

2024 Policy Agenda



The Policy Agenda is organized into four major policy priority areas. Embedded within each area is a focus on equity and the need to support children holistically in the context of their families and communities — referred to colloquially as the “Whole Child and Whole Family” framework. As such, the policy agenda will work to close race-based disparities in health, well-being and opportunity; utilize the best available data and advocate for the availability of full and complete data to understand which communities face the most significant barriers to resources, and so have the greatest opportunity to benefit from First 5 LA policy and systems change efforts, and promote a holistic system of supports that is language- and culturally-appropriate.

The 2024 First 5 LA Policy Agenda is grounded in learnings from First 5 LA investments and community experiences and recognizes children ages 5 years and younger as a truly “special population,” due to the rapid pace of brain development that occurs during this period. The 2024 Policy Agenda aims in particular to reduce barriers to care and ensure our youngest children receive health and learning supports as early as possible, to promote lifelong success. The experience of structural racism, woven throughout many of the systems and institutions families interact with, also powerfully disrupts optimal child development and family stability. As such, all priorities with the 2024 Policy Agenda will:

- Work to close systemic inequities and race-based disparities across health, well-being, and opportunity.
- Utilize the best available data and advocate for the availability of full, complete and disaggregated data.
- Promote a holistic system of supports that is linguistically and culturally responsive.

COMMUNITIES

Ensure communities have the resources and environment that supports optimal development of children prenatal to age 5.

- Advocate for communities' basic needs and increased opportunities to shape resources, services, and social conditions to protect the wellbeing of young children and families.
- Promote local flexibility in policies and systems that directly impact families and neighborhoods.
- Elevate and utilize disaggregated data on the conditions of children and families to inform efforts in reducing barriers to access and improving the quality of service delivery systems.

EARLY INTERVENTION

Improve systems to promote the optimal development of children through early identification and supports.

- Promote alignment and integration throughout early identification, early intervention, and family strengthening systems.
- Ensure children equitably receive early and periodic validated developmental, health and behavioral screenings, and appropriate trauma-informed interventions.
- Expand access to preventative care to close maternal and pediatric health disparities and achieve birth equity.

EARLY LEARNING

Expand access to affordable, quality early care and education.

- Increase public investment in a mixed delivery early learning system prioritizing family choice, infants and toddlers, and those from historically underresourced and marginalized communities.
- Ensure an equitable early learning quality support structure that responds to the diverse cultural and linguistic assets of all children, providers, and settings.
- Expand access to benefits and ensure fair pay for all early learning providers that reflects the critical roles they play.

FAMILY SUPPORTS

Promote a comprehensive system of family supports to advance positive outcomes for the whole child and whole family.

- Strengthen and maintain systems that connect families to effective, innovative, and community-responsive resources, prioritizing home visiting and early intervention services, and supporting the home visiting workforce.
- Advance and protect family supports to ensure families with young children and pregnant people are economically secure.
- Reduce barriers and eligibility requirements so children prenatal to 5 years old receive supports and services that promote healthy development at the earliest opportunities.