



2024-2025

# A Year of Collective Success for Early Childhood

*Un año de éxito colectivo para la primera infancia*

# We are Bright Beginnings Somos Comienzos Brillantes

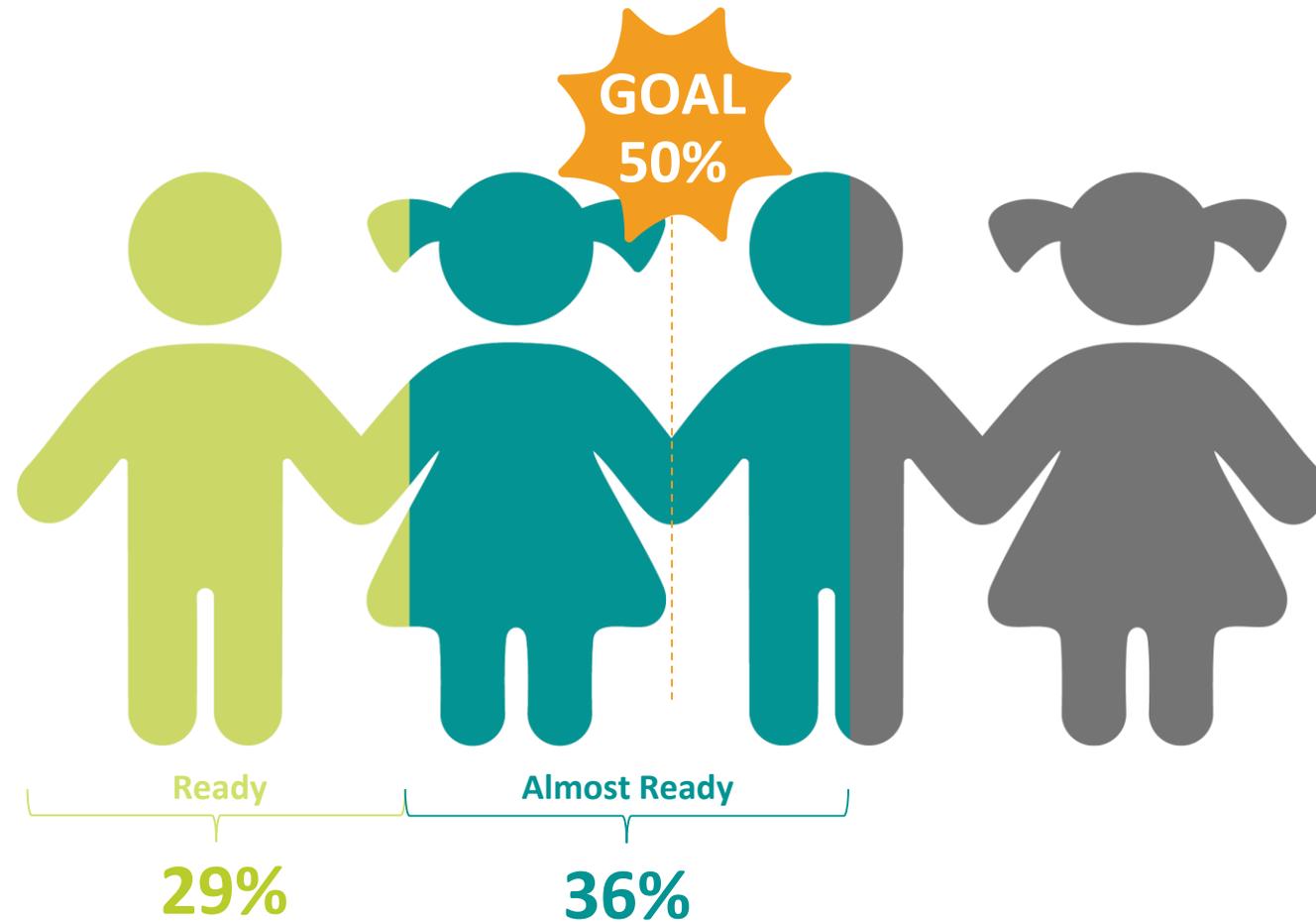
Together, we prepare young children for school and life by ensuring they have everything they need to succeed.

Juntos, preparamos a los niños pequeños para la escuela y la vida, asegurándonos de que Tengan todo lo que necesitan para tener éxito.



# Our Goal: Double School Readiness

Nuestro objetivo: Duplicar la Preparación Escolar



## 2024-2025 Highlights



**Perinatal mood & anxiety disorder is no longer in the dark.**

*El trastorno del estado de ánimo y la ansiedad perinatal ya no están en la oscuridad.*

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**Everyone is talking about child care.**

*Todo el mundo habla sobre el cuidado infantil temprano.*

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**Public policy and practice is bending towards early childhood**

*Las políticas y prácticas públicas se están orientando hacia la primera infancia.*

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**The Bright Beginnings Initiative is a model for collaboration.**

*El modelo de colaboración e innovación.*

# Perinatal mood & anxiety disorder is no longer in the dark.

El trastorno del estado de ánimo y la ansiedad perinatal ya no están en la oscuridad.

**3**

trainings and tools provided

*capacitaciones y herramientas proporcionadas*

**65**

new Doulas certified, assisting 71 births

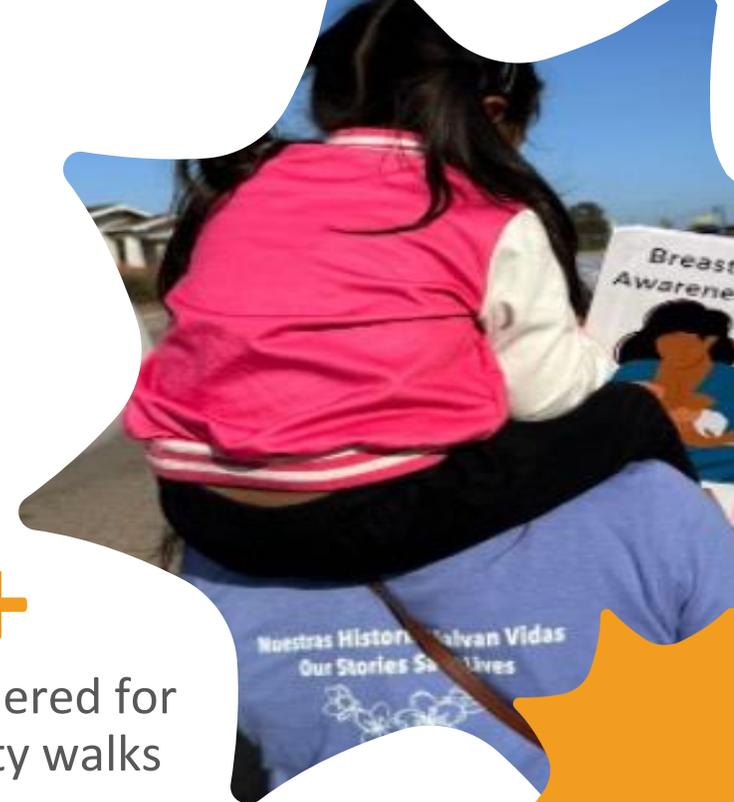
*nuevas doulas certificadas, asistiendo 71 partos*

**150+**

people gathered for 5 community walks in 4 cities

*la gente se reunió para 5 caminatas comunitarias en 4 ciudades*

The Maternal Mental Health Task Force has become a force in the region, made up of 75 unique individuals representing 24 organizations.



Everyone is talking about child care and early learning.

Todo el mundo habla sobre el cuidado infantil y el aprendizaje temprano.

**4th**

consecutive year of child care in the spotlight at the Monterey Bay Economic Partnership's "State of the Region"

*año más, el cuidado infantil ocupa un lugar destacado en el evento «Estado de la Región» de la Monterey Bay Economic Partnership.*

**6**

child care investment strategies named in the Regions Rise Together Inclusive Economic Blueprint

*Estrategias de inversión en el cuidado infantil mencionadas en el Plan Económico Inclusivo «Regions Rise Together»*



*“We need the same kind of innovation that’s making Joby fly. . . the kind of innovation that taps into the talent rooted in our communities.”*

**SONJA KOEHLER**  
DIRECTOR, BRIGHT BEGINNINGS INITIATIVE  
STATE OF THE REGION 2024

# Success Story Historia de éxito

# 94

**new programs were licensed.** Bright Beginnings launched a promotora model to support start-ups. Through community-based recruitment and peer support, the model aims to reduce cultural, language and technical barriers to the child care licensing process.

*Se otorgaron licencias a 94 nuevos programas. Comienzos Brillantes lanzó un modelo de promotoras para apoyar a las empresas emergentes. Mediante el reclutamiento comunitario y el apoyo entre pares, el modelo busca reducir las barreras culturales, lingüísticas y técnicas en el proceso de licencias para el cuidado infantil.*



# Public policy and practice is bending towards early childhood.

*Las políticas y prácticas públicas se están orientando hacia la primera infancia.*

Weaving together the work of Building Healthy Communities, First 5 Monterey County, and the Bright Beginnings Initiative, the COLIBRI Child Care Campaign was launched in 2023. This year, COLIBRI launched a Children's Bill of Rights.

*Entrelazando la labor de Building Healthy Communities, First 5 Monterey County y la Bright Beginnings Initiative, la Campaña de Cuidado Infantil COLIBRI se lanzó en 2023. Este año, COLIBRI en marcha una Carta de Derechos de la Niñez.*



# MAMÁS ABOGAN



# 21

women from across the county make up Las Mamas Abogan. By cultivating friendship and belonging, they build their capacity in advocacy.

They have also become part of the solution: trained as Mom & Baby peer mentors supporting perinatal mental health, licensed their own home for child care, and/or certified as a Doula.

mujeres de todo el condado conforman el grupo Las Mamas Abogan. Al cultivar la amistad y el sentido de pertenencia, fortalecen su capacidad en materia de defensa y abogacía.

También se han convertido en parte de la solución: se han formado como mentoras pares de madres y bebés para apoyar la salud mental perinatal, han obtenido la licencia para ofrecer cuidado infantil en su propio hogar y/o se han certificado como doulas.



# The Bright Beginnings Initiative is a model for collaboration.

El modelo de colaboración e innovación.



10 Years Strong:  
Greenfield  
Early Learning  
Partnership

## 290

families received 28,500  
diapers at the Greenfield  
Diaper Giveaway

*las familias recibieron  
28.500 pañales en el  
Reparto de Pañales de  
Greenfield*

## 85%

of 92 families attending  
completed enrollment in  
preschool, TK or kindergarten

*de las 92 familias  
participantes, completaron la  
inscripción en preescolar, TK o  
jardín de infancia*



# Many Thanks / Muchas Gracias

## **MONTEREY COUNTY CHILDREN'S COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Jose Ramirez, *Chief Probation Officer  
(Council Chair)*

Katy Castagna, *President & CEO,  
United Way Monterey County*

Deneen Guss, *Superintendent of  
Schools, Office of Education*

Elsa Jimenez, *Director, Health  
Department*

Roderick Franks, *Director,  
Department of Social Services*

## **BRIGHT BEGINNINGS INITIATIVE LEADERSHIP**

Edward Moreno, *Public Health Officer  
(Initiative Co-Chair)*

Francine Rodd\*, *First 5 Monterey  
County (Initiative Co-Chair)*

## **BRIGHT BEGINNINGS INITIATIVE BACKBONE STAFF**

Sonja Koehler, *Director*

Cristina De Orta, *Program Support  
(through October 2024)*

Iris Gamez, *Community Outreach,  
Inclusion & Advocacy Coordinator*

Rebeca Zuniga, *Communications  
Coordinator (through October 2024)*

## **EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY GROUP**

Jose Arreola, *City of Salinas*

Laura Dunn, *Carmel Unified School District*

Claudia Gomez, *Door to Hope*

Niaomi Hrepich, *WIC, Health Department*

Josh Madfis\*, *United Way of Monterey County*

Mamas de Salinas

Maria Ortiz, *MAOF Resource & Referral*

Ginger Pierce, *Child Abuse Prevention Council*

Angie Ramirez, *CAPSLO*

Laurie Ramirez, *Office of Education  
(Child Care Planning Council)*

Mayola Rodriguez, *Go Kids, Inc.*

Wendy Root Askew, *Office of the Supervisor (District 4)*

Tony Amezcua, *Bright Futures Education Partnership*

Shannan Watkins\*, *Early Development Services*

\* Also Steering Partners for Early Childhood Goals of the Bright Futures Educational Partnership

**COMIENZOS  
BRILLANTES**

INICIATIVA PARA PROMOVER EL DESARROLLO INFANTIL

**BRIGHT  
BEGINNINGS**

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

**¡Gracias!**

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fb: @brightbeginningsmc

