

2020-21 Headline Findings



First 5 Siskiyou promotes the optimal development of children 0-5 by focusing investments in four goal areas: Resilient Families, Quality Early Learning, Child Health and Development, and Strong Systems, which support an overarching desired impact of Kindergarten Readiness. In FY2020-21, despite the COVID-19 pandemic, First 5 Siskiyou continued to deliver high quality services to a broad swath of the county's parents and children.

Profile of Children and Families

- **First 5 families were hard-hit by the COVID pandemic.** The portrait of families at intake is markedly different than in 2019-20:
 - 31% said they or the other parent lost a job in the last year.
 - 57% earned less than the federal poverty level (\$26,500), up from 41% in 2019-20.
 - 25% of parents were unemployed but seeking work, compared to 16% in 2019-20.
 - 26% were moderately to very concerned about work-related issues, compared to 16% in 2019/20.
 - 35% were moderately to very concerned about money and bills, compared to 28% in 2019/20.
 - 23% were moderately to very concerned about their housing situation.
 - 13% said they felt down, depressed and a loss of interest in doing things.
- **Despite these socio-economic challenges, about two thirds of families showed strong protective factors.** In the area of *Social Connections*, 68% of families said it was “definitely true” that they had someone to talk with about problems. More than half of families (60%) also said it was “definitely true” for them that they knew which program to contact for meeting needs (*Concrete Support in Times of Need*), 70% said they had someone to turn to for advice on child-rearing, and 62% knew what to expect at each stage of their children’s development (*Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development*).
- **Families had greater access to First 5 services but less access to others.** Based on the widest-reach program, Imagination Library, First 5 Siskiyou served at least 1,505 unique children, a 24% increase from last year. This translates to **at least 56% of the county’s children 0-5**. First 5 also provided 5,373 child services (duplicated). However, fewer families said they accessed other community services.

Resilient Families

- **Family Resource Centers promoted protective factors with at least 818 children (30% of the county’s children 0-5)** and their 642 parents. There were at least 2,024 direct services provided, an increase from 1,770 in 2019-20. These services included support for key protective factors:
 - Enrollment assistance in WIC/ CalFresh/ Food stamps (n=249 families; *Concrete Support in Times of Need*)

- Strengthening relationships with their children in playgroups co-funded with Siskiyou County Library (n=165 families; *Knowledge of Child Development*)
- Training or activity to promote child readiness for kindergarten (n=1,569 families; *Knowledge of Child Development*)
- First 5 and Siskiyou County Library-funded family friendly events (n=338 families, *Social Connections*)

Quality Early Learning

- **First 5 Siskiyou is helping increase the quality of child care and early learning settings for 45% (1,217) of the county's 2706 children ages 0-5.** First 5's partnership with Quality Counts helped increase the quality of 33 early care and education sites, including preschools, family child care homes and 9 alternative sites (playgroups at FRCs); the 10 of the 11 sites that were rated were found to be in the two highest tiers of quality.
- **Efforts to support literacy in the home appear to be working:** Over 30,000 books were provided to Siskiyou families with young children, and 79% of First 5 Siskiyou families read together at least 5 days of the week.
- **At least 243 children and their parents engaged in high quality playgroups at the FRCs.**

Child Health and Development

- **Almost all (98%) of First 5 children had medical insurance** and 96% had been to the doctor for their well-child checks, compared to 73% of Medi-Cal enrolled children countywide. However, trends were worsening for oral health care compared to previous years; about 64% had a regular dentist and 88% of children reportedly had no untreated cavities.
- **Help Me Grow provided 500 children with developmental screenings** and made referrals for children with identified needs. Of those whose screenings were documented on a HMG screening form, 10% were found to have developmental concerns, and 20% were in the monitoring category.

Strong Systems

- **First 5 Siskiyou's Professional Development Partnership reached 1,607 attendees (1,467 providers and 40 parents) with 15 different trainings.**
- **Grant awards and county funding led to highest level of revenue to date:** \$1,303,054, which is translating into strengthening networks of care for our children and families.

Overall Impact

- **Kindergarten readiness is gradually increasing across the county.** In 2020, 37% of kindergartners were fully ready for kindergarten across all domains of readiness, up from 35% in 2017. Regression analyses revealed powerful findings about what was shaping readiness during the pandemic: *child wellbeing*, *licensed early learning experience*, and *parent-child engagement* ($R^2 = .55$); these three factors accounted for 55% of the variation in kindergarten readiness. Two-thirds of entering kindergartners had participated in First 5-supported services, which in turn directly promote these top three predictors.

