

First 5 Nevada County Commission
380 Crown Point Circle
Grass Valley, CA 95945
(530) 274-5361

This plan is on the web at www.first5nevco.com

Revised 2023 First 5 Nevada County. No portion of this document may be reproduced without the written permission of the author.

2024-2030 Strategic Plan

STRATEGIC PLAN

Table of Contents

Commissioners & Staff	3
Introduction	4
About Nevada County	5
Who We Are	8
THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Guiding Principles	13
Investment Guidelines for First 5 Nevada County Commission	14
Investment Guidelines – Home Positions	15
EVALUATION PLAN	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Logic Model	20
APPENDICES	21



Commissioners & Staff

COMMISSIONERS

Sue Hoek, Chair

District 4 Supervisor for Nevada County Board of Supervisors

Ryan Gruver

Director of Health and Human Services for Nevada County

Scott W. Lay

Nevada County Superintendent of Schools

Rachel Peña, LCSW, Vice Chair

Social Services Director for Nevada County

Truckee Regional Representative – Currently Vacant

STAFF

Melody Easton, Executive Director

Rosemary Gonzalez, Service Support Secretary



This report was written and prepared by the Executive Director with guidance from the Commission.

Introduction

In November 1998, the California voters passed Proposition 10, the California Children and Families First Initiative which added a 50 cent-per-pack tax on tobacco products. Revenue from the tax is intended to promote, support and improve early development of children from the prenatal stage to five years of age. Proposition 10 echoes what many parents and caregivers have long known and, in the 1990s was being proven by scientific advances—that the first five years of a child’s life are the most important for brain development.

Proposition 10 created a trust fund for revenues collected. Eighty percent (80%) of these revenues are distributed to the 58 individual California Counties annually to benefit children aged zero to five years old. Each local Commission has control over their own funds and by law is empowered to make local decisions about how funds should be spent. The remaining 20% of the revenues supports statewide programs and research.

On December 15, 1998, the Nevada County Board of Supervisors created the Nevada County Children and Families First Commission (later named First 5 Nevada County), and work began on *“the creation and implementation of an integrated, comprehensive, and collaborative system of information and services to enhance optimal early childhood development”* (California Health and Safety Code Section 130100). The five-member Commission is charged with administering and allocating the County’s portion of the Proposition 10 funds. By ordinance, the Commissioners are drawn from the Board of Supervisors, the county Health and Human Services Department, the Truckee community, and the field of education.

The First 5 California Commission has created a Small Population County Funding Augmentation that commenced on July 1, 2014. Under this agreement, the 21 counties with the lowest annual birth rates will receive augmented funding to support ongoing First 5 operations. The current Small Population County Funding Augmentation contract covers FY 2021-2024.

To date, First 5 Nevada County has invested more than \$9 million into early child development in Nevada County. State law directs First 5 Nevada County to distribute this money in accordance with this Strategic Plan, which has been reviewed by the public in at least one public hearing. Visit our website at www.first5nevco.com to learn more about First 5 Nevada County.

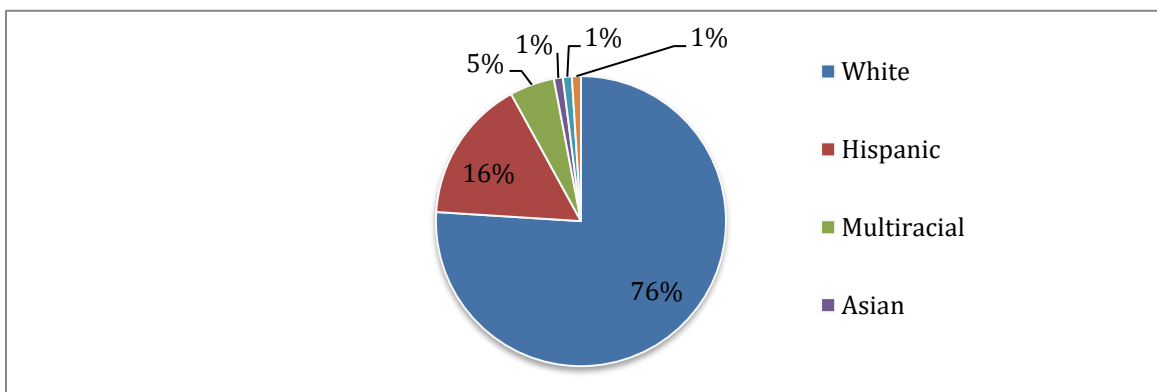
About Nevada County



Nevada County stretches across the Sierra Nevada region of California. The Western part of the County is more urbanized and densely populated, hosting its largest towns of Grass Valley, Alta Sierra, Lake Wildwood, Lake of the Pines, and Nevada City in the foothills, reaching up to the North San Juan area. The Eastern part covers the area of Truckee, Kingvale, and Soda Springs. Despite the prevalence of rural areas, approximately 3,939 children ages 0-5 years lived in Nevada County in 2022, including 1,202 in Truckee.^{1 2}

Based on the U.S. Census Bureau data, the 3,939 of Nevada County children ages 0-5 years were nearly evenly split between infants (20.4%), and ages one (20.3%), two (19.9%), three (19.4%), and four (20.0%) years. According to the Department of Finance Birth Projections, the estimated number of children 0-5 years of age is expected to increase slightly, by roughly 30-80 children, with no change in the proportional distribution by age (see Appendix). Nevada County birth rate was 883 infants in 2022, projected to slightly decrease to 842 in 2023, and then slightly increase to 864 in 2024.³ Most children (76%) were White, followed by Hispanic (16%), and relatively few Multiracial (5%), Asian (1%), Black (1%), and American Indian/Alaska Natives (1%).⁴

Demographic Characteristics of Nevada County Children (2022)



¹ State of California, Department of Finance. Birth Projections. P-3 Race/Ethnicity & Sex by Age for California & Counties. 2022. Nevada County.

² U.S. Census Bureau. Quick Facts. Truckee, CA. 2021.

³ State of California, Department of Finance. Birth Projections. P-Births: Historical and Projected Fertility Rates and Births, Calendar Year 1990-2040. Nevada County.

⁴ State of California, Department of Finance. Birth Projections. P-3 Race/Ethnicity & Sex by Age for California & Counties. 2022. Nevada County.

In 2022, Nevada County Median Income was \$98,400, slightly below the State Median Income of \$101,600.⁵ According to the U.S. Census Bureau 2021 data, one in four Nevada County children ages 0-5 years lived below the Federal Poverty Line of just \$27,750 for a family of four.⁶ However, based on KidsData.org, only approximately 189 children in this age group participated in CalWORKs.^{7 8}

Economic Characteristics of Nevada County Residents (2021)



Source: State Income Limits for 2022. U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey (ACS). Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months by Age. Nevada County. 2021. 1-year estimates.

Between 2016-2018, roughly 17.7%, or 2,200 mothers residing in the North/Mountain Region, which includes Nevada County, experienced prenatal depression and 15.4%, or 1,900 experienced postpartum depression.⁹ At this rate, approximately 149 new mothers would be affected in 2023, based on Nevada County birth projections. In 2022, low birth weight was reported for approximately 5.7% or 50 newborns in Nevada County.¹⁰ Around 8.6%, or 76 mothers did not exclusively breastfeed their infants at the hospital.



⁵ [State Income Limits for 2022.](#)

⁶ [U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey \(ACS\). Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months by Age. Nevada County. 2021. 1-year estimates.](#)

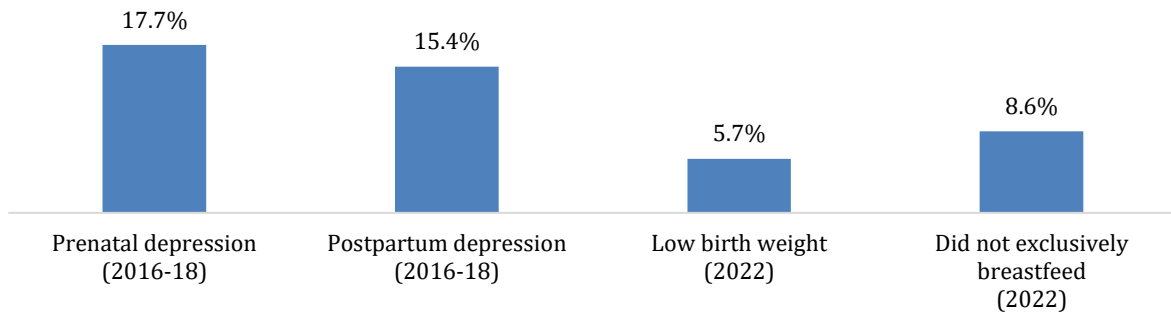
⁷ This estimate is an equivalent of the 4.8% of children ages 0-18 years who participated in CalWORKs in 2021, according to KidsData.org.

⁸ [KidsData.org. Children Participating in CalWORKs. Nevada County. Year 2020.](#)

⁹ [MIHA Data Snapshot, North/Mountain Region by Maternal Age, 2016-2018.](#)

¹⁰ County Health Rankings. County Health Status Profiles. 2022. Tables 1-29.

Health Status of Mothers and Babies in Nevada County (2016-18 and 2022)



Source: MIHA Data Snapshot, North/Mountain Region by Maternal Age, 2016-2018. County Health Rankings. County Health Status Profiles. 2022. Tables 1-29.

In 2022, Nevada County had 1,077 reported survivors of abuse, and 58 verified survivors of abuse. The majority of the cases were categorized as General Neglect, followed by Emotional Abuse and Physical Abuse. The estimated, cumulative financial impact on Nevada County for the 58 verified child survivors in 2022 is \$27,600,000. Though these costs accrue over the course of the survivors' lives, the community will continue to incur the same cost each year until we are able to reduce and ultimately end child abuse.

The rate for domestic violence calls for assistance is similar: 3.5 per 1,000 adults compared to a state rate of 5.9¹¹. A total 44 children were in foster care in January 2022, down from 60 in January 2021. In 2021, the median length of time in foster care was 357 days, down from a high of 601 days in 2013 (the current state median is 545 days)¹².

Many of Nevada County's children are geographically isolated, making access to services difficult. Providers encounter funding and staffing challenges related to economies of scale. In eastern Nevada County the families also have tough winter weather to contend with. The most recently available data, for 2016-2020, show that 17.2% of Nevada County children live in poverty¹³, and that poverty is often complicated by geographic isolation. Families in Nevada County continue to struggle with access to care issues that are often a result of our rural landscape. All of this makes the locally designed, comprehensive and integrated system of care offered by Proposition 10 all the more important for Nevada County.

¹¹ California Dept. of Justice, Criminal Justice Statistics Center, [Domestic Violence-Related Calls for Assistance Database \(1998-2003\) and Online Query System](#) (October 2014).

¹² Needell, B., et al. (May 2014). Child Welfare Services Reports for California, U.C. Berkeley [Center for Social Services Research](#).

¹³ U.S. Census Bureau, [data.census.gov \(July 2023\)](#)

Who We Are

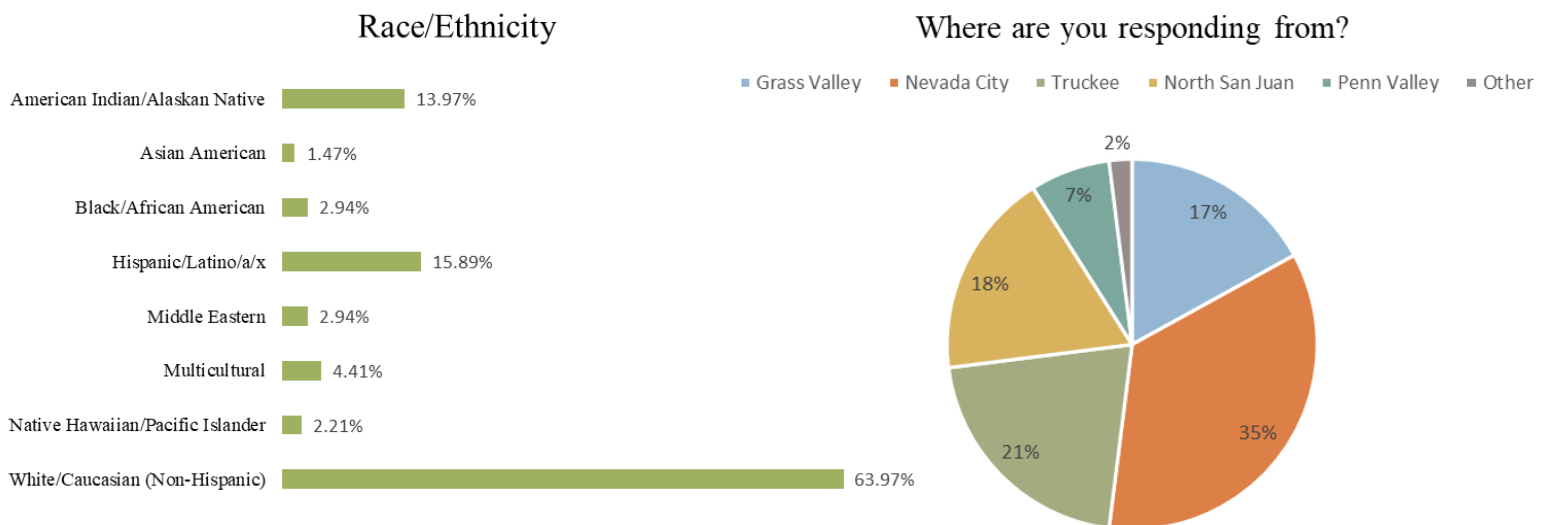


The Strategic Planning Process

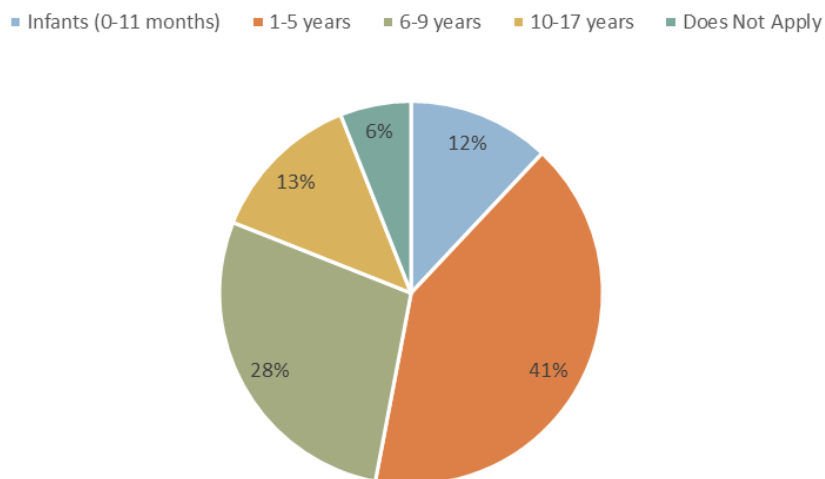
Our strategic plan is the road map to a long-term, cyclical implementation and evaluation process during which we regularly measure desired results. Since 2000, the First 5 Nevada County Commission has regularly sought out family, service provider, and other stakeholder perspectives and reviewed research and data to ensure the continued relevance of the Strategic Plan. The Commission regularly discusses the focus and future of the Commission.

In 2023, the Commission embarked on a Parent Input Process. The purpose of this process was to gather information directly from families with young children. An online survey was conducted to reach families throughout the county. Additionally, a series of 6 Listening Sessions were facilitated by First 5 Nevada staff and partners with families who are currently utilizing First 5-funded services.

Online Survey Demographics: 170 total responses (English and Spanish)



Number of Children in the Home



Survey Results indicated the following:

Protective Factors

- 52% of families surveyed responded that they have someone they can count on to listen to them when they need to talk
- 57% of families surveyed responded that they know how to help their children learn
- 74% of caregivers report having someone they can share their most private worries with
- 88% know where to seek advice when needed
- 50% of families read with their children 5-7 days/week
- 45% sing with their children 5-7 days/week
- 76% indicated that they visit the library 2-7 times per week
- Over 70% of parents agree that they feel confident in building relationships and communicating with other parents

Risk Factors

- 29% of parents surveyed believe that their child misbehaves just to upset them
- 28% of parents report frequent power struggles with their children
- 30% feel that there are many times they don't know what to do as a parent
- 44% report difficulty meeting their family's needs for housing - i.e. paying for rent or mortgage
- 26% report difficulty affording groceries or food
- 19% report challenges with transportation



Listening Sessions

Through a series of Listening Sessions, Commission staff and partners gathered feedback from 50 parents/caregivers. Parents were asked questions similar to those in the online survey; but they were also asked open-ended questions. Results from those questions are below:

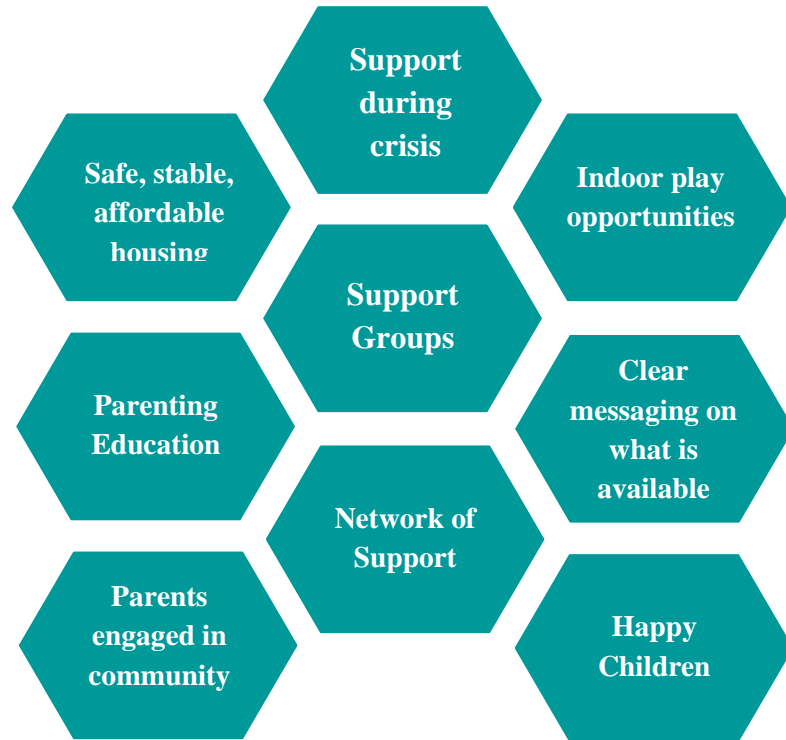
What is the BEST part about parenting in Nevada County?



What do parents/caregivers in Nevada County worry about?



What does a nurturing community look like to you?



Why do you think parents/caregivers drop out or stop participating in services?



Guiding Principles

The funds entrusted to First 5 Nevada County are intended to produce measurable outcomes that better the lives of young children and their families. The Children and Families First Act gives the Commission the opportunity to allocate resources and invest money in a comprehensive and flexible manner to further the purposes of the Act and the Mission of our Strategic Plan.

Equity and Inclusion

- Promote equal access to services for all children under age 6 in Nevada County
- Respond to the linguistic, cultural, geographic, and economic diversity of families
- Promote inclusion of families based on the needs of our diverse community; including, but not limited to children with disabilities and special needs

Collaboration

- Promote activities and programs that have been shaped by community participation and collaborative efforts

Systems Change

- Leveraging resources that build on the strengths of our families and the social capital in our communities
- Reduce fragmentation, build sustainable community capacity, and support shared decision-making and resources amongst partners

Data Collection

- All investments are made to programs or activities that are able to objectively demonstrate their cost-effectiveness and overall efficacy
- All investments comply with the requirements of the Commission to ensure accountability of funds

Investment Guidelines for First 5 Nevada County

We create strategic impact by funding programs and activities that support the goals in our strategic plan, show evidence of effectiveness, avoid duplication, and need Proposition 10 funding in order to meet those goals.

We ensure that our investments for children are used in the most effective manner. Therefore:

- All investments are made in accordance with a Goal contained in the Strategic Plan adopted by the Commission.
- All investments are made to programs or activities that are able to objectively demonstrate their cost-effectiveness and overall efficacy and that comply with other requirements of the Commission to ensure accountability of funds.
- Funds may be allocated for leveraging other county, state and federal governmental revenue as well as private foundation, corporate and community funding.
- Expenditures are made in accordance with the First 5 Nevada County Contracts and Procurement Policy and the Expenditure Plan. Funds may be allocated on a sole source basis if the Commission determines there is only one natural provider of a priority service, based on a key objective, within the County; or funds may be designated for a particular geographic area.
- Funds may be allocated on a one-time basis, on a continuing basis, or in allotments based on performance, as required by the Commission, but in no case, shall commit the Commission beyond funds already realized in the First 5 Nevada County funds.
- All Commission spending will be made in accordance with the First 5 Nevada County Long Range Financial Plan, which is updated annually.

These Investment Guidelines represent policy guidance the Commission approved to inform investment decisions for the 2024-2030 strategic period. The “home positions” articulated below express the organization’s point of view about how and where it can realistically have the most impact. To create a road-map for future Commissions, the rationale for each home position is included. The following table summarizes these Commission-directed policy guidelines.

Investment Guidelines – Home Positions

Prevention vs. Intervention

First 5 NC strives to fund about twice as much in prevention services as in intervention services

Research in child development points to the importance and efficacy of prevention; the Commission recognizes this but also acknowledges that when prevention doesn't happen, early intervention is the most efficacious alternative. Because of the plasticity of young brains, the earlier the intervention, the larger the impact. The Commission also recognizes that their limited dollars are sometimes a key source for community response for an emergent problem for young children and their families.

Direct Services vs. Systems Change

First 5 NC will continue to fund direct services; though is also continuing to advocate for a coherent system of services.

Systems change is complex work. Meaningful and sustained change requires the collaborative efforts of multiple partners, across multiple sectors, working on the multiple elements inherent in systems change. The Commission recognizes that funding direct services provides leverage for the Commission to encourage collaboration and integration of services. The Commission remains committed to supporting community collaboratives and to using executive director time to work on systems change.

Individual Focus vs. Family/Community Focus

Whenever possible, First 5 NC will fund services that focus on the contextualized client (in other words, the individual within a family and/or community context) or on community change.

Research has shown that services that target the child within the family context are more efficacious. This is especially true for behavioral health treatment. Some services, such as kindergarten readiness camps, have shown efficacy when targeted at the individual level; with these types of services, the Commission will encourage parent-outreach and education components. Some services, such as parenting classes, are targeted at the individual but impact the larger family system.

Local Models vs. Evidence-based Models

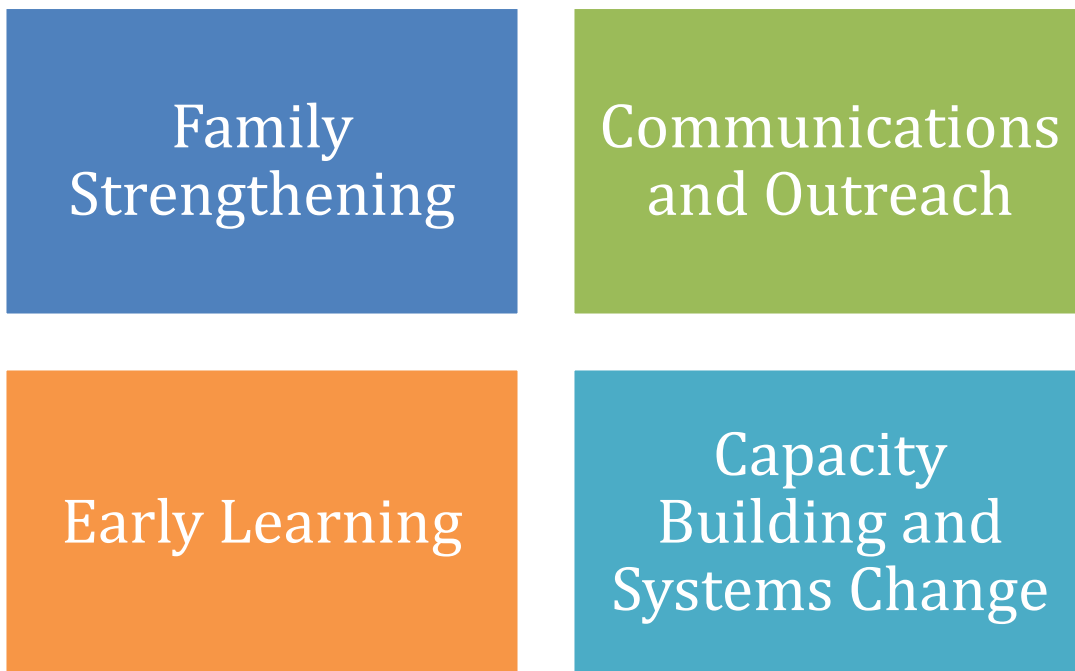
Whenever possible, First 5 NC will fund evidence-based or best- or promising-practices.

Evidence-based practices have proven impact and therefore are used whenever possible. The Commission recognizes that these are sometimes cost-prohibitive; that they are sometimes not adapted for a given target population; that sometimes there are no proven practices that address a priority issue. As such, the Commission will consider funding best- or promising-practices or locally developed models.

First 5 Nevada County Initiatives

With declining revenues, the Commission has chosen to focus more on community-wide systems change; supporting direct services programming in serving the community, while also seeking out additional opportunities for sustainability. The Commission articulated four initiatives and their relationship to one another that better captured their work. The four initiatives are:

The initiatives, their components, and their relationships to one another are described on the following page. An Implementation Plan will serve as a companion document to the Strategic Plan; outlining the funded programs and their alignment with the Commission's priority initiatives.



If we invest in these **priority areas...**

we anticipate these outcomes...

will lead to achieving these goals.

Family Strengthening

- Enhanced parenting support to promote strong families, including enhancement of parent knowledge of child development
- Opportunities for parents to receive concrete support in times of need
- Enhanced social connections among parents
- Enhanced parental resilience
- Enhanced social-emotional competence of children
- Consistent messaging on early learning and development

Goal 1
Nevada County children will live with supported, nurturing parents.

Early Learning

- Improved child care quality
- Enhanced knowledge, skills, materials, and capacity of providers who serve children 0 to 5
- Increased developmental screening of children, including Kindergarten entry assessments
- Supports for child health & wellness (behavioral, physical, and dental health and child safety)
- Improved family literacy
- Improved school readiness
- Increased opportunities for child socialization
- Decreased achievement gap for culturally diverse and socioeconomically disadvantaged populations

Goal 2
Nevada County children are ready to enter school.

Communications and Outreach

- Commission engagement in advocacy for and education about children 0 to 5 and their families
- Increased community knowledge of and engagement in the needs of children 0 to 5
- Consistent messaging on early development and learning

Goal 3
Nevada County children are represented in the larger community.

Capacity Building and Systems Change

- Increased communication and collaboration among agencies and organizations that serve the 0 to 5 population
- Increased numbers of agencies and programs leveraging private, state and federal dollars
- Increased sharing of funds, resources, and evaluations among agencies and programs
- Strengthened evaluation practices and communication of those findings
- Increased access to linguistically and culturally appropriate services for families

Goal 4
Nevada County families have access to integrated, collaborative, and sustainable services.

Evaluation Plan

PURPOSE

The purpose of the First 5 Nevada County Evaluation Plan is to provide information to stakeholders, including the Commission and those who contract with First 5, about progress on our statutory mandate to create a system to support, promote and improve the early development of children 0 to 5 years of age. The California Health and Safety Act requires First 5 Commissions to “...measure the outcomes of county funded programs through the use of applicable, reliable indicators and review that information on a periodic basis as part of the public review of its strategic plan.”

This plan will comply with state reporting requirements. In addition, this Evaluation Plan is intended to explain how Nevada County will collect data and measure outcomes in a manner that provides adequate information to the Commission about the value of their investments. Contractors will gain information about their programs as well.

STRUCTURE

Countywide Data on the Well-being of Children

First 5 Nevada County will continue to measure the well-being of children, using key countywide data points, parent and provider surveys, focus groups, and community conversations. Annually, the Commission will review a set of key countywide data points.

Annual Evaluation of First 5 Investments by the Commission

The Commission will review the progress and outcomes of each funded program annually. Beginning July 2020, grantees are required to complete quarterly programmatic and expenditure reports in order to receive expense reimbursements. Commissioners will be provided with a high level overview following each reporting period; with a comprehensive summary provided at the end of the program year. Each grantee will submit a one-page overview of their funded program by July 31 of each year for the prior funding year (**see IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**). These overviews will appear in the Commissioners’ meeting binders throughout the year. Additionally, grantees will provide a presentation about their progress and outcomes at a Commission meeting at least once during their granting period. Finally, at least once during each granting period, the Executive Director and representatives of the Commission will conduct a site visit to view program delivery, record keeping, and/or fiscal procedures. Any or all of these modes of evaluation will be used by the Commission in making future funding decisions.

Compliance with First 5 California Evaluation Framework

First 5 Nevada County staff and contractors shall comply with the First 5 California Evaluation Framework. As such, the Service Data Elements for each funded program must be reported. These are: the number, age, language and ethnicity of children, the number, language and ethnicity of primary caregivers, other family members served, and information about who provided the service. Staff and contractors shall report outcomes on all investments, and staff will report them to the state by result area.

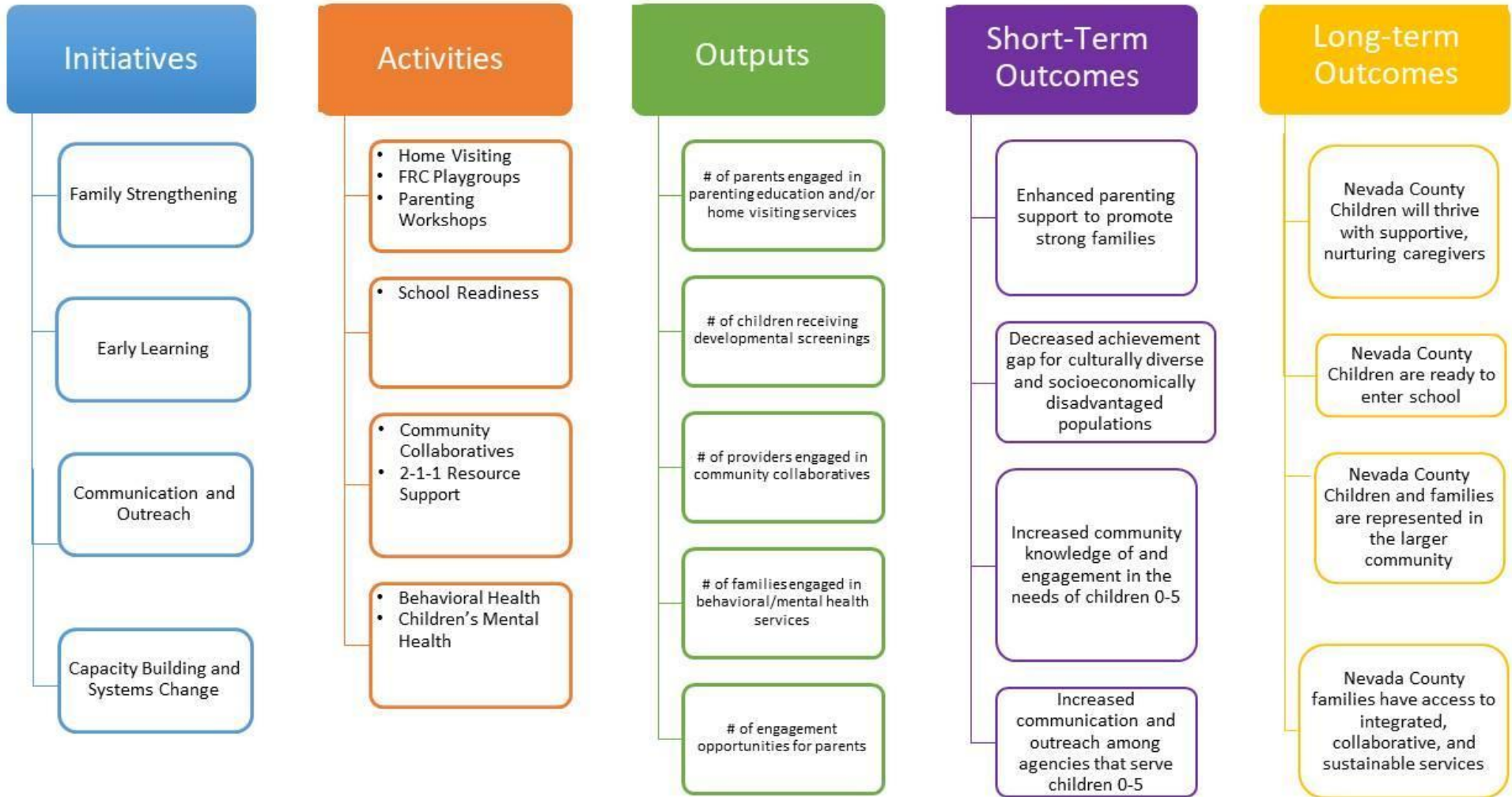
Reporting Requirements

All investments shall be tied to a Goal, Objective, and Strategy in the First 5 Nevada County Strategic Plan. The “Funded Program or Project Mandatory Reporting Requirements” description contains data collection requirements, definitions and a methodology for outlining the Evaluation Plan for each funded program (**see IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**).

Contractors shall report Service Data information and outcomes on agreed indicators on a quarterly basis, with a site visit planned for half way through the year. Staff shall review reports promptly and notify contractors within a reasonable time if their reports or their progress are not in compliance with the contract. Contractors shall also report their fiscal information as designated in their contracts.

Each funded program was selected because of its ability to meet a prioritized need identified by the Commission in their needs assessment and priority setting processes. Progress on those needs will be measured by selected indicators which will be tracked by grantees as indicated in the following chart (note: outputs listed in the logic model are not all-inclusive – additional indicators are outlined in the Implementation Plan).

Logic Model



APPENDICES

Long Range Financial Plan

First 5 Nevada County - Long Range Financial Plan					
<i>Financial Planning for Sustainability</i>					
<i>Approved: May 2023</i>					
<i>Fiscal Year ending June 30</i>	Approved 2022-23	Preliminary 2023-24	Projected 24-25	Projected 25-26	Projected 26-27
REVENUE					
Prop 10 tax revenue	\$481,621	\$457,413	\$425,130	\$465,770	\$433,565
Small County Augmentation	\$149,033	\$149,033	\$149,033	\$149,033	\$149,033
IMPACT 2020	\$18,000				
Donations	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
HV Collaborative	\$38,629	\$50,100	\$43,100		
Other Income	\$9,605	\$11,349			
Interest earned	\$3,520	\$2,940	\$2,267	\$2,108	\$2,084
Total Revenues	\$706,408	\$676,835	\$624,530	\$621,911	\$589,682
<i>Fiscal Year ending June 30</i>	Projected 2022-23	Projected 2023-24			
EXPENSES					
Prop 10 Programs	\$552,227	\$570,370	\$610,835	\$614,370	\$617,975
Community Projects	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
Evaluation	\$5,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
Services/Supplies	\$50,213	\$48,113	\$48,113	\$48,113	\$48,113
Kids Corner at the Fair	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000
First 5 Director Wages/Benefits .95 FTE	\$128,100	\$130,586	\$133,198	\$135,862	\$138,579
Service Support Secretary .45 FTE	\$41,914	\$42,671	\$43,524	\$44,395	\$45,283
Contracted Program Expenses					
Family Resource Centers	\$214,678	\$214,678			
Cross Agency Collaboration (CCTT, CSN)	\$25,000	\$25,000			
School Readiness (TTUSD, KidZone, RMAS)	\$54,627	\$54,627			
Ready to Grow	\$23,695	\$43,695	\$375,000	\$375,000	\$375,000
SPCFA Programs	\$160,500	\$160,500	\$10,500	\$10,500	\$10,500
Healthy Babies Home Visiting Program	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000			
Persimmony Database	\$ 10,500	\$ 10,500	\$ 10,500	\$ 10,500	\$ 10,500
HV Collaborative	\$45,149	\$30,100	\$23,100	\$0	\$0
Community Collaborative Coordinator .83 FTE	\$43,749				
Services/Supplies		\$100	\$100		
Parent/Workforce Incentives	\$1,400	\$20,000	\$20,000		
Contractual/Trainings		\$10,000	\$3,000		
IMPACT Programs	\$21,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Supplies	\$200				
Food for IMPACT	\$3,000				
Subcontract for Coaching and Mentoring	\$17,800				
<i>Fiscal Year ending June 30</i>	Approved 2022-23	Preliminary 2023-24	Projected 24-25	Projected 25-26	Projected 26-27
Total Expenditures	\$778,876	\$760,970	\$644,435	\$624,870	\$628,475
Revenues less Expenses	-\$72,468	-\$84,135	-\$19,905	-\$2,958	-\$38,792
Total Fund Balance	\$440,022	\$367,554	\$283,419	\$263,515	\$260,556
Withdrawal from Fund Balance	\$72,468	\$84,135	\$19,905	\$2,958	\$38,792
Ending Fund Balance	\$367,554	\$283,419	\$263,515	\$260,556	\$221,764



Our Mission: Promote the importance of early childhood by investing in complex systems of care, empowering families, and strengthening the community.

Our Vision: Nevada County children will thrive in nurturing communities that support families in reaching their full potential.

Mailing Address:
380 Crown Point Circle
Grass Valley, CA 95945

First5Nevco.com