



A Bit Better

News From First 5 Santa Cruz County

Child Care Provider Emergency COVID Response Funds Distribution

As a part of our mission, First 5 Santa Cruz County values early care and education, and works to support family child care and child care centers. "First 5 Santa Cruz County is proud and honored to have been able to braid public and private funding to provide emergency cash awards to members of our local child care community who remained open during the COVID-19 crisis. In particular we want to recognize our family child care community, who largely remained open to serve the children and families of essential workers and at-risk populations throughout the crisis. We hope that the emergency funds provided by First 5 and our partners played some part in helping our child care community meet the extraordinary costs and challenges associated with providing safe care for children during the crisis," says David Brody, First 5 Santa Cruz County's Executive Director.

As part of our First 5's COVID-19 on-going response, First 5 Santa Cruz County distributed \$338,574 from multiple sources to 188 family child care homes and 24 centers that continued to provide child care to the children of essential workers and at-risk populations in the first four months of the pandemic crisis. These funds help providers deal with the extraordinary costs associated with providing child care in as safe a manner as possible and consistent with state and local guidelines. An additional round of funding of \$100,000 will be distributed this March to an estimated 200 family child care homes and centers that are open and serving children.

Frame Their Learning Workshop

On February 27th, 52 family child care providers participated in a Frame Their Learning (FTL) virtual training, facilitated in Spanish. The unique FTL system, created by The Discovery Source, enhances the way teachers interact with children and provides tangible improvements in adult-child interactions.



In this training, teachers practice asking thought provoking questions, improving back and forth exchanges, and having quality conversations with children. Frame Their Learning also helps teachers use higher level vocabulary words to incorporate a rich STEM vocabulary into their lessons. This training complimented a FTL training in English that was sponsored by the County Office of Education and held earlier this year. Providers shared that they were excited to participate in this training and found the content engaging and enjoyed the modeling of strategies by the instructor.

Help Working Families Put Money Back in their Pockets

We need your help to let working families know about the California Earned Income Tax Credit (CalEITC) and Young Child Tax Credit. These credits put thousands of dollars in the pockets of families, helping them move out of poverty and up the economic ladder.

Who qualifies for the CalEITC?

- Any worker with an income of \$30,000 or less.
- Any worker who files taxes with an Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN) or Social Security Number (SSN).
- Self-employed (form 1099) and cash earners.
- Workers with children under age six who qualify for the CalEITC may also file for the Young Child Tax Credit—and receive up to an additional \$1,000.

The CalEITC and Young Child Tax Credits exist in addition to the

federal EITC. The average combined tax refund is \$3,000, but some families could receive up to \$8,053.

Workers can file online for free, or schedule an appointment for help with filing, at <http://www.myfreetaxes.org/>

The **new tax deadline is May 17, 2021**. This is the first year ITIN filers can access the credit, so we are especially trying to spread the word to immigrant families. For more materials to help get the word out, please visit www.first5association.org/CalEITC

Thank you for your help!



Community Announcements

Local Pediatric Dental Appointments Available

There are openings at local clinics for pediatric dental appointments for children 0 to 3. Please check out this [flyer](#) for more information about the importance of bringing young children in to have regular dental checkups.

Local Assistance Available to Help with Health Insurance and CalFresh Applications

Having access to health insurance and food for our families is of vital importance. If you, a family member, friend or neighbor need help completing or renewing an application to county or state health insurance programs Certified Application Assistors can answer your questions and offer free application assistance. Call an Application Assistor directly at any of the agencies listed on this [flyer](#) for more information.

Parenting and Caregiver Resources

- First 5 Santa Cruz County- **Triple P parenting support**
- Watsonville Public Library - **Storytime Kits**
- Community Foundation Santa Cruz County: **March Family Resource Calender**
- Santa Cruz County Office of Education website focused on **Distance Learning**
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- First 5 Association - **Resources for Families, Children and Communities**
- First 5 California's **Parenting Website**
- Resources from **Sesame Street in Communities**
- California Surgeon General's Playbook: **Stress Relief for Caregivers and Kids during COVID-19**
- From the National Institute of Mental Health - Flyers on Stress and Anxiety in **English** and **Spanish**

If you are in need of child care,
please call the Child Development Resource Center



Child Development Resource Center

Serving those who care for and educate young children.

(831) 466-5820

cdrc@santacruzcoe.org

COVID-19 Related Community Resources

- County of Santa Cruz Health Services Agency:
 - [Vaccination Information](#)
 - [COVID -19 Resources and Information Website](#)
 - [Testing Sites](#)
- Abriendo Puertas Shares Multi-Lingual COVID-19 Resources for Families: [Website](#)
- Mental Health Tips & Local Resources for COVID-19 – [ENGLISH](#) & [SPANISH](#)
- California Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response:
 - [COVID -19 Resources and Information Website](#)



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This newsletter is a collaborative effort of First 5 Santa Cruz County staff.



website: www.first5scc.org

PO Box 1457 Capitola, CA 95010

Tel: 831-465-2217 Fax: 831-479-5477

