



*First 5 Amador*  
*2019 – 2020*

*Program / Evaluation Report*

*In 1998, California voters approved a \$.50 tax increase on tobacco products through the passage of Proposition 10, the Children and Families First Act. Each county created a local Commission and received revenue to be used for programs for children prenatal through age five. Governed by a Commission, First 5 Amador is charged with administering the funds to support these efforts.*

*Evaluation efforts reflect an ongoing commitment to ensure local accountability, document program quality and effectiveness, and measure progress towards outcomes. Each funded program is diverse in terms of interventions and outcomes; therefore, evaluation plans are unique to each program.*

***First 5 Amador adopted the Strengthening Families Framework – Five Protective Factors and works closely with community partners and grantees to incorporate the objectives of the framework.***

***Research has shown that the Five Protective Factors are linked with lower incidence of child abuse and neglect: \****

- 1) Parental Resilience – the ability to manage and bounce back from all types of challenges that emerge in every family’s life.
- 2) Social Connections – friends, family members, neighbors, and community members provide emotional support, help solve problems, offer parenting advice, and give concrete assistance to parents.
- 3) Concrete Support in Times of Need – meeting basic economic needs like food, shelter, clothing, and health care is essential for families to thrive.
- 4) Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development – accurate information about child development and appropriate expectations for children’s behavioral at every age help parents see their children and youth in a positive light and promote their healthy development.
- 5) Social and Emotional Competence of Children – a child’s ability to interact positively with others, self-regulate their behavior, and effectively communicate their feelings has a positive impact on their relationships with their family, other adults, and peers. Challenging behaviors or delayed development can create extra stress for families, so early identification and assistance for both parents and children can head off negative results and keep development on track.

***\*<http://www.cssp.org/reform/strengthening-families/the-basics/protective-factors>***

# Results - Highlights

## 2019-2020

*Upcountry and Camanche Lake Community Centers*

*~Family Resource Centers~*

*Nexus Youth and Family Services*

Nexus Youth & Family Services utilized First 5 Amador funding to implement Family Resource Center (FRC) programs in the unincorporated areas of Upcountry and Camanche. Through the FRCs, Nexus provided access to needed services, socialization opportunities, and programs to ensure that families are strengthened and supported, children are better protected from child abuse and neglect, and are prepared to enter school healthy and ready to learn. The goal of the FRCs is to reduce disparities in access to services and programs for families residing in the Upcountry and Camanche areas of Amador County and to increase the success of self-sufficiency, stability, and resiliency.

**Through facilitated use of evidence-based developmental screening tools (Ages and Stages – ASQ/ASQ-SE Questionnaires), families learned how to foster their child’s development.**

Developmental screening questionnaires were provided to 57 families of which 32 (56%) returned their child’s for scoring. Of the 32 returned screenings, 27 scored within normal limits, 4 were referred to their Primary Care Physician, and one received the ASQ educational materials. All 5 children who were identified as needing follow-up were advised to be rescreened within 6 months. One child did receive a follow-up and showed improvement in the areas of concern.

52 ASQ-SE-2 (social/emotional) questionnaires were provided to families with 26 (50%) returned for scoring. Of the 26 returned screenings, 24 scored within normal limits and 2 received educational tip-sheets. The two children identified as needing follow-up were advised to be rescreened within 6 months. Due to the initial screening, one child received a referral to the Amador County Office of Education Intensive Intervention program (Due to Covid, the referral/re-screenings have not yet occurred).

Staff provided information and education about the screening opportunities and disseminated the ASQ/ASQ-SE-2 during toddler playgroups, parenting classes, the Kindergarten Readiness classes and Family Advocate home visits.

### **Families were connected to needed services by Nexus staff.**

311 children and 375 families benefited from general family support.

298 children received school backpacks.

80 individuals received information regarding health insurance through Covered California and 20 community members were provided assistance with the completion of MediCal applications.

243 families, 33 with children ages 0 – 5, utilized the bimonthly food distribution program offered at the FRCs; 24 of the total number of families were homeless.

FRC Promotoras staff provided Baby Welcome Wagon services to 6 Spanish-speaking families.

44 participants attended the weekly Hispanic Women's Group. The meetings were held virtually during the last quarter of this reporting period. (Topics included: parenting, suicide prevention, home language and culture, and health.)

68 families, 16 with children ages 0 – 5, accessed the centers' emergency food pantry programs; 23 of the total number of families were homeless.

49 seniors participated in weekly onsite socialization events. Eleven of the attendees have grandchildren ages 0 – 5.

245 individuals participated in FRC wellness workshops and individual presentations (Topics included: Mental Health First Aid, Understanding ADHD in Adults and Children, Suicide Prevention, and Educate, Equip and Support for parents wanting to learn more about childhood mental health issues.)

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### **Covid-Related Services.**

62 deliveries were made to 12 Hispanic Women's Group families in need. 214 students received school meal home-delivery two times per week (March – June with plans to continue in the next fiscal year as needed.)

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and associated social distancing / stay at home order issued by the Governor, Nexus closed the Family Resource Centers to the public beginning in mid-March. Staff modified the service delivery model and began to provide information and referral assistance through phone or video connection. Staff also began to conduct drive through food and resource distributions as well as deliver needed items to homebound clients. Staff worked in conjunction with the school district, food bank, First 5 Amador, senior center, and hospital to ensure food security for children, families, and seniors. In addition, staff provided activities, hygiene and dental kits, laundry supplies, grocery cards and information on mental health, community resources and alcohol, tobacco and other drug prevention.

These home deliveries were essential in maintaining communication with families struggling with the ramifications of the pandemic, loss of work and access to school.

In lieu of in-person group wellness workshops, staff began recording and posting each presentation on the Nexus website, Facebook pages, and YouTube channel. The presentations were provided by a licensed clinician and included links to pertinent resources and wellness information. As a component of our Covid-19 interim service plan, following are some of the videos that were posted in English and Spanish.

Weathering the Storm / Tips for Staying Calm in Times of Uncertainty

Self-Care During Isolation

Decision Making and Self Care

**Case management families achieved desired goals.**

48% of clients met their stated goal.

19% of clients made significant progress.

24% of clients made some progress.

9% of clients made little or no progress.

Family Advocates utilized case management software to track Family Action Plans, case management activity, and family engagement. Goal areas included education, employment, health, parenting, family management, and safety. This data was used to assess individual client progress, family strengths and concerns, and interventions.

**FRCs offered access to quality early childhood programs and supportive services.**

Girl Scouts	Children's Tutoring	Summertime Fun
Toddler Time Playgroup	Family Advocate services	Woodworkers meetings
Clothes Closet	Resume writing assistance	Information & Referral
Kindergarten Readiness	Children's counseling	Parenting Classes
Alcoholics Anonymous meetings	Toddler Time Playgroup	Promotores de Salud

**Parents were provided opportunities at each center to promote leadership and societal involvement.**

During the past year, community members provided 1,514 hours of volunteer service at the centers – an increase of 20% from the prior year. The following chart summarizes the total number of parent volunteers per project.

<b>FRC Project</b>	<b># of volunteers</b>	<b>FRC Project</b>	<b># of volunteers</b>
Information and Referral	8	FRC Operations	4
Food Distributions	9	Computer Assistance	4
Back-Pack 2 School	10	Clothes Closet	7
Angel Tree	10	Peer Partner Program	7
FRC Maintenance	5	Community Garden	5
Senior Social	3	FRC Yardwork/Garden	5

**Objective: Expand opportunities for families with young children to participate in intentional, interactive learning and socialization opportunities.**

Activity: Provide toddler playgroups once per week at the Upcountry and Camanche FRC sites.

**Outcome:** The Upcountry and Camanche Lake Community Center sites each implemented weekly toddler playgroup events for children and parents/caregivers to participate in together. Playgroup services were based on the *Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers and Twos* which is a comprehensive program designed to help educators implement a developmentally appropriate, content-rich program for children with diverse backgrounds and skill levels. In addition, staff utilized components of the *Handwriting Without Tears* curriculum including the Roll-A-Dough Letters, FLIP Crayons, and Magnetic Lowercase & Blackboard Set to introduce multisensory materials that help children develop their writing skills, and provided the “My First School Book” for all toddlers enrolled in the program. Staff also integrated *Baby STEM* activities into the daily schedule in order to promote the foundations of STEM which support children to develop skills in critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity. The FRC playgroup activities gave children opportunities to develop personal relationships with peers and engage in positive interactions with adults. Together, parents and children learned the importance of demonstrating receptive and expressive language skills and communication strategies. Children had the opportunity to develop early literacy skills, as well as control of large muscles for movement, navigation, and balance, and small muscles for manipulation and exploration. Parents/caregivers and children had the opportunity to learn and demonstrate healthy and safe habits. The Toddler Time Playgroup environment met the four domains of the *Creative Curriculum*: Social-Emotional Development; Language Development; Cognitive Development; and Perceptual and Motor Development. During playgroups, children were provided with age-appropriate choices for activities.

Throughout the reporting period, 29 children and 24 adults participated in the Toddler Time Playgroup offered at the Upcountry Community Center, and 24 children and 17 adults participated at the Camanche Center.

During playgroups, information regarding child development, local resources, and upcoming community events was available for parents/caregivers. In order to ensure that playgroup themes and topics were responsive to parent-child interests, FRC staff regularly discussed emerging needs and interests with participating families.



The demographic data provided in the following chart represents the 53 children who participated in Toddler Time Playgroup events at the FRCs during the reporting period.

Age	#	Gender	#	Ethnicity	#	Residence	#	Special Needs	#
<1	5	Male	36	White	37	Jackson	6	Yes	2
1	16	Female	17	Black	0	Ione	22	No	51
2	13			Hispanic	6	Pioneer	9		
3	10			Native American	0	Pine Grove	8		
4	5			Asian	1	Fiddletown	1		
5	4			Multi	7	Volcano	1		
6	0			Unknown	2	Burson	2		
						Valley Springs	2		
						West Point	1		
						Pollock Pines	1		

In order to ensure that community members were aware of Toddler Time Playgroup services, staff provided program flyers and informational packets for families at Pine Grove Elementary School, Pioneer Elementary School, Ione Elementary School, Ione Head Start, family child care homes, grocery stores, and local businesses. In addition, staff disseminated information about playgroup services at the American Legion Centennial Celebration, Ione Harvest Faire, Jackson Rancheria Employee Health & Wellness Fair, Sierra Wind Wellness & Recovery Center's Fall Festival, Children's Holiday Festival, and during Angel Tree holiday gift distributions.

Throughout the first 6 months of the program year the average daily attendance at the Upcountry Toddler Time Playgroup was 8 family members. The average daily attendance at the Camanche Toddler Time Playgroup was 6 family members. Attendance at the Toddler Time Playgroups during this time was impacted by several factors including inclement weather, power outages, the departure of long-term staff, and the adjustment for some parents/caregivers who were reluctant to accept a new program facilitator. Understanding resistance to change, new staff worked diligently to conduct outreach activities, build a trust-based relationship with enrolled families, as well as continuously reach out to those who had stopped attending in an effort to encourage their participation.

Throughout the next few months, enrollment and attendance began trending upwards with overall improved participation. From July through mid-March, the average daily attendance at the Upcountry Toddler Time Playgroup was 9 family members; the highest daily attendance was 19 family members. The annual average daily attendance at the Camanche Toddler Time Playgroup was 6.5 family members; the highest daily attendance was 14 family members.

Toddler Time Playgroup participant satisfaction surveys were conducted by a Program Manager to assess and monitor program effectiveness. The table below summarizes the parents' year-end responses to the verbal questionnaire. Twenty-two surveys were completed.

	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
1. I feel that the program has helped me enhance my child's school readiness and strengthened my parenting skills.				27%	73%
2. I feel that I have learned more about my child's growth, development, and learning.				14%	86%
3. I feel connected to the playgroup staff and other families.				5%	95%
4. I feel that the playgroup staff encourage me to be actively involved in my child's learning.				5%	95%
5. Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of the program for my child and me.				5%	95%

Parents also provided the following comments regarding the Toddler Time Playgroup program:

*"My granddaughter has opened up so much due to this playgroup."*

*"Miss Angela is a great teacher. She is so patient with all the children."*

*"I love this program and I'm an adult. My children love it too!"*

In addition, FRC playgroup staff utilized a condensed version of the *40 Developmental Assets for Early Childhood* as a pre- and post-survey for parents to measure the growth and development of external and internal assets their child and family acquire while participating in the program. The following charts summarize the pre- and post-survey results of current assets submitted by participating families at entry into the program and again at program completion. All post data was collected using an online survey link that was emailed to parents at the end of the year.

<b>Pre-External Assets</b>	<b>Decline to answer</b>	<b>Not at all/ Rarely</b>	<b>Somewhat/ Sometimes</b>	<b>Very/ Often</b>	<b>Extremely/ Almost Always</b>
Support	4%	0%	0%	4%	96%
Empowerment	0%	0%	2%	8%	90%
Boundaries & Expectations	0%	0%	4%	24%	72%
Constructive Use of Time	0%	0%	5%	18%	77%
<b>Post External Assets</b>	<b>Decline to answer</b>	<b>Not at all/ Rarely</b>	<b>Somewhat/ Sometimes</b>	<b>Very/ Often</b>	<b>Extremely/ Almost Always</b>
Support	0%	0%	0%	22%	78%
Empowerment	0%	0%	0%	37%	63%
Boundaries & Expectations	0%	0%	3%	16%	81%
Constructive Use of Time	0%	0%	11%	35%	54%
<b>Pre-Internal Assets</b>	<b>Decline to answer</b>	<b>Not at all/ Rarely</b>	<b>Somewhat/ Sometimes</b>	<b>Very/ Often</b>	<b>Extremely/ Almost Always</b>
Commitment to Learning	0%	0%	2%	16%	82%
Positive Values	0%	4%	12%	24%	60%
Social Competencies	2%	5%	14%	32%	47%
Positive Identity	2%	4%	4%	8%	82%
<b>Post Internal Assets</b>	<b>Decline to answer</b>	<b>Not at all/ Rarely</b>	<b>Somewhat/ Sometimes</b>	<b>Very/ Often</b>	<b>Extremely/ Almost Always</b>
Commitment to Learning	0%	0%	8%	36%	56%
Positive Values	0%	0%	8%	23%	69%
Social Competencies	0%	0%	11%	27%	62%
Positive Identity	0%	0%	0%	29%	71%

The results of the pre- and post-surveys indicated that families who participated in the Toddler Time Playgroup events at the FRCs self-reported an overall increase in the areas of Boundaries & Expectations, Positive Values, and Social Competencies.

The outcome data also reflects variations in the areas of Support, Empowerment, Constructive Use of Time, Commitment to Learning, and Positive Identity which parents attributed to the following reasons:

*“We are so stressed out at home because of the coronavirus. I had to stop working to stay home and take care of the kids. This has affected everything in our lives.”*

*“The uncertainty in our lives is taking a toll on my family. I am struggling to understand how we are supposed to keep doing this indefinitely. I had to spend all of my time with my high schooler and first grader at the end of the year just to make sure they would do their online school work. I didn’t have time to think about my little one very much.”*

*“Not having a routine or schedule like we would normally has put my family in total upheaval.” “Not being able to come to activities with other families has made us feel isolated and exhausted.”*

# Baby Welcome Wagon Universal - Home Visiting (Amador County Public Health)

The goal of the program is to strengthen family functioning and improve children's readiness for school by ensuring all new parents have access to the tools needed to optimize their children's home environment, whatever the socioeconomic status. The Kit for New Parents, developed by First 5 California, is used as the basis for the delivery of parenting information and customized with Amador community services and resources. The program provides paraprofessional face to face home visiting services. The first visit will preferably be actualized in the prenatal period. With the distribution of the Parent Tool Kit this home visit serves as the arena in which the family can express difficulties or family challenges are detected by the home visitor and services arranged to limit the negative effects on the caregiver and infant relationship. Education regarding Ages and Stages (ASQ/ASQ-SE-2) developmental screenings is incorporated in all visits and the tool is made available for siblings (0 - 5) already in the home.

The Baby Welcome Wagon is unique compared to other home visiting programs in the county. In this program, all Amador County residents with a newborn child are eligible for health education and referral services. The program will build on each family's individual strengths ultimately improving the health of their infant as well as overall family strength.

The Baby Welcome Wagon visit provides an opportunity to enroll families in the Imagination Library – home literacy program. Children enrolled in the Imagination Library at birth will receive 60 books in the mail by their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday. Introducing families to the importance of early literacy immediately after the birth of their child reinforces the impact talking, reading, and singing has on the development of their child and bonding with the adults in their life.

## Baby Welcome Wagon



**FREE GIFT  
THAT KEEPS  
ON GIVING!**

**If you or someone you know is expecting or celebrating the arrival of a new baby, Baby Welcome Wagon would like to offer you the gift of a lifetime!**

This FREE gift, available to all **AMADOR COUNTY** residents, includes an easy-to-follow Parent Tips book, the "Happy Baby" book to read to your child, a t-shirt, the "What To Do When Your Child Gets Sick" book, and lots of other fun and helpful items!

Sign up for the **IMAGINATION LIBRARY** and your child will receive a FREE BOOK each month.

Sign up for the First 5 Amador newsletter: YOU are your child's first teacher... remember to **"TALK, READ, and SING"** to your baby!

To receive your **FREE GIFT** and for more information, call **223-6563** or toll free **844-701-8883**



## **Highlights**

### **Meeting Families Where They Are**

First 5 Amador requested participation in First 5 California's diaper supply program. F5A successfully leveraged this opportunity by requiring local agencies/organizations to offer a referral to the Baby Welcome Wagon (BWW) home visiting program prior to enrolling in the free diaper distribution. Families could deny the referral and still receive diapers. This proved to be an extremely effective strategy.

The number of families choosing to receive a BWW visit during the first portion of the year doubled from 2018/19. Below are some of the outcomes realized by the 70 participating families:

- 63 accepted the offer of a home visit (6 had BWW visits in prior years and did not want another visit.);
- 11 Spanish-speaking families were offered ongoing services through the community centers' Promotoras program; 9 Native American families participated; 1 Foster mom; 1 visit occurred at the homeless shelter; 4 ASQ/ASQ-SE Screenings were completed with 2 children referred for follow-up with the regional center.
- 36 moms were screened for perinatal mood / anxiety disorders resulting in 60% with elevated scores. 12 women accepted referrals for clinical services through First 5 Amador's MHSA program.
- Virtual visits were launched during the last 3 months of the fiscal year. First 5 California's Parent Kits customized with Amador educational material and resources were delivered to homes prior to the virtual visits.
- BWW staff reported an increase in father involvement during the pandemic and virtual contact.

**Objective:** Parents of children from zero to three years will be given the opportunity to participate in the Baby Welcome Wagon (BWW) program.

Number of Referrals: 136 (more than double the previous year)

Jackson	43	Sutter Creek	10
Ione	33	Pine Grove	24
Pioneer	13	River Pines / Fiddletown	02
Plymouth	04	Volcano	03
Homeless	03		

1<sup>st</sup> Home Visits Completed: 90 (more than double the previous year)

Jackson	25	Sutter Creek	09
Ione	26	Pine Grove	09
Pioneer	07	River Pines / Fiddletown	02
Plymouth	02	Volcano	01
Homeless	01	Telephone/Zoom	08

2<sup>nd</sup> Contact Completed: 40 (25% increase from previous year)

Jackson	08	Sutter Creek	02
Ione	10	Pine Grove	04
Pioneer	07	Public Health /Pregnancy Help Center	02
Plymouth	03	Volcano	02
Homeless	01	River Pines / Fiddletown	01

Ethnicity of BWW families (mother's ethnicity):

White	66	Laninx	06
Native American	03	Multi-Racial	09
Asian	01	Filipino	02
African American	01	Unknown	02

Number of children within the home after the first home visit: (More than double prior year.)

0-2years	104
3-5years	21

85% of second home visit (contact) families will report having insurance:

100% of the families reported having insurance after second contact.

Number of Women Screened for PMAD (Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorder)

36	Women were screened with the Edinburgh tool
21	Women had elevated scores
14	Referred for counseling services
12	Entered clinical services
01	Put on waiting list for preferred clinician
01	Pending MediCal application
05	Already engaged in counseling services
02	Refused referral

\*\*Clinical services are coordinated through Amador County Behavioral, Private Therapists, as well as through First 5's MHSA contracted services with local clinicians.

**From the BWW Home Visitor:** In March of 2020, the world as we know it changed in Amador County and around the world. Along with those changes came the reality that home visits would come to a halt. How and could we still conduct a visit and at the same time maintain the health and safety of the home visitor and the vulnerable families? Pregnant women had been grouped as “high risk” for contracting the disease. At the same time, there were women who needed help and reassurance more than ever. Women faced the prospect of possibly not having their partners with them during the birth of their child. Anxiety and fear of the unknown were at an all-time high. First 5 Amador purchased an iPad for the home visitor to either skype or zoom with the families. Arrangements were made with the families for the home visitor to drop off the parent kit at the front door. The drop off was followed with a phone call or a virtual visit. The first two families to set up virtual visits were actually initiated by the first-time fathers. Although awkward in the beginning...both visits went very well. Families were able to ask questions, resources for the first-time parents were shared, referrals were made regarding immunizations, the WIC program, and breastfeeding. Another first-time mom opted to have her visit via a phone call. The mom suffered from anxiety issues and was having problems with what she referred to as a “colicky baby”. The home visitor spoke to the mom prior to dropping off the parent kit and was able to include information on “The Purple Crying” phase. The mom initially avoided the home visitor’s call...but timing once again prevailed. The mom was very grateful and relieved after the extended phone call regarding the parent kit. Again, resources were shared and the mom was assured that she was not alone. ###

**From the BWW Home Visitor:** Imagine yourself with 3 children (two of which are twin toddlers). You are working as a Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN) part-time, while hoping to further your career. Imagine experiencing Domestic Violence and having to flee your circumstances with your children. You don’t want anyone to know. You’re ashamed! You can’t, or don’t want to tell your employer. You don’t want to lose the job that barely covers your rent. You have to pay for childcare and you are an “essential” worker during Covid-19. Your benefits are running out and you don’t know where to turn. Luckily, this Mom was connected with a local therapist who reached out to First 5 Amador and the Baby Welcome Wagon. We all immediately responded and put our heads together. First 5 Amador supplied diapers and wipes for the twins, an emergency gift card for food/gas and other needs

purchased through a Covid – FRC grant, and a referral to WIC. Baby Welcome Wagon connected with the Mom and provided information regarding childcare assistance, housing and utility resources, food distribution, Operation Care, Pregnancy Help Center and Head Start. The BWW visitor also followed up on whether Mom was able to apply for WIC (she had made an appointment). One of the hardest things the Mom had to do was force herself to obtain services at the local Food Bank. She never thought she would be in this position. Baby Welcome Wagon encouraged Mom through a lengthy conversation that she was not alone, this was temporary, and services are there to help the community in times of need. She cried on the phone because she was so grateful to receive the help. The Mom went to the Food Bank and received help. This Mom plans to continue to look for ways to get past these tough times. She did qualify for continued childcare assistance through The Resource Center. This was a huge relief! The moral support this Mom received and the resources that she learned about through the Baby Welcome Wagon program, along with its partners, lightened the load of worry for this family. Henry Ford said, "Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success. (True statement!) ###

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## *Toddler Playgroups – Jackson and Ione (H. Hall)*

The Toddler Playgroup environment met the four domains of the *Creative Curriculum*: Social-Emotional Development; Language Development; Cognitive Development; and Perceptual and Motor Development.



The program allows parents / caregivers to introduce their children to a range of activities that enhance their learning. It also encourages children to develop social skills at their own pace and supports emotional growth by building confidence and encouraging them to be independent.



Toddler playgroups offer support to parents / caregivers by giving information of other services provided in the community and screenings that help them to understand how their child is developing. It provides parents and caregivers a comfortable space for social interaction, community networking, and an opportunity to play/interact with their child.

**Participation: 96 children / 76 parents - caregivers**

The structure of the Jackson and Ione playgroups consists of a welcome and greeting; exploratory play; lesson - activity; story / circle time; a healthy snack / water (often infused with fruit / vegetables); and clean up.

When parents arrive, they often share with the coordinator comments their children have shared prior to, or following playgroup. Children anticipate the weekly playgroup and it takes only a few weeks for the routine to be set and children to feel comfortable.

Three or four stations of activities such as painting, drawing, puppet play, and dress-up / pretend are provided each week. A large group activity for physical development and play is incorporated into the structure of the playgroup. *Zoo-phonics* is utilized to introduce the children to letters and literacy.

The majority of adults are grandparents, mothers or small family child care providers with several fathers attending periodically. Time for parent-to-parent interaction occurs during free play. The conversations are rich with parents sharing information such as local medical care options, favorite outdoor areas that are safe for small children, and support for each other regarding family stressors.

Programs funded by First 5 Amador such as the Imagination Library, safety net resources, and community events and services are discussed and material made available for parents and child care providers. Nutrition education and physical activity are focus areas of these playgroups.

It was necessary to pivot to curbside events during the last quarter of the fiscal year. Participation increased significantly which demonstrated the need to consider options in future years for families that would prefer doing activities at home. Resources regarding stress reduction, safety net services, and future events are included in the kits that are distributed at each site twice per month.



## Amador Cooperative Preschool

Amador Cooperative Preschool (ACP) officially opened its doors in August of 2006 and is Amador County's only state licensed parent cooperative preschool. ACP differs from other preschools in the county in that it is run by, and for, the preschool families. At the preschool, children learn through play -- a critical strategy for healthy social, emotional and cognitive development. Parents are recognized as their child's first teacher and considered to be valuable cooperative partners with the preschool staff in supporting their child's development.

Throughout this reporting period 10 children participated in the preschool. Parents are continuing to recruit additional families to ensure a sustainable program going forward. The teacher / director is an active participant in Amador Quality for Kids and has benefited from continuing education and incentives.

First 5 Amador staff provided technical assistance to parents and eventually the newly hired teacher. The program is now established as a 501(c)3 and licensed for 20 children.

The program has a new name: Mother Lode Preschool and continues to be co-located with First 5 Amador.

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, the preschool attempted online learning for children and families and eventually decided to close for the school year due to the challenges.



## Nexus Youth and Family Services Camanche Lake and Upcountry Kindergarten Readiness

Nexus Youth & Family Services utilized First 5 Amador funding to implement a Kindergarten Readiness Program at the Upcountry and Camanche Lake Community Centers for the 2019-2020 school year. The Kindergarten Readiness Program was designed to help participating children build the school readiness skills which have been outlined by local teachers, administrators, parents and professionals in the following categories: Social Readiness, Number Readiness, Colors & Shapes, Life Skills, Motor Skills (Large & Fine), Reading Readiness, Writing Readiness, Music & Art, and Health & Safety. The goal of the Kindergarten Readiness Program is to reduce disparities in access to school readiness programming for families living in the Camanche area, and through this increase the number of children who are ready to enter Kindergarten with skills for success in life.

**Objective:** Children will enter school with the skills for success in life.

**Activity:** Provide a Kindergarten Readiness Program once per week at the two centers.

**Outcome:** Nexus implemented a weekly Kindergarten Readiness Program for children ages 3-5 at the Camanche Lake and Upcountry Community Centers. Staff utilized the *Zoo-phonics* curriculum which is a program designed to help teachers implement developmentally appropriate early education services for children to learn the alphabet, phonemic awareness, rhyming, pre-sound blending, and pre-writing skills. In addition, staff utilized the *Handwriting Without Tears* curriculum which helps children develop their writing skills through explicit, multi-sensory, play based instruction, as well as integrated *STEM Play* activities into the lesson plans in order to promote creativity and higher-level thinking. Kindergarten Readiness activities gave children opportunities to develop personal relationships with peers and engage in positive interactions with adults. Children had the opportunity to develop early literacy skills, as well as control of large muscles for movement, navigation and balance, and small muscles for manipulation and exploration. Parents/caregivers and children had the opportunity to learn and demonstrate healthy and safe habits. During Kindergarten Readiness classes, children were provided with age-appropriate choices for activities that strengthened their school readiness skills.

Throughout the reporting period, 20 children participated in the Kindergarten Readiness Program offered at the Camanche Lake Community Center; the average daily attendance was 12 children. Seven children participated at the Upcountry Community Center (UCC), the average daily attendance was three. The program at the UCC site is only in its second year. The Camanche Lake program has been in existence for more than 10 years. The following Daily Schedule was utilized to ensure that planned activities align with *domains* that represent the overarching areas of child development and early learning essential for school and long-term success.



In addition to facilitating Kindergarten Readiness classroom sessions, program staff also utilized the *Zoo-phonics* curriculum to create weekly at-home activity packets for enrolled families. At-home activity packets aligned with classroom topics so children and parents could practice and promote early literacy fundamentals. Staff utilized KRP data to ensure that activity packets supported skill acquisition beneficial to each student.

The demographic data provided in the following chart represents the children who participated in the Kindergarten Readiness Programs during the 2019-2020 school year.

<b>Age</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>Residence</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>Special Needs</b>	<b>#</b>
<1	0	Male	10	White	23	Jackson	2	Yes	2
1	0	Female	17	Black	0	Ione	20	No	25
2	0			Hispanic	0	Pioneer	2		
3	6			Multi	4	Pine Grove	1		
4	12			Unknown	0	Plymouth	0		
5	2					Valley Springs	2		

In order to ensure that community members were aware of Kindergarten Readiness services, staff provided program flyers and informational packets for families at Pine Grove Elementary School, Pioneer Elementary School, Ione Elementary School, Ione Head Start, family child care homes, grocery stores, and local businesses. In addition, staff disseminated information about Kindergarten Readiness services at the American Legion Centennial Celebration, Ione Harvest Faire, Jackson Rancheria Employee Health & Wellness Fair, Sierra Wind Wellness & Recovery Center’s Fall Festival, Children’s Holiday Festival, and during Angel Tree holiday gift distributions. Community outreach activities, word of mouth, and partner agency promotion efforts proved to be very successful.

After each Kindergarten Readiness session, information regarding child development, local resources, and upcoming community events was available for parents and caregivers. Program staff met with parents to provide important information regarding their child’s progress, and support in their role as their child’s first, most important teacher. This strategy was particularly critical because parental involvement in children’s education from an early age has a significant effect on educational achievement, and continues to do so into adolescence and adulthood.

Kindergarten Readiness Program participant satisfaction surveys were conducted by a Program Manager to assess and monitor program effectiveness. The table below summarizes the parents’ year-end responses to the verbal questionnaire. Fifteen parents completed the survey.

	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
3. I feel that the program has helped me enhance my child's school readiness and strengthened my parenting skills.				13%	87%
4. I feel that I have learned more about my child's growth, development, and learning.					100%
3. I feel connected to the Kindergarten Readiness staff and other families.					100%
4. I feel that the Kindergarten Readiness staff encourage me to be actively involved in my child's learning.					100%
5. Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of the program for my child and me.					100%

Parents also provided the following comments regarding the Kindergarten Readiness Program:

*"My child really enjoyed the program and grew in the short time she was able to come."*

*"We really appreciate this program. Thank you!"*

*"This is so much fun and my child is really learning. I wish you could offer it 3 days a week."*

*"We look forward to coming. My son gets so excited when he knows it's a school day."*

*"My child has learned how to write his name. We are so proud!"*

*"Miss Angela is a great teacher."*

Throughout the reporting period, staff worked closely with a family whose child was exhibiting behavioral challenges during Kindergarten Readiness classes. When they first began participating in services, the parent shared that she was concerned about a potential developmental disability however was hesitant to pursue formal screening services for her child. Over time, staff observed that the frequency and severity of the child's disruptive conduct appeared to increase when the parent was present in the classroom. In order to promote positive interactions between the child and parent, staff provided practical strategies for effective behavior management and continued to model responsive communication including implementing verbal transition steps, using praise as a nurturing parenting skill, using fewer commands, and reducing recurrent questioning. In addition, the Behavioral Specialist met with the family to provide support and resources. The family continued to participate in Kindergarten Readiness services however the parent appeared to be somewhat discouraged with the noticeable lack of overall improvement in her child's challenging behavior and this resulted in frustration with the program in general. Staff continued to work closely with the family and was eventually able to persuade the parents to access special education services for their child in order to be able to effectively address any identified needs.

Today, the child continues to receive services through the ACOE Intensive Intervention program. Recently, the mother shared with staff that her daughter is progressing very well in the modified environment. She also thanked staff for the help and encouragement to pursue services for her child. "I appreciate everything you have done for us," she said. "You helped me make a good decision for my daughter."

Throughout the reporting period, program staff participated in multiple professional growth and development opportunities through Amador Quality for Kids (i.e. Loss, Trauma, and Young Children, Zoophonics Make and Take, ADQ-3/ASQ-SE Training, etc.).

Kindergarten Readiness Program staff utilized the Kindergarten Readiness Profile (KRP) as a pre- and post-assessment to measure the growth and development of school readiness skills children acquired while participating in the program. Domains included in the assessment are essential school readiness indicators in Social/Emotional, Physical, and Cognitive competencies. Staff also utilized the KRP as a screening tool to ensure that appropriate prevention and intervention strategies were provided in a timely manner, and for students who needed them. Throughout the year, staff completed the pre and post KRP assessments with 20 children. The post assessments were conducted as mid-year program assessments in the month of February.

The following charts summarize participating children’s pre and post KRP screening results and demonstrate an overall increase in the acquisition of skills, abilities and knowledge related to early learning and school readiness standards during the first 6 months of service.

<b>Pre-Social/Emotional</b>	<b>Not Yet</b>	<b>Emerging</b>	<b>Almost Mastered</b>	<b>Mastered</b>
A. Seeks adult help when appropriate	0%	6%	88%	6%
B. Engages in cooperative play activities with peers	0%	18%	82%	0%
C. Exhibits impulse control and self-regulation	0%	6%	94%	0%
D. Stays with or repeats a task	0%	12%	82%	6%
E. Separates appropriately from caregiver most days	12%	18%	64%	6%
F. Is enthusiastic and curious in approaching new activities	0%	24%	76%	0%
G. Follows rules when participating in routine activities	0%	12%	88%	0%

<b>Post Social/Emotional</b>	<b>Not Yet</b>	<b>Emerging</b>	<b>Almost Mastered</b>	<b>Mastered</b>
A. Seeks adult help when appropriate	0%	0%	27%	73%
B. Engages in cooperative play activities with peers	0%	0%	47%	53%
C. Exhibits impulse control and self-regulation	0%	0%	40%	60%
D. Stays with or repeats a task	0%	0%	33%	67%
E. Separates appropriately from caregiver most days	0%	7%	13%	80%
F. Is enthusiastic and curious in approaching new activities	0%	0%	33%	67%
G. Follows rules when participating in routine activities	0%	0%	40%	60%

<b>Pre-Physical</b>	<b>Not Yet</b>	<b>Emerging</b>	<b>Almost Mastered</b>	<b>Mastered</b>
H. Uses tools with increasing precision	0%	53%	47%	0%
I. Demonstrates general coordination.	0%	18%	82%	0%
J. Demonstrates sense of his/her own body in relation to others	0%	18%	82%	0%
<b>Post Physical</b>	<b>Not Yet</b>	<b>Emerging</b>	<b>Almost Mastered</b>	<b>Mastered</b>
H. Uses tools with increasing precision	0%	13%	67%	20%
I. Demonstrates general coordination.	0%	13%	54%	33%
J. Demonstrates sense of his/her own body in relation to others	0%	0%	67%	33%

<b>Pre-Cognitive</b>	<b>Not Yet</b>	<b>Emerging</b>	<b>Almost Mastered</b>	<b>Mastered</b>
K. Recognizes own name	0%	24%	41%	35%
L. Writes own name	18%	58%	24%	0%
M. Demonstrates expressive abilities	0%	24%	64%	12%
N. Understands that numbers represent quantity	0%	29%	71%	0%

<b>Post Cognitive</b>	<b>Not Yet</b>	<b>Emerging</b>	<b>Almost Mastered</b>	<b>Mastered</b>
K. Recognizes own name	0%	0%	20%	80%
L. Writes own name	0%	33%	60%	7%
M. Demonstrates expressive abilities	0%	0%	60%	40%
N. Understands that numbers represent quantity	0%	7%	73%	20%

<b>Pre-Recognizes Colors</b>											
	88%	65%	65%	88%	65%	65%	53%	76%	71%	53%	24%
<b>Post Recognizes Colors</b>											
	93%	73%	80%	93%	67%	73%	67%	87%	93%	87%	40%

<b>Pre-Recognizes Primary Shapes</b>	<b>Circle</b>	<b>Triangle</b>	<b>Square</b>	<b>Rectangle</b>
	88%	47%	53%	29%
<b>Post Recognizes Primary Shapes</b>	<b>Circle</b>	<b>Triangle</b>	<b>Square</b>	<b>Rectangle</b>
	93%	80%	73%	40%

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent FRC closures, staff modified Kindergarten Readiness services beginning in mid-March. Staff began to conduct drive-through kit and resource distributions as well as deliver needed items to homebound clients. The number of kits distributed ranged from 10 – 37. Contents included First 5’s Bridge to Kindergarten Calendar book, art projects, books, and activities for families to do together during the stay-at-home order.

In order to assess participant satisfaction with the kit and resource distribution services, staff disseminated surveys to families who had received the activity packets. All feedback was collected using an online survey link that was texted or emailed to parents at the end of the program year. Twenty-one surveys were completed.

100% of parents surveyed agreed / strongly agreed the activity kits helped enhance their child’s school readiness and strengthened their parenting skills.

100% of parents agreed / strongly agreed the activity kits are age-appropriate and engaging.

79% of families felt the activity kits are helpful during the pandemic and closure of in-person services.

100% of parents agreed / strongly agreed they were satisfied with the quality of the program.

Parents also provided the following comments regarding the activity kits and resources:

*“Due to the pandemic, my child hasn’t been able to interact in a classroom so with these kits I’m able to provide learning-based activities at home.”*

*“Such a great idea!” “My child absolutely loves these activities.”*

*“What a great alternative idea!”*

*“We saw the kit distribution advertised in the local newspaper. Thank you for doing this!”*

*“We thank our lucky stars for these activities. It gives our child something to look forward to.”*

*“These are a life-saver. My kids have been so bored and lost without being able to be around other kids.”*

*“Thank you for everything you are doing to help us. We are stressed out and these kits give us something to do that makes our child happy.”*

*“My daughter likes to try to keep track of when the distribution date is coming. She loves to go pick up her schoolwork.”*

**Conclusion:** The Nexus Kindergarten Readiness program was well-received by participating families. Families were referred to the program by multiple sources, including current and former enrolled families. This year, 20% of enrolled children were from returning families that had older children who had previously participated in services. Other enrolled families learned about Kindergarten Readiness services through family members, friends, FRC staff, social media, and community outreach activities.

By implementing quality and intentional school readiness programming, Nexus Kindergarten Readiness Program staff helped ensure that children living in the rural areas of Camanche and Pine Grove had improved access to services designed to support the developmental building blocks that are most important for a child’s school and long-term success:

# Commission-Run Programs

## Covid-19 Pandemic Support Services

First 5 was awarded a Family Resource Center grant which provided more than \$25,000 in supplies, cards for groceries, gas, diapers, etc. to families impacted by the stay-at-home order. Nexus combined the distribution of these items with home deliveries to families April through June.

108 children (64 = 0-5) and 66 adults benefited from these Covid support services through Nexus, Tribal TANF, Public Health, and the Pregnancy Help Center. Parent education programs that could be presented in a virtual format and focused on child abuse and neglect were purchased to allow FRC staff to continue working with families throughout the pandemic and beyond.

## Transition to Kindergarten

### *Background*

The Bridge Program in Amador County began in 2003 and initially served 16 children. This program was designed for children who would be entering kindergarten in the fall and had spent little or no time in a preschool setting. The program was designed to introduce the children to the structure and rhythm of the classroom. It was called a Bridge Program because it was aimed to help children cross from the pre-Kindergarten environment to Kindergarten.

This year the program had to be modified due to the Covid-19 restrictions. First 5's program coordinator created 300 school readiness kits to distribute to families. Kits were distributed by elementary school sites, through First 5 curbside events, Upcountry and Camanche Lake Community Center home deliveries, and child care providers / preschools.

### *Parent Education*

Parent education this year did not occur at the customary Kick-off to Kindergarten Nights due to the change in kindergarten enrollment through the school district. Information regarding how to help your child prepare for kindergarten was provided by First 5 staff during enrollment at each of the school sites. First 5 Amador is working with the school district to establish a new schedule to accommodate Kick-off to Kindergarten events at each site due to the popularity in previous years.





First 5 California IMPACT (Improve and Maximize Programs so All Children Thrive) is an innovative approach that forges partnerships between First 5 California and counties to achieve the goal of helping children ages 0 to 5 and their families thrive by increasing the number of high-quality early learning settings, including supporting and engaging families in the early learning process.

Participation rate in Amador's Quality for Kids (IMPACT) continues to be high with 70% of FCC homes (24) and 86% of centers (12) actively engaged. Participants represent center-based programs, family child care and 7 alternate sites (toddler playgroups, home visiting and school readiness programs). Families and caregivers are invited to attend all educational opportunities.

**Individual Participation:**

51 Center-based employees

24 Family Child Care owner/operators

4 Alternate Site employees / contractors

Total = 79 individuals

**Site Participation:**

12 Centers

24 Family Child Care

7 Sites / Programs (Playgroups, School Readiness, Home Visiting)

Amador's P.E.E.R. (Provider Early Education Resource) supported participants by providing coaching support and workshops. The P.E.E.R. transitioned to monthly educational opportunities as well as individual and group support during the last quarter of the fiscal year due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The P.E.E.R. created a monthly calendar for early care providers to assist with technical assistance, educational and support opportunities.

Amador's P.E.E.R. generates a social / emotional "Tips" post that ties in with an Imagination Library book for First 5's Facebook page. These are extremely popular and frequently receive comments from parents as well as providers.

Incentives for participation in quality improvement activities were awarded to individuals (i.e. for early childhood education classes) and sites for the adoption of systems changes such as the incorporation of Ages and Stages Developmental Screenings and administration of environmental rating scales (ECERS). To assist child care providers and preschool teachers in developing a robust literacy program at their sites, AQ4K developed "*Literacy on the Move*" which delivered education and resources to providers at their sites. Many providers are unable to access literacy resources due to the limited hours and locations

of public libraries. *Literacy on the Move* provided resources as well as recommendations for best practices leaving each provider with the tools needed to continue practicing until the next visit. 75 visits were conducted during this reporting period. Some of the topics included dental health, healthy food / seed planting, and social-emotional well-being.

Amador's Quality for Kids consortia includes members from the Child Care Council, State Preschool, Nexus Youth and Family Services, Amador County Adult Education, ATCAA - Head Start, private preschools, The Resource Connection, and First 5.

#### Feedback from Quality for Kids participants:

Family Child Care Owner / Operator - What I enjoy most about “Amador Quality for kids” is that I can take child development classes on my own time, and in return First 5 helps me by supplying educational toys and games for my daycare, I love that the P.E.E.R./coach is just a phone call away if I ever have a question, it’s nice to have a program that supports childcare providers In Amador County.

Family Child Care Owner / Operator - As a provider having the knowledge of early childhood development is important not only for providing quality care for kids but also a valuable tool in helping parents and families to raise their children. I appreciate the support of the Quality for Kids program and the resources it provides for child care providers.

Family Child Care Owner / Operator - As a childcare provider and as a mother, Quality for Kids has supported me and my business in a myriad of ways. They supply educational toys for my program, they offer a wide variety of professional development opportunities, they offer scholarships and compensation initiatives so that I can purchase educational materials, they provide tools and resources to help me to monitor the development of children, and they are always available to offer resources for everything imaginable that relates to promoting the healthy functioning of families and healthy development of children. Quality for Kids has provided me access to valuable resources and educational materials that keep my program and the families that I care for thriving.

Center-based Preschool Lead Teacher - This is my second year participating in the Quality for Kids program. They help by providing trainings and workshops that benefit my field and tools and resources that I can use to bring back to my program. They also helped support me by providing me with a stipend towards obtaining the two ECE Administration classes I needed in order to be the best supervisor for my program and staff.



#### Support during Covid-19

First 5 Amador along with First 5 California and The Resource Connection provided essential support during the last quarter of the fiscal year. Support included incentives for child care sites that remained opened to serve the children of essential workers. Personal protective equipment including masks, gloves, cleaning supplies, etc. were made available as well as learning material for ages of children not typically served by these sites.



Established by Dolly Parton in 1996, the program mails a new, age-appropriate book every month to registered children from birth until their fifth birthday. More than 60% (800+) of age eligible children in the county are enrolled in the program. More than 9,000 books were mailed to children in Amador County during 19/2020. First 5 funds the majority of the program, however, community service groups and individuals have contributed toward sustainability.

Children receive a “Welcome Book” – the *Little Engine that Could* upon enrollment and “*Look Out Kindergarten Here I Come*” as they graduate from the program. Amador’s highest monthly participation was January 2020 with 843 children receiving a book in the mail. Surveys conducted throughout the year indicate that approximately 25% more children 0 – 5 benefit from the books due to their caregivers opting out of enrollment for second or third child.

Anecdotal feedback from families continued to be extremely positive with comments regarding the frequency of requests by their children for the same book, excitement in anticipating the arrival of the books -- even to the point of conversing with postal carriers regarding their expected deliveries. Early childhood and school district personnel continue to share their appreciation of the program and the opportunities it provides children in Amador to establish early literacy skills. Beyond literacy, the consistency of this program supports parent / caregiver and child bonding by encouraging daily reading.



## Dad and Me (Grandpas, Uncles, Brothers, etc.)

First 5 Amador understands the importance of father-involvement and sponsors Dad & Me monthly events. Research shows that children who grow up with warm, nurturing, and actively involved fathers reap tremendous benefits, including better school performance, increased self-esteem, healthier relationships with peers and caregivers, and future access to greater financial resources, according to a recent review of the research. When fathers read to their young children on a regular basis, they tend to raise children who are superior readers, who perform better in school, and who have better relationship skills (Green, S. 2002)

Each of these events:

- Provides fun and educational opportunities to help children get ready for school.
- Provides opportunities for fathers, grandfathers, uncles, etc. to foster relationships.
- Provides families with ideas for future family field trips and activities.
- Encourages literacy with each family taking home a book related to the activity.

Some of the monthly field trips and activities included a local plant nursery, fire station, Sutter Creek Park, Boston Alley Gymnastics, and the Amador Model Train Museum.

- 48 Fathers / grandfathers and 60 children participated throughout the year.



This is a universal program and while the number of participants is satisfactory, the repeat attendance rate is low. First 5 Amador will administer a survey during 20/2021 to evaluate interest and barriers to participation.

Transition to Curbside Events: During the last quarter of the year, it was necessary to move to a curbside pick-up model. This has proven to be very successful and will help guide decision making regarding options for families as we move into the new year.

**Who's in your future?**

Today's toddlers are tomorrow's doctors, teachers, mechanics, and farmers.

**Children's Mental Health Matters.**

ASQ  
Ages & Stages  
Questionnaires

FIRST5  
AMADOR

209-257-1092

Mental Health Services Act

First 5 Amador offers consultation services funded by the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) by experienced behavioral specialists to assist preschool and child care, and stay-at-home families experiencing challenging behavior. A consultant is available to assist family child care providers and early education teachers with a wide range of resources and services. The consultant offers phone and on-site assistance to programs serving children ages 0-5.

Number of children served:

9 child-specific

3 comprehensive (preschool sites) – 60 children total

Some of the referrals recommended by the behavioral specialist included Nexus Youth and Family Services for ongoing counseling, perinatal wellness services for a pregnant mom experiencing anxiety and postpartum depression, and Valley Mountain Regional Center.

No child was removed from their current setting due to behavioral concerns. During the last quarter of the year Calming Kits, mental health coloring placemats, crayons, children's books on stress, and essential goods for struggling families were distributed to address the challenges of the pandemic.

First 5 continued to provide support for families and early care providers by offering training opportunities and resources regarding challenging behavior, stress reduction and self-care.

First 5's monthly e-newsletter and Facebook posts provide information and resources that support children's mental health. First 5 staff continue to be active participants and member of ongoing Behavioral Health / Mental Health Services Act Steering / Cultural Competency meetings and the Student Assistance Program to reinforce the importance of early identification and services for children and families.

Bus ads continue to promote the importance of supporting children's mental health and developmental screenings. (The header and footer on this page are current bus ads.)

ASQ  
Ages & Stages  
Questionnaires

Children's  
Mental  
Health  
Matters

FIRST5  
AMADOR

Mental Health Services Act

Help children learn how to manage their feelings and to calm down when overwhelmed...

Think  
Like a  
Snail...

STOP

tuck inside  
your shell

and

take  
deep  
3  
breaths



Research tells us that as many as 1 in 7 moms (1 in 10 dads) experience symptoms of depression and anxiety during the postpartum period. People in every age, income level and culture can develop Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders (PMADs) during pregnancy and within the first year after delivery. To address these concerns, First 5 and Amador County's Public Health Department brought together local agencies and organizations to establish the Amador - Calaveras Perinatal Wellness Coalition. Due to the high number of Calaveras babies born at the Sutter Amador Hospital, it made sense to include Calaveras agencies and organizations in the Coalition.

First 5 Amador continued to coordinate Coalition activities. The Coalition continues to have a robust level of participation from the hospital, Amador Public and Behavioral Health, community-based organizations, private clinicians, and a retired OB/Gyn. The Coalition's ongoing work and accomplishments include training for professionals and paraprofessionals; reviewing and refining an algorithm that provides details regarding screening, resource and referral services and clinical treatment. The Coalition continued to distribute educational / outreach material that clinicians credit to positive outcomes for families experiencing PMADs.

The Coalition continued to identify areas for improvement in the comprehensive system. An example of such is a newly developed policy for the emergency room at Sutter Amador Hospital.

Amador's Baby Welcome Wagon (BWW) program continued to provide support during home visits to families experiencing perinatal mood and anxiety disorders. The home visitor offers an Edinburgh screening at all visits and follows-up with referrals to clinical services and support.

Clinical services: 23 women were referred and followed through with services provided by marriage and family therapists and licensed clinical social workers coordinated through First 5 utilizing MHSA funding.

### Outreach and Education

To assist in the reduction of stigma associated with mental health, First 5 Amador continued to create and disseminate information regarding early childhood mental health as well as perinatal wellness. Educational ads were placed in community newspapers, run on local radio and displayed on local park signs. First 5's monthly e-newsletter is opened by more than 300 individuals and our Facebook page is extremely active and updated daily. First 5 monitors the open-rate to determine the effectiveness of messaging.

First 5 continues to educate parents, caregivers, early care and the community at-large regarding the importance of early identification and treatment through developmental screening for children and perinatal wellness screening for parents. Information for new parents and their families is distributed through the Breastfeeding Coalition's Grandmother Teas, social media, etc.





## Outreach / Social Media

- First 5 continued to supply community partners and parents with copies of the **Plays Well with Others – A Guide to Social and Emotional Development**. The guide includes an overview of social and emotional development, local resources, and parenting tips. The guide provides age-by-age breakdowns of typical child development, behaviors that warrant concern, and ideas of steps families can take to help foster healthy social and emotional development in their infants and young children.

First 5 also provides the Bridge to Kindergarten Calendar to families with children 3 – 5 years old – an early learning booklet created in-house and purchased for use throughout the state.

- First 5 provides administrative oversight of the **Amador Child Abuse Prevention Council (CAPC)**. Activities and outreach topics include Mandated Reporter Trainings, Period of Purple Crying education including handmade caps with purple yarn for newborns distributed through the hospital and Baby Welcome Wagon. Child Abuse Prevention Council members (CPS, MCAH, etc.) have incorporated the Perinatal Wellness Coalition's goals / activities in their scopes of work and system improvement plans. CAPC has expanded to include a "Resilient Amador" coalition to address Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and Trauma Informed Care.
- **Children's International Holiday Festival – Winter Festivals Around the World**  
First 5 Amador's Children's International Holiday Festival was another success this year with more than 300 individuals attending the event. Agencies and organizations that participate in the event adopt a country and provide an activity / healthy snack representing that portion of the world and share local resources and services available to families.
- **First 5 Amador's staff provided ongoing technical assistance and material design** to our grantees and partners. Our project and program coordinators' creativity and expertise have given a professional look to First 5's outreach material as well as that of our partners.
- **First 5's facility** (Margaret Dalton Children's Center – rented from the Jackson Rancheria) allows for more community involvement and awareness of the opportunities available for local families. Fitness classes, business and board meetings, parenting classes, large fund-raising events, and support groups utilize the facility making it possible to educate more community members about First 5's mission. The venue provides space for on-site child care which allows more parents to participate in ongoing activities. Head Start, State Preschool, Kene Me Wu, Operation Care, Nexus Youth and Family Services, Amador Tuolumne Community Action Agency, and the Child Care Council utilized First 5's location to host events and educational forums.
- **First 5's website, monthly e-newsletter, and Facebook page** provided up-to-date information for parents and providers. First 5 monitors participation rates through data management. Staff has noticed an increase in the number of fathers, policy makers, and community members accessing information provided through our social media efforts.

- First 5 provides information regarding social media activity on Facebook, the First 5 e-newsletter, etc. to community partners to assist them in gauging interest in their activities and programs promoted by First 5 staff.
- First 5 staff continued to take an active role on the Domestic Violence Council, Behavioral Health Advisory Board, Mental Health Services Act Cultural Competency / Steering Committee, Local Child Care Planning Council and Children and Families Program Committee.
- First 5 staff continued to provide support for Child Protective Services by providing developmental screening assistance for foster parents caring for children as well as coordinating semi-annual developmental screening events in partnership with the Amador County Unified School District.