

# 2024 POLICY PRIORITIES

First 5 Association of California (F5AC) advocates for California’s youngest children and their families to ensure that they have the supports to thrive in school and life. Grounded in a whole child / whole family framework with an intentional focus on Prenatal-to-3, First 5 is a conduit for change during this critical stage of development - building comprehensive and integrated early childhood systems of care that advance equity, prevention strategies, and systems coordination.

F5AC works to advance state and federal policies that support the First 5 network and infrastructure and cultivate opportunity for all of California’s young children and families. We do this while centering the fact that low-income communities, communities of color, and historically marginalized Californians face disproportionate impacts due to systemic racism, wealth inequality, and natural disasters.

## Policy Priorities



### RESILIENT FAMILIES

- Ensure California families have timely access to culturally and linguistically appropriate services that are relevant, effective, and build upon state and local systems.
- Increase family economic supports, empowering families to raise their children in stable, thriving homes.



### SUSTAINABILITY AND SCALE

- Secure funding toward sustainability to both offset the impact of the Proposition 31 flavored tobacco ban and declining tobacco tax revenue.
- Ensure that local First 5 commissions are recognized and engaged by the state as public entities, intermediaries, fiscal agents and thought partners for programs, policies, and state initiatives that seek to improve child and family outcomes.
- Preserve previous state policy achievements and investments to improve child and family outcomes.
- Leverage other health, family, and child development investments with the goal of establishing a sustainable early childhood system.



### COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT

- Seek to advance prevention, care coordination, screenings, and multi-generational supports through Medi-Cal and innovative systems transformation.
- Strengthen early identification and referral systems to provide appropriate intervention services for young children.
- Seek to repair harm done to communities of color and eliminate racial inequities in maternal and infant health outcomes by removing systemic racist practices, barriers to care for people of color, and increasing culturally relevant services for birthing people.
- Increase access to and investment in community-based Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH) providers and programs to effectively prevent and respond to trauma, identify concerns early, and promote resilience.



### QUALITY EARLY LEARNING

- Stabilize, strengthen, and scale early care and learning opportunities, with a focus on infant and toddler care.
- Promote equitable access and affordability across the mixed early care and learning delivery system by strengthening the workforce, improving quality supports, and promoting nurturing relationships between providers, caregivers, and children.