
MEMORANDUM

TO: CONTRA COSTA MEASURE X COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD

FROM: FIRST 5 CONTRA COSTA & THE COMMUNITY SERVICES BUREAU OF THE EMPLOYMENT AND HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: MAKING THE CASE FOR THE EARLY YEARS

DATE: MAY 26, 2021

CC: LISA DRISCOLL

Our coalition of early childhood stakeholders, First 5 Contra Costa, CocoKids, Contra Costa Health Services, Parent Voices, and the Community Services Bureau of the Employment and Human Services Department is proposing a total annual allocation of \$16,725,000 towards early childhood supports, providers, and systems. This investment in responsive early childhood systems that look at the whole child and whole family are necessary to ensure that children are safe, healthy, loved, educated, and have the social-emotional skills to thrive in school and throughout life.

When we support children and their families during a child's first five years of life, we make the most of the incredible human potential in all of us. Yet, not every child and family in Contra Costa has access to the same level of resources that help realize this potential. Too many of our children live in deep poverty, and a significant portion of families struggle to make ends meet in our high-cost county. We face persistent gaps in the supply of services and supports, availability of child care and early childhood mental health services, and resources to help families with their basic needs. Those who experience these gaps the most—and disproportionately so—are communities of color. Black and brown families have had to support their children with far less systemic and structural support than their white counterparts, resulting in disparities that fall along geographic, income, and racial lines.

For your consideration and information, we are submitting the attached written report entitled *Making the Case for the Early Years* and the accompanying slide deck. We look forward to supporting the work of the Measure X Community Advisory Board with any additional information or data that might help to better understand the needs of young children and their families.