

THINK BIGGER

with



FIRST 5
SAN MATEO COUNTY

Big Topic

Supporting San Mateo County Families During and Beyond COVID-19



As we face the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic now with uncertainty about what lies ahead, First 5 San Mateo County is committed to supporting our families, providers and partners. As a local agency that works closely with other organizations who serve local families, we've been working to address the fears and questions our community is facing by providing information and connections to support.

We encourage you to visit our [COVID-19 resource page](#) for a list of resources for parents, caregivers and staff working with young children. We will also be posting an ongoing [blog series](#) where parents and caregivers will be able to find helpful tips, resources and encouragement.

Providers of all kinds in our community are working tirelessly to give our families much-needed hope and strength, but also need support themselves. Providers and partners can [join our ACEs Connection page](#) to receive timely and relevant articles about how to best support families and themselves.

As difficult as this time is, we've been in awe to watch you all come together to strengthen our community while remaining physically apart. From our postal workers and grocery store clerks to our first responders, medical providers and child care providers, we thank each and every person serving our community and families during this time.

Census 2020



Now more than ever, we recognize the importance of a complete count. Funding for critical services, like the medical care needed during COVID-19 or critical school resources for our kids, are impacted by census numbers. Making sure all family members, especially kids, are counted in the 2020 census is vital for our community. The 2010 census missed more than 10% of all children under age 5 in the U.S. We can't let that happen again.

San Mateo County has the highest census response rate in the state of California at 62.9%, which is well above the National average (52.4%) and California average (53.8%). However, there are still regions that are undercounted. [Help us get the word out](#) so we can hit 100% in San Mateo County!

You can still complete your census online by visiting [My2020census.gov](https://my2020census.gov). While it only takes about 10 minutes to complete, it will help our children thrive for the next 10 years.

Image by County of San Mateo

A Focus on Child Care

“The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted a long-time underinvestment in child care infrastructure. Our community and economy need child care providers to function, and now is the time to rise up and support this unique sector.” – Christine Padilla



Christine Padilla, director of [Build Up for San Mateo's Children](#), a cross-sector initiative designed to grow and improve the supply of child care and preschool facilities in San Mateo County, puts a focus on the need to support the child care system now more than ever in her recent blog: [Child Care Was Always Essential](#).

This essential service is also extremely crucial to the lives of so many essential workers right now. Child Care Coordinating Council of San Mateo County (4Cs), is addressing the need of emergency child care in our community. Families in need of emergency child care services can receive assistance through 4Cs in applying for emergency child care subsidy and finding available child care sites. Child care providers wanting to provide emergency care, can also connect with 4Cs to offer services. Visit the [4Cs COVID-19 Resources page](#) to learn more.

Image courtesy of Christine Padilla

A Look Ahead: Strategic Plan 2020-2025



A Message from Kitty Lopez, Executive Director

Over the last two months, our community (along with our state, the nation and the world) has faced great adversity in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. This crisis has exemplified the complexity of the conditions that impact the health, well-being and success of a society. While we may not be able to predict the full impact of COVID-19, we do know that we must work broadly, collaboratively and proactively to sustain and repair the health and well-being of our children and their families.

As we proudly release First 5 San Mateo County's [2020-2025 Strategic Plan](#), we bring a proactive and wide-reaching mindset, with an eye toward building resilient families. We understand that the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of young children are interdependent. Children grow and learn within their family relationships and the larger community, and the social determinants of health a child is surrounded by greatly influence their development.

First 5 supports the whole child within the whole family.

Over the next five years, First 5 San Mateo County will support the success of children by continuing to focus on three primary community roles: Strategic Financial Investor; Community Partner in aligned

efforts; and Systems Leader to advocate for the prioritization of young children and their families in all decision making throughout our county.

Appreciating Our Teachers

Teachers, who already work tirelessly to improve the lives of students, families and communities, have faced unprecedented challenges amid the COVID-19 pandemic. **Teacher Appreciation Week took place last week, and this week we want to continue to acknowledge all San Mateo County teachers, from early learning programs, family child care centers, public and private centers and beyond, for all that you do every day.** Check out the pictures below from last year's "Quality Counts" celebration where we are able to honor the incredible San Mateo County teachers who have a continued commitment to high quality learning in early child care and education. Join us in saying "thank you" to teachers everywhere!



[Visit our Website](#)

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