



Kids' agency celebrates 15 years

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From Lori Aldrete

for First 5 Yolo

The camaraderie and sense of accomplishment were apparent as commissioners, agency representatives, nonprofit executives, and community advocates for children came together for a small celebration Friday morning, November 15th in Woodland to mark the 15th anniversary of First 5 Yolo.



*The three who have chaired First 5 Yolo since its inception: Former State Assembly Member, former Yolo County Supervisor and the second First 5 Yolo Chair Helen Thomson; State Senator and original First 5 Yolo Chair Lois Wolk; and Yolo County Supervisor and current First 5 Yolo Chair Don Saylor
(photo by Lori Aldrete for First 5 Yolo)*

“It was such a privilege to serve as the original chair of First 5 Yolo,” said Senator Wolk. She served as chair of the Children and Families Commission, from 1999 until 2002. “All the good that First 5 Yolo has accomplished for the health, wellbeing and development of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers in Yolo County over the past 15 years is the result of the collaborative efforts of dedicated commissioners, a strong staff, a partnership with the county and local nonprofits, and the voters of California, who approved Proposition 10 in 1998.”

Research shows that investment in a child's development in the first five years has a meaningful impact throughout life. The First 5 money from the Proposition 10 tobacco tax builds on this research, and has routed nearly \$2 million a year, for a 15 year total of \$26.5 million, into Yolo County; investing in the futures of the county's youngest children.

Through partnerships and collaborations with other local organizations, First 5 Yolo investments have enabled tens of thousands of families and children to receive needed medical and dental care, fresh food, preschool opportunities, library reading programs, parenting classes, home visits and other valuable services.

Some of the outcomes and successes celebrated Friday at First 5 Yolo include more than 3,000 West Sacramento children attended preschool at no cost; a 65 percent increase in early learning activities at the Yolo County Library; more than double the number of licensed foster parents in Yolo County – now at 80; and thousands of subsidized dental visits for young children and pregnant women.

For more information about these programs, go to www.first5yolo.org.

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