

2016/2017 SNAPSHOT

EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Supporting children with quality early care and education begins with a strong and qualified workforce. The knowledge that 90 percent of brain development happens in the first five years of life has fundamentally changed a common perception that child care is "just babysitting." Numerous studies show that teacher effectiveness is an important factor in improving the quality of early learning programs and leads to success in school and life. Realizing the importance of early education providers, First 5 Monterey County has funded the CARES (Comprehensive Approaches to Raising Educational Standards) program since 2002.

"CARES is a one-stop shop for students who are interested in the field of early childhood education," explains Amber Kerchner, the CARES Early Childhood Education Counselor at Monterey Peninsula College (MPC). CARES Counselors, located at both MPC and Hartnell College, advise early childhood education (ECE) students, providing professional growth and overall educational planning, as well as referrals for college resources. An annual early education career fair links students to bachelor's degree programs and local jobs in the field. Students work toward their degrees while maintaining coursework for their early education teacher permits, a requirement for working in licensed child care programs.



CARES Provider Spotlight: REBEKAH

Like many families in our county, Monterey resident Rebekah was faced with a decision when her children were young—to stay home or return to work. Needing income yet unable to afford child care, she started caring for her niece and nephew to supplement her family's bottom line. It was during this time that she found her calling.

Deciding to take her passion and turn it into a business, Rebekah enrolled in classes at MPC. She remembers connecting with the CARES Program, "Amber showed me the general direction in which I should go so that I wasn't misled or misdirected in getting to my goal as quickly as possible."

Rebekah sees her education as a gateway, "I could give more to the children I was working with, more to the parents who were asking questions. I realize how important families are, how important communities are, and how we work together to really provide structure and a foundation for the children...the next generation."

CARES At-a-Glance 2016/2017

465

early education students
took classes to improve
knowledge

Early education career
fair held at Hartnell

145 students

10 employers

6 four-year colleges

MPC reported a

4x increase

in the number of

ECE degrees*

*From 2013-2014 to 2015-2016



2016/2017 Funded Agencies

ACTION

- Alisal Union School District
- Binational Center for the Development of Oaxacan Indigenous Communities
- Chualar Union School District
- City of Salinas - Salinas Public Library
- Community Action Partnerships of San Luis Obispo
- Continuing Development, Inc.
- Door to Hope
- Easter Seals Central California
- GoKids, Inc.
- Gonzales Unified School District
- Greenfield Union School District
- Hartnell College and Hartnell College Foundation
- Hartnell College Child Development Center
- Kinship Center - A Member of the Seneca Family of Agencies
- Mexican American Opportunity Foundation
- Monterey County Health Department, Behavioral Health
- Monterey County Health Department, Public Health
- Monterey County Office of Education
- Monterey County Probation Department
- Monterey Peninsula College (MPC) and MPC Foundation
- Monterey Peninsula Unified School District
- North Monterey County Unified School District
- Pajaro Valley Prevention and Student Assistance, Inc.
- Pajaro Valley Unified School District
- Praxis Consulting
- Seledad Adult School
- WestEd Center for Prevention and Early Intervention

Commissioners

- Simón Salinas (Chair)
- Julie Drezner (Vice-Chair)
- Josefina Silva (Secretary)
- Elsa Jimenez
- Elliott Robinson
- Chris Shannon
- Jamie Valenzuela-Mumau

First 5 Monterey County works to: increase early childhood funding; collaboratively enhance access to resources and services for families with young children; and inspire policies and practices supporting early learning. In fiscal year 2016/2017, funds supported the following types of programs: parent-child playgroups; parenting classes; home visiting; family, friend, and neighbor playgroups; event sponsorships; college counseling for early childhood educators; technical assistance and quality support to child care centers; mental health counseling; and special needs support.

\$7.1M
INVESTED

35,423

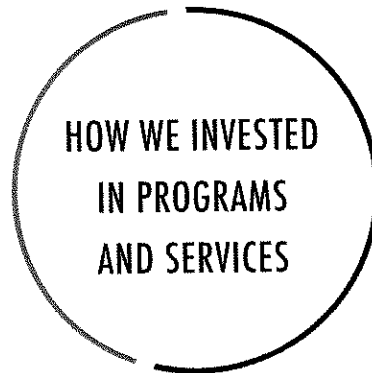
CHILDREN, PARENTS, CAREGIVERS,
PROVIDERS, AND EDUCATORS SUPPORTED

Total Expenditures: \$7,143,821

Programs & Services: \$6,085,188

Evaluation: \$328,128

Administration: \$730,505



44%

Parenting Programs



29%

Child Care Quality Programs



27%

Mental Health & Child Well-Being Programs

Childhood doesn't last forever but the experience lasts a lifetime.

www.First5Monterey.org 831-444-8549

2016/2017 SNAPSHOT

MENTAL HEALTH AND CHILD WELL-BEING: Home Visiting

The pressures and demands of raising a child can be challenging for even the best-prepared parent. Home visiting, the practice of trained parent educators meeting families in their homes with support and resources, helps parents understand the tremendous impact they can have on their child's early brain development. Home visitors model and encourage parents to interact with their child in ways that support early language and social-emotional skills—leading to improvements in a child's school readiness, health, and development.

"I think that we prepare children for school and for future success in the world by supporting the parent-child relationship," comments Diana Upton. As a parent educator with the Parents As Teachers (PAT) program at Door to Hope, she has spent the last 20 years helping families understand and nurture their child's unique development, enjoy parenting, and connect to services and resources. First 5 Monterey County funds the home visiting program through a Parenting Development grant.

Diana typically visits a family two to four times a month and uses the evidence-based PAT curriculum. PAT recognizes the strengths of families and is responsive to family needs, covering topics that include child development, health, and safety. "Parenting is the biggest task that people take on. Parents as Teachers is based on the idea that parents are children's first and most influential teacher. Parents know their child best," reflects Diana.

Home Visiting Spotlight: FERNANDO, RAQUEL, AND KING



Home Visiting At-a-Glance 2016/2017

Parent educator Diana began meeting with Fernando and Raquel when their son, King, was only a few months old. The family recognized the value of participating in PAT and made visits a priority, even with Fernando's busy 66-hour work week. Fernando and his wife Raquel looked forward to Diana's twice-a-month visits as a time when they could learn more about how to best support the growth and development of King.

Fernando recalls, "What I liked most was learning stuff about his cues—so we can react better to his needs." When describing PAT, Raquel remembers, "I liked the activities. It was always age-appropriate and something to look forward to later for the different stages of his development."

PAT gave Fernando and Raquel the skills and tools important to King's healthy development. When reflecting on the impact of having Diana as a parent educator, Fernando states, "We really felt like she was there to help us grow, and grow with King."

8 out of 10

parents indicated improvement in

- their ability to identify what their child needs
- their confidence as a parent

9 out of 10

parents indicated improvement in

- their knowledge of how their child was growing and developing



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PARENTING DEVELOPMENT: Playgroups

Young children thrive through healthy relationships with their family and community. The positive day-to-day interactions children have with their parents and caregivers—like talking, reading, singing, and playing—help them develop the skills they need to succeed in school and life. Understanding this importance, First 5 Monterey County invests in playgroups that help families nurture important parent-child relationships, learn about their child's unique development, and find connections to local resources and services.

During playgroups, parent educators, like Michele Huizar of the Salinas Public Library, model interactions critical for children's early learning and social development and focus on play as the way young children learn. Michele's approach works to "build cognitive skills and development, allowing children a chance to explore sensory, science, craft, and math activities. But it's all through play."

"You have to establish a relationship with the parent and show them that you really are interested in the development of their child," Michele says. These relationships have big payoffs—Michele has connected families to needed resources like child development screenings and services for developmental delays.

Playgroup Spotlight: SAMANTHA AND GAVIN



Samantha, a Salinas mother, attended her first playgroup facilitated by Michele when her oldest daughter was a preschooler. Now with her two-year-old son Gavin, and a baby on the way, she continues this weekly tradition, noting, "I have an hour and a half just to interact with my son. I think that's the most precious thing."

Playgroups provide Gavin a chance to interact with other children while also helping Samantha continue the learning at home—Michele's suggestions have prompted Samantha to include her children in everyday activities like cooking. Samantha sings praises about Michele as a facilitator, "She's so amazing. She's always welcoming, my kids love her."

With her oldest now in kindergarten, Samantha remembers how her daughter "liked being able to express herself through all the songs and reading." Ultimately, playgroups prepared her daughter for the routines of school. "She understood more about structure before going to school. She knows that school has a structure too and playgroups helped her get that sense. That has been really, really helpful to my daughter."

Playgroups At-a-Glance 2016/2017

8 out of 10

parents indicated improvement in

- their confidence of helping their child learn
- the amount of activities they do together with their child
- their connection with other families with children



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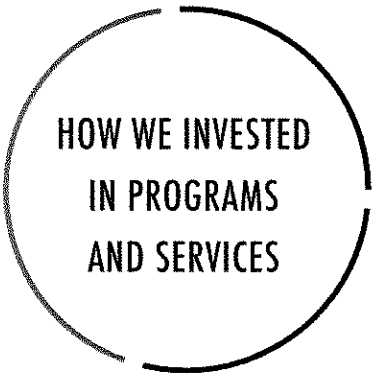
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