



FIRST 5 MARIN
Learn. Grow. Thrive.



Community Investments in Early Childhood

FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025

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First 5 Marin Mission & Vision

First 5 Marin's vision is that every child in Marin County will thrive in supportive families and communities that nurture their greatest potential. Together with families, communities and other partners, the First 5 Marin Children and Families Commission will create a Marin where the health and welfare of all of our children influences core decisions at every level of our political and public institutions, and in every community. There will be understanding across and among communities about the

varied opportunities and needs of children. As a community, Marin will act upon the knowledge that what we do to increase the potential of less advantaged children improves the potential for all children. Families will have the knowledge and tools to advocate for their children. As a result of our efforts, all children will have access to affordable health care, opportunities that promote success in school, and they will live in families and communities that provide for their optimal health, safety and well-being.

Commitment to Equity

Marin is committed to serving children and families in Marin County through equitable and inclusive community engagement. Through our actions we aim to combat the harm that historically racist practices have inflicted on communities of color in Marin County. We commit to:

- 1) Actively listening to community voices to ensure our work reflects

- 2) Looking at our own policies and practices with cultural humility and changing those that interfere with equitable pathways to success for our children;
- 3) Learning and growing together to support fully inclusive systems of care that help liberate communities that have been harmed by historically discriminatory practices.

Dear Partners and Community Members



Maria Patricia Niggle
Executive Director

I am honored to be writing this message to you. It is an opportunity to reflect on—and celebrate—the extraordinary impact of First 5 Marin’s work over the past year and its reach into the lives of Marin’s children and families. Together in 2024–25, we invested more than \$1 million, reaching nearly 6,000 individuals, while advancing meaningful systems change to ensure that all children in our county have the opportunity to thrive.

It is important to underscore that this progress is occurring amid significant and compounding challenges. Federal funding for early care is increasingly imperiled,

members of our immigrant communities are facing heightened threats to their health and safety, and Proposition 10 revenues continue their long-term decline. In this context, we are being asked to do more with less—while also reimagining new strategies to sustain and strengthen the work beyond our current climate. What gives me confidence is our shared commitment to unlocking the potential of systems building in Marin County—transforming opportunity into action through partnership, innovation, and collective leadership.

Over the last year, I am proud that First 5 Marin has:

- Invested \$1 million+ in local service providers who advance our 6 priority funding areas.
- Fostered connection and collaboration across these service providers—through quarterly convenings and 1-on-1 technical assistance—to expand the impact of our grantmaking beyond its monetary footprint
- Partnered to secure new sources of revenue to sustain mission-critical work and our funded partners—through a collaborative \$3 million grant from the state Commission for Behavioral Health and explored additional opportunities that hold promise.

- Continued our commitment to early identification and early intervention services through Help Me Grow Marin.

- Advocated for systems reform across adjacent sectors—each of which impacts the lives of our children and families—through county collaboratives like: Marin Funding Network, Immigrants Rights and Justice, Marin Cal Aim Implementation, Help Me Grow Leadership Team, Early Learning Community Action Network through Marin Promise Partnership, and more.

While this is just the tip of the iceberg, these activities represent the different ways in which First 5 affects change, including in its role as a funder, a convener, a collaborator, and an advocate. In each role, we know that our fortunes are inextricably bound in the fortunes of others, and that partnership is the only way to advance and sustain the changes we seek to make. As such, I’d like to recognize our staff, community partners, commissioners, and above all else, Marin’s children and families.

Looking ahead, I strongly believe that our community’s future is bright, precisely because of our collective efforts to make a better future for our children. Looking ahead, First 5 Marin will refresh its eight-year Strategic Plan through robust stakeholder engagement and Commission-led workgroups to ensure our priorities are aligned with this moment and responsive to the evolving needs of Marin’s children and families. We will continue working closely with funded partners to drive continuous improvement, prepare for the third year of funding, and proactively identify and leverage public and private resources that are currently underutilized to strengthen children’s health, early childhood education, and family supports across the county.

I am honored to be your partner and look forward to our upcoming work together.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maria Patricia Niggle".

Maria Patricia Niggle
Executive Director

The Reality for Marin's Children and Families

Key indicators across health, education, and income

Despite Marin's reputation for wealth and prosperity, 37% of county households do not earn enough to make ends meet without public or private assistance. A family of four with one school-aged child and one preschooler needs \$158,761 annually to afford basic necessities—housing, utilities, transportation, and groceries. An adult earning minimum

wage would need to work 195 hours per week to support this family. The perception of universal prosperity masks significant need, particularly among families of color. While 29% of white households struggle financially, the rates climb sharply for communities of color: 37% of Asian households, 73% of Latinx households, and 95% of Black households face economic insecurity.

Source: *Insight Center for Community Economic Development.*

94% of kindergartners had up-to-date immunizations.

53% of low-income kids 0 to 5 visited the dentist last year.

33% of children with Medi-Cal had an annual preventive checkup.

48% of children in working families had licensed child care available.

24% of low-income third graders met or exceeded standards for reading (English).

40% of English language learners achieve fluency in their school careers.

Source: *KidsData.org and Marin Promise Partnership.*



Licensed child care in Marin County costs an average of **\$2,315** per month, per child. That is a **38%** increase since 2018. And the cost of child care in Marin is **24%** higher than the California average.

Marin County Child Care Commission (2024)

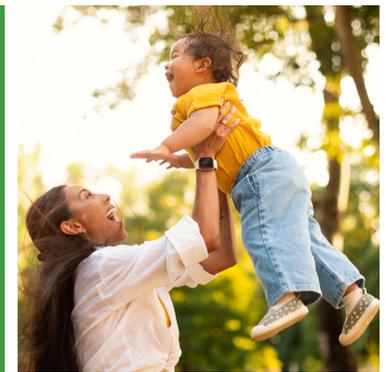
41% of women in Marin County are paid low wages. *Fifth highest across all California counties.*

23% of children in Marin County live in poverty. *Up to 199% of the federal poverty level or \$51,852 for a family of four.*

33% of their income is spent on rent. *Single mother with two children.*

45% of their income is spent on child care. *Single mother with two children.*

33% of low- to moderate-income in Marin are not able to afford enough food. *Source: California Budget and Policy Center.*



Impact At-A-Glance

Family Support

- 5 programs served 3,051 children, 2,003 caregivers, and 22 providers with total investment of \$543,644.
- Intensive family support through Postpartum Support Center reached the most families (1,756 children and 1,703 caregivers).
- General family support provided by three community organizations served 325 children and 300 caregivers through culturally responsive programming.

Child Development

- 7 programs invested \$782,194 to strengthen quality early learning and care across Marin County.
- Quality supports trained and supported 193 providers through professional development, coaching, and systems strengthening.
- Direct early learning programs served 479 children and 450 caregivers through museum-based learning, family child care training, developmental screening coordination, and performing arts enrichment.
- Data infrastructure connected 164 children and families to coordinated screening and services through the MCOE Data Exchange.

Child Health

- 2 programs invested \$632,999 to advance early intervention and preventive health services.
- Help Me Grow Marin provided care coordination and developmental support to 239 children and 304 caregivers, while training 297 providers in developmental screening and family-centered care—supported by Proposition 10, grants, and CalAIM fee-for-service funding.
- Oral health services through Pediatric Dental North Bay delivered preventive education and treatment to 31 children, addressing critical dental health needs.

System of Care

- 3 programs invested \$202,050 to strengthen advocacy, cross-sector collaboration, and systems coordination.
- Parent Voices of Marin advanced policy and public advocacy, amplifying family voice in early childhood systems, health and housing.
- Systems building initiatives fostered community forums and collaborative networks through First 5 Marin Forums and Help Me Grow ARPA funding.

\$1,000,000 First 5 investment in direct-service providers.

4,100+ community members of color are served by First 5 funded programs.

5,700+ children, caregivers & providers are served by First 5 funded programs.

3,500+ Spanish speakers are served by First 5 funded programs.



First 5 Marin's Strategic Priorities 2024-25

Community Funding Initiative

First 5 Marin invested over \$1 million in community-driven solutions to expand support for children ages 0-5 and their families, with particular attention to equity and addressing systemic barriers.

Funding priority areas:

Child Care Solutions	Family Support & Parent Advocacy
Children's Health & Wellness	Maternal & Infant Support
School Readiness	Collaborative Systems Change

Key Innovations

Results-Based Accountability — Partners apply continuous improvement principles to data collection, impact articulation, and service delivery.

Cohort Collaboration — Quarterly convenings facilitate peer learning, partnership opportunities, and collective impact.

Technical Assistance — One-on-one support helps partners refine impact narratives and secure additional funding as Prop 10 revenue declines.



Convening for Impact

In FY 2024-25, the Marin Communications Forum continued to strengthen First 5 Marin's role as a systems leader by convening community partners, parents, and county leadership around critical policy issues impacting children and families. These forums informed and connected professionals across sectors, elevated emerging priorities, and helped inspire collaboration, advocacy, and action for systems change. Topics included maternal mental health, playful learning environments, healthy and equitable child development, online safety, social services coordination, and the child care crisis.

2024-2025 Forums included:

- Maternal Mental Health
- The "New Ecology of Early Childhood"
- Playful Learning Landscapes
- Healthy Environments, Child Development and Equity
- Preventing Child Abuse
- Online Safety
- Marin Social Services
- The Child Care Crisis



Systems Change in Action

Health Access for Families & Young Children
Convened partners to collaboratively apply for 1 of 6 grants for Maternal Behavioral Health in the State of California securing a \$3 million state maternal behavioral health grant expanding trauma-informed care.

Community Health Worker Hub
Trained and certified 15 bilingual community health workers to launch Marin's Community Health Worker Hub—a culturally responsive workforce that connects families to resources and helps systems respond to community needs.

Sustainable Quality Child Care
Assessed true cost of quality child care in partnership with MCOE and Marin Child Care Council to inform sustainability strategies and equitable pay for child care providers.

Community & Systems Building
Shifted conditions through partnership with the Early Learning Community Action Networks, Immigrants Rights and Justice, and Child Abuse Prevention Council.



Working together for Marin's Children and Families



POSTPARTUM
Support Center



Families lead, kids succeed.



MUSEUM OF THE
AMERICAN
INDIAN
NOVATO | COAST MIWOK LAND



PERFORMING STARS OF MARIN
founded 1990



Pediatric Dental Initiative

Direct Investment in Community Providers

School Readiness

Promoting playgroups, collaboration and data innovation.

Marin County Office of Education / Funded Partner

Funded strategy: Evidence based data exchange meetings between preschool, elementary school teachers, and family members.

Who benefits: Families and educators of children transitioning from preschool to TK or K.

Impact Highlight from 2024-25: 91% of families who participated in the meetings said that they are more comfortable approaching their child's TK/K teacher and asking them questions about their child.

North Marin Community Services / Funded Partner

Funded strategy: Hire a Bilingual Child Development Specialist role to serve as a liaison for Spanish-speaking families enrolled in the Child Development Program and Developmental Playgroup.

Who benefits: Low-income and Spanish-speaking children aged 2-5 and their families

Impact Highlight from 2024-25: 100% of participating families report their child is better prepared to learn in school since participating in the Developmental Playgroup.

"Having [my child]'s preschool and TK teachers connect just really felt like bringing our communities together...it felt like people were united in looking out for my child, which is really just so moving."

-Family Member

"My expectations shifted after the Data Exchange because I was able to learn who he was last year... it was useful to learn about what he is capable of."

-TK/K Teacher



School Readiness

Promoting playgroups, collaboration and data innovation.

Performing Stars / Funded Partner

Funded strategy: Enrichment programs at 3 child care centers in Marin City / Southern Marin, including music, dance, and gardening/garden arts.

Who benefits: 3-5-year-olds from low-income households & families of color living in Marin City / Southern Marin.

Impact Highlight from 2024-25: 70 new trusting relationships formed between caregivers, school staff, and community-based partners, fostering open communication and shared goals around school readiness.

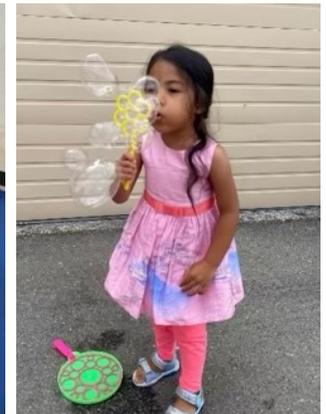
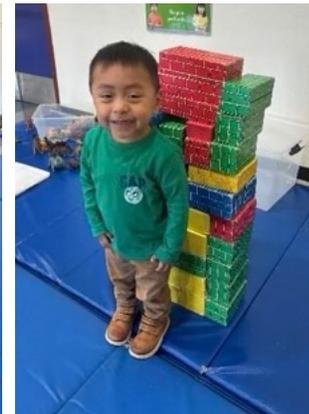


Parent Services Project / Funded Partner

Funded strategy: Host a developmental playgroup for parents to find, access, and use community resources to support their children's social & emotional development.

Who benefits: Parents who have recently immigrated to Marin and/or are from low income households.

Impact Highlight from 2024-25: 91% of participating caregivers successfully accessed at least one new community resource or service as a result of program participation.



Children's Health & Wellness

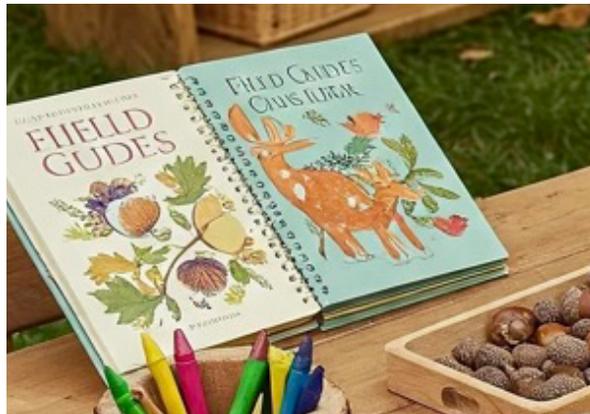
Improving screening, early intervention, and health outcomes.

Museum of the American Indian / Funded Partner

Funded strategy: Provide children with Native American and Indigenous heritage a regular playgroup experience that integrates nature-based activities and Indigenous cultural practices.

Who benefits: 0-5-year-olds in Northern Marin, especially those with Native American and Indigenous heritage.

Impact Highlight from 2024-25: 26 playgroup sessions held, resulting in 187 new connections formed between North Marin residents and the Museum.



Pediatric Dentistry Initiative / Funded Partner

Funded strategy: Deliver specialized dental surgeries to children with severe dental decay.

Who benefits: Marin County children aged 0-5 who have severe dental decay, particularly Latinx and Medi-Cal recipient patients.

Impact Highlight from 2024-25: 31 new families have found a permanent dental care home for their child, and their child's severe dental decay has been addressed.



Child Care Solutions

Expanding affordable high-quality child care and supports.

Marin Child Care Council / Funded Partner

Funded strategy: Support to existing family child care providers & outreach to new providers, for the purpose of increasing the total number of child care slots in Marin County.

Who benefits: Parents will see increased job security and economic opportunity while their children are attending high-quality Family Child Care Provider facilities

Impact Highlight from 2024-25: 112 new child care slots added.



Family Support & Parent Advocacy

Strengthening family services, and advocacy for equitable systems.

Parent Voices / Funded Partner

Funded strategy: Develop Parent Voices' organizational infrastructure necessary to sustain parent-led advocacy in Marin County.

Who benefits: BIPOC & immigrant parents, parents who qualify for publicly funded child care, parents of children with special needs, and survivors of domestic abuse.

Impact Highlight from 2024-25: 182 pledges signed by community members to vote/be civically engaged in the November election.



Maternal & Infant Support

Services for perinatal health & parenting capacity.

Postpartum Support Center / Funded Partner

Funded strategy: Connect moms to postpartum services through preventive supports (peer groups, education, resource navigation) and personalized case management.

Who benefits: Moms of color and low-income moms who are disproportionately impacted by Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders (PMADs)..

Impact Highlight from 2024-25: 296 moms with reported decrease in social isolation & stress after receiving support from PPSC.



Collaborative Systems Change

Advancing coordination across early childhood care and education.

Bay Area Discovery Museum / Funded Partner

Funded strategy: Hire a new Community Engagement Manager to: deepen relationships with children and families via community partners; increase visits to the museum; and increase participation in play-based learning opportunities.

Who benefits: Children aged 0-5-year olds from low-income households from Marin City, the Canal, West Marin, and North Novato and their families.

Impact Highlight from 2024-25: 44% of visitors during Family days who were 1st time visitors to the museum.



Early Childhood Mental Health: Identification & Intervention

Connecting parents and caregivers with the support they need to promote healthy child development.

Help Me Grow Marin connects families with the support they need for healthy child development. Care Coordinators provide personalized, confidential guidance—linking parents to developmental screenings, health care, early learning programs, and basic needs—free of charge and in families' preferred languages.

Help Me Grow Marin impact highlights include:

840 total participants served.

239 children connected to early developmental supports.

304 caregivers supported through care coordination and resource navigation.

297 providers engaged to strengthen Marin's early childhood system.

Majority of families served were Latino/Hispanic
Strong reach among Spanish-speaking families,
supporting equitable access to care.

Building Stronger Systems Through State Funding

Secured state grants to strengthen early identification and support across the county. Partnered with health plans, Aliados Health, and the County of Marin to expand services through the Community Health Worker Hub, providing culturally responsive support that meets families where they are.

Supporting Developmental Screening

Provided Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) trainings and launched a county data dashboard to help early childhood programs use screening results in meaningful ways. Training reached partners across health services, behavioral health, community organizations, and school districts.

Family-Centered Support

Facilitated Parent Cafés with Community Schools in West Marin, expanded support addressing children's medical, developmental, educational, and behavioral health needs, and brought together community partners to guide program planning—building a more connected and equitable early childhood system.

Help Me Grow Marin: First 5 Marin's direct service commitment—connecting families to early support through trusted, community-informed care.



Looking Ahead

In a time of constrained resources and growing need, First 5 Marin is sharpening its role as a public partner—investing strategically to expand access, advance equity, and strengthen the systems that support young children and families.

1) Advancing Equity in Access and Outcomes

Persistent disparities mean that families facing economic hardship, linguistic or cultural barriers, or systemic marginalization often encounter greater obstacles to services and supports. First 5 Marin will continue to center equity by prioritizing community-driven engagement, culturally responsive approaches, and investments that reduce barriers and expand opportunity for those most impacted by historical inequities.

2) Strengthening Systems and Coordination

Fragmented systems make it difficult for families to navigate health, early learning, and family support services. First 5 Marin will focus on systems strengthening by convening partners across sectors, improving coordination and data-sharing, and supporting aligned strategies that make services easier to access and more responsive to family needs.

3) Ensuring Sustainability and Long-Term Impact

As public funding and organizational resources shift, sustaining effective services—particularly for underserved communities—requires intentional planning and collaboration. First 5 Marin will prioritize strategic investments, diversified funding approaches, and performance-informed decision-making to ensure long-term impact and resilience.

4) Expanding access to affordable, high-quality child care.

Expanding access to affordable, high-quality child care remains a critical priority for Marin. Families continue to spend an unsustainable share of their income on care, while a severe shortage of licensed slots—particularly for infants and toddlers—limits both parental employment and children's



early learning opportunities. These access challenges are closely tied to workforce instability, as early educators are under-compensated, increasingly commute from outside the county, and are nearing retirement age. Guided by the Early Childhood Roadmap and aligned with the County's 2025-2030 Child Care Strategic Plan, First 5 Marin will focus on strengthening the child care system by stabilizing and expanding supply, supporting a mixed-delivery model, and investing in workforce recruitment, retention, and professional development to ensure long-term quality and sustainability.

Together we can help our children learn, grow, and thrive!

First 5 Marin would like to thank all of the local agencies and individuals who offer programs or provide services to the young children and their families in Marin.

Meet our Current Commissioners



Dr. Jessica Hollman
Chair



Supervisor Eric Lucan



Dr. Itoco Garcia,
Vice Chair



Angie Evans
Vice Chair



Sandra Rosenblum



Kari Beuerman



Kelly McKinley



Dave Bonfilio
(emeritus)

Meet our Staff



Maria Niggle



Michelle Fadelli



Evelyn Paniagua



Suzanne Kreuzer MS



Maritza Barahona



FIRST 5 MARIN

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