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First 5 Association Highlights Research Showing Universal Child Care Could Add \$23 Billion to California's Economy

SACRAMENTO—The First 5 Association of California, representing First 5 commissions across the state that serve more than 1 million children and families each year, is highlighting new research from California's leading universities demonstrating the urgent need, benefits, and feasibility of greater public investment in child care.

A new [Stanford research paper](#) estimates that universal child care would enable over 100,000 mothers to enter the workforce, adding \$23 billion to California's GDP—more than covering the cost of universal child care. A [companion study](#) from UC Irvine and UC Berkeley found that 600,000 children under age 3 lack access to licensed care, costing the state up to \$53 billion in annual economic losses.

The following can be attributed to Avo Makdessian, Executive Director of First 5 Association of California:

"California's child care crisis is choking off opportunities for families and undermining our economic potential. Beyond the well-documented benefits to young children, this new research confirms that investing in child care delivers significant gains for both California families and our economy. Like San Francisco Mayor Lurie's [recent child care proposal](#), public policies are slowly catching up to academic research and families' lived experiences. California's young children deserve more bold action from state and local leaders. We intend to work with both Governor Newsom and the next governor to make child care and early childhood systems a greater investment priority."

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About First 5 Association of California

First 5 Association of California represents the state's 58 county First 5 Commissions. Together, First 5 supports over one million children and families each year, advancing policies and investments that ensure young children are healthy, safe, and ready to learn. The Association works to advance state and federal public policies and funding that support California's young children and families. Our policy work is informed by county First 5

Commissions and local communities and is grounded in a whole child / whole family lens. 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 environmental hazards.

Learn more at www.first5association.org.