

# PROTECTING CRITICAL SERVICES FOR CALIFORNIA'S YOUNGEST CHILDREN



## BUDGET REQUEST

The First 5 Association of California (F5AC) is requesting a one-time \$100 million investment to ensure local programs serving California's babies, toddlers, and preschoolers stay intact. This one-time funding request would be allocated to First 5 programs throughout the state and focus on the highest priority areas:

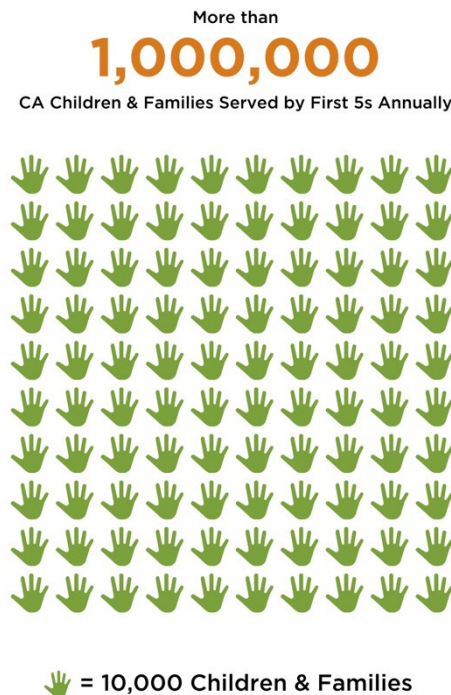
- Family strengthening programs such as family resource centers, fatherhood programs and home visiting.
- Infant and early childhood mental health services for young children and their caregivers, and workforce training.
- Child care and early learning supports such as provider coaching, mentoring, and stipends.

## SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES AT RISK

For 25 years, local First 5 programs in every county have supported the healthy development and school readiness of millions of California children. Already declining tobacco tax revenues that fund First 5 programs have been dramatically slashed since Proposition 31 (the flavored tobacco ban) was implemented last year. F5AC's tobacco tax revenue projections estimate **First 5s will need to cut \$123.7M** in early childhood community investments over the next two fiscal years and \$422.9M in the next

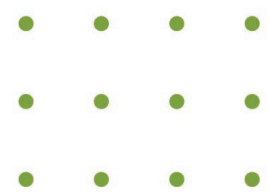
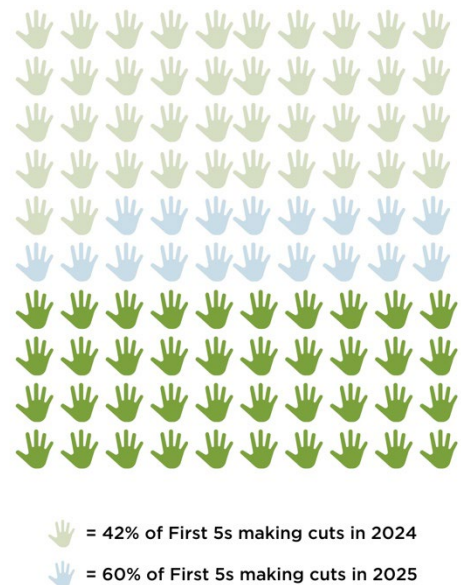
five fiscal years.<sup>1</sup> The need is urgent— **more than 42% of First 5s have already made program cuts this year and 60% are planning on program cuts in 2024-25.**<sup>2</sup>

Without a short term, stop-gap investment from the state, programs serving tens of thousands of low-income children and children of color will end. California's babies, toddlers, and preschoolers should not bear the impact of the flavored tobacco ban in the form of fewer services and opportunities for healthy development.



## BUDGET CUTS

First 5 Program Cuts



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## PRESERVING FIRST 5 INFRASTRUCTURE

Local First 5s make up a statewide, 58-county network of early childhood service providers, case managers, grant makers, program coordinators, trusted messengers, researchers, advocates, and effective public stewards of state and local funding. **Together this network impacts the lives of more than 1 million kids, families and caregivers each year.**<sup>3</sup>

In addition to community program cuts, operational reductions in this network mean First 5s cannot **coordinate** local early childhood services like home visiting or serve as contract managers for CalAIM (California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal) community partners. In addition, because First 5s **leverage** funds to match other local and state funding, every tobacco tax dollar lost reduces funding available to serve California's children and their families. Finally, as statewide **innovators** of early childhood best practices, a dwindling infrastructure will disproportionately impact the state's most vulnerable children.

For more information, contact Courtney Armstrong, Director of Government Affairs with First 5 Association of California, at [courtney@first5association.org](mailto:courtney@first5association.org).

<sup>1</sup> First 5 CA, "FY 22-23 Monthly Distribution of Tax Revenues". <https://bit.ly/3S8L0jt>

<sup>2</sup> Based on the response from 47 counties who participated in a survey conducted by First 5 Association of California in 2023. These counties comprise 88% of children born in the state.

<sup>3</sup> First 5 California, "2022-23 Annual Report", Appendix C, page 59. <https://bit.ly/48DBv2N>

