



Make the FIRST 5 Years Count!



# ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY 2004-2005

**First 5 Monterey County Commissioners**  
Fiscal Year 2004 – 2005  
(July 2004 – June 2005)

Edith Johnsen, Chair, July 2004 – December 2004  
Monterey County Board of Supervisors

Len Foster, Chair, January 2005 – June 2005  
Monterey County Health Department

Jerry Smith, Member beginning January 2005  
Monterey County Board of Supervisors

Carole Singley, R.N., Commission Secretary, July 2004 – March 2005  
Salinas Adult School Parent Center

Noemy Burnside, Commission Secretary  
North Monterey County Unified School District

Elliott Robinson, Commission Personnel/Finance Committee Chair  
Monterey County Department of Social and Employment Services

Robert Taniguchi  
Monterey County Department of Social and Employment Services

Linda Velásquez, M.D., M.P.H.  
Monterey County Health Department

Kathy Walsh, Member beginning April 2005  
King City Child Development Center

**Staff**  
(Fiscal Year 2004 – 2005)

Francine Rodd  
Executive Director

Beth Reeves-Fortney  
Senior Program Officer

Karina Lehrner  
Program Officer

Melissa Parlee-Hirth  
Community Partnership Manager

Manuela Kolpin  
Finance/Operations Officer

Joanna Steinbruner  
Administrative Manager

Ana Duran  
Finance Administrative Support

**(Fiscal Year 2005 – 2006 Additions)**

David Dobrowski  
Evaluation Officer

Jose Montenegro  
Community Partnership Manager

Amanda Santiago  
Program Administrative Support



**Mission**

To serve as a catalyst to create sustainable change in systems, policies and practices for enhancing the development of children in their first five years of life.

**Vision**

All children in Monterey County will enter school in good health, emotionally well developed, and ready and able to learn.

**Guiding Principles**

The *First 5 Monterey County* Commission is guided by the principles of integrity, honesty and mutual respect toward others, and encourages inclusiveness, collaboration and innovation in building an optimal system of support for young children. The Commission endeavors to support programs that are grounded in the best evidence of what works, that are able to demonstrate positive outcomes, and that maximize additional sources of financial support.

Make the FIRST 5 Years Count!



# Letter to the Community

Dear Friends,

We are pleased to bring you the **First 5 Monterey County (F5MC)** 2004-2005 Annual Report to the Community. As a result of our support and through the efforts of our community partners, more than 7,000 children and families have been helped by **F5MC** funded programs.

From July 2004 through June 2005, **F5MC** gave more than \$4 million in grant funds to strengthen programs and enhance the development of children during their first five years of life.

The Commissioners of **F5MC** are passionate advocates for our youngest children. We know children are more likely to succeed in school and in life if they have:

- Parents who read to them daily;
- Quality group early learning experiences, such as preschool, family child care or playgroups;
- Homes free from domestic violence;
- Attention to their special needs; and
- Physically and mentally healthy bodies.

Given the above, research indicates they will be:

- Less likely to repeat a grade in school;
- Less likely to enter the criminal justice system;
- More likely to graduate from high school and college;
- More likely to lead healthier, happier lives; and
- More likely to be productive community members.

In fiscal year (FY) 2004-2005, **F5MC** focused on reaching the families most in need of child development, family functioning and child health services. Of families receiving services for more than six weeks, 70 percent of the mothers had little schooling or no high school diploma, and half of the families were below the federal poverty level (\$18,850 for a family of four). We are proud to report between July 2004 and June 2005, more than 5,000 families received our Kit for New Parents. Also, **F5MC**-funded agencies and programs in Monterey County served more than:

- 3,410 children;
- 4,140 parents/caregivers; and
- 1,790 providers.

The programs are having a positive impact. For example, after six months of involvement with a funded program, children five years and younger are receiving the recommended number of health check ups and up-to-date vaccinations. Parents are telling us their children's overall health is improving as well. Also, parents are encouraging literacy by reading or showing picture books to their children more often. Service providers are doing a better job of working together and providing more comprehensive services to our families.

While we are pleased with our progress, we have more work to do. Some of the areas of focus for FY 2005-2006 include ensuring more parents receive the information and educational opportunities they need to develop strong families; increasing outreach to diverse racial/ethnic populations in need of services, such as the Oaxacan community; continuing to refine our data collection and reporting systems to reduce administrative burden on funded programs; and assisting our partner agencies with their efforts to increase service integration.

We are excited about the future for our children and are proud of the dedicated individuals who work tirelessly on their behalf. Along with my fellow **F5MC** Commissioners, I invite you to read this Annual Report to the Community and see for yourself the outstanding and caring services being provided to our children, from the prenatal stage through age five, and their families in Monterey County.

Sincerely,

Len Foster  
Chair  
January 2005 – June 2005



**Len Foster**  
Chair,  
January – June 2005  
First 5 Monterey  
County Commissioners



“He was not scared to be left and knew I would be back to get him. He knew there would be a routine, knew the social rules and he was comfortable.”

– Irene Webb, Children's Creative Learning Center Parent



## Proposition 10 and First 5 Monterey County

In 1998, California voters passed Proposition 10 — a large public investment in early childhood health and development programs for pregnant women and families with children ages five and younger. The 50-cent-per-pack tax on tobacco products is generating more than \$600 million a year for programs supporting the early development of California’s children.

Proposition 10 revenue is divided among all 58 of California’s counties based on

birth rates, and each county spends the money on locally identified priorities for children 0 through 5 years of age and their families. There are approximately 7,000 live births in Monterey County each year and more than 33,500 children between the ages of 0 through 5.

**First 5 Monterey County (F5MC)** gives more than \$4 million each year to qualified programs that serve children and their families

in our county. The agencies receiving grants focus on at least one of **F5MC’s** four strategic areas: improved child development, improved child health, improved family functioning and improved systems for children and families. **F5MC** has set a goal of developing an integrated, comprehensive and easily accessible system of programs and services for children from the prenatal stage through age 5 and their families.

“The biggest challenge and accomplishment is raising public awareness of what First 5 is. They act as a facilitator with multiple groups and they are working hard to get people going in the same direction.”

- F5MC Grantee

## Strategic Areas of Focus

### Improved Child Development

Most experts agree that a child’s early experiences affect the rest of his or her life. In fact, some say experiences have a larger impact on a child’s ability to learn than heredity, with the first three years of life having the largest impact.

Children learn through supportive and responsive relationships with their parents, caregivers and professionals. Providing developmentally appropriate learning opportunities helps prepare them for entry into kindergarten.

In fiscal year (FY) 2004-2005, **F5MC** supported tuition subsidies for 95 income-eligible families in order to increase the

number of children who are able to attend preschool programs.

**F5MC** also funded stipends for child care providers to receive professional development training during FY 2004-2005 through the CARES program. Substitute teachers were provided so child care providers could attend workshops on school-readiness, as well as student teaching classes.

### Improved Child Health

Healthy children feel better and have greater self-esteem, improved social interactions, and a higher ability to learn and thrive. During the last five years, **F5MC** has made it a top priority to increase access and use of appropriate medical, mental and oral health care by children 0 through 5 years of age.

During FY 2004-2005, **F5MC** helped improve access to health care, reduce preventable diseases and reduce injuries for children. Health-related programs included preventative oral and medical health education; home visitation and case management programs for infants and new mothers; physical and mental health training for home visitation providers; and health screening, treatment and referral, especially for children entering kindergarten and for child care centers.

### Improved Family Functioning

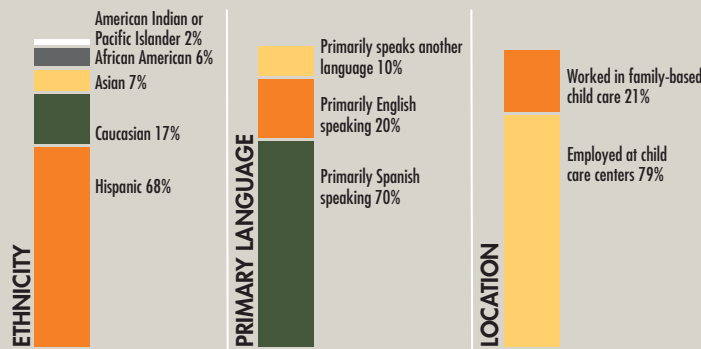
Unfortunately, children do not come with an instruction manual to assist parents with this rewarding AND challenging responsibility. Parenting requires patience, understanding and a good sense of humor. The use of positive parenting practices helps children grow up to be well adjusted and confident adults. Positive parenting techniques and access to supportive services also give parents the skills needed to face the challenges of raising children without resorting to child abuse, neglect or domestic violence.

Domestic violence crosses all racial, economic and social lines. In Monterey County in 2002, there were 1,836 domestic violence-related calls to law enforcement. The American Psychological Association Task Force on Violence and the Family says a child’s exposure to domestic violence is the strongest risk factor in passing on violent behavior from one generation to the next. Data suggests early support and training can prevent anti-social behavior in school-age children and stop the cycle of violence.

In FY 2004-2005, **F5MC** funded seven programs to help provide parents with tools to develop healthy families. Services included parent education about appropriate discipline and child development, mental health assessments, and support and service referrals. Services were delivered through home visits, classroom learning and one-on-one meetings.

### Training for Child Care Providers and Parents

In FY 2004-2005 there were 364 providers who received financial awards for eligible professional training. There were 286 parents and 53 child care providers who participated in school-readiness workshops. Additionally, 33 child care providers were trained in child development and student teaching.



## Improved Systems for Children and Families

Children and families do better when the agencies providing services to them communicate and coordinate with each other. **F5MC** brings people from various agencies and backgrounds together to look at how client information is communicated across programs and to make necessary changes in policies and practices.

During FY 2004-2005, **F5MC** invested in three system change collaborative efforts to address families with multiple needs. These collaborations were the School Readiness Collaborative (SRC), Monterey County Screening Team for Assessment, Referral and Treatment (MCSTART), and Children's Emergency Intake Shelter (CHERISH)/Family 2 Family.

SRC is administered by the Monterey County Office of Education, and supports the physical, emotional and cognitive development of children ages 0 through 5 so they are better prepared to enter kindergarten. It is concentrated in East Salinas, Seaside, King City, San Ardo and San

Lucas where some of the county's low-performing schools are located.

SRC plays an important role in school readiness by increasing the availability and use of needed medical and oral health care for young children; training child care teachers; and providing parenting classes for fathers and child-abuse-prevention classes for parents. The Alisal Healthy Start Family Resource Center in Salinas, the Cabrillo Family Resource Center in Seaside and the mobile Family Resource Center of Mee Memorial's South County Regional Health Partnership in King City help coordinate these services.

MCSTART, administered by Door to Hope, is a collaborative concerned about the health and social/emotional well-being of children of substance-abusing mothers. It is focused on improving the early assessment and intervention of at-risk children, and also works to improve the health of neonatal babies and infants who have been exposed to alcohol and drugs during pregnancy. Services for infants and young children include screenings, assessments, health care, mental health support and

case management. Parental support services and case management are provided to parents and caregivers.

CHERISH/Family 2 Family was formed by the Department of Social and Employment Services to meet the needs of children entering the child welfare system through emergency placement and foster care. The program includes the CHERISH Receiving Center — a safe and child-friendly location with books, games and activities. Children can remain at the Receiving Center for up to 23 hours following removal from the home. This time allows partnering programs to assess the mental and physical health of the child while determining the best placement options.

With the goal of keeping children in familiar places, and as near to supportive family members as possible, the Family 2 Family program developed a neighborhood-based network of family foster care. The program also facilitates family team decision-making about child placements that involves foster parents, case workers, birth families and community members.

*In FY 2004-2005, more than 3,816 participants received services related to improving children's health.*

Approximately 2,150 children received health screening/assessment or direct health care.

- Hispanic ..... 81%
- Caucasian ..... 8%
- American Indian, Asian, African American, Pacific Islander, multi-ethnic and other ..... 5%
- Not reported ..... 5%

■ Slightly more than half (56 percent) were between three and five years of age.

■ Just more than 1,300 parents received child health-related services, primarily health education.

■ Seven percent were fathers. Of the mothers, 51 percent were pregnant, of which almost half (350 women or 44 percent) were under 20 years old.

- Hispanic ..... 78%
- Caucasian ..... 10%
- American Indian, Asian, African American, Pacific Islander, multi-ethnic and other ..... 7%
- Not reported ..... 5%

## Child Care Workforce Recruitment and Retention

Having highly qualified and educated preschool teachers and child care providers creates better preschool environments for children and leads to better kindergarten readiness.

Recruitment and retention of providers is a significant challenge due to low wages and few benefits. As a result, many child care centers experience a high rate of turnover and have difficulty finding skilled staff to fill positions. This affects the children in their care. For example, studies have shown significant negative effects on children's behavior and social/emotional, cognitive and language development resulting from high caretaker turnover.

To address this need, **F5MC** funds the Comprehensive Approaches to Raising Educational Standards (CARES) for the early learning workforce by providing stipends and incentives to encourage child care providers to continue their professional development.

CARES typically awards annual cash stipends (\$500 to \$2,500) for continuing education and professional development. A new incentive, introduced in 2005 specifically for family-based child care

providers, awards a \$2,000 bonus for national accreditation, a prestigious certification requiring a rigorous application and commitment to high-quality programs for children.

CARES has led to an expansion of early childhood education (ECE) programs on local community college campuses and has created a larger pool of trained ECE (child care) providers in the community.

*“I learned the skills about how to talk to her [a client] so that she felt comfortable continuing to come to [our agency] for services and support.”*

*- Family Support Practitioner*

Due to the declining nature of **FSMC** revenues, long-term planning for sustainability is critical. Sustainability funds included in the net assets category will help ensure program funding for 10 years.

**First 5 Monterey County Statement of Net Assets  
June 30, 2005**

<b>ASSETS</b>	
Cash and equivalents .....	\$ 18,856,455
State receivable .....	1,198,263
Interest receivable .....	124,229
Prepaid expenses .....	4,589
Capital assets, net of depreciation .....	21,297
<b>Total assets .....</b>	<b>20,204,833</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>	
Accounts payable .....	48,277
Accrued salaries .....	7,149
Grants payable .....	2,028,852
Deferred revenue .....	104,051
Capital lease .....	3,252
Compensated absences .....	18,322
<b>Total liabilities .....</b>	<b>2,209,903</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	
Invested in Capital assets, net of related debt .....	18,045
Restricted* .....	17,976,885
<b>Total net assets .....</b>	<b>\$ 17,994,930</b>

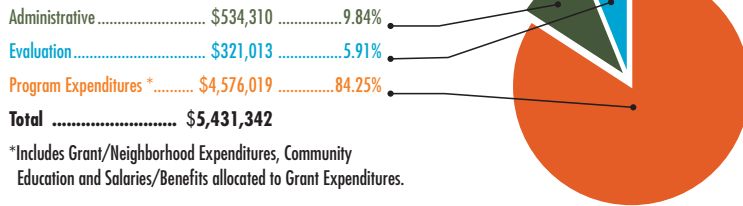
\*Reserved for Encumbrances, Matching Grants, Approved Contracts- not executed, Restricted grants, Contingency, Sustainability, Information/Education and Undesignated.

**First 5 Monterey County Statement of Activities  
For the Year Ending June 30, 2005**

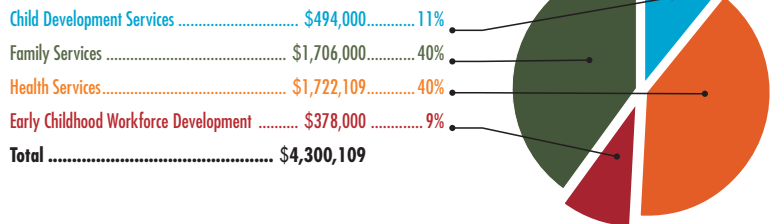
<b>EXPENSES</b>	
Grant expenditures .....	\$ 4,300,109
Neighborhood grants .....	10,599
Salaries and benefits .....	534,183
Evaluation .....	321,013
Professional fees .....	89,214
Rent/utilities .....	61,058
Community education .....	30,311
Training and conferences .....	25,221
Services/supplies .....	15,615
Insurance .....	14,197
Depreciation .....	9,285
Telephone .....	5,784
Subscriptions and dues .....	5,345
Repairs and maintenance .....	3,918
Interest on long-term debt .....	2,887
Computer supplies and maintenance .....	2,603
<b>Total expenses .....</b>	<b>5,431,342</b>
<b>REVENUES</b>	
Proposition 10 allocation .....	6,384,654
Foundation and state matching grants .....	835,979
Other revenue .....	10,633
Investment income .....	458,526
<b>Total revenues .....</b>	<b>7,689,792</b>

<b>CHANGE IN NET ASSETS .....</b>	<b>2,258,450</b>
NET ASSETS, BEGINNING OF YEAR .....	15,736,480
<b>NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR .....</b>	<b>\$ 17,994,930</b>

**Fiscal Year 04/05 Expenses**



**Fiscal Year 04/05 Grant Expenditures**



Make the **FIRST 5** Years Count!

## Special Needs Task Force and Demonstration Project

First 5 Monterey County (F5MC) understands the importance of early intervention and support services for children with special needs and their families.

To meet this need, F5MC initiated the establishment of the Special Needs Task Force in February 2004. The Task Force is made up of representatives from various agencies who meet regularly and work together to develop ways to improve services and support for children with special needs.

In response to the growing number of special needs children and families in Monterey County, F5MC and the Special Needs Task Force successfully proposed to First 5 California that Monterey County become one of 10 counties selected to participate in a Special Needs Demonstration Project. Administered by the Monterey County Office of Education, this four-year demonstration project serves children ages 0 through 5 living or attending preschool in the 93905 ZIP code. The project addresses gaps in infrastructure, communication and systems related to the provision of comprehensive, seamless and family-centered services. The project focuses on four areas:

- Increased access to screening;
- Improved access to services;
- Inclusion of children with special needs in appropriate preschool and other early care settings; and
- Improved infrastructure and communication systems.

## Success Stories



### Dads in Action

Dads in Action is giving "machismo" new meaning. You might think the last thing you want a father to be is macho, but according to the National Latino Fatherhood and Family Institute, that's exactly what a good father is. For a man to be truly "macho," he must be responsible and respectful, especially with family. This is the backbone of Dads in Action, where fathers of all ages, who have young children from 0 through 5 years old, learn about good parenting.

From teenagers to men in their 40s, dads come together weekly for two-hour sessions to learn about nurturing children. The program combines the National Latino Fatherhood and Family Institute's "A Father's Love" course with literacy workshops, family-fun field trips and men-only discussion groups. "We're the only program to work directly with fathers," states Alberto Cornejo, Dads in Action parent and community liaison. "At Dads in Action they can open up and talk about issues."

The program stresses the bonding and supportive effects of fathers reading to their youngsters. "We teach them how to set up a child's reading area and even how to pick out the different parts of a book so they can help with discussion and book reports as the kids get older," adds Alberto. "This helps the children and promotes the importance of success in school." Some grandfathers even join in on the literacy workshops and participate in the program's lending library.

The whole family goes along on inexpensive field trips to the beach or local driving ranges. The family returns for graduation; however, the rest of the program is devoted to "dads only." The time set aside for discussions of the many responsibilities of fatherhood provides invaluable opportunities for the men to share everyday situations and learn about solutions from each other.

In addition to learning about the responsibilities of fatherhood, Hugo Chavez is discovering the joys of early communication with his baby daughter. He came to Dads in Action shortly after Melissa's birth to find out about good parenting. At just 17 years old, Hugo says it's hard being a new father, but Alberto and the other dads in the program taught him what he needs to know about how to interact with his infant. "I learned how to have consideration for what she needs," says Hugo proudly. "I now know how to be there for her, how to behave with her and how to talk to her."

The young family lives with Hugo's parents in Salinas. The baby's mother is a full-time student finishing high school, while Hugo goes to classes two days a week to complete his GED. The rest of the time he is home with Melissa taking care of her and making plans for their future. Like most

*Continued on next page*

**READ, TALK and PLAY with your child every day.**

*Children learn every day. When you and your child read, talk and play together, you help with early learning that prepares them for life.*

*“I now know how to be there for her, how to behave with her and how to talk to her.”*

*- Hugo Chavez, Dads in Action Parent*



*Continued from previous page*

young men he wants to get a job and buy a house someday. But unlike others his age, he has learned to put someone else first. His child may be barely six months old now, but Hugo knows what he would like for Melissa. "I want her to go to school and find out what she wants. If she has a dream, I'll help her with it."

Putting children first and supporting their education are Dads in Action priorities. When fathers learn how to be responsible parents, as well as how to enjoy time with their families, they become more comfortable with their children. According to Hugo, there are some amazing benefits in store for dads who take the time to learn how to be good fathers. "When my daughter smiles up at me, it goes all the way deep inside me. It's wonderful."

**Dads in Action is a member of the School Readiness Collaborative and is funded by First 5 Monterey County. For information on Dads in Action, call (831) 755-0846.**

#### GRANTEE MEETINGS

**First 5 Monterey County** holds regular meetings for all grantees to update and inform them about local and state news relevant to **F5MC** programs. The meetings also allow agencies to build linkages and relationships across programs.

### Childrens' Creative Learning Center

For the Webb family of Seaside, Childrens' Creative Learning Center (CCLC) has turned out to be more than just a great place to drop off the children while the parents work, it has become a family partner. Five-year-old Malik went into the pre-school program at age three, while his little sister started in the infant-to-toddler program. Now Malik is doing very well in kindergarten and Izabella is about ready for the junior pre-school program. Mom Irene says CCLC is part school, part day care, part friend and part family.

Located on the Presidio of Monterey, CCLC might be expected to serve the children of military families and teachers at the Defense Language Institute. However, the center is open to all Monterey County families, offering early learning opportunities from birth through five years of age. **F5MC** provides subsidized tuition to enable low-income children to attend CCLC.

Director Amy Bosso describes the center as an atmosphere where children can safely explore in a developmentally appropriate environment. The play-based educational program is accredited through the National Association for the Education of Young Children for meeting national standards of quality. From outside playtime to classroom activities to nutritious snacks and lunches prepared by the onsite cook, the youngsters are constantly learning by experiencing and talking about what is going on around them.

A day at CCLC can start as early as 7 a.m. and end as late as 6 p.m., with curriculum from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for children two through five years of age. While the infants and toddlers have their own area and routine, the older ones spend their days in pre-school activities with language, math, science and music. Art is also an important part of the day, with every classroom housing its own art studio and individual smocks for "messy" play with paint or craft making with macaroni or toilet paper rolls.

Having worked in a child care center herself, Irene looked at her children's care and pre-school options with a discerning eye. "At CCLC, as the kids move up in age, what they are doing changes," she says. "Each program and area has a more advanced play structure and more things for the kids to do." Each group also has an age-appropriate, child-to-adult ratio ranging from one adult for every four infants to one adult for every nine five-year-olds.

Irene notes that when Malik started kindergarten he could write his name and understand numbers, but was ready for school in some other important ways too. "He was not scared to be left and knew I would be back to get him. He knew there would be a routine, knew the social rules and he was comfortable. I was more sad and nervous about him going off to kindergarten than he was."

Through play and discovery, Izabella has been working on language development at CCLC. She is also learning important social skills, such as how to share and interact with others. Not long ago, when she went through a biting phase, the center staff worked closely with the family to change this behavior. "They tried a couple of different things with Izabella," says

Irene. "They gave her teething things and toys and even a cold washcloth to gnaw on. When she looked frustrated, she was told to suck on something and then she was fine — no more biting." Now, Izabella is almost ready for the junior pre-school program. After that, her mother expects her to follow in her big brother's footsteps and head off to success in kindergarten and beyond.

**Childrens' Creative Learning Center is partially funded through First 5 Monterey County. For more information on CCLC, call (831) 647-1880.**

### MCSTART

Kristin and John Guertin adopted a drug-exposed infant at seven weeks old, knowing he would certainly have challenges due to his birthmother's methamphetamine use during pregnancy. However, the Guertins did not know the extent of the problems about to hit their family and how they would face them with love, patience and the help of a caring, dedicated community of professionals.

Kristin says during the first few months baby Gabriel began experienced tremors, would arch his body and needed to turn away so no one could look into his eyes. Then he started repeatedly banging his head or screaming for long periods of time for no obvious reason. John, Kristin and their older son, Alec, tried to soothe the baby, but to no avail. Visits to the pediatrician and neurologist, as well as dozens of clinical tests, led nowhere. By this time, Kristin also had someone else to care for as well as herself; she was pregnant with Sofia, who would arrive less than a year after Gabriel. "Our world had shrunk to be all about Gabriel," she recalls.



“And I kept wondering what would become of our family.”

Kristin kept looking for answers. The calls she made and classes she took eventually led her to Penny Welsh of the Parents as Teachers program. Penny introduced Kristin to a new world of understanding and learning how to cope with the unique behaviors of children exposed to drugs and alcohol in the womb. “I could call Penny at any time of the day or night to ask her what to do.” About this same time, the Guertins were told that, in addition to the methamphetamines, Gabriel had probably also been exposed to alcohol and cocaine before birth.

Penny brought in the Monterey County Screening Team for Assessment, Referral and Treatment (MCSTART). This early intervention and treatment program, for children exposed to alcohol and/or drugs before birth, became the family’s lifeline. The parents were interviewed and Gabriel was seen both in the office and at home by the MCSTART team of medical, mental health and therapeutic professionals. When the evaluation was complete, the team returned to the Guertin’s home with a lengthy report. “They gave me more information than you could ever hope to receive on your child,” recalls Kristin. “Basically it said, ‘Here is what you should do. Here is what you do outside the home. Here is what you do inside the home.’ It was full of referrals within the MCSTART program and throughout the community.”

Finally, not only did Kristin understand Gabriel’s sudden, intense screaming, she learned some ways to reduce it. Since he suffers from Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, he has what professionals call extensive sensory dysregulation problems. For Gabriel, sounds, sights and even temperature changes can be shocking and throw him into a panic. The ringing of a phone, the turning on of a light or just the cold of a car seat in the morning can set him off. MCSTART showed Kristin and John how to help Gabriel by giving him daily, specialized massages and joint compres-

sions in the morning, afternoon and night. These frequent treatments flood him with sensations so, when something minor happens, he is not startled and completely set off emotionally and behaviorally.

Since the summer of 2004, the Guertin family and MCSTART have worked together to find solutions. Hope Griffin Ortiz, a therapist who works closely with the Guertins, says the program’s success is due in part to its collaborative nature. Aside from MCSTART’s own team of professionals trained in fetal drug and alcohol exposure solutions, the agency has relationships with resources throughout the county for referral. Hope says families can use all or part of the services offered through MCSTART. “There is no one size fits all with these children,” she points out. “We look at each situation and see what will benefit that child and that family.”

Right now, Hope visits weekly to observe and work with Gabriel, who is now four years old. When needed, she also sees Kristin and the other children to help them on issues of how to interact as a family. An occupational therapist occasionally sees Gabriel with Sofia, the sister just 10

months younger, for lessons on how to take turns and share. Sofia also has had to learn not to imitate her brother’s inappropriate behavior to get attention. Kristin says she’s often taken advantage of the occupational therapist’s invitation to “call anytime.”

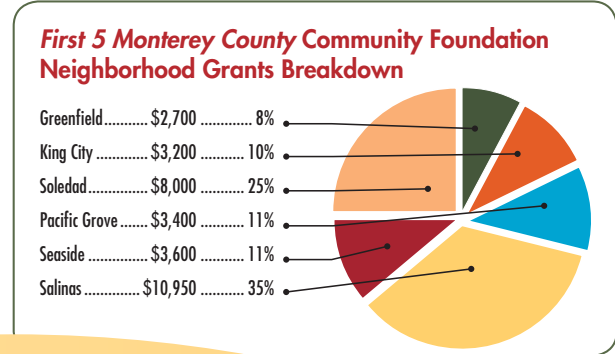
MCSTART helped enroll Gabriel into Head Start, where he enjoys preschool and shows strong problem-solving skills and a creative streak. Kristin remembers when she and her husband thought special education classes or kindergarten with an aide were in Gabriel’s future. Now they believe he will be ready to start kindergarten on his own when the time comes. “Every day is still about Gabriel and helping him manage himself,” says Kristin. “But my husband and I are in complete agreement — the people at MCSTART are among the most caring and capable group of professionals we have ever worked with in our lifetime. They brought our family out of the darkness.”

**MCSTART receives funding from First 5 Monterey County. For more information on MCSTART, please call (831) 758-0181.**

## Neighborhood Grants

The First 5 Neighborhood Grant program provides small grants — up to \$4,000 — to neighborhood groups working with children ages 0 through 5 and their parents. It is administered by the Community Foundation for Monterey County, which also provides training and support to the funded community groups. For more information, visit the Community Foundation’s website at [www.cfmc.org](http://www.cfmc.org).

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“...my husband and I are in complete agreement — the people at MCSTART are among the most caring and capable group of professionals we have ever worked with...They brought our family out of the darkness.”

— Kristin Guertin, MCSTART Client

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### 2005 Neighborhood Grant Recipients

**Alisal Adventures** — Helps increase parent literacy skills and provides books for children ages 0 through 5. Its goal is to guide parents in reading to their children.

**Ballet Folklorico Aguila Real** — Teaches traditional Mexican dance to children. Funds help buy costumes and pay event and workshop fees for participating children ages 0 through 5.

**Caritas Felices** — Creates a lending library of educational toys, arts, crafts, music and activity equipment to enhance development for foster children ages 0 through 5.

**El Despertar de Padres Activos** — Provides educational activities for children while parents learn about topics related to child development.

**Friends of Parents Place** — Expands a multi-sensory, accessible, child-friendly and age-appropriate area for children in a native plant habitat and children's garden.

**King City Cooperative Preschool** — Partially funds new preschool equipment and playground improvements.

**Literatura Latina Bilingüe** — Purchases books and supplies for a weekly reading group of Latino mothers and grandmothers of children ages 0 through 5.

**Martin Luther King School** — Purchases books and materials for a week-long "kindergarten academy" to prepare students who have not attended preschool for kindergarten.

**Parents and Teachers for Early Literacy** — Provides literacy activities for preschool-age children in Soledad.

**Provedoras de Greenfield** — Purchases books and supplies for child care providers.

**Provedoras de Infantes del Condado del Sur** — Establishes a lending library of age-appropriate materials to provide children in child care with expanded early learning opportunities.

## Making a Difference in Monterey County

Children and families from all over Monterey County are served by F5MC-funded programs. Here is the geographic breakdown of those who are served:

	All Children Served	All Parents Served	Monterey County*
Salinas	54%	44%	49%
Peninsula	17%	29%	24.5%
South County	14%	21%	17.5%
North County	15%	6%	9%

\*Population Age 5 and Under by Census County Divisions

### Outcomes

Providers, parents and caregivers, who have participated intensively in F5MC programs and service follow-ups, note significant improvements in the lives of children ages 0 through 5 and their families. From July 2004 to June 2005, F5MC directly served more than 9,000 of Monterey County's youngest children, their families, child caregivers, early educators and service providers. The following are outcome examples after six months of intensive service:

#### Early Childhood Health

- *More children receive check-ups and vaccinations.* An increase of up to 20 percent in children's medical check-ups and necessary immunizations.
- *Children are healthier.* An increase of 28 percent in parents reporting their children's overall health is "excellent" or "very good."
- *More children with special needs identified.* An 8 percent increase in the identification of children with special needs.

#### Child Development and Family Support

- *More children on the way to reading.* An increase of 11 percent in parents reading to or showing picture books to their children three times a week or more.
- *Stronger family relationships.* An increase of 13 percent in parents telling stories to their children at least three times per week.

#### School Readiness — Program Infrastructure/ Systems Change

- An 86 percent increase in referrals received because of School Readiness Programs.
- Seventy-one percent of School Readiness Collaborative (SRC) agencies "strongly agreed" that SRC increased knowledge of services provided by other SRC partners.

- Sixty-four percent of SRC agencies initiated or expanded services provided at school sites.
- Fifty-seven percent of SRC agencies increased their outreach activities at school sites.
- Sixty-seven percent hired staff "ethnically and culturally reflective of the communities they serve" as a result of the grant.
- About half (52 percent) expanded language capacity as a result of the grant.

#### Reaching and Involving Traditionally Underserved Populations

- Families that received "intensive" services from F5MC programs exhibited notably low levels of education and income. More than two-thirds (70 percent) of mothers did not have a high school diploma or GED at the time they began services. Likewise, more than half (51 percent) of families had incomes below the federal poverty level (FPL).

Ethnicity	Children Served by First 5+	Parents/ Care-givers Served by First 5+	Total Births*	Medi-Cal-Funded Births*
Hispanic	2646 (85.4%)	1705 (83.2%)	5,334 (72.2%)	3,734 (89.7%)
Caucasian	252 (8.1%)	198 (9.7%)	1,461 (19.8%)	236 (5.7%)
Asian	20 (0.7%)	20 (1.0%)	359 (4.9%)	94 (2.3%)
African-American	77 (2.5%)	41 (2.0%)	117 (1.6%)	50 (1.2%)
Other	104 (3.4%)	85 (4.1%)	89 (1.2%)	38 (0.9%)
Unknown			27 (0.4%)	12 (0.3%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,099</b>	<b>2,049</b>	<b>7,387</b>	<b>4,164</b>

\* Ethnicity of mother. Data taken from Monterey County Comprehensive Perinatal Services Program 2004 Birth Data Report.

+ For whom ethnic data is available of the 3,410 children and 4,145 parents served. Percentages taken from Harder and Co. calculations for the 2004-05 Evaluation Report.

For a full evaluation report on F5MC outcomes, visit our website [www.first5monterey.org](http://www.first5monterey.org).

## Programs Funded as of February 2006, All or in Part, by F5MC

### Health Services

**Breathe California**  
**ProActive Families Against Asthma**  
**(PROFAA) Program**  
**831-373-7306**  
 Home visits and help for children with asthma.

**Door to Hope**  
**MCSTART**  
**831-758-0181**  
 Early intervention and treatment for children exposed to alcohol and/or drugs before birth.

**Pajaro Valley Unified School District**  
**Where the Kids Are**  
**831-786-2100**  
 Coordinates Kindergarten Round-ups in the Pajaro area to find children with medical needs.

**Child Development Services**  
**Monterey Peninsula Unified School District**  
**Highland Preschool**  
**831-899-4879**  
 Preschool for children and support for families.

**Children's Creative Learning Centers**  
**831-647-1880**  
 High-quality early childhood education, child care and parent support.

**Early Childhood Workforce Development**  
**Monterey County Department of Social and Employment Services CARES**  
**831-796-3530**  
 Promotes and encourages continuing education for child care providers through stipends.

**Family Services**  
**Food Bank for Monterey County**  
**Food for Children Program**  
**831-758-1523**  
 Distributes food to low-income families.

**Monterey County Department of Social and Employment Services**  
**CHERISH/Family to Family**  
**800-850-0006**  
 Agencies and community organizations providing neighborhood-based support services to families and children in the foster care system.

**Women's Crisis Center**  
**PEACCE (Prevention of Early Abuse through Collaborative Counseling and Education)**  
**831-757-1002**  
 Child-abuse prevention classes for parents and counseling for victims of family violence.

**South County Initiative**  
**Center for Community Advocacy**  
**831-753-2324**  
 Health promotion and outreach services for children and families.

**Centro Binacional Para el Desarrollo Indígena Oaxaqueño**  
**Healthy Children**  
**559-499-1178**  
 Oaxacan community outreach, translation, application and referral assistance.

**Childhood Matters, Inc.**  
**KLOK-99.5 FM**  
**Nuestros Niños**  
**415-522-0565**  
 Spanish language radio programs with information for children and families.

**Radio Bilingüe, Inc.**  
**KHDC 90.9 FM**  
**877-372-5437**  
 Triqui and Mixteco, Oaxacan language radio programs with information for children and families.

**Neighborhood Grants**  
**Community Foundation for Monterey County**  
**831-375-9712**  
 Grants of up to \$4,000 to fund trainings and programs focused on children ages 0-5 and their families.

### School Readiness

Through the Monterey County Office of Education, the School Readiness Program offers services to prepare young children for school, including medical, dental and behavioral health services; parent education; literacy classes; information and referral services; kindergarten preparation activities; and child care provider training.

**Alisal Community Health Start**  
**Family Resource Center**  
**831-775-4500**  
 Serving families living in Salinas in the 93905 ZIP code area.

**Cabrillo Family Resource Center**  
**831-899-4879**  
 Serving families living in Seaside in the 93955 ZIP code area.

**South County Regional Health Partners, Inc.**  
**Mobile Family Center**  
**831-386-7469**  
 Serving families living in King City, San Ardo and San Lucas.

**School Readiness Service Providers**  
 The following agencies assist families with young children in the above-mentioned neighborhoods.

**Family Services**  
**Monterey County Office of Education Head Start Program**  
**Dads in Action**  
**831-755-0845**  
 Parenting education for fathers.

**Monterey County Probation Department**  
**Child Advocate Program**  
**831-784-5788**  
 Home visitation and case management for families (by referral only).

**Salinas Adult School**  
**Parents as Teachers Program**  
**831-796-6970**  
 Home visitation and parent education for families.

**Salinas Public Library**  
**831-758-7345**  
 Family literacy development.

**Women's Crisis Center**  
**PEACCE**  
**831-757-1002**  
 Child-abuse prevention classes for parents and counseling for victims of family violence.

**Health Services**  
**Central Coast VNA**  
**831-758-8243**  
**Mom and Baby Program**  
 One in-home care visit to new mothers and their newborns (by referral).  
**Nursing Services**  
 On-site nursing at child care centers.

**Children's Oral Health Program**  
**831-422-6889**  
 Mobile dental services and oral health education.

**Monterey County Children's Behavioral Health**  
**831-784-2150**  
 Mental health counseling.

**Monterey County Health Department**  
**Public Health Nursing**  
**831-796-1278**  
 Home visitation and parent education.

**Early Childhood Workforce Development**  
**Monterey Peninsula College**  
**831-646-4168**  
 Training for child care teachers.

**Kindergarten/Preschool Teacher Network**  
**Monterey County Office of Education**  
**School Readiness Program**  
**831-784-4148**  
 Ensures successful transition from preschool to kindergarten.



“The School Readiness Collaborative has brought together so many different pieces of the service community, some of whom had never talked to each other or were in competition with each other.”

- F5MC Grantee

“I'm very impressed. For a group of nonprofit agencies competing for grant dollars, I have seen amazing consensus on what is best for kids.... It's amazing to see program leaders say, 'It's going to cost me money but it's best for the community.'”

- F5MC Grantee

## New Activities This Year

### Making a Difference in South County

Children and families in the South County region of Monterey County have historically been underserved and have lacked culturally appropriate services. The 2004 Children and Families Data Profile identified this region as having the highest teen pregnancy rates, and the lowest income and education rates in the county.

Based on these facts, **First 5 Monterey County (F5MC)** launched a collaborative funding process that involves local families and community groups to bring needed services to the area.

During fiscal year 2004-2005, **F5MC** held numerous community dialogues and stakeholder meetings to determine what local residents wanted in the way of services and programs. Attendees said improving access to existing health care and child care services were their highest priorities. Participants noted major gaps in communication and outreach between service providers and community members.

With \$250,000 set aside for South County programs, **F5MC** worked to develop joint funding efforts with other local agencies to help children 0 through 5 years of age and their families with their identified needs. United Way of Monterey County joined our efforts and will provide an additional \$50,500 toward the "Bridging the Gap" initiative to increase access to existing health and child development services through culturally appropriate outreach by local community groups and service providers. For a list of the organizations funded, see page 11.

### Kindergarten Surveys

To determine the level of readiness of children for kindergarten in high-need areas, **F5MC** funded its third Kindergarten Readiness Assessment in fall 2004. Unlike previous county-wide surveys, the fall 2004 assessment specifically focused on school readiness target areas to serve as a baseline from which to measure progress. Conducted by Harder + Company,



a research and evaluation firm, the survey measured teachers' views about school readiness skills (language and communication, motor, social and emotional) among children, as well as factors that may influence readiness (age, special needs and family background).

A parent survey also was conducted at 14 schools by Harder + Company. Teachers provided data on 866 kindergartners, and 876 parents provided valuable information about preparing local children for entering kindergarten. Results from the survey will be used to strengthen information and communication among preschool and kindergarten teachers, administrators and parents.

### VISIT OUR WEBSITE

Visit the **F5MC** website at [www.first5monterey.org](http://www.first5monterey.org) for more information about:

- Early Learning Opportunities planning process and community meetings;
- Neighborhood Grant Program;
- Event sponsorships;
- **F5MC** grantees;
- Public Commission meetings;
- And more.

## First 5 Monterey County — Making the First 5 Years Count!

As a society we no longer think of children as "little adults," and understand they develop in unique ways. Early experiences shape a child's learning, self-esteem and health, which in turn affect their entire lives. Fortunately, through the money made available by Proposition 10, young children from prenatal through five years of age are given new learning opportunities and health services not available in the past.

We are not doing this alone. As this Annual Report shows, many local community agencies are involved. Exciting partnerships and group efforts are providing programs and services for families most in need. We are committed to a participatory team process that involves grantees, other Monterey County agencies, families receiving services and professional providers. A great example of this team process is the

"Bridging the Gap" initiative currently taking place in South County.

As we look at the successes of our funded programs, and review local population and economic data, we are better prepared to make future funding decisions. A detailed review of local secondary data and child development and early education research, including input from local stakeholders, has led **F5MC** to conclude that the greatest way to achieve successful outcomes in our four priority areas will be by focusing on increasing quality, early learning opportunities for children ages 0 through 5 and their families.

**F5MC's** objectives for early learning will be developed through a

strategic planning process for the Early Learning Opportunities initiative taking place from January through December 2006. A participatory process will involve community members, service providers, recipient families and policy-makers in identifying strengths and building bridges for collaboration and partnerships among existing community assets.

We have an amazing opportunity to help set children on a positive course for their entire lives. If you would like to participate in one of our community meetings to help us set that course, contact our office or check the website for upcoming meetings and events.



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