

# Annual Agency Progress Report



2024-2025



## Letter from Supervisor Chuck Washington, Commission Chair



When I look across Riverside County, I see promise and responsibility. As a grandfather, I know every child's safety is personal. As a former pilot and public servant, I know how far vision can carry us — if we chart the course together.

This 25th anniversary of First 5 Riverside County is more than a milestone — it's proof of what we can build when we combine heart, science, and partnership. Proposition 10 has fueled over half a billion dollars in investments. But the real strength has come from weaving those dollars with County ARPA and CARES investments, state funding streams, and local commitments. Together, they've built trusted systems: Family Resource Centers, home visiting, early learning, and pediatric supports.

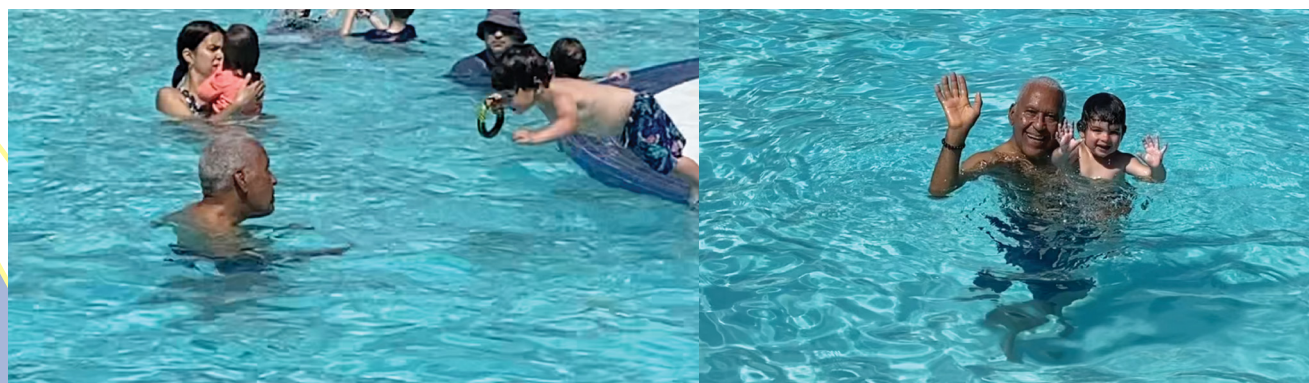
Investments in infant swim rescue are among the ones I hold dear. I believe no family should ever lose a child to water when lifesaving skills can be taught early. Expanding training and contracting more providers — that was one of our goals. When infants can float, when toddlers can survive near water, families gain confidence. That's prevention in action.

On child care and workforce — I know this personally: when families can't find infant and toddler care, it's not just a family crisis — it's an economic one. Riverside County is still a child care desert, and the lack of spaces keeps parents out of the workforce and holds our economy back. Expanding infant-toddler spaces and supporting providers in underserved areas is not a side project. It is essential to family stability and to the future of our county.

Our strength is not in what one agency does. It's in how we move in step. The Commissioners, County departments, providers, and families — each has a role. We are not spectators but stewards of a unified vision. My hope is that this report shows not only what we've done, but what we believe is possible when we lean into partnership.

In the work ahead, we will deepen those partnerships, sharpen what works, remain flexible when context changes, and always put children first. Those first years matter more than any others — and with alignment, shared purpose, and commitment, Riverside County will continue to move forward.

Thank you for walking this path with us. The journey is long, but the destination is worth it.



## Letter from Tammi Graham, Executive Director



This year marked a milestone: First 5 Riverside County's 25th anniversary. For 25 years, powered by Proposition 10, we have invested more than half a billion dollars to support over a million children and families. But this anniversary is about more than numbers. It marks a turning point — the foundation we've built together for a stronger, lasting early childhood system.

In FY 2024-25, Commission investments in agencies totaled more than \$15 million — expanding provider capacity, improving outcomes for children and families, and advancing the systems that connect them. We anchored the core pieces of that system: Family Resource Centers connected through RivCoONE so families experience “no wrong door” support; Quality Early Learning tied to a hybrid payment model that expands choice, incentivizes quality, and stabilizes providers; and health and development supports embedded into pediatrics, home visiting, and prevention dashboards that let us respond in real time. These are not isolated projects — they are building blocks of infrastructure.

And yet, equity gaps remain. Black children in Riverside County still face higher rates of preterm birth, and only about 60% of children receive the recommended six or more well-child visits by 15 months. By 30 months, fewer than 70% receive even two well-child visits, with stark disparities for Black/African American families and geographic gaps in places like Corona, Temecula, and Hemet. Infant and toddler care is in crisis: Riverside County is serving only about 9% of eligible infants and toddlers, leaving an estimated 60,000-seat gap. That shortfall isn't just a family hardship — it translates into lost jobs, lost earnings, and lost tax revenue, weakening our entire local economy. Families in the far east and desert regions face the steepest wait times and have the fewest options.

These realities remind us that anchoring the system is not enough — we must advance it. The lesson of 25 years is clear: partnership drives equity, and equity is the measure of our system's strength. What we anchored, we now aim to advance. Looking ahead to the 2027-2030 Strategic Plan, our charge is to go deeper: closing persistent gaps, scaling what works, and preparing for the broader shift toward treating early childhood as critical infrastructure for Riverside County's future.

The work ahead is not a reset — it is a step forward. We've built the capacity; now we must put it fully to work.

**We invite you** to join us in this next chapter.  
**PREVENTION REQUIRES PARTNERSHIP** —  
and the future of Riverside County begins in the  
earliest moments of a child's life.

## Riverside County Children and Families Commission

### Mandate & Legal Authority (Prop 10)

First 5 Riverside County was established by the California Children and Families Act of 1998 (Proposition 10) to invest tobacco-tax revenues in children prenatal to age five. Prop 10 requires every county to seat an independent Children & Families Commission to set policy and fund early childhood systems. Riverside County Ordinance 784.11 carries out that mandate locally, placing First 5 within county government and empowering an independent, public commission to adopt the Strategic Plan and budget, approve contracts and grants, and ensure funds are used lawfully and for impact—consistent with Commission Bylaws, the Brown Act, and county conflict-of-interest rules.

### What the Commission Does

The Children & Families Commission is the public board that stewards First 5 Riverside County on behalf of families with young children. Commissioners set direction, adopt the Strategic Plan and annual budget, approve major investments, and hold the work accountable for results. Seats are defined in ordinance and state law so health, education, and early-childhood expertise are at the table—because strong governance drives strong outcomes. Commissioners are also community champions: they ask hard questions, listen to families and providers, and keep the focus on equity, access, and impact.

### Current Commission

- Supervisor Chuck Washington — Chair; Board of Supervisors, Third District (District III appointee)
- Jose Campos — Vice Chair; Public Member (District II appointee)
- Edwin Gomez, EdD — Riverside County Superintendent of Schools (RCOE)
- Zachary Ginder, PsyD, MSW — Public Member (District I appointee)
- Kimberly Saruwatari, MPH — Director, RUHS—Public Health
- Elizabeth Romero — Public Member (District IV appointee)
- Charity Douglas — Director, Department of Public Social Services
- Takashi Wada, MD, MPH — Public Member (District III appointee)
- Cheryl-Marie Hansberger, Ed.D. — Public Member (District V appointee)
- Board of Supervisors Alternate: Supervisor Jose Medina (District I)

Meetings are noticed and conducted under the Brown Act. Agendas, minutes, and materials are available on the First 5 Riverside County website.

## First 5 Riverside County Advisory Committee

### What the Advisory Committee Does

Established under Commission Bylaws, the Advisory Committee brings parent, provider, health, education, and community voices into Commission decision-making. Members review data, surface disparities, and offer recommendations on strategy, equity, and access to the Commission. Grounded in brain science—that most brain architecture is built in the first five years and is shaped by safe, stable, and nurturing relationships—the committee keeps timing and context front-and-center so investments reach families when they matter most. Meetings are noticed and open to the public under the Brown Act.

### Current Advisory Committee

- Kari Middleton-Hendrix — Chair (District IV appointee)
- Malinda Margiotta — Vice Chair (District III appointee)
- Jiles Smith — Member (District I appointee)
- Antonia Eli Mast — Member (District II appointee)
- Agam Patel — Member (District IV appointee)
- Saovaros Diehl-Hope — Member (District V appointee)
- Angel Anton — Member (District III appointee)
- Helena Lopez — Member (District V appointee)

Meeting agendas posted in advance per the Brown Act.



## At a Glance: FY24–25 Impact

Countywide reach, demographic context, and program outcomes from First 5 Riverside County's prevention investments.

|                                     |                                                                                                |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Population Overview</b>          | ~230,000 children ages 0–5 in Riverside County (2028 projection)                               |
| <b>Maternal &amp; Infant Health</b> | 9% of births are preterm (2018–2022)                                                           |
| <b>Prenatal Care Inequities</b>     | 4% receive no prenatal care; Black and Native women 2–3 times higher risk                      |
| <b>Child Safety</b>                 | Drowning remains the top unintentional cause of death for ages 0–5; >150 911 calls (2022–2024) |
| <b>Housing &amp; Stability</b>      | 5–6% of TK/K students unhoused (2023–24); 90% in doubled-up housing                            |

### Demographic Reality: Why Early Investment Matters

- Children under 10 have declined by ~1 million statewide since 2000.
- Seniors will outnumber children within five years
- 90% of California's children are now homegrown
- In Riverside, 22% of young children live in poverty and 1 in 7 lack health coverage
- Riverside County's child population growth has slowed dramatically — now projected to reach 3 million residents by 2074 (a 50-year delay)
- Every child born today carries twice the economic and civic weight of a generation ago



### Reach

- 60,000+ people served: 49,092 children and 11,298 caregivers (~ 1 in 12 young children countywide)
- 67 funded providers; 16,000+ children enrolled in Quality Start sites

### Program Highlights

- HealthySteps & screenings: 8,300+ children; 4,259 Tier-3 services (+33% vs. target)
- Home visiting: 560 families served (+13% vs. target); CalWORKs enrollment trending up after braided-funding + referral redesign
- Drowning prevention: 2,762 swim lessons across 10 providers (101% of target)
- Guaranteed Basic Income pilot (prenatal): 409 pregnant participants
- Family voice: 75% feel supported for developmental needs; 24% still face waitlist/cost barriers
- 464 sites in Quality Start Riverside County
  - 873 trainings delivered; 4,179 quality goals achieved (since inception)
- Top provider challenges: low wages (49%), funding limits (36%), retention (37%)

### Systems Alignment (What Changed)

- New data dashboards surface racial & geographic disparities and trigger faster action (near-drowning, unsafe sleep, referral flows)
- Process improvement: 12 CQI projects—less red tape, faster access
- Braided funding: Prop 10 + ARPA + CalWORKs + IEHP + First 5 CA

### Budget, at a Glance

- Total revenue: \$30.8M | Expenditures: \$32.8M
- Every \$1 Prop 10 → ~\$2.36 in services (leveraged)
- Ending fund balance: \$32.9M (includes \$0.4M ARPA-restricted)
- Cash & investments: \$34.6M (ensures timely payments/project delivery)

### What families say they need

- Care most used: family/friend (67%)
- Top stressors: cost of living (65%), child care access (36%), housing (28%)

## 2025 Champion for Children Profile

Angela Muñoz – Director of Outreach & Education, JFK Memorial Foundation  
A Long Legacy of Parent Partnership



For more than 30 years, Angela Muñoz has been a steady, powerful advocate for Riverside County's children and families. As Director of Outreach and Education at the John F. Kennedy Memorial Foundation — a First 5-funded partner — she has led prevention and family-strengthening programs that have touched thousands of lives. Her leadership has helped prevent CPS involvement, reduce repeat cases, and support successful reunifications, changing not only family stories but community trajectories.

What sets Angela apart is her spirit of partnership and innovation. She has said “yes” to every pilot and project First 5 has launched — from new referral models to Family Resource Center system design — always with the

conviction that families deserve support before they reach a crisis. Colleagues describe her as someone who makes systems go farther: creative, energetic, and relentless in her focus on what works for families.

Her reach extends well beyond JFK. She provides free parenting classes across the Coachella Valley, including at the Juvenile Detention Center in Indio; serves on the Board of the HOPE Collaborative; and partners with schools, hospitals, behavioral health providers, and community organizations from Barbara Sinatra Children's Center to Jewish Family Services. Trained in multiple evidence-based early childhood program models — Parents as Teachers, Healthy Families America, SafeCare, and more — Ange-

**Angela is the 6th recipient of the Champion for Children Award, selected from a pool of 37 nominees since the award's creation in 2019**

la embodies both professional expertise and cultural humility, meeting families without judgment and with trust.

Angela Muñoz is more than a provider. She is a community voice, a trusted guide, and a true Champion for Children — proving that when systems align with leaders like her, families across Riverside County are stronger.

Angela was featured in a video focusing on the value of home



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visiting, which can be viewed on the First 5 Riverside County website on the home visiting page.

## 2025 Champion for Children Nominees

7 Extraordinary Nominees - Advancing Riverside County's Vision for Families

### Bridgette Hernandez

*Assistant Director, DPSS Children's Services*

Bridgette sees the hardest outcomes every day. She champions child abuse prevention strategies that are family-centered, culturally responsive, and equity-driven. Her leadership shapes culture: saying yes to collaboration, yes to innovation, and yes to building bridges so children grow up safe and families remain whole.

### John Sarrouf

*Pediatrician, DAP Health*

John integrates early childhood support into broader health equity efforts, ensuring vulnerable families in the desert region are not left behind. He volunteers beyond his normal working hours to ensure all children have access to the care they need.

### Marina Lopez-Rabindranath

*Director of Community Partners and Engagement, Community Health Systems, Inc.*

Marina creates solutions to serve families in need, and spearheads community events throughout the year including backpack giveaways and holiday toy drives. She is a voice for families serving with the Jurupa Valley Family Resource Network and Inland Disability Coalition.

### Robert Williams

*Bureau Chief of Business Operations, RivCo Parks*

Robert has woven family wellness into the county's parks system, creating safe, accessible spaces that double as hubs for connection and child development. He started the county's Outdoor Equity Initiative, helping children and families from underserved communities engage in physical activity, build resilience, and develop stronger emotional connections through outdoor experiences.

### Janet McDonald

*Child Development Program Administrator, Family Services Association*

Janet oversees multiple child development centers and is a change maker in early education as she has led the way in the development of innovative teacher training programs. FSA child care centers earned NAEYC accreditation under her leadership.

### Shelley Amatulli

*Lead Toddler Teacher, Family Services Association*

Shelley has dedicated her career to lifting up families through direct service and leadership. Her commitment to prevention and whole-child support ensures families receive consistent, compassionate care.

### Sophia Williams

*Regional Manager, DPSS Children's Services*

Sophia is a rising leader in child welfare, recognized for championing prevention pathways that keep families together safely. Her work highlights the importance of early intervention before challenges escalate. She has also increased equitable outcomes for children through the Healthy Crownz Initiative, which addresses proper hair care for children of different ethnic backgrounds.

## Goal 1 - Quality Early Learning (QEL)

### Expanding Access to Quality Care, When and Where Families Need It

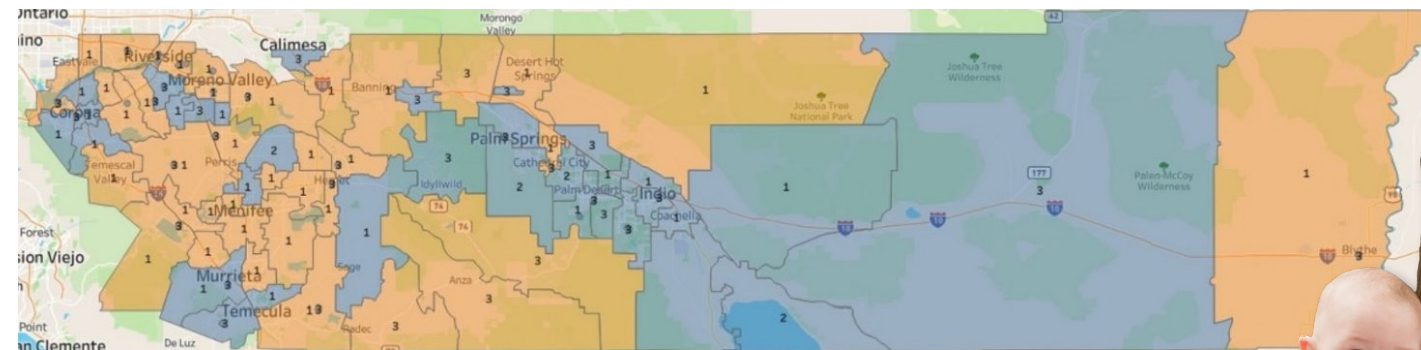
Riverside County faces one of the state's deepest shortages of affordable, high-quality early learning, with an estimated 10,269 infant-toddler seats missing countywide. Only 4% of eligible infants and toddlers are served, leaving families — particularly in rural, low-income, and predominantly Latino east-county communities — with the fewest options. The result is more than a child care gap; it is an equity gap that undermines family stability, workforce participation, and school readiness.

**\$5.6M invested in QEL in FY24-25, stabilizing the workforce and increasing capacity across Riverside County**

To meet this challenge, First 5 Riverside County and the Riverside County Office of Education (RCOE) have built a shared governance system that transforms fragmented efforts into one coordinated structure. Together we co-lead Quality Start Riverside County (QSRC), align standards, stabilize the workforce, and expand family choice. At the center is the Riverside Hybrid Al-

ternative Payment Program (RHAP), a nationally recognized model that delivers access through presumptive eligibility, continuity of care for families in transition, and flat-rate quality incentives that stabilize providers. Since 2023, RHAP has issued 1,400+ scholarships, helping to keep rural providers open and add infant-toddler spaces where shortages are most severe.

This progress rests on countywide partnerships: with RCOE to align quality standards and workforce supports; with County of Riverside Facilities Management and Riverside County Office of Economic Development to deliver large-scale expansion projects, such as Lakeland Village and French Valley, for infant/toddler spaces. Each partnership extends Prop 10's reach, turning scattered projects into infrastructure that lasts.



Child care deserts are where families have the fewest choices. **Orange areas** meet the 'child care desert' definition: many more young children than licensed seats.

These are priority zones for RHAP scholarships, facilities expansion, and workforce stabilization.

### Partnership in Action

Since 2015, with leadership from the Riverside County Office of Education and First 5 Riverside County, the county has implemented Quality Start Riverside County (QSRC)—a comprehensive Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) that is a part of California's QRIS, Quality Counts CA (QCC). QSRC sets standards for quality, supports providers in continuous improvement, and empowers families with information to make child care choices that lay a strong foundation for lifelong success.

**464 QSRC sites serving 16,000+ children 0-5 in FY 24.25**

QSRC providers credit their participation in the program to successfully strengthening teaching practices and classroom quality, growing professionally and gaining confidence, and seeing positive outcomes in children's learning and well-being.

### Infrastructure Expansion Across Riverside County

Blended investments of ARPA, Prop 10, and local impact fees are expanding and renovating child care facilities in every Supervisorial District, with a strong emphasis on infant/toddler spaces.

| District | Project                                 | Funding Blend                                                       | Capacity Impact           | Target Completion       |
|----------|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1        | Family Services Association (Riverside) | \$780K Prop 10                                                      | +48 Infant/Toddler spaces | Summer 2025 (completed) |
| 1        | Temple Beth El (Riverside)              | \$172K Prop 10                                                      | +42 Infant/Toddler spaces | Summer 2025 (completed) |
| 1/2      | Lakeland Village (Lake Elsinore)        | \$5.1M ARPA D1/D2/ECE + \$3.5M Prop 10 + \$607K DIF                 | +48 Infant/Toddler spaces | Spring 2026             |
| 3        | ViP Tots (Hemet)                        | \$382K Prop 10                                                      | +24 Infant/Toddler spaces | Fall 2024 (completed)   |
| 3        | French Valley                           | \$12M D3 ARPA + \$2M Prop 10 + \$2M Library + \$2M ARPA contingency | +48 Infant/Toddler spaces | Early 2026              |
| 4        | Bermuda Dunes                           | \$585K Prop 10                                                      | +50 Infant/Toddler spaces | Summer 2025 (completed) |
| 4        | Desert Rose (Ripley)                    | \$1M ARPA                                                           | +48 Infant/Toddler spaces | Summer 2026             |
| 4        | Escuela de la Raza (Blythe)             | \$2.18M Prop 10                                                     | +32 Infant/Toddler spaces | Spring 2025 (completed) |
| 5        | Jan Peterson CDC (Moreno Valley)        | \$1M ARPA + \$1.4M Prop 10                                          | +36 Infant/Toddler spaces | Summer 2026             |

QEL priority projects show a layered, countywide strategy—braiding ARPA, Prop 10, and local funds—and grounded in **deep partnership with RCOE** through shared governance of Quality Start Riverside County. This is the **RIVERSIDE PARTNERSHIP MODEL** in action: expanding infrastructure, stabilizing the workforce, and delivering one seamless system of quality early learning for families.

## Partner Provider Highlights

### Angel Anton, ABC Child Care Village Executive Director Leading with Stability, Expanding with Vision



At ABC Child Care Centers, leadership runs deep. For years, Malinda Margiotta and the ABC family have been a fixture in Riverside County's early learning landscape. Today, Angel Anton, Malinda's daughter, is carrying that legacy forward while shaping her own voice as a system leader.

As owner and director, Angel has witnessed firsthand the volatility of child care funding: a fragmented child care reimbursement system, eligibility rules impacting low-income families, and long waitlists for infant-toddler care as spaces are scarce. "Providers want to focus on children, not survival," Angel often notes.

That's why the Riverside Hybrid Alternative Payment Program (RHAP) has been transformational. By blending flexible Proposition 10 funds with RCOE's administration of the state Alternative Payment system, RHAP stabilizes cash flow, guarantees day-one access for families, and provides flat-rate incentives that reward quality care. During the pandemic, RHAP support enabled ABC Child Care Centers to keep doors open for essential workers' children; today it ensures classrooms remain staffed, safe, and high-quality as demand for infant-toddler care grows.

But Angel's impact goes beyond her center. As a member of the First 5 Riverside County Advisory Committee, she is a partner and system voice — helping champion early childhood education, advocate for sustainability, and align equity-focused strategies across providers. Her leadership is especially critical now, as state systems shift and local families face an unprecedented 10,269-space gap in infant-toddler care.

Angel is a compassionate bridge-builder who deeply understands and values the experiences of early educators. She brings their lived realities into system design conversations with genuine care, ensuring that the solutions are meaningful and effective for both families and providers.

### Carmela Garnica, Escuela de la Raza Unida Director Expanding Infant-Toddler Care Where It's Needed Most



In Blythe, the need for infant-toddler care has long outstripped supply. Families faced waitlists before classrooms even opened, a reality felt most by low-income, Latino families in the eastern county, where access is most scarce.

Thanks to \$2.18 million in Proposition 10 infrastructure investment, Escuela de la Raza Unida — under the leadership of Program Director Carmela Garnica — completed a new modular building in spring 2025, adding 32 infant-toddler spaces to the Palo Verde Valley. These spaces were filled immediately, underscoring the urgency and impact of expanding care in underserved regions.

Carmela is more than a program director — she is a community leader. As First 5 Riverside County's very first Champion for Children Awardee in 2020, she

continues to set the standard for advocacy, partnership, and vision in early childhood. Her leadership ensures Blythe's families are not left behind in Riverside's broader push for equity.

**\$2.18M invested in Blythe, adding 32 infant-toddler seats; waitlist filled before opening**

This project represents more than bricks and mortar: it is a promise kept. By stabilizing care in one of the county's most underserved regions, Carmela and Escuela de la Raza Unida are proving that targeted investments can close gaps, strengthen families, and expand opportunities where they are needed most.

## Parent Profile

### Cynthia Rios Empowered by Care, Confident to Provide

For Cynthia Rios, her children's safety comes first. Through the Riverside Hybrid Alternative Payment Program (RHAP), she secured care for her 2-year-old Jade and 1-year-old Oliver in a nurturing, high-quality program close to home.

RHAP helps the whole family—children receive strong, stable care, and parents have the guidance they need to pick a trusted, licensed provider. That way parents like Cynthia can feel confident choosing a licensed early learning program that's right for their child.

Cynthia enrolled in the RHAP program in October 2024 as a direct referral through her child care provider. This allowed her to find care for her children where she wanted to, giving her agency over the most important priority in her life. All too often, parents face the double-headed challenges of affordability and availability, making them feel like they do not have a full say over where their children spend their days when they have to go to work. RHAP works to empower parents.

Cynthia shares: "I didn't know there were scholarships like this that could help. I feel really taken care of because my kids are taken care of, so that allows me to focus on my job and be a provider for my family. I'm thankful for this allowing me to actually go back to work and giving an opportunity for my kids to actually focus and have the attention they deserve and they need."

Cynthia was featured in a video testimonial about the RHAP program, which is available on the First 5 Riverside County website. First 5 is grateful to her for sharing her story.



"By **blending multiple funding streams**, RHAP offers a responsive and flexible model that **ADAPTS TO THE EVOLVING NEEDS** of families in Riverside County."

-Dr. Edwin Gomez, Riverside County Superintendent of Schools and  
First 5 Riverside County Commissioner

## Goal 2 - Comprehensive Health & Development (CHD)

### Early Health Investments Change the Trajectory

Children prenatal through age 5 in Riverside County need access to the full spectrum of health and behavioral health services to thrive. Yet disparities remain sharp: only 77% of mothers receive timely prenatal care (vs. 83% statewide); Black women and babies face the highest preterm birth rates (7.5% vs. 6.9% statewide); and pediatric access is six times worse than the state average (1 pediatrician for every 2,800 children under 5). Developmental screenings are increasing, but follow-up lags in high-need ZIP codes, disproportionately affecting families of color and those on Medi-Cal.

**\$7.7M invested in CHD in FY24–25, strengthening pediatric integration, connecting families to early identification and support and closing referral gaps**

Our strategy is to shift systems, not just fund programs.

HealthySteps embeds developmental specialists directly into pediatric practices where gaps are greatest. Home visiting reaches families at highest risk, stabilizing care before crises deepen. Oral health and drowning prevention expand safety nets, while alignment with Medi-Cal reforms builds sustainability so gains last beyond any one funding stream.

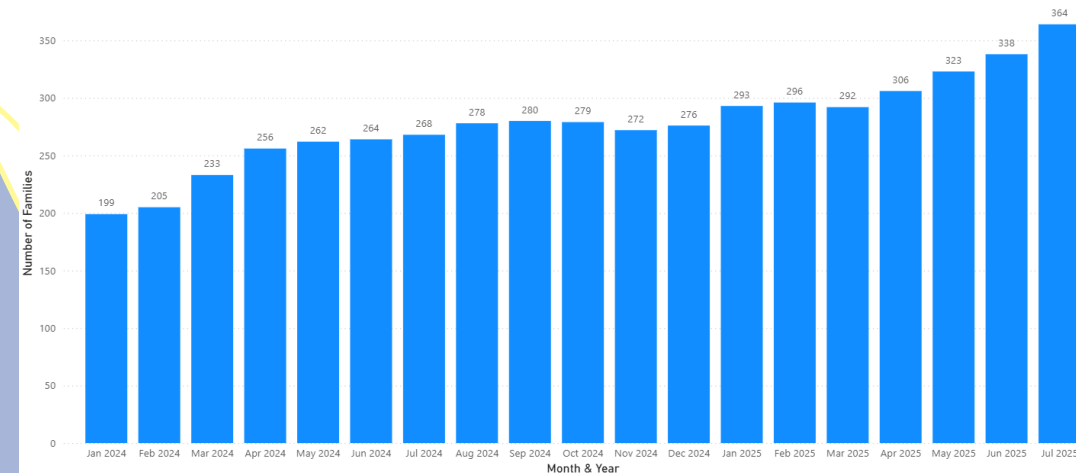
The vision is clear: families should not chase help across multiple doors. From birth, children should be automatically linked to screenings and services — triggered early, seamlessly, and without extra steps for parents. This shift is only possible when county departments move in step — sharing strategies, co-designing solutions, and dismantling barriers together. Families experience needs as a whole, and systems must respond the same way.

In home visiting, that shift is already visible. Enrollment once stalled due to limited entry points, eligibility cliffs, and mid-process drop-offs. Together with DPSS Self Sufficiency and provider partners, we tackled these barriers through CalWORKs Home Visiting Rapid Improvement Events. Families can now enter through multiple doors, eligibility standards are clearer, retroactive reversals have ended, and braided funding has expanded access beyond CalWORKs families. Providers are freed

to focus on what matters most — delivering care, not chasing paperwork.

Equity gaps remain, but shared investments and a focus on shared outcomes are moving Riverside County from isolated programs toward an integrated infrastructure. Riverside is a county in motion — making it easier to focus on the whole child and the whole family.

**FIRST 5**  
Riverside County  
Children & Families Commission  
Families Served



### Partnership in Action

#### HealthySteps

**7 clinics embedded;  
8,460 screenings**

*"Our group, CPCMG was lucky enough to partner with HealthySteps about five years ago thanks to a grant from First 5 Riverside County... so many of our patients have complex healthcare needs alongside socio-economic and developmental challenges. It is difficult to juggle the mental, developmental, and complete physical and social needs of our patients, and especially challenging for the families who are often struggling financially. Our HealthySteps developmental experts have bridged this gap...it has made a huge difference in the lives of children."*

-Daniel Robbins, DO FAAP FACOP, Lead Physician, Temecula Parkway Office, Regional Medical Director, Children's Primary Care Medical Group Riverside County

#### What families are saying about HealthySteps in Riverside County:

*"My questions are always met without judgement."*

*"They called us after our visit—they went above and beyond."*

*"I was able to get a better understanding of why my child was behaving a certain way and get solutions. I like that I didn't feel like a bad mom for admitting that I was feeling frustrated."*

#### Home Visiting

**4,524 CalWORKs home visits in FY24–25, nearly double FY23–24**

*"This family has been enrolled since November 2024, and their journey has been nothing short of inspiring. From the beginning, the caregiver embraced her child's cerebral palsy diagnosis with both courage and determination. She's consistently shown up to every home visit, twice a month, for over nine months fully present and eager to learn more about how to support her child emotionally, physically, and developmentally. She's taken advantage of every opportunity and resource offered through the PAT program and beyond, and it shows in how far her child has come. This family reminds us what's possible when love meets support."*

-Jurupa Unified School District - Parent Educator, Parents As Teachers Program

The **first three years** build the foundation for life. Families need seamless systems of support — **WHOLE-CHILD, WHOLE-FAMILY, AND WHOLE-COUNTY.**



## Partner Provider Highlights

Amy Cabrera, Lifesaver Aquatics Founder and Instructor  
Skills Save Lives — Expanding Riverside's Water Safety Capacity



Drowning remains the leading — and most preventable — cause of death for children under five. Fences and supervision help, but they are not enough. Swim lessons provide a portable, life-saving skill children carry anywhere water is present. That's why, with DPSS Children's Services, First 5 Riverside County has built a countywide prevention and crisis-response system: families experiencing near-drowning events are linked to trauma-informed lessons within days, and county staff can fast-track referrals when they see risks like unfenced pools or open water.

When a Community Improvement Designation fund (CID) investment from District 3 Supervisor Chuck Washington expanded Riverside County's capacity to train infant survival swim instructors, Amy Cabrera — founder of LifeSaver Aquatics — stepped forward. With her dual background as a nurse and elite competitive swimmer, she brings both clinical expertise and precision coaching to every lesson. Now one of the few providers in the region certified to teach survival swimming to infants and toddlers, Amy is helping fill a critical gap in local water safety.

**2,762 scholarships  
awarded in FY24–25;  
10 providers**

Her impact was immediate. After a near-drowning referral, Amy enrolled three siblings within days, donating her time so the family could rebuild safety and confidence in the water. Parents described the relief of watching their children float, smile, and find joy again after fear had nearly taken them. She has also worked with children with special needs — including autism, cerebral palsy, and spinal cord injuries — guiding them to master life-saving skills in the water.

Amy didn't only teach swim skills — she turned trauma into resilience. More than an instructor, she is part of a prevention system proving what's possible when providers are trained, partnerships align, and families are connected to lifesaving support at the moment it matters most.

"At Lifesaver Aquatics we envision a world where **survival swim is a skill all babies are expected to learn in life**. A world where it is just as important to learn to self rescue themselves in water as it is for them to learn to walk and talk, read and write making **THE WORLD A SAFER PLACE ONE CHILD AT A TIME**."

-Amy Cabrera

### Riverside County Key Findings (2018 – 2022)



There were a total of 866 non-fatalities and 220 fatalities.



Children ages 0-4 make up 64.8% of non-fatalities (n=561).



There were an average of 173 non-fatalities per year.



There were approx. 4 non-fatal drownings for every 1 fatality.

Expanded swim lessons and rapid crisis response with DPSS Children's Services are addressing this urgent risk.



## Parent Profile

Laurisa & Noah  
From Shelter to Stability

At just 11 months old, Noah is learning to roll, scoot, and crawl — milestones that once felt out of reach. When his mother, Laurisa, entered the Coachella Valley Rescue Mission, she was referred through the fast-track home visiting pathway created by First 5 Riverside County and John F. Kennedy Memorial Foundation.

As a new mom balancing shelter housing, part-time work at McDonald's, and bachelor's degree studies — all while caring for an infant with a gross motor delay — Laurisa faced steep challenges. With her Parent Educator, Elizabeth Castro, she set simple but powerful developmental goals. At first, tummy time was a struggle, and Laurisa wasn't sure how to help. Together, they worked step by step, adding tools like climbing and crawling blocks that turned therapy into play.

The results have been remarkable. Today, Noah rolls with ease, spends 10 minutes on his tummy, and holds a crawling position. Just as inspiring is Laurisa's own transformation — from hesitant and unsure to a confident, engaged parent who narrates, encourages, and celebrates every achievement.

**In FY24–25, First 5 Riverside County's Home Visiting program delivered 4,524 CalWORKS visits and completed 863 developmental screenings, helping parents like Laurisa's support their children's growth**

Elizabeth reflects: "This mom is proof that when we show up with support in those delicate postpartum months, everyone thrives — the baby, the mother, and the community. Home visiting is more than a program; it's a connection, and it's a gift."

Now, Laurisa and Noah have moved into their own apartment, a major step toward stability and reunification with Laurisa's older daughter. Their story is a reminder that support in the earliest moments changes everything: for children, for parents, and for the systems around them.



**NO MILESTONE IS TOO  
SMALL WHEN BIG STEPS  
ARE ON THE WAY**

## Goal 3 - Resilient Families

### Families Shouldn't Face Barriers — They Should Find Wider Doors

Families with young children in Riverside County face real pressures: poverty, housing instability, and child safety risks that disproportionately affect communities of color. Public attention often gravitates toward tragic outcomes, but those moments obscure a broader truth: investments in prevention are quietly reshaping how families experience support every day.

**The FRCs received nearly 8,000 visits from January through June 2025**

The change begins at the front door. With the launch of START as the county's integrated referral system, powered through RivCoONE, families now complete one universal intake — the Whole Person Health Score — that captures their needs holistically. Shared staffing agreements and co-

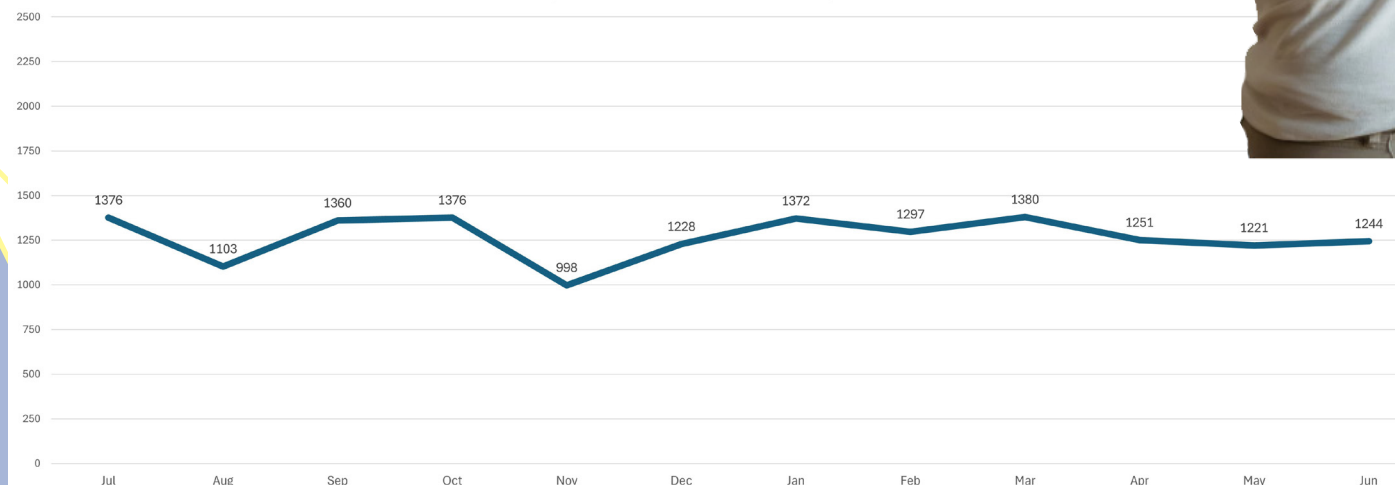
location mean that this isn't just technology; it's a different way of working. Families will no longer encounter programs sitting in silos, but an integrated system that moves with them.

That system extends beyond the FRC walls. In partnership with the Office on Aging, Child Support Services, and Community Action Partnership, outreach and cross-training ensure that trusted navigators can connect families seamlessly across community programs. With DPSS Self Sufficiency, CalWORKs home visiting referrals now move quickly from first contact to enrollment, supported by follow-up calls from CHW-certified FRC staff that re-engage families who once opted out.

Taken together, these shifts are more than interagency agreements — they are proof that resilience is becoming a shared county outcome, not an individual family burden. The wider doors families experience today are the product of county departments moving in step, aligning around prevention, and reshaping what it means to raise a child in Riverside County.



Family Resource Center Census July - June 2025



### Partnership in Action

#### Community Health Workers

Every First 5 Riverside County staff member across the county's five Family Resource Centers is now certified as a Community Health Worker (CHW). This achievement transforms FRCs from service sites into prevention hubs, equipping staff with the skills to address social determinants of health, connect families across systems, and elevate lived experience in countywide planning. Families benefit by being met by trusted staff who are trained to listen, screen, and link them to the right supports on the first contact.

**100% of FRC staff certified as CHWs, creating a prevention-trained frontline workforce**



#### Whole Person Health Score

The RivCoONE START integrated referral system tool is now fully scaled across all Family Resource Centers, embedding the Whole Person Health Score (WPHS) into daily operations. Every family who walks through the door has the opportunity to receive a holistic snapshot of their needs. This shared intake creates consistency across the network and eliminates guesswork: families don't have to tell their story multiple times, and staff can connect them to the right supports.

**7,000+ WPHS screenings completed since rollout**

The WPHS also produces system-level data, helping county partners spot patterns, guide prevention investments, and measure collective impact. With this tool in place, resilience is no longer about individual navigation — it is built into the system itself.

#### Whole Person Health Score Summary

Assessment Last Completed:

| E               | P                                                                                                                                                            | F                    | Q              | M         | L                       |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|-----------|-------------------------|
| Physical Health | Emotional Health                                                                                                                                             | Resource Utilization | Socioeconomics | Ownership | Nutrition and Lifestyle |
| A-F             | Good. Little opportunity for improvement (no referral needed).                                                                                               |                      |                |           |                         |
| G-O             | Fair. This is an area of health that is likely impacting your overall well-being. Consider seeking additional support or help (referral needed).             |                      |                |           |                         |
| P-Z             | Needs Improvement. This is an area of health that is already impacting your overall well-being and needs immediate or continued attention (referral needed). |                      |                |           |                         |

**Resilience is prevention and it grows when COUNTY SYSTEMS MOVE TOGETHER.**

## Family Resource Centers

### Helping Families Thrive

At the Family Resource Centers (FRC), every service is more than just support — it's a reminder to families that they are not alone. Through the Whole Person Health Score, staff learn about each family's unique needs and connect them with resources that make a difference: parenting classes that strengthen bonds, transportation for jobs and medical care, or creative activities that spark children's imagination. Each connection reflects our commitment to walk alongside families, building hope, creating opportunities, and empowering them to thrive together.

The following stories are examples of how FRCs connect with families and help residents of all ages to thrive, from connection to additional services to community events that bring the family together through fun and educational activities with their children.

### Desert Hot Springs Family Resource Center



**Estella Briceno**  
Regional Manager

At the Desert Hot Springs FRC, we give children their best start – and we also offer enriching experiences for older kids. Each summer we partner with Animal Samaritans to host their two-day program, Critter Camp for ages 7 to 13. Campers learn about animals through games and crafts and meet many special friends including dogs and other furry animals, reptiles, and birds. The goal is simple: teach kindness to animals as a pathway to kindness with each other.



This year, 7 year-old Noah finally got to join his older sister. He learned how to safely pet different animals and is already using those skills with his family's pets at home. He can't wait for next summer's camp.

### Jurupa Valley Family Resource Center

**Alicia Corona**  
Regional Manager

At one of our newest FRCs, family engagement comes first. At our first-ever Cookies with Santa, more than 75 neighbors stopped in for photos, crafts, music, and cookies—and left with something more: over 30 new connections to on-site resources and partner agencies. Families who came for the nearby health clinic or Mother's Store returned with their children to join the celebration, meet staff, and learn what the FRC can offer. Joy opened the door; trust kept families walking through it.



### Mead Valley Family Resource Center

At Mead Valley's Back-to-School event, a grandmother spent the afternoon helping her granddaughter explore pottery and art stations while she met with DPSS to apply for CalFresh and Medi-Cal—right there at the FRC. The day captured what these events are designed to do: pair celebration with access. More than 200 attendees enjoyed the festivities, and over 40 families initiated benefits or health referrals on the spot—support that uplifts the whole household in one welcoming place.



**Charity Webb**  
Regional Manager

### Mecca Family and Farmworkers' Service Center

At the Mecca Family & Farmworker's Service Center, we help families take steps that open doors. Recently, we partnered with Congressman Dr. Raul Ruiz and the U.S. Department of State to host a community passport fair. In one welcoming space, 92 adults and children were able to apply for or renew passports and 20 adults completed a Whole Person Health Score.

For many families, a passport is more than a document—it means visiting loved ones, traveling for work, and creating new opportunities for their children. Our role is simple: make the process friendly, affordable, and close to home, so families feel supported every step of the way. Mecca FRC is honored to be a trusted place where families plan, prepare, and build their future.



**Maria Machuca**  
Supervising Program Specialist

### Temecula Family Resource Center

At the Temecula Family Resource Center, we focus on connection and belonging. We partner with the local library and community groups to host welcoming, family-friendly events that highlight early childhood supports and invite families to share their voices. Short surveys and conversations help us adjust services to what families say they need most. From hands-on activities to resource fairs, every gathering is designed to bring neighbors together and make sure each family feels seen, included, and supported.



**Charity Webb**  
Regional Manager



## Goal 4 - Cross Program Impact

### Building the System Beneath the Programs

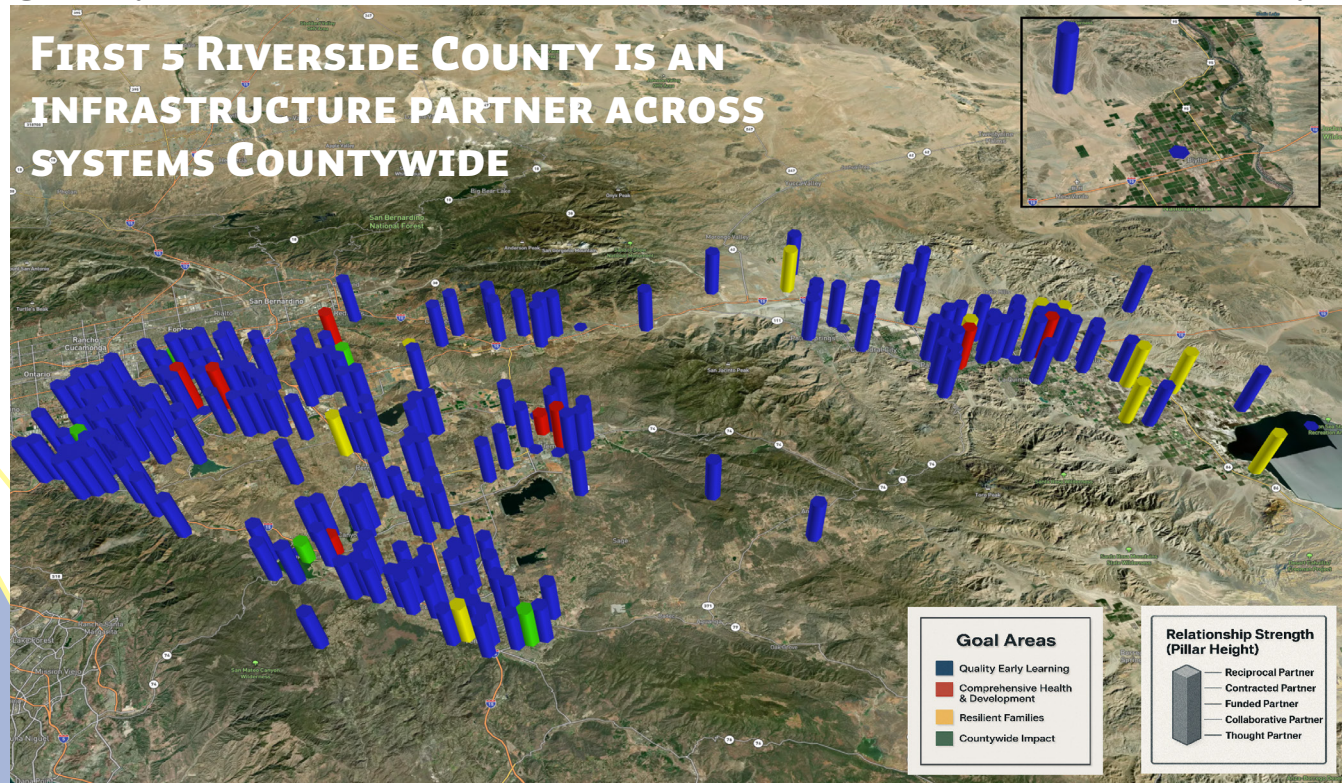
Riverside County cannot solve child and family challenges one program at a time. Children live whole lives, and families navigate multiple needs at once. When systems are fragmented, families carry the burden—retelling their story, losing eligibility mid-process, or waiting months while risks escalate.

**3 county departments now sharing early childhood focused dashboards; 12 internal process improvement projects launched**

First 5 Riverside County is investing in the infrastructure beneath the programs—the tools, data, and culture shifts that help departments work as one. Progress is visible in three ways:

- Shared Dashboards. With RUHS–Public Health and the DPSS Office of Child Abuse and Prevention, we launched real-time dashboards tracking 911 near-drowning calls and referral flows.
- Process Improvement Culture. A new team is embedding continuous quality improvement—streamlining contracts, modernizing data systems, and redesigning workflows. The aim is to remove inequities baked into administration (e.g., retroactive eligibility reversals, limited office hours, fragmented entry points, invoicing delays). Less red tape means quicker access for families and more staff time for direct support.
- Braided Funding. Proposition 10 is braided with American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), CalWORKs, First 5 California, and Inland Empire Health Plan (IEHP) dollars—multiplying reach and building sustainability beyond one-time funds.

Together, these investments are moving Riverside County from a patchwork of services toward an integrated system — one that acts earlier, adapts faster, and reaches families more equitably.



### Partnership in Action

#### Shared Data Dashboards

For years, prevention data arrived too slowly to guide action. In FY24–25, that began to change. First 5 Riverside County partnered with RUHS–Public Health (dedicated epidemiology staff), the DPSS Children’s Services Division/Office of Child Abuse and Prevention, and county leaders to co-design real-time dashboards that track 911 near-drowning calls, unsafe sleep outcomes, and referral flows across programs.

These are living tools, not shelf reports. When a near-drowning is logged, swim-lesson capacity is checked. When unsafe sleep risks rise, outreach pivots. When referrals slow, bottlenecks are flagged. Because the data are disaggregated by race/ethnicity, ZIP code, and region, disparities surface in real time—so leaders can adjust before gaps widen. This is not predictive policing or punitive analytics; it’s equity work that moves dollars and attention where risk is rising, not years later.

**Dashboards now track 911 drowning calls in real time, prenatal care inequities by race/ethnicity, and 4,500+ home visits — giving county leaders actionable data to shift resources before harm occurs**

The result will be shared accountability across departments, resources directed where need is greatest, and a clearer, real-time picture of how Riverside County’s youngest children are doing.

#### Equity & Access

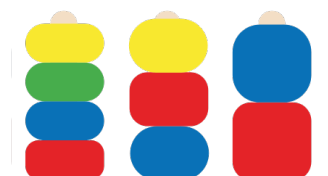
##### Who We Reached, Who We Missed

FY24–25 data show both progress and unfinished work. Families reached reflect Riverside County’s diversity, with strong gains among Latino families, rural regions, and low-income households. Yet gaps remain: Black/African American children are under-enrolled in some programs, Asian families are underrepresented overall, and families without transportation face higher barriers. Families with stable housing and cars benefit most from current systems, while those in the far east and desert regions wait longer and have fewer options.

Two shifts are helping close these gaps. First, universal START intake ensures every family at an FRC receives the Whole Person Health Score, capturing needs across health, housing, food, development, and more—so all families leave with the same full view of supports they may qualify for, not just those who know how to ask. Second, 100% of FRC staff are now Community Health Worker–certified, meeting families with cultural humility, reducing duplication, and building bridges across systems.

We need to continue to pursue targeted outreach and stronger partnerships in underserved communities—so equity is a measurable outcome we are accountable to.

Equity is the measure of our **SYSTEM’S STRENGTH.**



## Budget Overview

### Investing Boldly, Leveraging Widely

First 5 Riverside County used every available resource. We drew down all eligible claims and made a planned draw from fund balance so services continued without interruption. In FY24–25, each Prop 10 dollar supported about \$2.36 in total services.

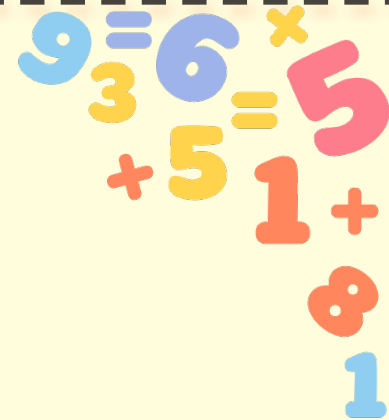
#### How we leveraged the dollars

Prop 10 served as anchor capital in a broader braid of funds—IMPACT, ARPA, CalWORKs, Medi-Cal managed care (IEHP), First 5 California, and investment income. This leverage sustained HealthySteps expansion, accelerated child care infrastructure, and stabilized a prevention-trained workforce across the Family Resource Center network.

#### Why it matters

This is a story of leverage and sustainability: Prop 10 as seed capital drawing in state, federal, and local matches so families receive support earlier and more effectively. As we build the 2027–2030 Strategic Plan, this is the model we will scale—fewer idle dollars, more timely services.

|                                           |                                     |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Total Revenues</b>                     | \$30.80M                            |
| <b>Total Expenditures</b>                 | \$32.78M                            |
| <b>Ending Fund Balance</b>                | \$32.93M                            |
| <b>ARPA-Restricted Balance</b>            | \$0.40M                             |
| <b>Leverage</b>                           | ~\$2.36 in services per \$1 Prop 10 |
| <b>Liquidity (Cash &amp; Investments)</b> | \$34.59M                            |



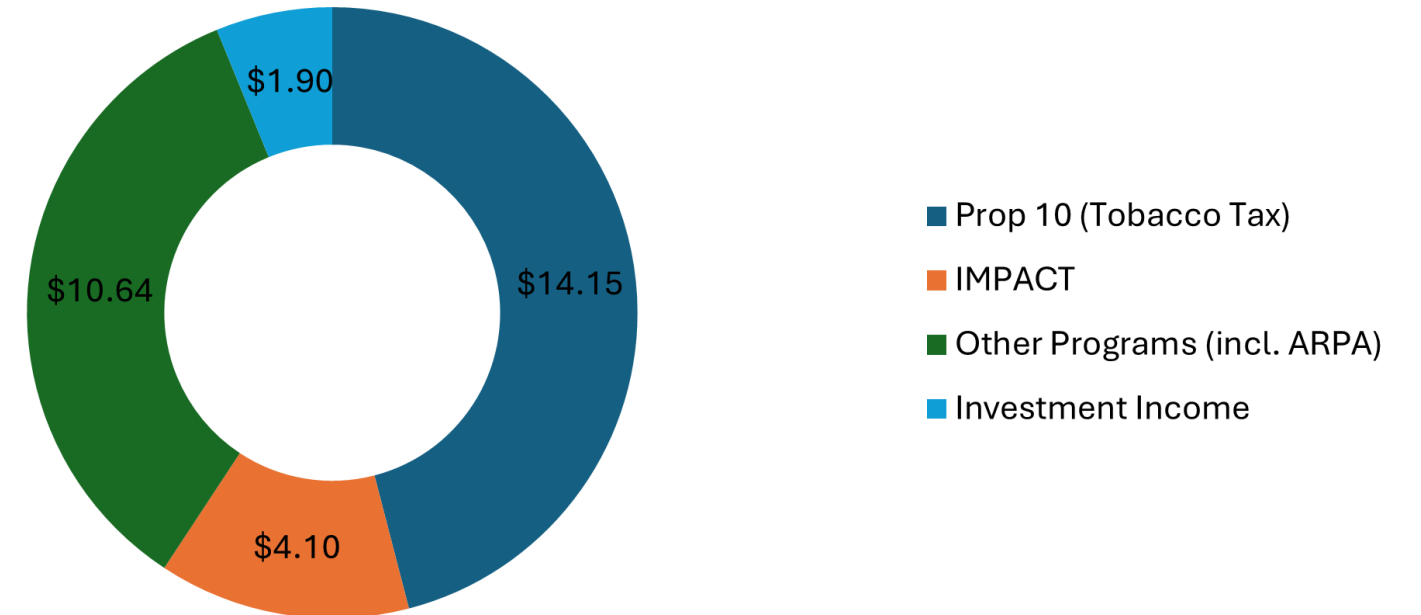
Nearly half of revenue is Prop 10; the rest is braided from state, federal, local, and interest earnings.

Every \$1 of Prop 10 leveraged into **BROADER SYSTEM INVESTMENT** — reaching families sooner, reducing costlier interventions later

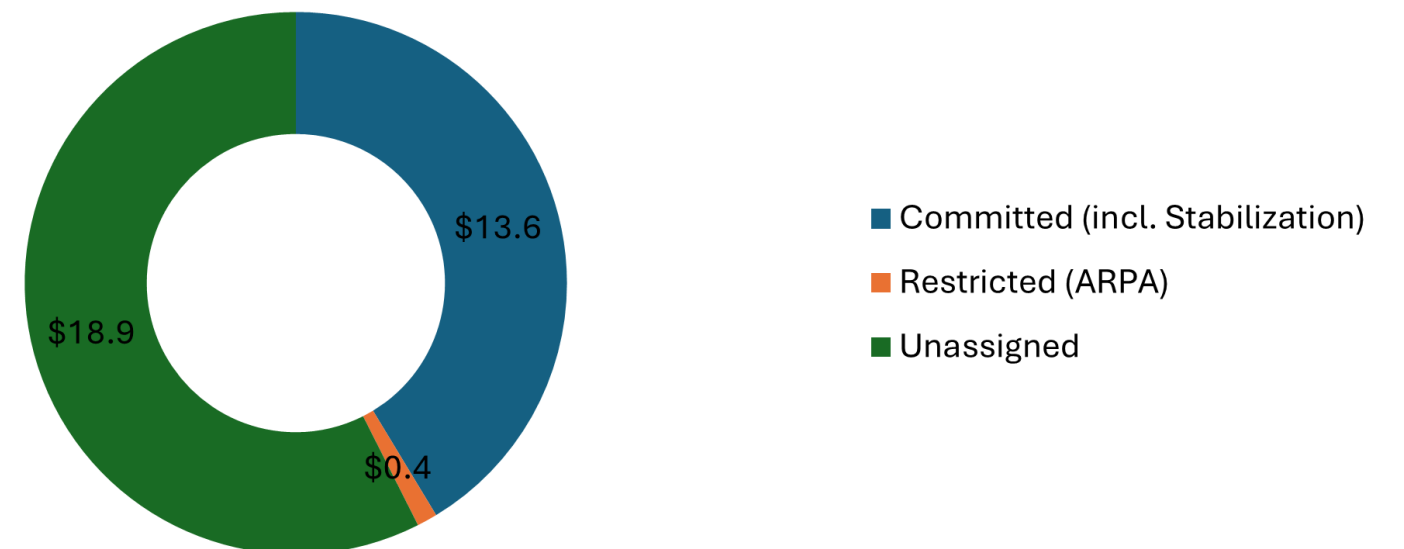
## Cash & Investments in County Treasury: \$34.59M

Budget Stabilization: **\$6.0M committed** | Minimum Fund Balance: **\$4.0M on target**

### FY24–25 Revenue Mix (\$ Millions)



### Ending Fund Balance Composition (\$ Millions)



FY23/24 to FY25/26 Investments

| Goal Area                                          | FY23/24 Contract Actuals | FY24/25 Contract Actuals | FY25/26 Contract Budget | FY23-26 Estimated Total |
|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Countywide Programs - Total                        | \$675,000.00             | \$1,265,700.00           | \$267,900.00            | \$2,208,600.00          |
| Quality Early Learning - Total                     | \$6,249,524.75           | \$5,656,766.49           | \$11,232,186.28         | \$23,138,477.52         |
| Comprehensive Health and Development (CHD) - Total | \$6,653,243.01           | \$7,764,062.86           | \$11,851,802.42         | \$26,269,108.29         |
| Resilient Families - Total                         | \$707,388.48             | \$746,275.69             | \$900,000.00            | \$2,353,664.17          |
| Contracts Expired - Total                          | \$373,745.45             | \$84,578.28              | \$-                     | \$458,323.73            |
| ESTIMATED GRAND TOTAL FY 23/26 INVESTMENTS         | \$14,658,901.69          | \$15,517,383.32          | \$24,251,888.70         | \$54,428,173.71         |

FY 24/25 Final Agency Report

| Agency Name                                                                                        | Contract #         | Primary Target Description                           | Target # | Result # |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------|
| Desert Recreation Center                                                                           | CF23118            | Swim Scholarships                                    | 500      | 869      |
| SoCal Water Babies                                                                                 | CF24101            | Swim Scholarships                                    | 180      | 186      |
| Corona-Norco YMCA                                                                                  | CF24104            | Swim Scholarships                                    | 1333     | 1071     |
| City of Temecula                                                                                   | CF24146            | Swim Scholarships                                    | 125      | 143      |
| YMCA Desert                                                                                        | CF25108            | Swim Scholarships                                    | 400      | 226      |
| Lifesaver Aquatics                                                                                 | CF25112            | Swim Scholarships                                    | 62       | 117      |
| City of Banning                                                                                    | CF25117            | Swim Scholarships                                    | 20       | 23       |
| City of Beaumont                                                                                   | CF25124            | Swim Scholarships                                    | 37       | 17       |
| City of Desert Hot Springs                                                                         | CF25136            | Swim Scholarships                                    | 15       | 34       |
| Jurupa Area Recreation & Park District                                                             | CF25140            | Swim Scholarships                                    | 72       | 76       |
| Rady Children's Hospital (HealthySteps)                                                            | CF24150            | # of Children Age 0-3 who received Tier 3 Visits     | 2400     | 2,529    |
| Riverside University Health System – Community Health Centers (HealthySteps)                       | CF24149            | # of Children Age 0-3 who received Tier 3 Visits     | 800      | 1,730    |
| Loma Linda University Children’s Hospital (Help Me Grow Inland Empire)                             | CF24126            | # of Children screened                               | 5000     | 3,650    |
| Blindness Support (Home Visiting)                                                                  | CF24111<br>CF24112 | # of Parents served                                  | 30       | 48       |
| Yoo, Jeung Choo MD Inc. (Home Visiting)                                                            | CF24113<br>CF24114 | # of Parents served                                  | 108      | 127      |
| Jurupa Unified School District (Home Visiting)                                                     | CF24115            | # of Parents served                                  | 108      | 161      |
| John F. Kennedy Memorial Foundation (Home Visiting)                                                | CF24117            | # of Parents served                                  | 100      | 114      |
| Riverside University Health System - Public Health (Home Visiting)                                 | CF24119<br>CF24120 | # of Parents served                                  | 88       | 49       |
| Family Service Association (Home Visiting)                                                         | CF24123            | # of Parents served                                  | 60       | 61       |
| Cal State Northridge (ECOHA)                                                                       | CF24152            | # of Providers Trained                               |          | 129      |
| Comprehensive Autism Center (Early Explorers)                                                      | CF24143            | # of Families served                                 | 10       | 3        |
|                                                                                                    |                    | # of Providers Trained                               | 20       | 29       |
| American Academy of Pediatrics (Reach Out and Read)                                                | CF25103            | # of Books distributed                               | 37,350   | 26,133   |
| Inland Southern California United Way, Inc. (Raising a Reader)                                     | CF24122            | # of Kits distributed                                | 1,000    | 561      |
| Inland Southern California United Way, Inc. (Guaranteed Basic Income Pilot)                        | CF24136            | # of Pregnant individuals participating in GBI pilot | 500      | 409      |
| Riverside County Office of Education (RCOE) -- Riverside Hybrid Alternative Payment (RHAP) Program | CF24121            | # Children who received scholarships                 |          | 505      |
|                                                                                                    |                    | # of incentives paid to ECE sites                    |          | 1,666    |



2.36 x

SERVICES PER  
\$1 PROP 10

\$34.59M

CASH & INVESTMENTS  
— FOR TIMELY  
PAYMENTS AND  
PROJECT DELIVERY

## Building a Braided Home Visiting System

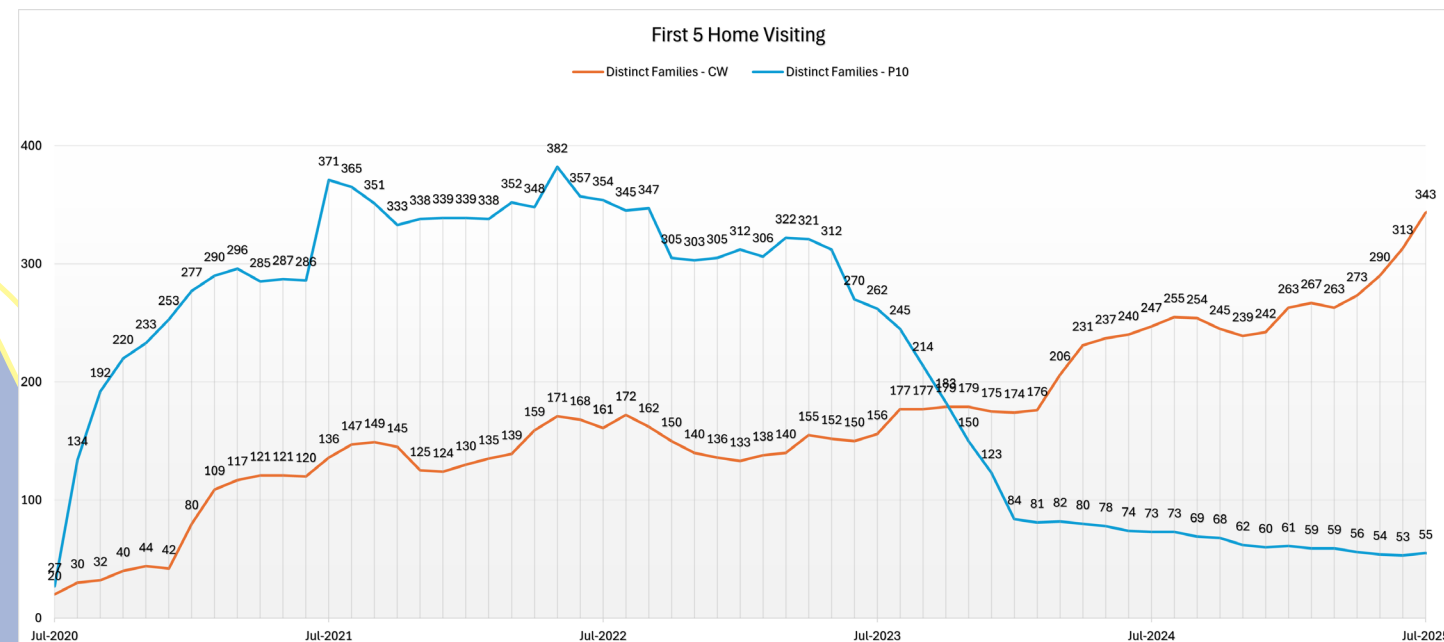
Proposition 10 has been a backbone of Riverside County’s home visiting investments. But as state resources grew, the Commission made an intentional decision: reduce reliance on a declining Prop 10 funding stream and braid it around CalWORKs Home Visiting so families could gain more stable access.

That shift wasn’t simple. CalWORKs eligibility and referral rules made enrollment slower and less flexible than Prop 10. Together with DPSS Self Sufficiency and Children’s Services teams, we committed to changing that reality. In February 2024, First 5 Riverside County launched a focused improvement effort — streamlining referrals, expanding capacity, and reducing barriers.

- Braided funding so families aren’t turned away on technicalities. If eligibility lapses, services continue — with full model fidelity up to 36 months, not the 24-month cutoff.
- Closed gaps when state allocations dropped from \$5.48M to \$3.48M, supplementing contracts with Prop 10 to maintain a \$4.2M system capacity
- Expanded access so families in transition, or outside strict CalWORKs rules, can still enroll.
- Adapted models so families outside strict CalWORKs eligibility can still access home visiting.

**4,524 CalWORKs Home Visiting visits delivered in FY24–25 — enrollment climbed from fewer than 100 families in 2021 to more than 300 families per month by mid-2025, reflecting a fully stabilized and braided system between DPSS and First 5 Riverside County**

The result: Prop 10 no longer substitutes for CalWORKs home visiting funding — it makes it more flexible, more equitable, and more accessible. Riverside’s braided CalWORKs home visiting system is now stable, growing, and connecting more families in the earliest years. CalWORKs Home Visiting is no longer under-enrolled. With DPSS, we turned an underutilized program into one consistently connecting families to care.



## What’s Next: Deepening Partnerships, Narrowing Focus for Impact

### A letter from Charna Widby, Assistant Director

As we close the chapter on FY24–25 and the 2023–2026 Strategic Plan, we open the door to what comes next. The foundation is in place. Now is the time to go deeper in partnerships and sharper in focus, so we can deliver greater impact where it matters most.

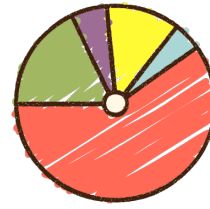
Our near-term priorities reflect this shift:

- **Maximizing Family Support Through New Tools.** The Benefit Navigator will launch across Family Resource Centers and be shared with County partners to ensure every family leaves with the same clear view of benefits and tax credits they qualify for — not just those who know how to ask. Families will be able to scenario-plan and make informed choices, while new tools like Nava Labs’ agentic AI will help caseworkers complete applications more quickly and accurately. Families tell their story once, staff spend less time on paperwork, and support becomes more consistent and equitable.
- **Sustainable HealthySteps Expansion.** With Medi-Cal managed care contracts, HealthySteps is shifting from short-term pilots to permanent infrastructure. Developmental screening, caregiver support, and care coordination will become standard practice in pediatrics, with new pilots in partnership with DPSS Children’s Services to connect families earlier through shared data protocols.
- **Home Visiting as a Braided System.** By aligning Proposition 10, CalWORKs, and Medi-Cal, we are sustaining proven models while expanding to reach families who too often fell through the cracks. Braided financing and streamlined referrals mean families connect sooner and more reliably — not just in crisis, but in the transformative prenatal-to-three window when support changes the trajectory for both parent and child.
- **Family Resource Centers as a Platform for Prevention.** With CHW-certified staff, universal START intake, and shared data dashboards, FRCs are evolving into a countywide platform where families access supports holistically and without stigma. Unlike systems bound by eligibility or crisis thresholds, FRCs are built for prevention — widening the doorway and offering wraparound supports that address whole-family needs. Co-funded by DPSS and First 5, FRCs are positioned to be leveraged more fully across departments, so families get seamless, coordinated care.

The 2027–2030 Strategic Plan will build directly on the momentum of this report. Over the next year, we are listening and learning — gathering input from families, providers, and county partners through surveys, conversations, and shared data. What emerges will not be a reset, but a sharpening of focus: doubling down where strategies are showing impact, adapting where gaps remain, and staying flexible as conditions shift.

The lesson of the past year is clear: when we align resources and lead together, Riverside County moves forward. The next chapter is about advancing what we have anchored and making sure every investment works harder for children and families.

**Early childhood is Riverside County’s smartest investment:** every dollar leveraged now prevents far greater costs later — and **EVERY PARTNERSHIP WIDENS THE DOOR FOR FAMILIES TO BE SUPPORTED SOONER.**



## Methodology & Sources

### How We Know

The data in this report reflect activity and outcomes from FY 2024–25 (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025) and are drawn from multiple county and partner systems.

Primary sources include Apricot 360 (program performance and case-management data), the START universal intake tool and its Whole Person Health Score, and county epidemiology dashboards maintained by RUHS – Public Health that track maternal, infant, and injury trends in real time.

Findings also incorporate cross-agency analyses from:

- Riverside University Health System – Epidemiology & Program Evaluation Branch (county dashboards and surveillance data)
- California Integrated Vital Records System (Cal-IVRS)
- California Department of Education
- First Watch drowning prevention surveillance
- First 5 Riverside County program data (Annual Report FY 24-25)
- Kristin Gist, MS – Early Identification and Intervention Landscape Report and stakeholder convenings
- UC Berkeley Center for the Study of Child Care Employment – early learning workforce and compensation data
- Kenyon Education Consulting – Quality Start Riverside County Accomplishments Report (2025)
- Poder Collective Research – QSRC Provider Survey Key Findings (2025)
- Dowell Myers, Ph.D., University of Southern California Sol Price School of Public Policy – Population Dynamics Research Group – demographic modeling and child-to-senior dependency projections (Children as Infrastructure: Securing Riverside County’s Future through Early Investment, 2025)

Together, these sources provide both a granular and systems-level view of how Riverside County’s children and families are experiencing prevention, access, and support.

To protect privacy, all data follow small-N suppression protocols; data are aggregated or redacted when counts are small to ensure no individual can be identified.

Finally, attribution matters. The outcomes in this report are shared outcomes—reflecting partnership across the Riverside County Department of Public Social Services, Riverside University Health System – Public Health, Riverside County Office of Education, Inland Empire Health Plan, RivCo ONE, and dozens of funded community providers. First 5 Riverside County serves as a catalyst and fiscal intermediary—aligning investments and strengthening system partnerships—but the outcomes belong to Riverside County.



# It's ABOUT THE KIDS STRONG STARTS, STRONG COUNTY

