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2020-21 Headline Findings

In FY 2020-21, First 5 Tehama innovated new programs and communication efforts, expanded trauma-informed systems efforts, and continued supporting families and children through direct services, and information/resource sharing.



Improved Family Functioning

- First 5 Tehama expanded its reach to families through online communications including four **email “stories.”** Each story averaged 268 successful deliveries. Story open rates exceeded industry benchmarks and increased throughout the FY.
- First 5 introduced the **Book Club** to engage families and increase literacy, distributing over 1,700 books and information on community programs, literacy, resiliency, and stress buster ideas. About 229 children engaged in the **Book Club** this FY.
- Sixty-six parents registered for four **“Parent Academies”** on Resilience, Early Math, Early Language, and Mind and Body Strategies.

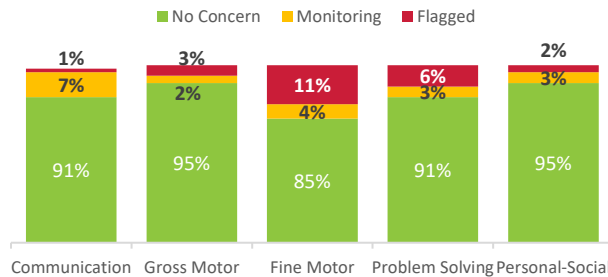


Improved Child Health

- First 5 Tehama continued use of the **Parents as Teachers (PAT) home visiting** model, which considers parents the most influential part of children’s lives. PAT empowers families with information about child development and parenting strategies.
- **Parent-Child interactions** significantly increased following home visiting in the four PICCOLO domains: affection, responsiveness, encouragement, and teaching.
- Regarding **medical health**, 98% of children participating in home visiting had medical insurance, 93% were current on immunizations, and two-thirds of 3-5-year-olds had at least one dental visit.
- Using the PAT model, home visitors administered the **Ages and Stages Questionnaire-3 (ASQ)** developmental screener to identify developmental problem areas and provide referrals to early intervention support specialists.
- Fifteen of the 149 ASQ-3 screenings were flagged with concerns. Eighty percent received referrals. Of those, 67% received services.



Improved Child Development



- First 5 held 39 **playgroup** sessions with 52 adults and 66 children. Nearly all parents (97%) learned something new about child development/parenting and other School Readiness resources.



Improved Systems of Care

- First 5 Tehama continued **Early Intervention Partnership (EIP)** efforts. Participants refined cohesive and more efficient systems and increased knowledge of resiliency, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), and protective factors.
- Twenty-five percent of referrals through the **P2P Referral Tracker** resulted in enrollment.
- First 5 Tehama expanded efforts to incorporate trauma-informed care in Tehama systems. More than 58 providers/professionals were **ACEs Aware** trained. Interagency participants-built partnerships to expand trauma informed services and systems in new ways.
- First 5 Tehama also supported Help Me Grow, the Home Visiting Collaborative, Nurturing Parenting Program (NPP) Collaborative, Quality Counts North State (QCNS), and Career and Partnership trainings.

Introduction

Tehama County is located in northern California and is comprised of approximately 65,000 residents, with 21.5 residents per square mile.ⁱ About 6.1% of Tehama residents were under five years of age. Tehama County estimates the number of infants will continue to rise within the next five years, and about 60% of children 0-5 are without childcare.ⁱⁱ



The First 5 Tehama County Children and Families Commission was established by Proposition 10 in 1998, along with 57 other First 5 County Commissions throughout California. This voter-approved initiative created infrastructure and funding streams from tobacco tax dollars to support improved health, family functioning, and child development for families with children prenatal to five-years-old.

First 5 Tehama’s vision is that *Tehama County children will be born healthy and thrive in safe, supportive, nurturing, and loving environments; and will enter school cognitively prepared and be healthy, active, and socially appropriate learners.*

Furthermore, their mission is that *Tehama County children will thrive, be healthy, and enter school ready to learn.*

COVID Impact

In FY 2020-21, the global COVID-19 pandemic continued to impact programs and services within Tehama County. First 5 Tehama continued to adapt and innovate new ways to engage community members and encourage social interaction and community building through low- or no-contact methods. Some of these transitions included online playgroups, virtual home visiting, drive through events, the development of new programs, and utilizing social media for virtual read-a-longs and at-home activities.ⁱⁱⁱ Despite these silver linings, the impact of this unprecedented global pandemic should not be understated. All First 5 programs experienced challenges to their planned service delivery throughout this fiscal year. It is important to keep these considerations in mind, particularly when comparing estimates to pre-pandemic values.



State of Children in Tehama County

Poverty

- In 2019,¹ 33.6% of children under five in Tehama County were living below poverty level. This is a slight decrease from the 34.5% of children under five in Tehama County living in poverty in 2018.^{iv}

Child Abuse

- In 2020, there were 385 child abuse allegations among youth 0-5 in Tehama County, among which 53 were substantiated maltreatment. Tehama County has a higher rate of allegations (80.0 per 1,000 children) compared to statewide estimates (44.5 per 1,000 children), and a slightly higher rate of substantiated maltreatment (11.0 per 1,000 children) than the 9.9 per 1,000 children statewide.^v

Health

- In 2020, 72.6% of children in Tehama County attended a well-child visit with their doctor, compared to 75.1% statewide.^{vi}
- In 2019 (most recent available data), 52.1% of children ages 3-5 in Tehama County attended a dental visit in the last year, compared to 55.8% of children statewide.^{vii}

Education

- In 2019, 47.9% of children ages 3-4 in Tehama County were enrolled in preschool, compared to 49.6% statewide, and 50.4% in Tehama in 2018.^{viii}
- In 2019, 36.3% of economically disadvantaged 3rd graders in Tehama County were reading at or above their grade level, similar to the 36.6% of economically disadvantaged 3rd graders statewide.^{ix} The proportion of economically disadvantaged 3rd graders in Tehama reading at- or above-grade level increased about 8% since 2018.



¹ Most recent data available

First 5 Tehama Goals

First 5 Tehama's strategies and activities are centered around four major goals to improve family functioning, child health, child development, and professional systems of care. Many of the strategies utilized overlap two or more goals, as First 5 Tehama recognizes the interrelated nature of impact that these essential services may provide.

Goal 1 – Improved Family Functioning

Positive family functioning is essential to the lives and development of young children. Families are the most critical models in a young child's life. Ensuring families have essential strengthening protective factors— basic needs, coping mechanisms, and positive peer networks— increases family functioning and reduces the likelihood Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and toxic stress will occur for children. These strategies aim to increase family functioning overall, with the intent to reduce parental stress, familial poverty, and to increase positive child outcomes.

Goal 2 – Improved Child Health

The second overarching goal of First 5 Tehama's work is to improve child health. Whole child health is critical for ensuring young children are thriving and reaching their potential. This work focuses on ensuring that children are attending regular well-child medical and dental visits and receiving preventative care before health problems arise. These strategies include ongoing health and development screenings, such as Ages and Stages Questionnaires (ASQ).

Goal 3 – Improved Child Development

The third goal of First 5 Tehama is to increase children's development and love of learning. Young children learn through play and the language exposure in their family, community, and educational settings. These strategies include supporting families on how to increase literacy in the home and increase community-based literacy experiences, providing developmentally appropriate supports through assessing children for developmental delays, and increasing quality education opportunities available to young children.

Goal 4 – Improved Systems of Care

The final goal of First 5 Tehama's work is to increase the connectivity and coordination of seemingly separate systems to decrease gaps in services for families and children. These strategies include leading and convening collaboratives and sharing resources across systems and agencies.

Desired Results

Improved Family Functioning

- Parents have social connections with supportive peer networks
- Parents have concrete support in times of need
- Parents have improved interactions with their children

Improved Child Health

- Children are meeting developmental milestones and are on target with medical and dental visits

Improved Child Development

- Parents support their children's development and love of learning.

Improved Systems of Care

- Agencies offer coordinated service delivery to provide comprehensive "no wrong door" systems of care

First 5 Tehama's Strategic Framework

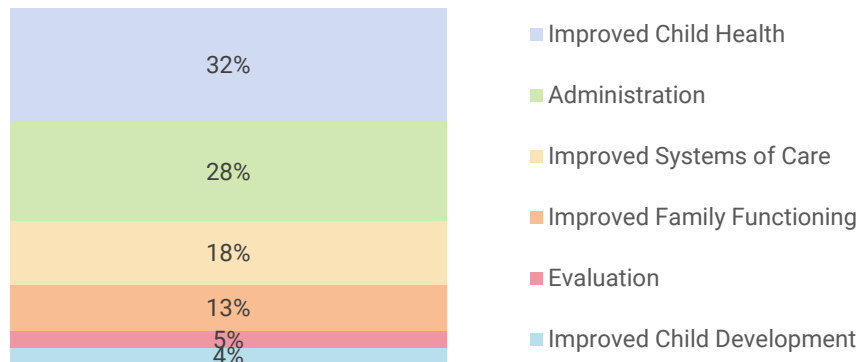


First 5 Tehama Investments in Children, Families, and Communities

During FY 2020-21, First 5 invested a total of \$994,730 dollars with the intention of improving the lives of families with young children across Tehama County. The figure below shows how funds were distributed across the different strategic result and administrative areas. The area that received the highest percentage of funding was improved child health (intensive home visiting program). Notably:

- ▶ Each area influences the others. While labeled under one main goal, funds influence many goals.
 - *For example, through Improved Systems of Care funds that support collaboration between 0-5 programs, child development is also improved because more children have access to quality programs.*
- ▶ The ACEs Aware Planning grant included over \$200,000 of contracts with partners identified as administration.
 - *These funds were used for partners to train providers and professionals in ACES as well as support collaboration.*

Figure 1. Expenses, by Content Area



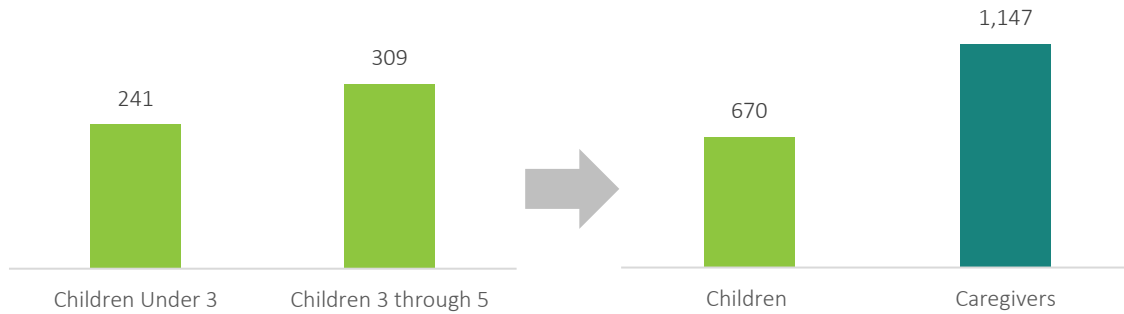
Expense Area	FY 2020-21
Improved Child Health	\$319,249 (32%)
Administration	\$282,693 (28%)
Improved Systems of Care	\$178,053 (18%)
Improved Family Functioning	\$124,656 (13%)
Evaluation	\$50,173 (5%)
Improved Child Development	\$39,906 (4%)

Source: FY 2020-21, First 5 Tehama.

Profile of Children and Families Served

In FY 2020-21, there were approximately 670 children and 1,147 caregivers directly served by First 5 Tehama. Despite the ongoing impact of COVID-19, First 5 served more children and caregivers in FY 2020-21 compared to FY 2019-20 (502 children and 780 caregivers).

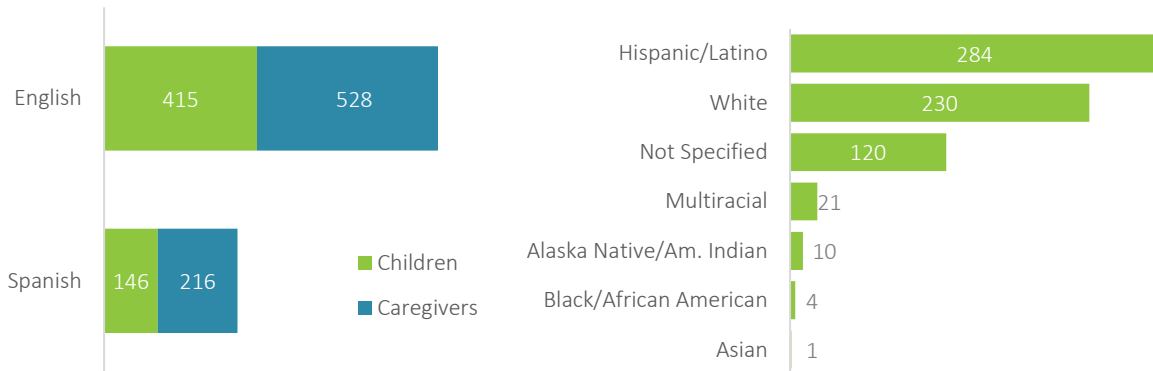
Figure 2. Number of Children and Families Served per Year and Number of Children Served, By Age



Source: First 5 Tehama Annual Report data. Note: Total children served includes an additional 120 children whose age was unknown but under six years.

The majority of children served by First 5 in Tehama County were Hispanic/Latino (52%) followed by white (42%). Most spoke English as their primary language (74%) while more than a quarter (26%) primarily spoke Spanish. This shows a lower percentage of Hispanic children served and a higher percentage of primarily English-speaking children served compared to FY 2019-20 (59% Hispanic/Latino and 60% speaking English as primary language).

Figure 3. Ethnicity and Primary Language of First 5 Tehama Participants



Source: First 5 Tehama Annual Report data. Due to limited availability of ethnicity information for parents, only children’s ethnicity are reported here.

Family Resiliency Initiatives

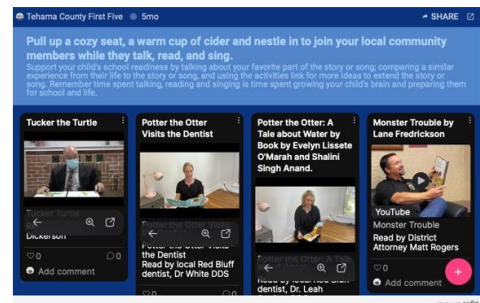


First 5 Tehama employed a variety of family resiliency programming in FY 2020-21, including providing necessary resources to families (such as the Kit for New Parents) and hosting community trauma-informed care webinars and literacy events such as children's book and resource drive throughs. These events/experiences (provided in English and Spanish) offered Tehama families a multitude of resources and services designed to increase family resiliency, knowledge of parenting and child development, and connections to community resources. First 5 continued to utilize community-level data to adapt activities and resources to the most current needs of families.

Talk Read Sing Play

This county-wide public education campaign encourages parents to talk, read, sing, and play with their children every day. Through parent and community education about the importance of early language and literacy as well as practical application strategies for supporting early language and literacy, the Talk Read Sing Play! campaign supports the more critical years and developmental areas of child development.

- ▶ **100 Talk Read Sing Play! magnets** were distributed to K-12 schools in partnership with the Safe Education and Recreation for Rural Families initiative, provided through the Tehama County Department of Education.
- ▶ A webpage was created on the First 5 Tehama website, with resources for parents and providers including online read-along videos.



Book Club

One of First 5 Tehama's newest literacy initiatives is the **Book Club**, where families join and receive monthly newsletters with local literacy and educational resources as well as triennial book bags with books and resiliency resources. **Book Club** members also receive advance invitations to summer literacy events such as Grab and Go Science and Stories.

- ▶ In its first year, **229 children engaged with the First 5 Tehama Book Club**. Through a partnership with Tehama County library, First 5 distributed 375 book bags to young children in Tehama County. This included a total of approximately **1,715 books** (1,550 books to Book Club members and 165 books to the community for Book Club recruitment). Book bags also included resources for key programs in the County, such as the Pregnancy to Preschool Partnership (P2P), child development information, language and literacy tips, stress-buster ideas, and resiliency resources.
- ▶ The large majority (89%) spoke English as their primary language, with 11% speaking Spanish. Participants were economically diverse ranging from household annual incomes below \$20,000 to more than \$100,000 indicating the diverse need for local 0-5 literacy and educational resources.



Families joining the Book Club were typically very committed to reading together, highlighting the potential long-term benefit of this new program providing additional reading resources and community connections. Upon joining the **Book Club**, 60% of parents reported typically reading books with their child five to seven times per week. More than a quarter (27%) of Book Club participants read with their child three to four times per week. About 10% read together once or twice a week and 3% did not yet have regular reading time with their child.



In response to an increased need for concrete reading materials, a lack of positive community events for families, and a need for child development resources, First 5 Tehama (in partnership with Tehama County Library and local book stores) hosted three summer drive through and virtual reading events. The first (July 2020) was a response to the continued impact of COVID. The second and third (June 2021) were based on the popularity of the previous event, as well as emerging K-12 data highlighting the least growth in math and science during the previous school year. In light of this data, the events featured grab and go science kits, parent materials for at-home activities, and science/space themed books.

Kit for New Parents

The Kit for New Parents is a free, comprehensive resource from First 5 California for new and expectant parents emphasizing the importance of a child's early years. Kits include an educational DVD, a parents' reference book, a touch-and-feel book for children, and resources for parents. In FY 2020-21, **First 5 Tehama distributed 126 kits**, including 71 English Kits and 55 Spanish Kits. This is a 26% decrease from the 171 resources distributed in FY 2019-20 which is much less substantial than between FY 2018-19 and FY 2019-20 (-69%). This is a testament to the added online function to request a New Parent Kit directly from the First 5 Tehama website.

2-1-1 Tehama

2-1-1 Tehama provides essential resources and referrals for food/clothing, housing, transportation, childcare, legal services, support groups, healthcare, senior services, drug and alcohol treatment, mental health services, and crisis hotlines. First 5 families receive information about the critical resources that 2-1-1 Tehama can provide in times of need. Anyone in Tehama County can call 2-1-1 and connect with a live person to direct them to these services or visit www.211tehama.org or text their zip code to 898211.

In FY 2020-21, 2-1-1 Tehama directly served 93 people with children under five years of age (a 28% decrease from FY 2019-20). Calls increased about 45% between FY 2018-19 and 2019-20, which may highlight an increased need for essential resources during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic. While calls from families with children under five have decreased, counts remain higher than pre-pandemic numbers.

Among callers with children eight or younger,² 2-1-1 callers were mostly White (44%) and primarily spoke English as their first language (90%). The top three needs expressed among all callers were housing, food/meals, and utility assistance.

² Caller descriptions not available by age of child(ren) in home

Parenting Education/Support Initiatives



First 5 Tehama’s goals include the belief that parents are the most important models in a child’s life. Parenting education and support initiatives are designed to facilitate strong family functioning, the development of positive, educational, and affectionate relationships with children, form positive peer relationships, and decrease parental stress and challenges.

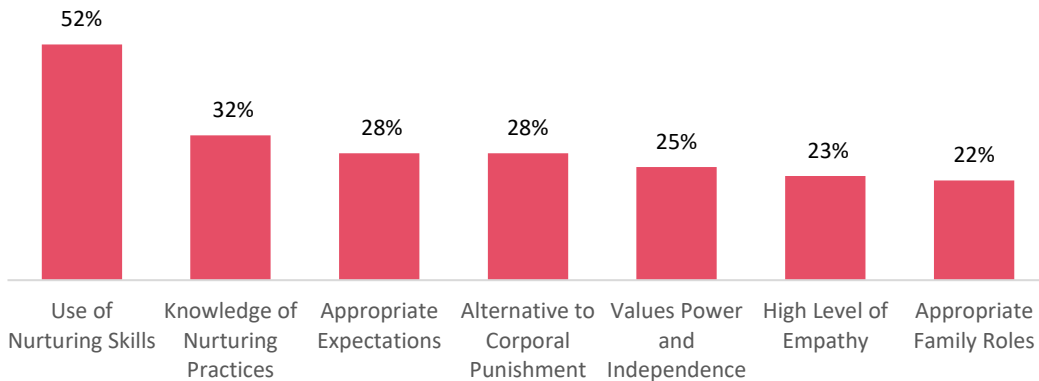
Parenting Classes

Parent education programs help parents develop appropriate child behavior management techniques and gain knowledge and understanding of age-appropriate behavior and expected developmental milestones. The programs often contain a component to help parents learn the skills of identifying community resources that provide support to families. Nurturing Parenting Programs (NPP) feature activities to foster positive parenting skills with nurturing behaviors, promote healthy physical and emotional development, and teach appropriate role and developmental expectations.

Northern California Child Development, Incorporated (NCCDI) conducted two NPP courses (one English, one Spanish). Courses were attended by 20 parents (a slight decrease from 28 parents in attendance in FY 2019-20). These parents were between 22 and 38 years of age and largely economically disadvantaged, with 95% reporting a household income of \$25,000 or less. About 81% were female. Ninety percent of parents had a high school diploma and 10% had some college experience. Half (50%) of the participants were unmarried with a partner, and 45% were single.

Out of the 20 parents enrolled in parenting classes, 16 completed the full, 16-week course.³ Parents completing the full course increased skills in parenting (Adult-Adolescent Parenting Inventory; AAPI) and nurturing (Nurturing Skills Competency Scale; NSCS). Participants showed a 52% increase in knowledge about their use of nurturing skills and a 32% increase in knowledge of nurturing practices. Parenting skills in appropriate expectations and alternatives to corporal punishment increased about 28%.

Figure 4. Increase in Parenting and Nurturing Skills after Nurturing Parenting Program Classes



Source: Nurturing Parenting Program Adult-Adolescent Parenting Inventory and Nurturing Skills Competency Scale. N = 16.

³ All classes were held virtually through Zoom

Success Story: Parenting Education Classes

Mark⁴ is a father who was mandated to take NPP parenting classes. When he began the program, he still had custody of his child. However, by the sixth class, Mark had already missed three classes and he lost custody of his son who went into foster care. After this happened, Mark reached out to see if NCCDI would be willing to conduct a one-on-one class with him so that he could complete the course and NCCDI agreed.

Mark completed all 16 parenting class sessions and said that he wished he had known more about parenting earlier in his life. Mark regained custody of his son, who is now enrolled in the Head Start program at NCCDI.

“I am so thankful for the teacher who was willing to take the time to let me finish all the classes. I learned that I was doing the same thing to my son that had been done to me growing up and now I can change that”

Parent Academies

First 5 Tehama registered a total of 66 parents for four family-focused trainings designed to inform and engage parents of young children. Trainings covered the following topics:

- ▶ Resilience
- ▶ Early Math
- ▶ Early Language
- ▶ Mind and Body Strategies

⁴ Fictional names used

Home Visiting

In FY 2020-21, First 5 Tehama utilized evidence-based home visiting to improve family functioning, child health, and child development within Tehama County. Home Visitors utilized the Parents as Teachers method to educate parents and conduct health and developmental screeners.



In total, home visitors served **150 caregivers** and **172 children** (68 aged 0-3; 104 aged 3-5). About 72% of children were Hispanic/Latino and more than one-third (37%) of children spoke Spanish as their primary language. The number of caregivers served in the First 5 Parents as Teachers (PAT) Home Visiting program decreased more than 25% compared to FY 2019-20 and the number of children decreased about 12%.



Parents as Teachers (PAT)

First 5 Tehama employed the Parents as Teachers home visiting program (PAT). PAT recognizes parents as being the most influential part of their young children's lives and empowers them with information about child development and how to improve parenting practices. Additionally, PAT provides screeners that can increase early detection of developmental delays and health issues.

Parent-Child Interactions

The *Parenting Interactions with Children: Checklist of Observations Linked to Outcomes* (PICCOLO) assessment tool includes brief observation of 29 measures in four major domains: affection, responsiveness, encouragement, and teaching. This tool provides insights into the effectiveness of the PAT curriculum, how well children are exhibiting age-appropriate development and/or school readiness skills, and whether parents and caregivers report increases in confidence, knowledge, and engagement.^x

Assessments are collected at two points in time to measure changes between the six months following home visiting using the PAT curriculum.



Each PICCOLO domain has seven to eight behavior items, each scored using a scale of 0 (Absent – not observed), 1 (Barely – brief or emerging), or 2 (Clearly – definite, strong, or frequent behavior). The following data present the averages of the total PICCOLO score and the average of the combined score for each domain among School Readiness Home Visiting participants (see figure below).

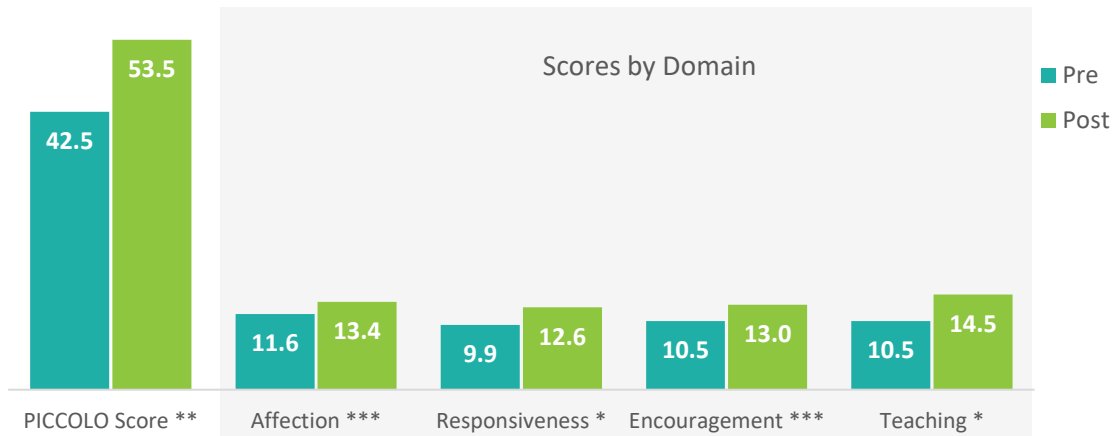
The 30 home visiting participants that completed both a pre- and post-test had an average total pre-test score of 42.5, which increased to an average post-test measure of 53.5. This change indicates **statistically significant improvements in overall assessment scores**.

The *affection* domain includes parenting behaviors which help children feel close and connected to parents, which help establish parent/child relationships and support children's development. The *responsiveness* domain refers to parents responding to children's cues, emotions, words, interests, and behaviors. This trait is an important foundation for social-emotional development.

The third domain, *encouragement*, considers parenting behaviors that actively support children’s exploration, effort, skills, initiative, curiosity, creativity, and play which promotes social and cognitive skills. Lastly, parents’ early *teaching* interactions include shared conversation and play, explanations, and questions to provide cognitive and language stimulation.

Changes between the pre- and post-tests were **statistically significant for all domains**, in addition to the overall PICCOLO scores. Teaching had the most *substantial* point increase of the four domains, with a pre-test average of 10.5 and a post-test average of 14.5.

Figure 5. Average Increases in PICCOLO Scores among Home Visiting Participants (Matched Pair)

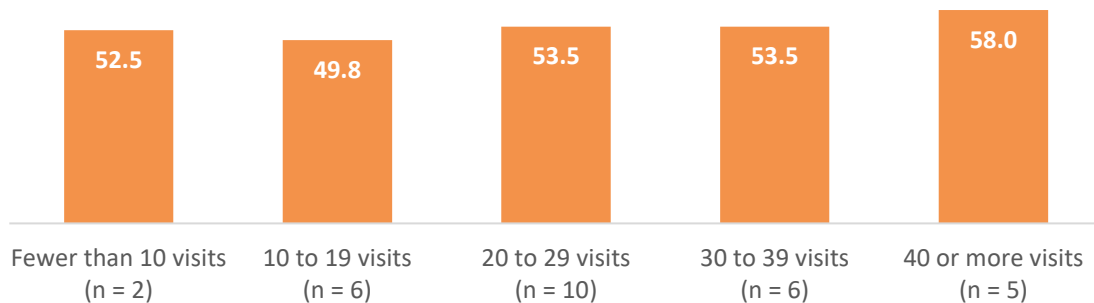


Source: School Readiness, 2021. Matched Pair N=30.

* Indicates p < .05 statistical significance, ** indicates p < .01, *** indicates p < .001 statistical significance

The average overall PICCOLO score at the time of the post-assessment showed increases among participants with more home visits during FY 2020-21. Those with 40 or more visits had the highest overall average PICCOLO score (58.0). Participants with fewer than ten visits had a slightly higher average than those with 10 to 20 visits, however this may be skewed by a smaller number of participants included in the former (n = 2) compared to the latter (n = 6).

Figure 6. Average Overall PICCOLO Scores (Post-test) by Number of Home Visits



Source: School Readiness, 2021. PICCOLO Post-Test Scores N=29.

Success Story: Home Visiting

Isabella⁵ is a 21-year-old first-time mom. She heard about home visiting from a co-worker and was very interested in learning more about her pregnancy and being ready when her baby arrived. She was also scared and nervous about being a first-time mom and at times felt lonely as she had no family in the local area and stopped working during her pregnancy. Isabella and her boyfriend participated in twice-monthly virtual visits for about seven months before the baby was born.

“I ... was really nervous and worried, but my home visitor was always there for me to answer questions and show me what to do. She helped me prepare and feel ready for my baby.”

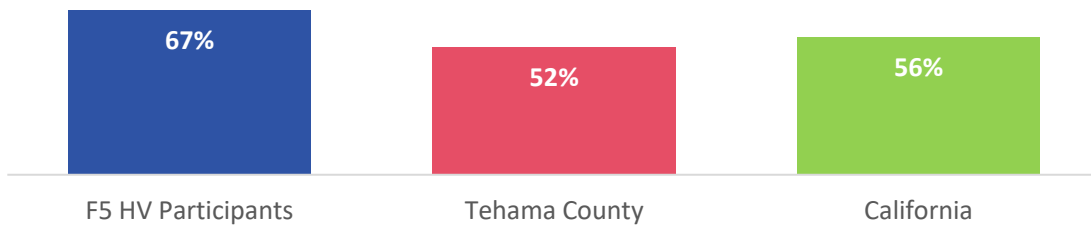
Isabella was very happy starting home visiting because she had someone to talk to and trust. Her home visitor provided handouts and resources that she felt helped her prepare for the baby and understand what was happening to her body during pregnancy. Isabella’s home visitor helped her apply for MediCal, find a clinic for prenatal care, obtain a car seat through the Child Abuse Prevention Council Tehama County 4 Kids (TC4K) program, enroll in WIC, obtain birth certificates, and receive healthy food to enjoy during and after her pregnancy. When Isabella felt overwhelmed about what she needed or how to get it, she knew she could always reach out to her home visitor to provide the steps and support.

Isabella has also been very excited to see her boyfriend learn how to be a good parent. She was very thankful for all the support leading up to the birth since she had no one else to confide in. Isabella successfully delivered a healthy and happy baby and has set up a library area to spend time reading together. The family is excited to continue with home visiting now that baby has arrived.

Child Health

Of the families participating in the intensive home visiting program, 98% of children⁶ had medical insurance. Among those with insurance, 74% had public insurance (Title XIX/XXI). Additionally, 93%⁷ of were current on immunizations, and 67%⁸ of HV participants aged 3-5 were up to date on dental visits.

Figure 7. Percentage of Children 3-5 Years of Age Up to Date on Dental Visits



Source: Parents as Teachers database (Penelope). N = 42 (age 3-5). First 5 percentages refer to the number of those with a “first or regular dentist appointment”

5 Fictional names used

6 Percentage excludes 28 records with missing data

7 Children aged 19 months and under three years at any point during the program year, enrolled for at least 90 days

8 Proportion of children who have had their “first or regular dentist appointments”

Child Development

Using the PAT model, home visitors were trained to administer a the Ages and Stages Questionnaire-3 developmental screener (ASQ-3) to help identify potential problem areas. If identified, the home visitor provided referrals to early intervention support specialists. The ASQ-3 screens child development in five different areas: *communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem solving, and personal-social*. Children can receive a score of “normal” (no delays present), “monitoring” (they are on the borderline for delays), or “flagged” (there is a delay present) for each of the five domains. In FY 2020-21, 15 (10%) out of 149 ASQ-3 screenings identified children with developmental concerns to be referred to early intervention services.⁹ The number of children flagged with a concern was lower than the 24 (13%) children in FY 2019-20.

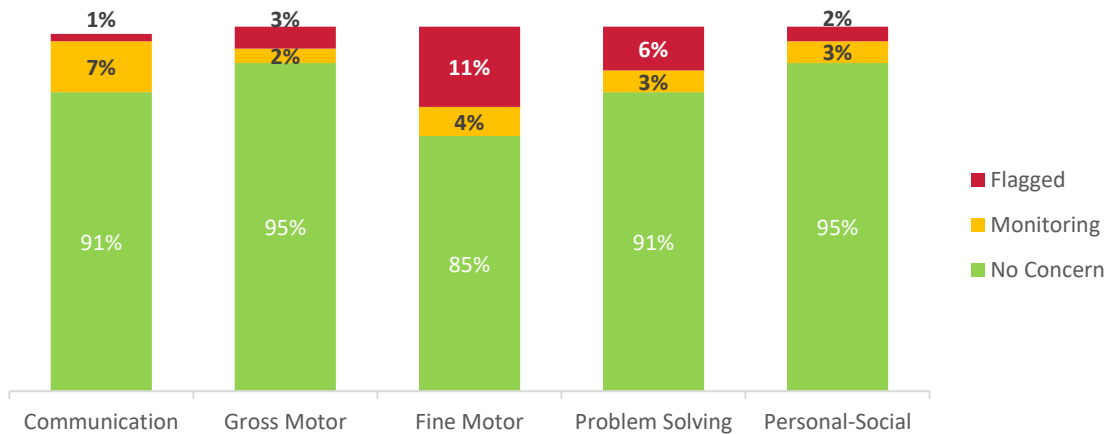
“[What I like most is] being able to set goals for my child. I often think tasks will be too difficult for my child so I don't try but my parent educator will incorporate those tasks and I'm always surprised by my child's abilities.”

– School Readiness Parent Participant



Of the 15, twelve received referrals for intervention and eight received developmental support services. Overall, 79% of children were meeting developmental milestones, 11% were on the borderline in at least one domain, and 10% were flagged for a delay in one or more developmental domains.

Figure 8. ASQ Results, by Domain

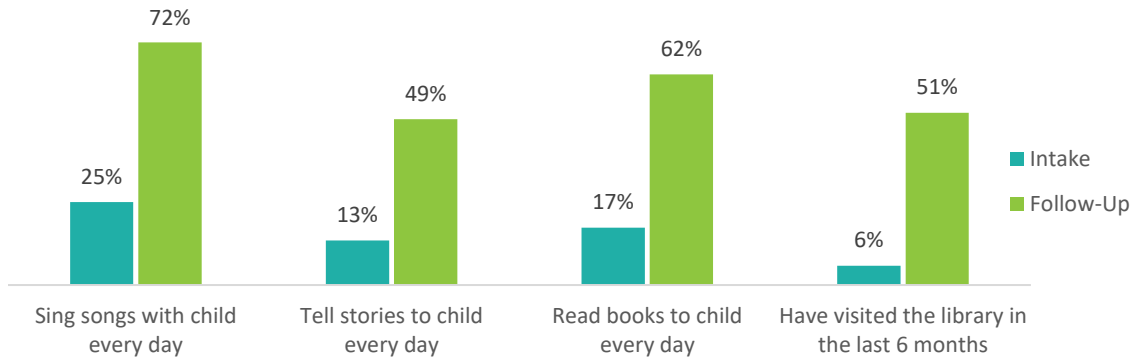


Source: Parents as Teachers database (Penelope). N = 149

⁹ Includes eight children receiving assessments more than once. Total number of children screened equals 141.

In addition to developmental testing, parents were given questionnaires about their educational practices with their young children before and after participation in home visiting. Caregivers were asked about library attendance, and how often they read to their child, tell stories, and sing songs with their child. At follow-up, caregivers were substantially more likely to report singing songs (72%), telling stories (49%), and reading books (62%) with their children every day, compared to intake. About half of the participants had visited the library at least once in the past six months, compared to the six months prior to home visiting (6%).

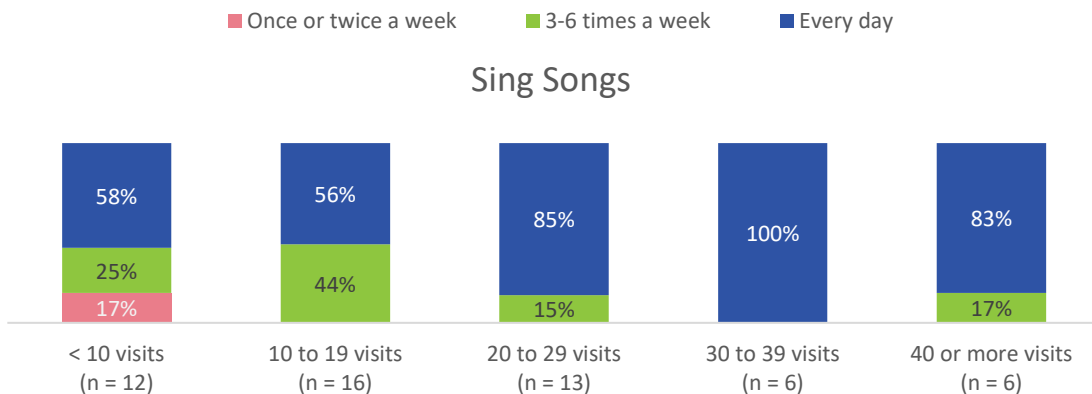
Figure 9. Percentage of Parents Responding Positively to Questions about their Educational Practices with their Young Children, Before and After Home Visiting Program Participation

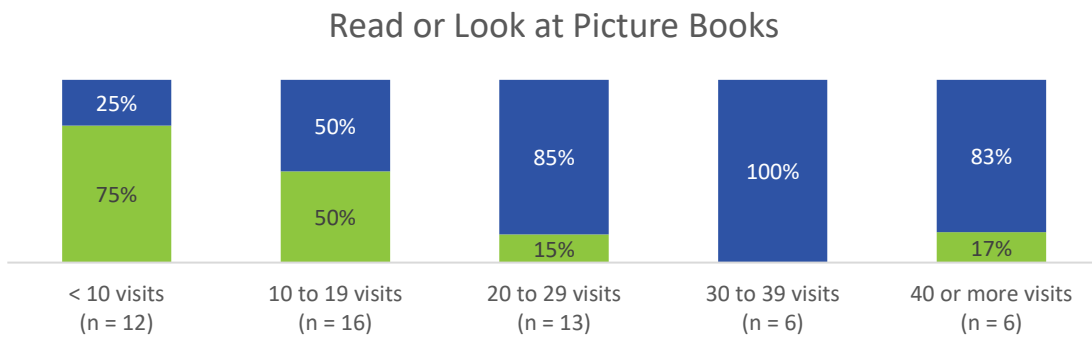
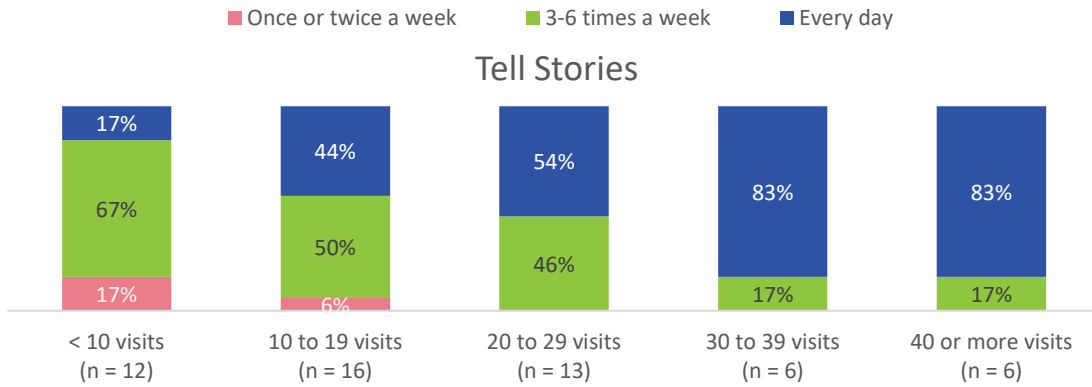


Source: Intake and Follow-up Survey, Parents as Teachers database (Penelope); N = 53.

The figure below highlights the frequency that parents sing songs, read books, and tell stories to their child after participating in home visiting. Participants with more hours of home visiting were more likely to engage in these activities every day, compared to those with fewer home visits.

Figure 10. Percentage of Parents' Frequency of Educational Practices with their Young Children After Home Visiting Program Participation, by the Number of Home Visits





Source: Intake and Follow-up Survey, Parents as Teachers database (Penelope); N = 53.

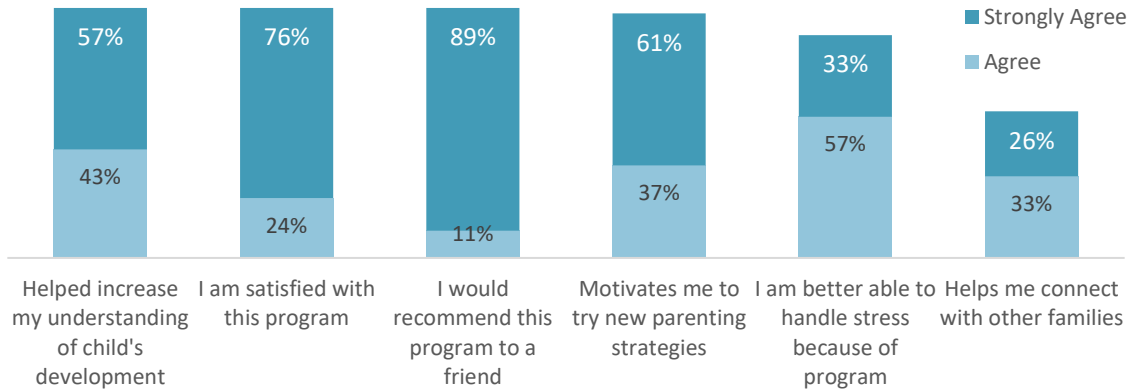
Home visiting was highly valued by the parent program participants, with the vast majority reporting positive opinions about the program (see figure below). As one parent described:

Este programa a sido de gran utilidad tanto para mi como para mi hija. Para mi fue muy satisfactorio que me pudieron ayudar con inquietudes que yo tenia sobre el habla de mi hija y el desarrollo. Para mi hija fue una alegria de que la educadora le brindo el material necesario para su aprendizaje.

Translation: This program has been very useful for both me and my daughter. For me it was very satisfactory that they were able to help me with concerns that I had about my daughter's speech and development. For my daughter, it was a joy that the educator provided her with the necessary material for her learning.



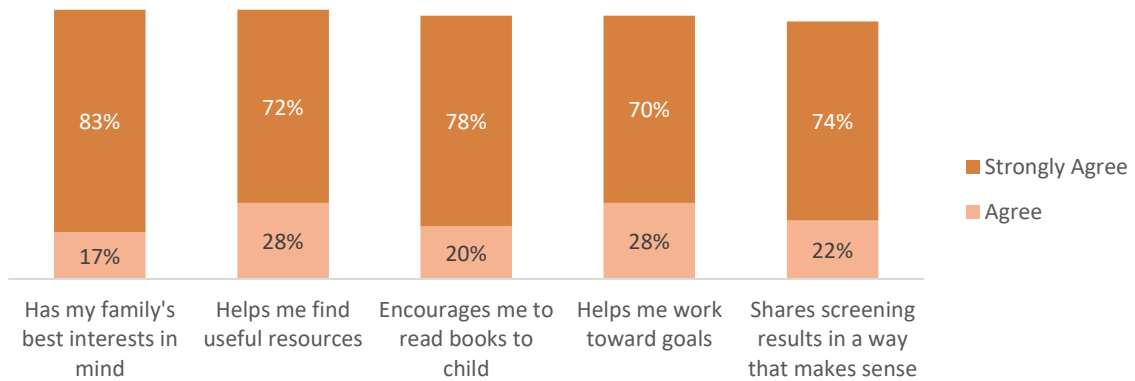
Figure 11. Home Visiting Parent Satisfaction Responses – Program Characteristics



Source: PAT Satisfaction Survey, Parents as Teachers database (Penelope); N = 46. Includes percent that agree or strongly agree

Participants often reported that they appreciated the learning activities, books provided, and saw improvements in their child’s ability to “aprendio colores y algunos numeros” (learn colors and some numbers). Additionally, participating in School Readiness helped parents connect to other programs, and learned new ways to help facilitate their child’s learning. Among those that would change something about the program, responses typically requested more in-person visits or “mas visitas en persona.”

Figure 12. Home Visiting Parent Satisfaction Responses – Parent Educator Characteristics



Source: PAT Satisfaction Survey, Parents as Teachers database (Penelope); N = 46. Includes percent that agree or strongly agree

Success Story: Home Visiting

Catalina¹⁰ is a 30-year-old married mother of four. She and her family have lived in Tehama County for about two years after moving from Mexico City. Catalina's husband came to a Safe Education and Recreation for Rural Families (SERRF) event and expressed interest in School Readiness. The next week, Catalina went to the local elementary school to get more information about the program. Her younger children enrolled in the home visiting program and received ASQ screenings.

During the first visit, the home visitor learned that despite living in Tehama County for two years, Catalina had never enrolled any of her children in school because she didn't know how and didn't have anyone to guide her through the process. They made a goal right away to get her older children enrolled in school and to monitor her younger children's developmental progress in their low-scoring domains.

In just a couple of weeks, Catalina's older children were enrolled in distance learning and her younger children were making significant developmental progress. Catalina's home visitor supported her in finding a medical home, scheduling doctor appointments, and getting her children up to date on immunizations.

Catalina shared that previously, she was intimidated because of her lack of English skills but her home visitor gave her the confidence she needed to connect with other resources. She is also implementing new parenting skills with her children that she has learned from home visits and from the Parents as Teachers handouts.

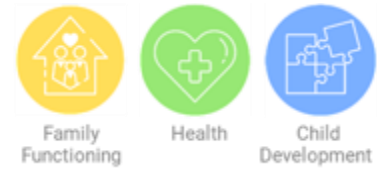
"It is hard moving to a new country, not knowing the language, and having to do a lot for your kids. My home visitor helped me with that and so much more and I am very thankful. I feel so much better about how I am doing as a parent and so happy there is a program like School Readiness for people like me!"



Two of Catalina's children

¹⁰ Fictional names used

Group Connections



Parent Cafés

Based on participant feedback on virtual events and consideration of necessary safety precautions that impact group gatherings, Parent Cafés were put on hold during the 2020-21 fiscal year. First 5 Tehama intends to revisit the feasibility of resuming Parent Cafés in future fiscal years.

Parent-Child Playgroups

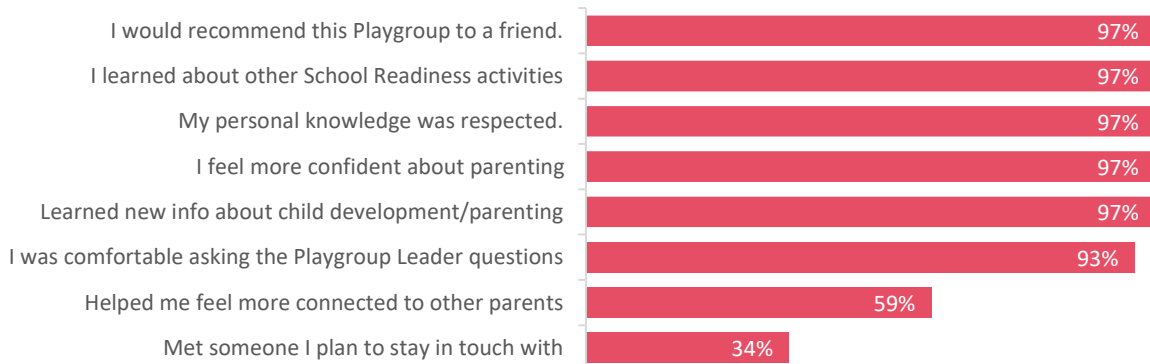
Playgroups provide an opportunity to enhance early learning skills, promote social development, increase school readiness, enhance parents' knowledge about the importance of play, and help parents find easy activities to do at home that support early learning. Playgroups offer a myriad of benefits for both parents and children including increasing social interactions, especially parent/child(ren) interactions through play, story time, and developmentally appropriate activities set in an inviting space.



In FY 2020-21, First 5 Tehama provided 39 virtual playgroup sessions to 52 adults and 66 children (down from 102 parents and 129 children in FY 2019-20). The majority of children served were Hispanic/Latino (67%) and English was their most common primary language (62%). More than half of the children served were located in Corning (51%), followed by Red Bluff (41%).

Participants largely felt that they benefitted from parent-child playgroups. Nearly all participants felt comfortable asking the Playgroup Leader questions (93%), and felt they learned new information about child development/parenting and other School Readiness activities (97%). However, parents were less likely to report feeling a peer connection with other parents (59%) or as though they met a person or another parent that they intend to keep in touch with (34%).

Figure 13. Parent-Reported Outcomes After Attending Playgroups



Source: Parents as Teachers database (Penelope). N = 29. Includes percent of participants that agree or strongly agree

Success Story: Playgroups

Christine¹¹ is the mother of two young children. She started bringing her kids to playgroup when they were two-and three-years-old. Now her children are three-and five-years-old.

Christine found out about the program while working as a temp for the Tehama County Department of Education. She was looking for fun, educational activities to do with both of her children. She was very excited to learn more about School Readiness and what they have to offer. Christine participated in virtual playgroups all year with both kids. Playgroups became especially important to this family when they opted not to enroll their youngest child in preschool due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

After learning more about School Readiness, Christine enrolled her youngest for home visits and connected to the First 5 Tehama Book Club. They also attended drive-through events at the Red Bluff library.

“Playgroups have helped show me that it is okay for the kids to get messy when doing creative activities, they are learning and think this is so much fun!”

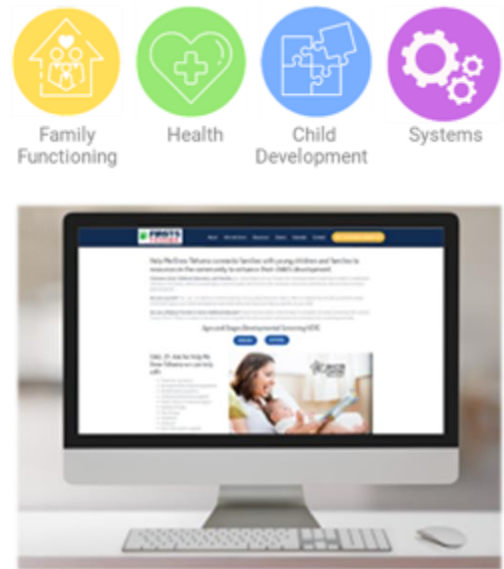
The kids like interacting with other kids and listening to the home visitors read stories and loved seeing them when they would drop off their activity.”

¹¹ Fictional names used

Help Me Grow Tehama

Help Me Grow (HMG) is an early identification and linkage system which advances the use of developmental screenings to detect developmental and behavioral delays in children and successfully links them to appropriate interventions and services.

In FY 2020-21, the HMG online system launched, and the program increased and expanded outreach to three significant audiences: families, companion services (e.g., Far Northern Regional Center, Rowell Family Empowerment), and medical clinics (e.g., Dignity Health Solano Street Medical Clinic). This work was also embedded in the ACEs and P2P communication focus. Training on the referral process was recorded and shared platforms to enable ongoing access to information.



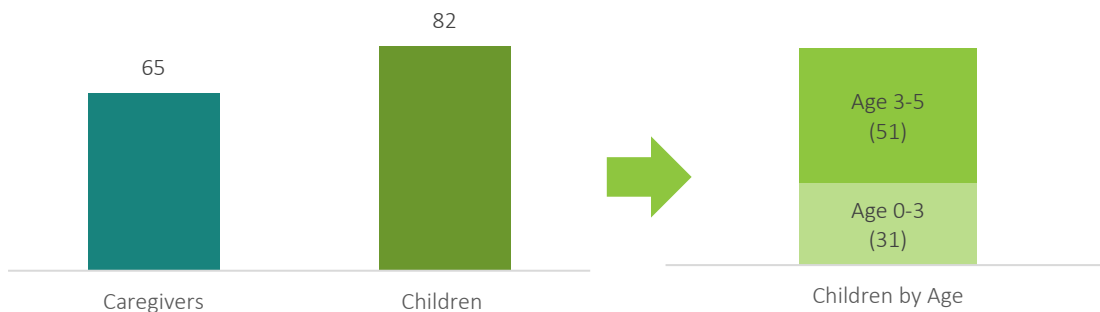
In FY 2020-21, **at least ten agencies received training on the Help Me Grow online screening and referral system**, including a range of providers, such as:

- Clinics
- Special Education
- Social workers
- And more!

Help Me Grow Resource Visits

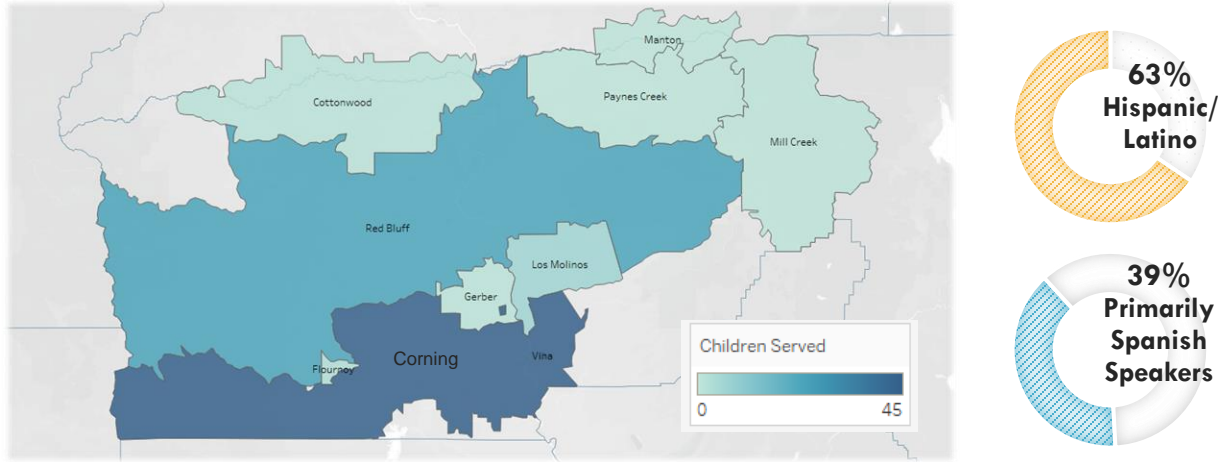
Help Me Grow funding also supports resource visits in Tehama County. Resource visits are offered to families who might not be interested in intensive home visiting and therefore received partial service that includes resource and referral, developmental screenings, developmental referral and follow-up, health access, playgroup connection, and a parent activity. In all, **65 caregivers** and **82 children** (31 children younger than three years, and 51 children between three and five years) received a virtual resource visit in FY 2020-21.

Figure 14. Help Me Grow Resource Visits Participants



More than half of the children receiving virtual resource visits were located in Corning (55%), followed by Red Bluff (28%), and Los Molinos (7%). Sixty-three percent of the children receiving resource visits were Hispanic/Latino, and 39% of children primarily spoke Spanish in the home.

Figure 15. Area Map of Children Receiving Resource Visits



Communications and Engagement



First 5 Tehama utilizes online communications and social media to engage with the Tehama community and leadership and provide tools and information about local 0-5 resources and trauma-informed practices.

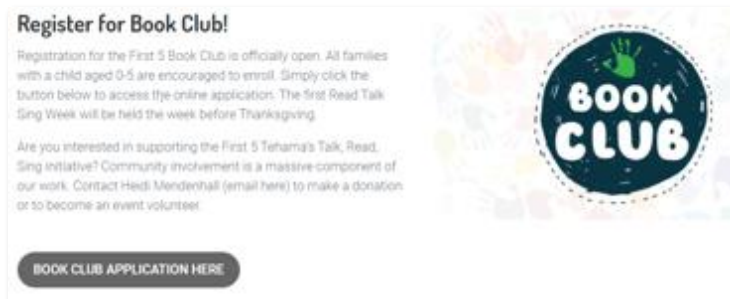
Email Campaigns

First 5 Tehama launched a laser focused vision of promoting 0-5 programs through social media and email campaigns, grounded in environmental scan data surrounding how families learn about and engage with programs. While social media work started in the previous FY, information gleaned from the environmental scan narrowed the vision from simply building 0-5 awareness to creating onramps for families to engage with 0-5 programs.

In FY 2020-21, First 5 Tehama deployed four story-based newsletters designed to increase community engagement. Stories averaged about 268 successful deliveries. More than a third of the recipients opened the stories introducing the First 5 Book Club, a look back [at 2020] to look ahead, and unpacking ACEs on a local level. Nearly half of the recipients opened the “Families Crave Resiliency” email. **Each open rate exceeded the non-profit industry benchmark (25%)¹² and increased over time.**



Click rates were consistent with or exceeded the average click rate across all industries (2.6%). The Introduction to the First 5 Book Club had the highest “click” rate, with 64 clicks (6.2%) on the Book Club sign-up form.



¹² Source: MailChimp. “Average email marketing campaign stats of Mailchimp customers by industry” <https://mailchimp.com/resources/email-marketing-benchmarks/>

Social Media

The First 5 Tehama **Facebook** page shares information on local resources for families with children 0-5 as well as evidence-based tips for families and early childhood providers. Facebook posts had a monthly reach between 470 and 2,022 users, with an average monthly reach of 743 Facebook users.

In FY 2020-21, First 5 Tehama also launched a new **Instagram** page to expand their communication of resources and evidence-based tips with families and providers, specifically those in younger age groups that may be more likely to utilize this platform. The @first5tehamacounty handle was created in July 2020, and quickly grew to having over 200 followers in less than six months.



First 5 also launched a media page on their website which hosts all real-time media content. Media content includes the **NorCal Champions for Kids Podcast**, hosted in partnership with First 5 Shasta, the **Family Table Talks YouTube video series** which highlights Tehama resources supporting Help Me Grow Tehama, and online story readings from community members such as the Red Bluff Police Chief and the Tehama County District Attorney. First 5 Tehama **Pinterest** boards have also been created, filled with activities and information for families.

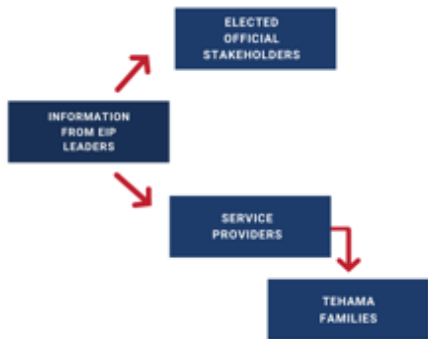
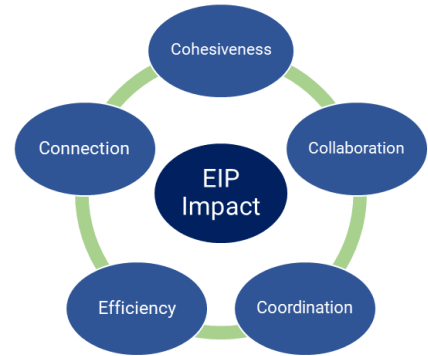


Early Intervention Partnership



First 5 Tehama continued to spearhead the Early Intervention Partnership (EIP), the prevention committee of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Children whose goal is to develop integrated support services that promote the best outcomes for children and families. EIP strives to improve communication, coordination, and integrated service delivery.

First 5 surveyed EIP members to measure the impact of the EIP on Tehama County. Participants valued the role of EIP in forming more cohesive, collaborative, coordinated, and more efficient systems related to early childhood. The EIP has helped organizations build better relationships with other agencies and become more aware of other resources available, which they feel makes them a better resource to families. The EIP has also helped increase knowledge of resiliency, ACEs, and the Five Protective Factors and made it easier to implement these topics into their work.



Information gleaned from EIP is actively shared within the partnering agencies and with other community leaders (e.g., elected official stakeholders) to facilitate the use of this knowledge and implement change. First 5’s future goals for EIP include its continued growth through inclusion of more stakeholders from K-12 education, mental health, and private entities. First 5 also intends to strengthen and increase awareness of the working collaboratives within the EIP.

These working collaborative efforts include: Pregnancy to Preschool Partnership (P2P), Strengthening Families Integration, Help Me Grow, Path 1 Referral System, and the Nurturing Parenting Program Collaborative. These groups have benefitted participants’ work by improving communication between programs, creating more awareness around ACEs, and expanding their ability to support families.

Pregnancy to Preschool Partnership (P2P)

In 2020-2021 the P2P partnership continued to meet monthly on Zoom to ensure 0-5 continuity in Tehama County and work toward its goals to ease the referral process between families, share pertinent information among organizations, increase support while families are waiting for program enrollment, and increase number of families engaged in the 0-5 systems. The P2P partnership is comprised of the following programs in Tehama County:



- ▶ School Readiness
- ▶ State Preschool
- ▶ Early Head Start
- ▶ Head Start
- ▶ Healthy Beginnings
- ▶ Healthy Families Tehama

To achieve these goals together P2P created a shared referral process. FY 2021-2021 was the first full fiscal year P2P utilized the online referral **tracking system named the Tracker**. This database allows P2P agencies to send referrals between one another quickly and easily, and includes referral outcome data (i.e., “closing the loop”). Through the P2P referral system, home visiting coordination has taken shape and has begun expanding the vision for the Tracker beyond 0-5 education and family support programs. The following presents Tracker highlights for the 2020-21 fiscal year:

- *Total referrals:* 75 referrals created for 63 parents (some parents received multiple referrals).
- *Outgoing referrals:* School Readiness sent 39 referrals, First 5 Tehama sent 29 referrals, NCCDI sent three referrals, and Healthy Families Tehama sent two referrals.¹³
- *Incoming referrals:* Most referrals (38) were sent to School Readiness, followed by NCCDI (19) and state preschool (16).
- *Referral Outcomes:* 18 children were enrolled in services following the referral, 15 were placed on a waitlist, and 35 were not enrolled in services.¹⁴

The Pregnancy to Preschool Partnership has become a central unit for systems initiatives that focus on the health and well-being of children, families, and community. This first year using the Tracker was massively successful for Tehama County. There are ongoing quality improvement efforts to increase use of the Tracker, ensure complete data entry, and streamline the process.

Tehama ACEs Aware and Strengthening Families (SF) Integration

The ACEs Aware strengthening families work is strongly connected to P2P as it builds from the success of the referral tracker to consider how to incorporate additional co-services, including initiating referrals at health clinics. Strengthening Families Integration supports building strong families and healthy communities with the Five Protective Factors by building agency capacity and expanding parent cafés, along with promoting use of family resiliency resources and tools. In 2021, First 5 Tehama utilized an ACEs Aware grant to increase awareness about adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) among Tehama service providers, community leadership, and families. First 5 facilitated three convenings of key stakeholders in Tehama County to connect and collaborate.

¹³ 2 referrals did not have an outgoing source listed

¹⁴ 7 referrals did not have an outcome listed

“... an ACEs Aware lens has taught us a new way of seeing our work. ... it is not enough to curate and provide resources to those in need. ... our network of care can pair ACEs screening with quickly accessible local information and resources.” – ACEs Convening Participant

The convenings offered participants valuable resources and strategies to better serve families through an ACEs Aware lens and work toward a more integrated system of support. One participant mentioned that prior to ACEs, collaborations with health partners were either splintered or not happening. As a result of the ACEs Aware work, participants have been working to implement and/or evolve services and build new partnerships for warm handoffs, and training staff to engage with families in new ways. At least 58 providers and staff were ACEs Aware trained because of the ACEs Aware work in Tehama in 2021.



Home Visiting Collaborative (HVC)

The Home Visiting Collaborative continued to meet virtually in FY 2020-21. Home visitors were invited to attend in effort to increase engagement and a sense of connection that was much needed. Home visitors were able to share their successes, barriers, and the needs of families. As a result of the home visitors' valuable insights, the Collaborative engaged in meaningful and constructive dialogue both between programs and among program supervisors and staff. Following the success of this strategy, the Collaborative decided to continue this format into FY 2021-22. This strategy also enabled the home visitors to act as key informants on the needs and strengths of families for the Tehama County 0-5 Environment Scan provided by the HVC funds.

Conversations held at the Collaborative meetings also raised requests for more social-emotional and resilience trainings. First 5 funded trainings specifically for home visitors and non-teacher oriented 0-5 professionals (e.g., social workers, early mental health professionals). A total of **56** professionals were registered for three early educator trainings, including:

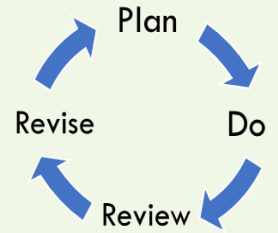
- ▶ Program for Infant Toddler Care
- ▶ WestEd Center for Child and Family Studies, Social Emotional Focus
- ▶ SAMSHA Grant
- ▶ Mind and Body by Sharon Bisalar (for Spanish Speaking professionals)

The Mind and Body training was specific to Spanish speaking home visitors and was attended by six participants.

Nurturing Parenting Program (NPP) Collaborative

The Nurturing Parenting Program (NPP) Collaborative also continued to meet virtually during the 2020-21 fiscal year. However, partners were eager to resume face-to-face trainings, so the Collaborative transitioned to a hybrid model. The group shared lessons learned and best practices, and two members were trained in the newly released NPP curriculum with plans to share the information with the rest of the Collaborative during FY 2021-22.

Ongoing Systems Work Highlight (PLAN, DO, REVIEW, REVISE)



WHY?

In 2017, Tehama County early education programs each had a separate waiting list and separate, complicated enrollment processes. Barriers needed to be **eliminated between programs for the Early Childhood System to come together to improve children’s health and school success.**

WHO?

The initial work group gathered as a subset of the Tehama Early Intervention Partnership (EIP) with a focus on creating an “algorhythm” (spelling adopted by group for naming purposes) to develop a shared understanding among themselves and families about which services best fit which families (i.e., creating a clear picture of when a family would fit best in Early Head Start versus School Readiness Home Visiting).

WHAT?

“Algorhythm” discussions focused on each program’s goals, enrollment requirements (e.g., income), and strengths (e.g., bilingual staff). Next, the group shifted focus to how to better support families’ early education enrollment. The group created a paper P2P referral form to support referrals for families that may have been waitlisted or began enrolling in a program they were not eligible for.



For instance: If a family tried to enroll in Head Start and did not qualify or were waitlisted, enrollment staff would ask families to sign a shared information form, which they would then share with the better-fit program via fax.

REVIEW

Between 2018 and 2020, this process **reduced barriers on families and provided a way for them to receive services** even if they did not qualify for the original program or if a program was full. However, two clear barriers remained:

1. P2P could not clearly “close the loop” (know how many families were served after the referral).
2. According to population estimates and enrollment data, Tehama’s 0-5 programs were still engaging only 50% of families.

REVISE

Addressing Barrier 1.



In 2020, First 5 built an online referral platform to **improve closed-loop referrals** for P2P partners. The **Tracker** (completed in February 2020) has enabled programs to stay connected even when staff are working remote.

Addressing Barrier 2.



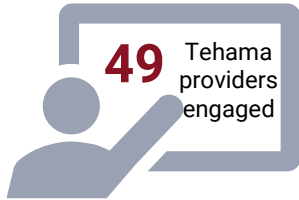
The ongoing pandemic exacerbates the need to **reach a large number of families** not yet engaged in Tehama County 0-5 programs. Thus, First 5 Tehama created a Book Club, leveraging the First 5 California book distribution.

The Book Club offers a zero-commitment enrollment for any family member of a 0-5-year-old child living in Tehama. Book Club participants receive three book bags from the local library yearly, become engaged in the First 5 Tehama communication system via First 5’s monthly communications highlighting local 0-5 education opportunities, and are offered an opportunity to be enrolled in one of the P2P programs. After 9 months 270 participants had signed up; 50% of which were not previously engaged in any 0-5 early education experience.

Provider Strengthening



Quality Counts North State (QCNS)



Through Quality Counts North State providers can apply to participate, learn, and stay connected with efforts to increase the quality of early care and education within California’s North State.^{xi} QCNS provides programs with access to training, coaching/mentoring, materials, funding, and technical assistance. Six counties in California, Glenn, Lassen, Modoc, Shasta, Tehama, and Trinity, comprise the QCNS.

First 5 Tehama supports the expansion of providers’ participation in QCNS, as well as the underlying philosophy of supporting quality in early care and education. In FY 20-21, 49 providers engaged in QCNS in Tehama County.



First 5 Tehama also donated \$500 to provider recognition efforts serving 78 providers honoring providers engaged in QCNS and outreaching to providers not yet in QCNS. The event celebrated providers and provided information on how to access and become a part of QCNS while also sharing an evidenced based strategy to help children regulate emotions, Tucker Turtle Takes Time to Tuck and Think, or the “Turtle Technique.”^{xii}

Cradle to Career Partnership Trainings

Based on needs that arose throughout the Early Intervention Partnership, First 5 Tehama co-hosted eight partner trainings on social-emotional health and wellness. A total of 183 participants registered for trainings, which were conducted in partnership with funds from TUPE, Expect More Tehama, and Tehama County Department of Education. Presenters at these trainings were invited back by multiple early education partners to expand the work focused on 0-5 including Quality Counts North state and Northern California Child Development, Inc.



Current Successes and Goals for the Future

The 2020-21 fiscal year was an important one for First 5 Tehama. Not only was it the new executive director's first full year in the role, but the continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, well beyond initial estimates, raised many opportunities for First 5 to **creatively engage families** and systems in new ways. Additionally, First 5 obtained funding to support the ACES Aware work, introducing more opportunities to engage in trauma-informed care within the county and individual organizations. This work supported many families in new ways and **revitalized critical interagency partnerships**.

Several other new initiatives and opportunities also took flight, despite limited options for traditional programming. Some of these opportunities included **increased media communication** that expanded First 5 Tehama reach beyond the county to include a regional and statewide audience (e.g., video read-a-longs with local elected officials, a podcast, a "Family Talk" video series aimed to create connection and conversation without contact.) First 5 Tehama also provided new **training opportunities and workshops** for professionals, including one novel Mind and Body session in Spanish for native-Spanish speaking service providers to feel supported in their primary language. First 5 also implemented new family-aimed programs such as the **Book Club**, to increase engagement and provide resources to encourage and support literacy in the home.

In the upcoming fiscal year, First 5 will be exploring the lessons learned and data gathered around specific county needs to inform their strategic plan. A new **Five-year strategic plan** will be built to guide future work and goals. First 5 Tehama aims to use these refocused strategic goals to build on the successes of this year and to increase engagement in early educational services throughout the county, increase connectivity and cohesiveness between systems that young children and families utilize, and increase awareness across the county in all arenas (community, education, and health) on the critical importance of evidence-based strategies to support young children develop and thrive.

First 5 Tehama has continued excitement about the collective potential to have a positive influence on the lives of young children and families living in Tehama County through a blend of direct support and systems-level changes.

References & Endnotes

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