiver.	3.53	4	10	35	12	26
I read with my young child every day.	3.52	5	11	33	11	28

Strategic Direction [Stakeholder Groups B, C, D, and E]

Please rate how effective the Children and Families Commission / First 5 Stanislaus is in serving children birth to age five and their families in each of the areas below.

295 respondents rated how effective First 5 Stanislaus was in each of the areas provided. Respondents rated effectiveness on a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 = not effective, 2 = somewhat effective, 3 = effective, and 4 = very effective. Respondents were also able to choose the answer, “Don’t Know” when rating an area.

Area	Weighted Average	1	2	3	4	Don’t Know
Improving the health of children	3.0	8	49	84	65	89
Improving the systems of care and resources that support children birth to age five	3.0	11	43	84	67	90
Making short-term change in the community	3.0	8	36	95	58	98
Improving family functioning and support	2.9	6	58	84	62	83
Improving child development by increasing the number of children ready to enter school	2.9	11	54	76	62	90
Making long-term change in the community	2.9	12	53	66	64	100

The Children and Families Commission / First 5 Stanislaus’ funding mechanism, state tobacco tax revenue, continues to decline statewide while community need continues to grow. The Children and Families Commission / First 5 Stanislaus must think strategically about its role in supporting children birth to age five and their families in Stanislaus County. Please rate the importance of each of the potential roles the Commission should consider into the the future.

305 respondents provided ratings for this question. Respondents rated each potential role on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 = not important and 5 = very important.

Statement	Weighted Average	1	2	3	4	5
Capacity builder- Support service providers to increase their capacity to better support and serve children birth to age five and their families	4.17	4	7	61	82	138
Convener/collaborator- Bring together partner organizations to strengthen existing and grow new partnerships and initiatives to support children birth to age five and their families	4.16	7	5	74	56	153
Systems builder- Work across systems within Stanislaus County to ensure that the systems that touch and support children birth to age five and their families are coordinated and provide a comprehensive system of care	4.16	3	9	78	54	151
Policy advocate- Advocate for greater support and increased resources for children birth to age five and their families	4.02	8	14	74	65	131
Funder- Continue to fund service providers and organizations (at decreased levels)	3.94	6	21	96	33	137

Data management support- Align data across Stanislaus County that is related to long-term outcome measures for children birth to age five and their families	3.73	10	22	97	75	91
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In response to the “Other” selection available for potential roles, respondents provided the following comments:

- Ensure there is no overlap or duplication of roles between F5 Stanislaus and other agencies
- There is need for more staffing to ensure quality of services
- Find alternative funding or increase funding sources, such as higher tobacco taxes or using marijuana tax money
- Programs should be available to all families regardless of income eligibility

Please use the space below to say a little more about the roles that you think the Commission should consider in its future work to support young children and their families in Stanislaus County.

108 respondents provided a response to this question.

Respondents provided the following expansion regarding the potential roles provided:

- **Capacity builder:**
 - Training service providers on brain development in children birth to five, trauma-informed care for children and families, and how to develop health social emotional skills in children birth to five
 - Ensuring funded providers meet outcome expectations and support quality improvement, such as tying funding to meeting outcomes and enhancing evaluation of services
 - Support providers in sustainability work, identifying funding sources, and how to leverage funding to find other funding
- **Systems builder:**
 - Supporting ECE workforce pipeline/system
 - Think about long-term outcomes and how F5 Stanislaus can build/support a quality system (ECE workforce pipeline, quality of ECE programs, parenting support, leading a coordinated and accessible system for families) and how to measure outcomes/success in this system
 - Invest in the mechanisms already in place to support long-term outcomes
 - Coordinate the system so it is aligned and not fragmented
 - Need for economic and workforce development - job training, more jobs with livable wages, more industry in the community
- **Convener/collaborator:**
 - Foster partnership and collaboration between providers and with F5 Stanislaus, especially between organizations with similar goals
 - Health care providers
 - Coordinators
 - Schools
 - Government/community agencies
 - Local landlords to create affordable housing
 - Sectors that provide services to children birth to five
 - Focus on Prevention
 - County office of education
 - Strengthening Families framework
 - Tobacco Control Outreach Prevention Services Coalition
 - Align the system/partners/collaborators to streamline services available, reduce duplication of efforts, and improve accessibility of services
 - Could pool resources

- Create space for partners to come together to develop innovative approaches/services for families
- Making information about services available from different providers known/communicated to improve system of referral
- **Policy advocate:**
 - Policy at the macro level
 - Advocate for state and federal funding to continue existing services and expand them
- **Funder:**
 - Provide more funding, which can make existing services more accessible
 - County funding for direct services is declining and programs are being cut
 - Continue funding:
 - Family Resource Centers
 - FRCs serve as a very accessible and appealing way for families to access services
 - Opportunity to use FRCs for new efforts/collaborations
 - Healthy Start
 - Healthy Birth Outcomes (HBO) and other prenatal care outreach programs
 - Programs that include parenting education, strengthening family relationships, mental health services, child developmental issues
 - Services for children 0-5
 - Family engagement
 - Consider funding child care access
 - Determine where funding provides the most resources
 - Look for alternative funding sources (county, state, federal), such as the county general fund and education fund
- **Data Management Support:**
 - Opportunity to align data systems if aligning with collective impact movements, Focus on Prevention and Cradle to Career Partnership, especially data on school readiness
 - Early childhood data available is fragmented and collected by multiple sectors
 - Consolidation of the data could be a helpful resource to inform future policy and strategies
 - Collect data annually for comparison and change over time
 - Look further into evaluating different communities' needs

Respondents also brought up raising public/community awareness as a potential role or activity for First 5 Stanislaus to focus on. Suggestions included:

- Increase community awareness of First 5 Stanislaus' role, services, and accomplishments in achieving better outcomes for children
- Increase community engagement
 - Connect with parents/caregivers to understand their needs
 - Make sure programs and services are known and accessible to families

Closing Questions [all Stakeholder Groups]

What are three words that you would use to describe the Children and Families Commission / First 5 Stanislaus? [all- except those not familiar]

183 respondents provided at least one word for this question. The most common words or similar words used were support or supportive, caring, collaborative or collaboration, helpful, funder, necessary, and family or families.

What do you think is the single most important thing that the Children and Families Commission / First 5 Stanislaus should do to achieve long-term outcomes for the community?

231 respondents provided a response to this question.

Respondents listed the following as the single most important thing F5 Stanislaus should do to achieve long-term outcomes for the community:

- **Continue to provide funding/resources to direct service providers working with families**
 - Tie funding to service providers to outcomes
 - Ensure providers are using evidence-based/best practices
 - Programs to keep funding:
 - Mitigating negative effects of ACEs for children 0-5 and for their families
 - Service providers for children 0-5 and their families
 - Family supports
 - FRCs / one-stop service centers
 - Literacy/reading programs
 - Parenting classes
 - Site based resource centers (Healthy Start)
 - Seek alternative funding sources for F5 in order to continue funding service providers
- **Continue to collaborate/partner with agencies and service providers**
 - Streamline supports and coordinate services to create a cohesive system of supports for children age birth to 5 and for their parents
 - Opportunity to coordinate and pool resources
- **Provide more supports for families**
 - Specific supports requested by respondents:
 - Drug rehab
 - Wraparound services for parents/caregivers
 - Parenting programs and classes
 - Workforce development - job stimulation, job trainings
 - Strengthening families
 - Transportation support
 - Adult ESL classes
 - Citizenship support
 - Health clinics and nutrition classes expansion
 - Expand services to:
 - Parents who are ineligible for subsidized care but can't afford childcare on their own, families at all income levels
 - Larger age range of children (children over 5)
 - More SES groups
- **Continue to support parents**
 - Support parent educational attainment efforts
 - Offer parenting classes on parenting approach, child development, with culturally/linguistically appropriate options
 - Work to increase amount of affordable ECE, including increasing child care capacity and quality/consistency across types of providers
 - Support life skills development, such as in resiliency and empowerment
- **Increase community/public awareness of First 5 Stanislaus and its work, services and accomplishments**
 - Increase general public awareness of ECE issues and impact, especially in low-income families
 - Make initiatives, resources, and programs known in the community

- “Make its presence, resources and program known. I never see or hear anything about First 5 Stanislaus initiatives in the community.”
- Make programs/resources and information about them more accessible
 - “help to make access to essential resources easier to achieve. Continue building knowledge of services. Knowledge is power.”

Please share any additional thoughts the Children and Families Commission / First 5 Stanislaus should consider as it plans for the future.

109 respondents provided an answer to this question. Comments given were similar to those given previously throughout the survey:

- Immigration concerns, lack of affordable housing, and lack of affordable health care are major challenges
- First 5 Stanislaus should collaborate/partner with other programs and organizations
- First 5 Stanislaus should serve as a capacity builder to “develop multi-tiered systems of support, provide training and leadership for the implementation of these types of systems”
- Continue to provide and/or fund supports for families, especially for parents
 - Parenting classes
 - Culturally/linguistically-appropriate services
 - Family Resource Centers
 - Programs like Healthy Birth Outcomes and Healthy Start
 - Services for families not currently income eligible
- Conduct more outreach to build awareness of existing services and of F5 Stanislaus

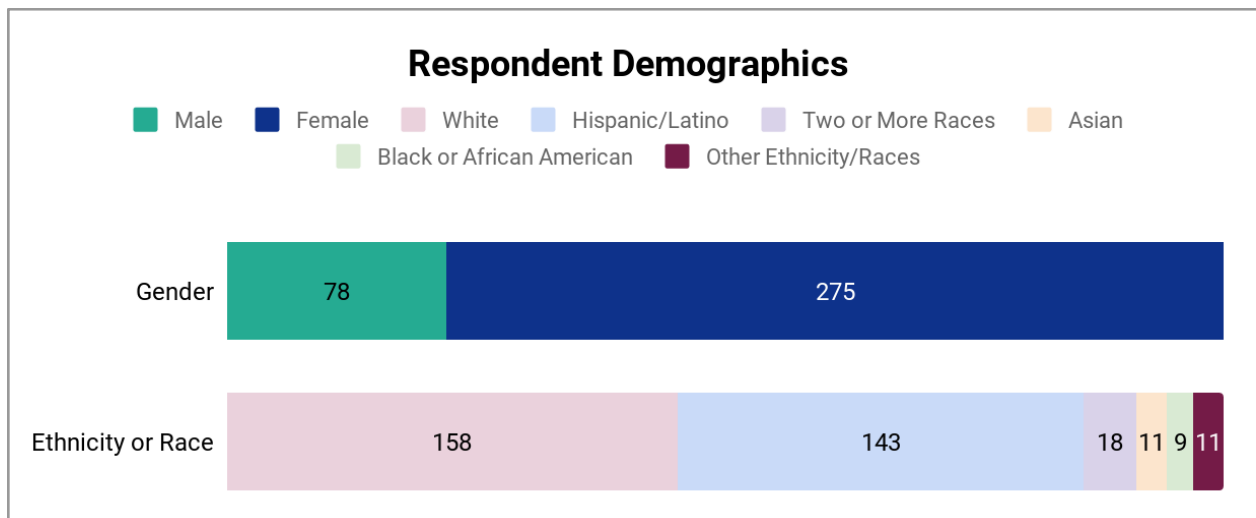
Additional comments included:

- Continue to focus on education and literacy for children
- Provide services for children older than five

Demographics

Out of 358 respondents who provided their gender, 275 respondents (76.82%) were female, 78 (21.79%) were male, and 5 (1.40%) were other.

Of 350 respondents who provided their ethnicity and race, 158 identified as white (45.14%), 143 as Hispanic or Latino (40.86%), 18 as two or more races (5.14%), and 11 as Asian (3.14%). There were less than 10 respondents each identifying as American Indian or Alaska Native, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or other.



Number of years of experience you have in the field of early learning

156 respondents provided an answer to this question (only respondents in Stakeholder Group C, Employee or board member at an organization that supports children birth through age 5 and/or their families).

Range	Count	% of Responses
Less than 1 year	15	9.62%
1-5 years	41	26.28%
6-10 years	29	18.59%
11-20 years	30	19.23%
21 or more years	41	26.28%
Total Responses	156	100%

[survey logic: if c, d, or e were selected for Q2] I work at the following type of organization [please choose only one of the following]:

228 respondents provided an answer to this question. Only respondents in Stakeholder Groups C, D, and E, were prompted to provide an answer to this question.

Type of Organization	Count	% of Responses
Nonprofit organization	98	42.98%
Other local government	69	30.26%
Other	20	8.77%
School district	16	7.02%
County office of education	12	5.26%
Private business	3	1.32%
Faith-based organization	3	1.32%
Institution of higher education	3	1.32%
Public school (non-charter)	2	0.88%
Charter school	1	0.44%
For-profit program provider	1	0.44%
Total Responses	228	100%

Appendix VI: References

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- ³⁵ All data from ACS 2012-2016 5-Year Estimates unless otherwise noted.
- ³⁶ Healthy People 2020. Social Determinants of Health. <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/social-determinants-of-health>
- ³⁷ GPG reviewed relevant reports and data collections including the 2018 MCAH Stanislaus County Needs Assessment, 2017 Stanislaus County Office of Education Public Report, Race Counts, Datausa.io, Kidsdata.org, U.S. Census American Community Survey, and others to locate data for desired indicators.
- ³⁸ The data and analysis presented below is drawn from a variety of sources and is intended to inform strategic direction setting and planning discussions among First 5 Stanislaus commissioners and staff. The 2018 MCAH Stanislaus County Needs Assessment and other reports provide more comprehensive community assessment results and should be referenced as needed for further detail.
- ³⁹ Cowan, T. (2005). California's San Joaquin Valley: A Region in Transition. Congressional Research Service, Library Congress.
- ⁴⁰ 5-Year ACS 2012-2016
- ⁴¹ “CalFresh (Food Stamp) Participation.” KidsData.org. <https://www.kidsdata.org/topic/742/food-stamps/trend#fmt=2261&loc=350&tf=3,84> (accessed August 10, 2018).
- ⁴² 2018 Stanislaus County Maternal Child and Adolescent Need Assessment Report (draft).
- ⁴³ CDSS CalFresh Data Trends: <http://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/Research-and-Data/CalFresh-Data-Trends>
- ⁴⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.
- ⁴⁵ Trulia. Modesto Real Estate Market Overview. https://www.trulia.com/real_estate/Modesto-California/. Accessed 8/12/18
- ⁴⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, *Op. cit.*
- ⁴⁷ Trulia. *Op. cit.*
- ⁴⁸ Zillow “Stanislaus County Home Prices & Values” (<https://www.zillow.com/stanislaus-county-ca/home-values/>) and “California Home Prices & Values” (<https://www.zillow.com/ca/home-values/>)
- ⁴⁹ U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division. Annual Estimates of Housing Units for the United States, Regions, Divisions, States, and Counties: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2017. 2017 Population Estimates.
- ⁵⁰ U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.
- ⁵¹ Ibid.
- ⁵² “The California Economy: Crisis in the Housing Market.” March 2018. Public Policy Institute of California. http://www.ppic.org/content/pubs/jtf/JTF_HousingMarketJTF.pdf
- ⁵³ Race Counts Stanislaus County Profile: <http://www.racecounts.org/county/stanislaus/>
- ⁵⁴ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
- ⁵⁵ <https://www.kidsdata.org/topic/761/secure-employment65/table#fmt=1163&loc=2,350,1454&tf=79&sortType=asc>
- ⁵⁶ ACS 1-Year Estimates: 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, Table B28002
- ⁵⁷ An increase in calls for assistance may not mean an increase in incidents, but rather that individuals are more likely to call for assistance in relation to DV.
- ⁵⁸ Children Now. 2016-17 California County Scorecard. <http://pub.childrennow.org/2016/>
- ⁵⁹ U.S. Census Bureau 2016 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.
- ⁶⁰ Data provided by County Health Rankings & Roadmaps. <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/california/2018>. Sources: US DHHS HRSA Area Health Resource File (primary care physicians and dentists), NPI Registry

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- ⁶¹ Race Counts determines overall Health Access performance and disparity ratings based on a combination of indicators: life expectancy, health insurance, preventable hospitalizations, low birthweight, access to Federally Qualified Health Centers, and usual source of care.
- ⁶² Race Counts State Overview: <http://www.racecounts.org/california/>
- ⁶³ California Department of Public Health, Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Division. *MIHA Data Brief: Symptoms of Depression During and After Pregnancy*. Summer 2018.
- ⁶⁴ CDC National Vital Statistics Reports, Volume 67, Number 1, Births: Final Data for 2016. https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr67/nvsr67_01.pdf
- ⁶⁵ “Adverse Childhood Experiences,” Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Updated on July 9, 2018. <https://www.samhsa.gov/capt/practicing-effective-prevention/prevention-behavioral-health/adverse-childhood-experiences>
- ⁶⁶ “A Hidden Crisis: Findings on Adverse Childhood Experiences in California,” Center for Youth Wellness, 2014.
- ⁶⁷ American Institutes for Research and Berkeley Early Childhood Think Tank. *Achieving Fair Access to Early Education: Fewer Children, Regional Gaps Across California*. July 2018.
- ⁶⁸ Stanislaus County Office of Education, Child and Family Services. *Give Your Child a Head Start in School, Work & Life, Public Report 2017*; US Census Bureau 5-Year ACS B09001.
- ⁶⁹ Campaign for Grade Level Reading. <https://gradelevelreading.net/about-us/campaign-overview>
- ⁷⁰ StanislausREADS! Progress Report 2016: “The Future Begins With Me” http://www.stanreads.org/media/Stanislaus%20Reads_Community%20Report%202016.pdf
- ⁷¹ Protective factors are conditions or attributes (skills, strengths, resources, supports or coping strategies) in individuals, families, communities or the larger society that help people deal more effectively with stressful events and mitigate or eliminate risk in families and communities.
- ⁷² Refer to section 3.C.III for more detailed data and source information for all “Social Determinants Data” bullet points in this section.
- ⁷³ County Health Rankings & Roadmaps. <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/california/2018/measure/factors/138/data?sort=desc-3> Data Source: CDC Compressed Mortality File
- ⁷⁴ Strengthening Families™ is a research-informed approach to increase family strengths, enhance child development and reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect. It is based on engaging families, programs and communities in building five protective factors. Center for the Study of Social Policy. <https://www.cssp.org/young-children-their-families/strengtheningfamilies/about>
- ⁷⁵ A number of these indicators are included in Section 3.C.III (social determinants of health) above.
- ⁷⁶ The plans reviewed were analyzed in varying levels of depth and included those from Alameda*, Butte*, Calaveras, Contra Costa*, Fresno*, Inyo, Kern*, Kings, Los Angeles*, Mariposa, Merced, Monterey*, San Benito, San Joaquin, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Solano, Sonoma, Sutter, Tulare*, Tuolumne, Ventura*, and Yolo* county commissions. County commissions with an asterisk were selected for deeper analysis based on a combination of potential factors, including: recommendation from stakeholders based on innovative content or approach; similarity in geography, ethnic makeup, or population size; counties that the County of Stanislaus compares itself to in other contexts; and counties with more recent strategic plans (2015 or later).
- ⁷⁷ *Division 108. California Children and Families Program, California Code 130100 - 130158.*
- ⁷⁸ Any funds not needed in each account may be transferred to the Unallocated Account.
- ⁷⁹ These sections were developed through a combination of GPG-analysis of survey, interview, and focus group responses and analysis of the current context in Stanislaus County, California, and the nation (see section 3).
- ⁸⁰ One example of a strategy for advocacy and education that was cited by an interview participants is [The Children’s Movement of Fresno](#). Its mission is to inform and support individuals, businesses, and community leaders in Fresno County to make the well-being and education of children a priority in every decision. This is accomplished through six annual forums designed to inform and inspire community stakeholders toward greater impact through collective action and resource alignment. Forums provide actionable information, current data, best practices, and networking opportunities to a diverse cross-sector audience.
- ⁸¹ First 5 Stanislaus (2018). “2016-2017 Annual Program Evaluation.”
- ⁸² Totals more than 16 total interviews because stakeholders could represent more than one stakeholder group.