

First 5 Sonoma County - Plan for Change

Our Vision: Children in Sonoma County will develop to their full potential

1. Core Beliefs

We believe:

Children should be appreciated for who they are as well as who they will be.

Experiences in the first 5 years are critical to brain development.

Investing in prevention & early intervention is essential.

Families are their children's first teachers.

The entire community benefits when all children reach their full potential.

All children—regardless of language, culture, or special need—have the right to access all developmental services.

Contextual Factors

Funding opportunities

Competing priorities

Changing demographics

Socio-economic trends

Local/state/federal allocations

2. Guiding Principles

In our work, we:

- Recognize & honor children's rights, intelligence, curiosity, & imagination
- Respect diversity, strength, & potential of children, families, & communities
- Invest in sustainable system change
- Support policies/programs that benefit children and families
- Continuously improve, based on evaluation & community feedback
- Collaborate to coordinate & integrate services
- Maintain fiscal responsibility, transparency, & accountability
- Partner with parents, families, & communities to provide safe, nurturing environments for children

3. Needs Identified

- School readiness
- Health and healthy development
- Parent support & education
- Quality of early care/education
- Accessibility/quality of services

4. Strategies

- Employ integrated, collaborative approaches
- Apply best practices
- Leverage resources
- Use varied funding mechanisms
- Use data to inform decision making
- Maintain dedicated fund for long term stability

5. Expected Change

School Readiness:

- Children will be ready for school.
- Schools will be ready for children.
- Families and communities will have the supports and services that contribute to children's readiness for school success

Children Will:

- Be born free of exposure to alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs
- Have health care coverage
- Have healthy teeth/gums
- Be well-nourished/physically active

Parents and Community Will:

- Be educated/supported to create safe/nurturing environments

Early Care and Education Will:

- Be of the highest quality

School Readiness



Supporting Evidence

- Early child development research/evaluation
- Local needs assessments
- Advisory committees
- Local practice/wisdom
- Community/collaborative planning models

Cultural norms

Complementary efforts by others

Availability of services

State mandates