



First 5 IMPACT Fact Sheet



OVERVIEW

First 5 California (F5CA) is investing \$190 million in First 5 IMPACT (Improve and Maximize Programs so All Children Thrive) over five years (fiscal years 2015-16 to 2019-20) to support a network of local quality rating and improvement systems (QRIS) statewide. QRIS is a research-based strategy to improve the quality in settings across the entire continuum—from alternative settings and family, friend, and neighbor care to family child care homes, centers, and preschools.

First 5 IMPACT builds on a successful network of local QRIS efforts, forges partnerships with all 58 counties, builds on existing F5CA programs, and aligns with and leverages federal, state, and local investments and direction. Striving toward high-quality, evidence-based standards will ensure more early learning and care settings can support California's children to gain the skills, knowledge, and dispositions necessary to be successful in school and life.

FIRST 5 IMPACT FACTS AT A GLANCE

- Invests \$190 million of F5CA Proposition 10 funding over five years
- Participants include 48 consortia representing all 58 counties
- Reaches 5,835 early learning sites across the state, or 14% of all licensed early learning sites in California

WHAT IS A QRIS?

Quality early learning and care is a critical piece of early childhood development that has been shown to have long-term benefits for children. A quality rating and improvement system is intended to raise the level of quality of early learning and care programs by developing quality standards, providing quality improvement supports, and aligning disconnected systems. This system is a multi-faceted approach to accomplish the following:

- Establish a set of standards that define quality for centers and home-based early learning programs
- Support early learning educators with increased training, support, and compensation
- Ensure information about quality in early learning settings is available to parents and caregivers
- Support infrastructure to create processes for supporting quality improvement and monitoring progress
- Inform policymakers and the public about the effectiveness of early learning programs

Currently, 39 states have a statewide QRIS. In California, local, state, and federal investments in quality infrastructure fund a system of local

county and/or regional consortia to operate a QRIS. Each funding stream (including Department of Education's California State Preschool Program and the Infant/Toddler QRIS Block Grants, and First 5 IMPACT) supports California's seven distinct QRIS elements that measure quality across the state. Additionally, there is flexibility for consortia to modify the framework to meet local needs and provide related training and technical assistance to sites.

WHY ARE FIRST 5 IMPACT AND QRIS IMPORTANT?

- Because research has shown 90% of brain development occurs by age 5 (with at least 80% completed by age 3), high-quality early learning environments are crucial for young children.
- Parents need access to high-quality environments for their children that foster learning and support social-emotional development.
- Families want clear, easy-to-understand information to help them choose the right care environment for their children.
- Providers need support to keep striving toward providing the healthiest and most caring, quality environments possible for children to thrive.

FIRST 5 IMPACT FUNDING PRIORITIES

Over the five-year term, First 5 IMPACT funds will support four key areas:

- 1. County and Regional Work:** \$122 million for county Lead Agencies to support local QRIS implementation.
- 2. Regional Training and Technical Assistance (T&TA) Coordination Hubs:** \$18 million for First 5 county commissions to support regional coordination of resources and data systems.

- 3. State-Level Systems Support and Statewide T&TA:** \$28 million for state infrastructure and T&TA related to continuous quality improvement statewide.

- 4. Evaluation and Research Projects:** \$22 million for evaluation and research projects (e.g., child outcome research) and to support expansion of local QRIS databases.

CORE PRINCIPLES OF FIRST 5 IMPACT

- **Effective teaching is critical:** Children with warm, supportive early educators in stimulating environments are more resilient and engaged learners.
- **Strong and engaged families:** When families are included as active participants and partners in their child's development, it empowers them as their child's first teacher and positively impacts child development.
- **California's early learning and care system respects the diversity of family care needs and so does First 5 IMPACT:** Children thrive in early care settings that work best for them. Quality is not one size fits all—it looks different across the spectrum of setting types. First 5 IMPACT recognizes those differences and supports all provider types.
- **All types of programs and providers must be high quality for children to be successful:** Early learning centers; family child care; family, friend, and neighbor care; family resource centers; Boys and Girls Clubs; libraries; and home visiting programs are all participating in First 5 IMPACT.