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I remember the early meetings as the ‘algorithm meetings’ … it was hard.
The agencies really thought of their kids as theirs and while they wanted to the best for everyone, there is always that fear that we won’t fill our own enrollment and earn our contracts.
But when I started as the ED in 2020, they had moved past all of that…. we were able to leverage the hard work [of the] ‘no wrong door entry’ to an online closed loop referral system.

- Heidi Mendenhall, First 5 Tehama Executive Director


## Pregnancy to Preschool (P2P) Framework

The P2P strategy was developed in 2017 and evolved to include the addition of an online, interactive referral portal to focus on access to closed-loop referrals between partners. **The** **mission of the P2P is to offer Tehama County families a “no wrong door” approach for families to access the services they need**. In other words, P2P aims to reduce the burden on families and ensure families do not slip through the cracks to receive the services they need.



As the P2P strategy grew and evolved, Tehama County identified the *Centering Families* framework as key to setting goals and strategies for the group. Due to Tehama County’s rural nature, this primarily home visiting-focused framework was applied to all early learning in Tehama County. The *Centering Families* framework includes five key components for an effective coordinated system, including:

*a) Planning*

*b) Strength of Partnerships*

*c) Shared Data and Measurement*

*d) Workforce Support, Development, and Equitable Compensation, and*

*e) Coordinated Outreach and “No Wrong Door” Enrollment*.

P2P aims to address components b, c, and e through their shared referral network and data sharing, including referral details and ASQ screenings.

In the last four years, P2P increased referrals, refined outcomes tracking, and internal coordination to best route families and meet them where they are. This study marks the next step to align the P2P’s “no wrong door” intent, shared accountability for serving families, and workforce support for P2P partners.

FY 2023-24

**154** referrals for **129** caregivers

**50% served\*** by end of FY

FY 2022-23

**149** referrals for
**106** caregivers

**58% enrolled** by end of FY

FY 2021-22

**91** referrals for
**75** caregivers

**49% enrolled** by end of FY

FY 2020-21

**75** referrals for
**63** caregivers

**24% enrolled** by end of FY

\*Definition of served updated in FY 2023-24 to include families seeking resources only rather than program enrollment

Throughout 2024, First 5 Tehama identified areas in which the P2P group and service needs continued to evolve and grow. First 5 Tehama compiled insights from P2P members via a voluntary, anonymous survey and developed two key action items to continue on the trajectory of the P2P mission and evolving needs. Seven members completed the online survey. Key highlights are presented below.

## the Centering Families Framework

First, participants were asked to share their thoughts on **how P2P is doing overall**, in relation to their mission and the three *Centering Families* strategies which P2P aims to address. On average, participants gave shared data and measurement strategies “4 stars.” Participants rated the strength of partnerships slightly lower, on average, followed by the coordinated outreach for “no wrong door” enrollment.

Source: P2P Anonymous Member Survey (N = 7). Average scores, range 1 (Poor) to 5 (Excellent)

When asked about the five components of the *Centering Families* framework overall, P2P members primarily felt it was **most critical** **to improve** the strength of partnerships (b) as well as strategies for workforce, development, and equitable compensation (d).

## The P2P Mission, Goals, and strategies

P2P members completing the online survey also shared insights about how P2P is accomplishing its mission to offer Tehama County families a “no wrong door” approach for families to access the services they need, as well as the specific strategies used to achieve this mission.

**83% *somewhat* agreed**that P2P is **achieving its mission**
to offer Tehama County families a “no wrong door” access to services.

Most participants “somewhat”(83%, 5/6) agreedthat P2P is **accomplishing its mission**, and the remaining 17% “strongly” agreed. The challenges and opportunities to improve that participants discussed included:

* + Improving the timeliness of referrals
	+ Navigating agency restrictions which can impact the “no wrong door” approach
	+ Identifying reasons for referral outcomes where families’ need are *not* being met.
	+ Strengthening collaborations between agencies

Additionally, participants shared various opinions when asked whether they were interested in exploring a **centralized eligibility list**. One participant was supportive and felt it “would be a huge benefit in creating a ‘no wrong door’ approach.” Meanwhile others were unsure (needing more information or concerned about agency requirements imposing limits). Two participants also further highlighted the importance of strengthening collaborations between agencies as they expressed interest only if “it could ensure a true partnership by all involved” and “an equitable approach.”

### P2P Strategies

The P2P uses multiple strategies to further its mission to give Tehama County families a “no wrong door” approach to access services. The key strategies that P2P members use to coordinate referrals and share information include:

1. Receiving **fax or email referrals** from external, non-P2P member organization partners
2. Utilizing an **online referral portal** to send, receive, and track “closed loop” referrals
3. Sharing **ASQ data** with First 5 Tehama for annual reporting of countywide screening outcomes
4. Attending **bimonthly meetings** (every other month) to review data, share enrollment updates, professional development, and outreach opportunities

For each strategy, participants were asked whether they agreed that the strategy played an important role in the P2P mission, whether the strategy was being used effectively, and (in some instances) whether community partners or members understand how to complete the process.

All participants “strongly” agreed that reviewing professional development opportunities at bimonthly meetings was important and used effectively. Participants were more divided on the other strategies although all participants at least “somewhat” agreed in the importance and effective use of each strategy. One exception was the small number of participants who “somewhat disagreed” that the online referral tracker was important or used effectively.

Similarly, half of the participants (3/6) “somewhat disagreed” that P2P members understood how to complete the online referral tracker process. On the other hand, one out of six participants (17%) somewhat disagreed that the external community partners understood how to complete the fax or email referral forms.

Source: P2P Anonymous Member Survey (N = 6 although ns may vary by question). Responses based on a 4-point scale (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree).

Participants were also asked more specific questions related to the **online referral tracker portal**, including rating the usefulness of the various aspects of the online portal, what changes they would like to see, and how their work would be impacted if the online referral tracker was not used.

The following insights came from the four participants who responded to these sections:[[1]](#footnote-1)

* Three out of four participants (75%) said receiving referrals through the tracker was “very” useful, as well as the ability to send to multiple recipients at once. Participants felt that sending referrals and tracker data reviews were “mostly” or “very” useful (50% each). Participants were more divided and more likely to disagree about the usefulness of the details and access to client-level information.
* Participants shared that they would like to see complete information sent to the correct agency in a timely manner with detailed notes, as well as the ability to access links to program applications in one place.
* Participants were divided on how their work would be impacted without the tracker. Half of the participants said that sending referrals, receiving referrals, and connecting families to services would be “about the same,” while the other half said these actions would be “harder.” Three out of four participants said enrolling families in their program would be the same without the online tracker, while one participant said enrollment would be harder.

## Key Takeaways and Next Steps

First 5 Tehama reviewed the responses to these survey questions and shared a detailed summary of responses at a P2P meeting where members had the opportunity to react to the findings and share additional thoughts on the findings. This in-depth process led First 5 Tehama and the P2P Partnership to identify **preliminary action items** for which the work has already begun.

**Joint Learning Sessions**

First 5 and P2P will begin the next phase of P2P including planning joint learning sessions to include community service providers beyond the P2P members. This will improve connections with additional early learning facilitators and providers who have otherwise not been “at the table.”

**Leveraging CalAIM**

First 5 and P2P will explore options to leverage CalAIM to support partner organizations’ sustainability to serve families, as well as potential for a more robust and effective P2P database.

**Data Management**

Members also jointly agreed to modify the client-level information collected by P2P, limiting data to only the most useful and essential data elements in order to encourage members to share more detailed notes for a thorough and contextual narrative on the family circumstances to fully prepare the receiving agency for next steps. Efforts have begun to review and modify the data collection and data entry tools.

1. Results may be skewed due to incomplete responses from all participants, especially if those who were more likely to disagree with the effectiveness of this strategy were those who did not share responses. Interpret with caution. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)