

FIRST 5 CENTER FOR CHILDREN'S POLICY

Senior Policy Research Associate Position Announcement

Position Overview:

The First 5 Center for Children's Policy (First 5 Center) is California's leading research and policy think tank dedicated to improving early childhood systems. Grounded in the experiences of California's 58 First 5 county commissions, the First 5 Center believes that all of California's youngest children deserve to be healthy, safe, and ready to thrive in school and life. The First 5 Center is seeking a Senior Policy Research Associate to contribute to the development of our policy research portfolio.

Reporting to the Managing Director, the Senior Policy Research Associate will lead major bodies of work related to health and community-based systems and services intended to improve the health and well-being of infants and toddlers. The Senior Policy Research Associate is a smart, self-motivated professional with a passion for social justice and a track record of using research and data to understand complex issues. This is a great position for a professional looking to deepen their policy acumen and contribute to a dynamic, committed, and passionate team.

Successful Candidates:

- Are mission-driven with a demonstrated passion for improving outcomes for California families experiencing adversity and commitment to equity;
- Are policy thinkers, with an interest in systems and root causes;
- Have strong interpersonal skills and the ability to build relationships with a wide range of colleagues and partners;
- Have a knack for communicating complex data and research findings in an understandable and compelling manner to a variety of audiences, both in writing and verbally;
- Are talented time managers, able to adjust to changing priorities, manage multiple projects simultaneously and meet quick deadlines;
- Are self-starters and problem solvers, guided by curiosity, pragmatism and critical thinking;
- Are comfortable working with complex information and are nimble adapters to new technology;
- Want to be a part of a team that is collaborative, mission-oriented, hard-working, evolving and caring;
- Have a sense of humor and curiosity.

Key Responsibilities:

- Lead research and policy analysis projects focused on improving outcomes for infants and toddlers and strengthening California's systems of care for families.
- Conduct a range of research activities including: literature reviews, design and execution of surveys, interviews and focus groups, and quantitative analysis based on publicly available databases.
- Monitor and analyze policy changes, opportunities, and updates relevant to First 5 and California children and families from key state departments both independently and in collaboration with other members of the team.
- Develop and shape strategic and research-informed policy recommendations; engage with team members and First 5s to inform policy recommendations and direction.
- Produce written materials (reports, briefs, memos and blogs) on issues impacting young children and families with low-income in California.
- Create well-crafted data visualizations, charts, tables, spreadsheets, and other communication tools for internal and external use.
- Present research findings to various audiences including the First 5 network of counties, partner organizations, media outlets, funders, state officials, and other stakeholders.
- Support partnerships and coalitions with state and county departments, peer association organizations, and other early childhood advocacy organizations.
- Contribute to the development of new funding proposals aligned with the Center's goals and vision. Document progress and contribute to regular reporting.
- Support the organization's commitment to equity and inclusion; demonstrate an openness to a diversity of perspectives.
- Act with integrity, professionalism, and exercise excellent judgment.
- Oversee the work of interns, as necessary.

Qualifications

- Experience working in California state policy and knowledge of state and county systems such as health, social services and/or public health. Knowledge of early childhood programs preferred.
- Experience developing research-based and/or practice-informed policy proposals.
- Master's degree or other advanced degree from an accredited college or university in a social science discipline such as public policy, public health, education or other related field. A combination of education and experience may be substituted.
- Experience working directly with children and families is a plus.

Location and Travel

- Position location: Flexible within California
- Travel: Monthly meetings in Sacramento and occasional travel within California

Compensation

Salary is commensurate with experience starting at \$100,000 per year. Employee benefits include remote work structure with support to set up a home office; 100% employer paid coverage of medical, dental and vision for employee plus family; retirement with generous employer match; optional 457 plan; 13 paid holidays plus one week winter break; vacation and sick time accrual; flex spending account for medical and dependent care costs; Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and group life insurance.

Application Process

Interested? Then apply! We encourage candidates with diverse backgrounds and perspectives to consider joining our team. Please submit a single PDF document with a cover letter describing your interest and experience, along with an up-to-date resume to applications@first5association.org. The email subject line should read: Application for Senior Policy Research Associate. Applications will be considered on a rolling basis until the position has been filed.

In service of building a more equitable hiring process, we ask applicants to consider removing any identifiers from their cover letter and resume related to race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, or other identity factors. Research indicates this is one practice that can reduce the impact of unconscious bias in the preliminary selection process. We look forward to learning about and from candidates' full lived experience in later stages of the interview process.

It is the policy of First 5 Association to afford equal opportunity in all aspects of employment to all persons without discrimination on the basis of race, religion, sex, national origin, ethnicity, age, physical or mental disabilities, color, marital status, sexual orientation or medical condition, or any other basis protected by law. This policy shall apply to all employees and applicants for employment, and extends to all phases of employment, including hiring, training, promotion, discharge or layoff, rehiring, compensation and benefits.