



Community Report

July 2023 - June 2024

Authored by First 5 Humboldt Evaluation Staff

This report to the community provides an overview of First 5 Humboldt programs and services as well as evaluation results presented in the First 5 Humboldt Local Evaluation Report (LER) from July 2023 through June 2024. The LER is organized by the four guiding focus areas in the First 5 Humboldt 2020-2025 Strategic Plan:

Systems Change

Advocate for policies, funding, and system changes that support and improve the lives of young children and their families

Child and Family Well-Being

Support the well-being of young children and their families through prevention and early intervention activities throughout Humboldt County

Professional Capacity

Build and support a professional workforce with the capacity to provide prevention and early intervention services to young children and their families

Community Engagement

Promote a community that understands and supports child and family well-being

Additionally, two cross-cutting issues inform and apply to all the work of First 5 Humboldt:

Preventing and Reducing Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs): First 5 Humboldt seeks to raise awareness of, build resilience to, and reduce the incidence of ACEs and associated chronic stress in young children.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: First 5 Humboldt strives to be an anti-racist organization that actively promotes racial equity in recognition of the structural racism in our society today and our local and national history of racism and genocide. First 5 Humboldt affirms, welcomes, and values all children, youth, adults, and families in our community, honoring their experiences and identities.

Who We Are



First 5 Humboldt is a county organization, approved by a voter mandate in 1998, dedicated to working across systems to create a better integrated network of care for children and families that promotes the health and well-being of all Humboldt County residents.

Vision

For all Humboldt County children to reach their unique potential in healthy, safe, nurturing families and supportive communities that value, respect, and invest in their wellbeing

Mission

To improve the lives of children and their families by supporting and advocating for comprehensive integrated systems of services that use prevention and early intervention to foster secure healthy children, reduce disparities, and promote equity and positive change



Protective Factors

The Strengthening Families™ Protective Factor Framework is a research-informed approach to increase family strengths, enhance child development and reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect. It is based on engaging families, programs and communities in building five key protective factors.

Parental resilience

Managing stress and functioning well when faced with challenges, adversity and trauma

Social connections

Positive relationships that provide emotional, informational, instrumental and spiritual support

Knowledge of parenting and child development

Understanding child development and parenting strategies that support physical, cognitive, language, social and emotional development

Concrete support in times of need

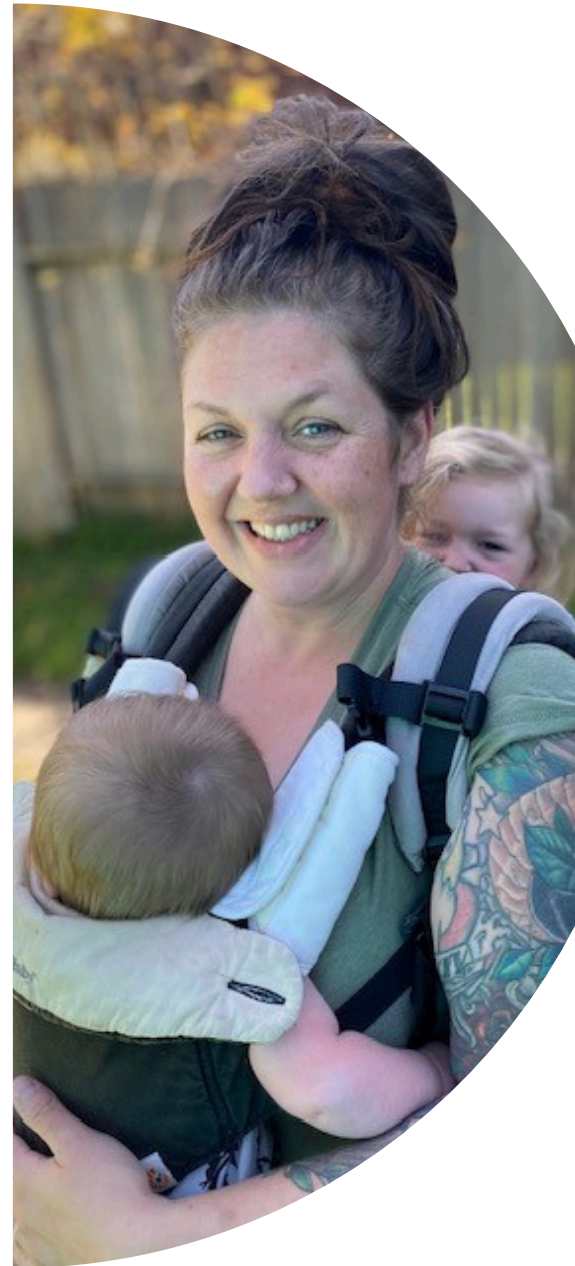
Access to concrete support and services that address a family's needs and help minimize stress caused by challenges

Social and emotional competence of children

Family and child interactions that help children develop the ability to communicate clearly, recognize and regulate their emotions and establish and maintain relationships

At its heart, Strengthening Families is about how families are supported to build key protective factors that enable children to thrive. The five protective factors at the foundation of Strengthening Families also offer a framework for changes at the systems, policy and practice level – locally, statewide and nationally.

Center for the Study of Social Policy (2023). Retrieved from <https://cssp.org/our-work/projects/protective-factors-framework/>





Services Provided by Location

From July 2023 through June 2024, First 5 Humboldt partnered with local and regional community organizations to provide opportunities to build Protective Factors for young children and families throughout Humboldt County.



85+ Number of agencies and community organizations that First 5 Humboldt partnered with to provide programming and services

21 Number of programs and activities led by community partners and funded by First 5 Humboldt, including nine DHHS/First 5 Humboldt ACEs Collaborative Partnership Grants, two parenting class series, and ten library branches

23 Number of playgroups funded throughout Humboldt County which are supported by regional playgroup leaders and First 5 Family Support Navigators

Embedding Family Support

When children and those who love them spend time together in a safe, supportive environment, they build confidence, connection, and community.

From July 2023 through June 2024, First 5 Humboldt offered or funded the following services and programs to Humboldt County families:

- F5H distributed around 2,500 of the fully bilingual English/Spanish Hiking Humboldt Kids book free to Humboldt County families with children five years of age and younger through a book tour, reaching each of the eleven Humboldt County Library branches and bookmobile, all 23 First 5 Humboldt funded playgroups, early childcare settings, transitional kindergarten classrooms, and pop-ups at community events.
- As part of the Counting on Community family events, (40) people gathered at Sue-meg Village in September 2023 to connect and hear stories shared by traditional Yurok storyteller, Ernie Albers (see photo below). After hearing stories, families got to take a culturally interpreted tour of the village, hear songs and more stories from Yurok tribal member, Skip Lowry, who has years of experience interpreting for California State Parks.
- F5H coordinated a community meet up and family hike at Freshwater Farms Nature Reserve during October 2023, one of the hikes in the Hiking Humboldt Kids book. (10) children, 0-5 years old, and (24) parents/ caregivers attended the hike.
- F5H coordinated and engaged the community in a bilingual Story Walk (Mariposa) at the Gene Lucas Community Center with (68) books distributed to families with children 0 to 5 years old.
- F5H provided funding to Redwood Community Action Agency (RCAA) to distribute 30,624 diapers to families between July 2023 and June 2024.
- F5H provided funding to support the Humboldt County Library, who offered 542 events and activities to children and families, including storytimes, family literacy parties, outreach events, and the Leap to Literacy delivery service to early childhood locations.



The Playgroup Initiative

In 2015, the First 5 Humboldt Commission committed dedicated funding for 20 playgroups over 10 years to ensure that playgroups continued to serve the communities in Humboldt County using the Strengthening Families and high quality frameworks.

Playgroups are an important part of the work at First 5 Humboldt.

In 2015, the landscape of First 5 Humboldt looked different. It was anticipated that...

- First 5 Humboldt would expend its Sustainability Fund by 2025, closing its doors,
- the two staff members would be reduced to less than full time in 2018,
- there would be annual financial contributions to sustain playgroups from First 5 California and agency partners, and
- community agencies would assume fully funding playgroups beginning in 2025.

At the end of the 2023-24 reporting period, the reality is that First 5 Humboldt...

- is currently fully funding 23 playgroups with in-kind support from partners,
- is experiencing a significant decline in Prop. 10 funding, which funds playgroups, and
- has continued to maintain staffing and be present in the community through programs reliant on external grant funding.

According to the 2023 Playgroup Family Survey, 97% of respondents agree or strongly agree that, "Overall, this playgroup provides valuable support for me and my family," 90% agree or strongly agree that as a result of the services/ activities that they have taken part in at playgroup, "I feel more supported as a parent," and 91% agree or strongly agree that "This playgroup helps me understand healthy child and family development."

As the Playgroup Initiative comes to a close in 2025, there is opportunity to reflect on the role of partnership and community investment in order to continue free, accessible, and regionally and culturally tailored services to families who are experiencing the first 5 years of parenting.



Playgroup in Numbers!

23

Playgroup partners

1,076+

Playgroup events

1,509+

Parents and caregivers
attended a playgroup

1,569+

Children, 0-5,
attended a playgroup

1,702+

Instances of direct
support with parents
and caregivers

15,560+

Total number of visits
from children, 0-5



Thank you to our Playgroup Partners!

Arcata United Methodist Church

Casterlin School

City of Arcata

City of Blue Lake

City of Fortuna

ERV Community Center Foundation

Maple Creek School

Mattole Valley Family Resource Center

McKinleyville Community Services District

North Klamath Watershed Council

Orick School District

Providence Health Northern California /

Loleta Community Resource Center

Providence Health Northern California /

Rio Dell Community Resource Center

Providence Health Northern California /

Willow Creek Community Resource Center

Redwood Coast Montessori

Redwood Community Action Agency

Redwood Discovery Museum

Salmon Creek Community School

South Bay Family Resource Center

Southern Humboldt Community Healthcare

District/SoHum Family Resource Center

Two Feathers Native American Services

Westside Community Improvement Agency



Commitment to Learning

First 5 Humboldt works in partnership with communities to identify needs for training and opportunities for shared learning. From July 2023 through June 2024, First 5 Humboldt provided the following activities:

20 Trainings/Series

18 Workforce Trainings
2 Parenting Class Series:
Triple P Positive Parenting
Abriendo Puertas

389+ Participants

291+ Professionals
98+ Parents/Caregivers

Topics

Positive Parenting
Developmental Screening
Strengthening Families
CPR/First Aid
Community Resiliency Model
The Ripple Effect

*"I am going to start
with myself so
I can properly teach
it to the children."
-Participant feedback*

Advocating for Children and Families

First 5 Humboldt is devoted to championing the rights and needs of our county's families. What we do today matters for both the short- and the long-term well-being of those who call this place home.

From July 2023 through June 2024, First 5 Humboldt engaged with the following policy makers and organizations to advocate for public policies that support the well-being of children and their families. The following are examples of activities during this reporting period.

- Karina Vazquez-Lopez and Genesis Acuna from Open Door prepared a presentation for the Northern California ACEs Collaborative in March 2024 on the Practice Grant and their local work.
- Ashley Villagomes and Danielle Reed prepared a presentation, "Prioritizing Indigenous Perinatal & Postpartum Health: Working alongside tribal partners to improve outcomes for expecting families, infants and young children," for the First 5 California Child Health, Education, and Care Summit in March 2024.
- IMPACT and QRIS Program Coordinator, with Commissioner Wendy Hill, presented to the Board of Supervisors on March 5, 2024 the findings and recommendations of seven listening sessions, in both English and Spanish, which convened and checked-in with early care and education providers throughout Humboldt County about their experiences in an industry that has been deeply impacted by the Pandemic.
- Policies advocated for include SB 326: the Mental Health Services Modernization Act, to reinstate the 0-25 age set aside and add a call-out for children 0-5; and urging a federal waiver to allow for continuous Medi-Cal eligibility for children under 5. Most children lose coverage for "administrative reasons" related to annual recertification, rather than because of a change in eligibility.
- AB 2982: Prenatal to Three Workgroup: First 5 Humboldt submitted a letter and the County has also graciously submitted a letter to Assembly Appropriations, asking them to support AB 2982, which would convene a workgroup on prenatal to three services in California, with one goal to examine First 5 funding and services.
- Engagement with legislators on the decline in First 5 revenue from Prop 10/state tobacco tax and sustainability.
- Worked with our legislators and staff to promote a \$100 million one-time California budget ask to prevent further cuts to local early childhood services.
- Met with Funding the Next Generation director, Margaret Brodtkin, to discuss possible public funding strategies for children and families locally, and arranged for her to present to the local Child Care Champions group, a private/public stakeholder group working on local solutions for families.
- Worked with the state organization, Children Now, on persuading the Legislature to reject the Governor's proposal to cut CalWORKs Home Visiting. This would have resulted in a 50% cut to CalWORKs home visiting to Humboldt families.
- Due to Vesper's generous support, F5H was able to bring Dr. Manuel Pastor and Dr. Chris Benner to keynote at the Redwood Region Economic Development Summit in Ukiah, which was an event designed to help the region plan and leverage the California's Community Economic Resilience Fund allocation. Due to interactions between F5H and Dr. Pastor earlier in the year, he was able to incorporate data on Indigenous residents in the information they presented as well as information on children under 5.

A Two-Generation Approach

Two-generation approaches supporting children and their caregivers simultaneously to build protective factors, resiliency, and parental capacity to enhance child and family well-being and prevent child abuse and neglect. Also called "whole family" or "intergenerational" approaches, these strategies address the interconnected needs of parents and children.*



Home Visiting Coordination Grant

Funded by First 5 California, the Home Visiting Grant provides the opportunity to collaborate with other home visiting partners to share information and resources, and coordinate on common goals. First 5 Humboldt is currently engaged in systems coordination and CHW certification.



Road to Resilience

Funded by the Office of Child Abuse Prevention, Road to Resilience serves Native pregnant and parenting people at risk of Substance Use Disorder through home visiting, providing cultural activities, and building connection through family events. The funding concluded this year and will be transitioning to Welcome Baby: Pathways to Resilience.



Playgroup and Family Events

First 5 Humboldt offers playgroups, parenting classes, and family events that build connection between child and caregiver, strengthen relationships, and increase resilience in a nurturing and safe environment.

Program to Watch For!



Welcome Baby: Pathways to Resilience is a program funded by an Office of Child Abuse Prevention grant to increase access for all clients in the county in a no-wrong-door approach, allowing for an expansion of postpartum care and more intensive case management services for pregnant and parenting people in our community that have a history of substance use, including but not limited to tobacco, alcohol or cannabis. We will be partnering with K'ima:w Medical Center in Hoopa, United Indian Health Service Inc. clinics in Arcata/Eureka, Elk Valley and Weitchpec, Redwoods Rural Health Clinic in Redway, and Open Door Community Health Centers to provide services.

*www.childwelfare.gov

Program Highlights

First 5 Humboldt partners with others who know that by leveraging our resources together, we can start changing Humboldt’s tomorrow. By keeping our focus on creating a healthy future for all of Humboldt County’s residents, we support initiatives that consider the whole child and the whole family.

“

I am going to start with myself so I can properly teach it to the children.

”

-A participant from The Ripple Effect

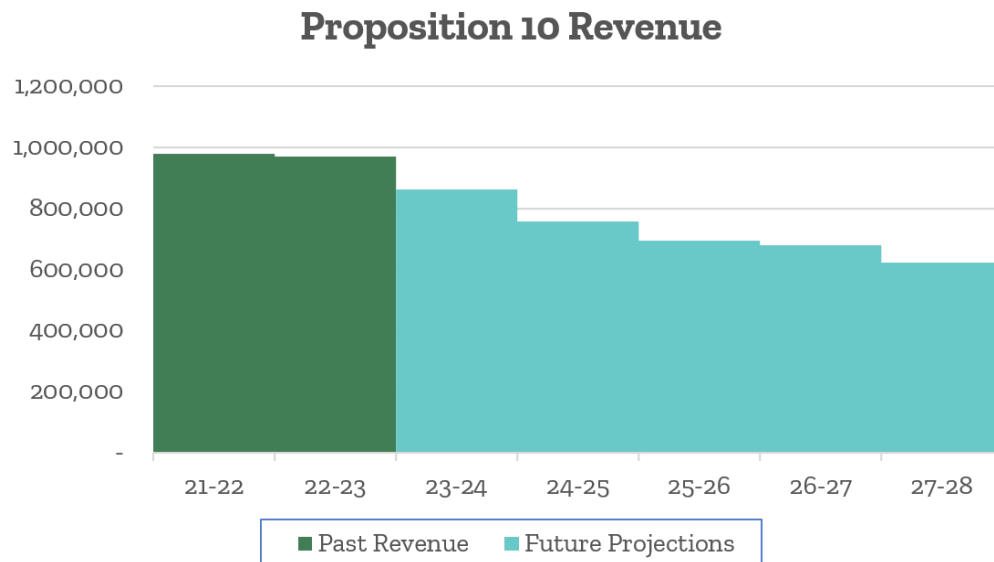
Program	More Information
Road to Resilience	Funded by the California Department of Social Services Office of Child Abuse Prevention, the Road to Resilience Program began in July 2019 and ended June 2024. The focus of the program was to provide Health Navigators to (1) Native women who have a substance use disorder (SUD) and are pregnant or have an infant, and (2) Native women who have an infant with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) in Humboldt and Del Norte Counties. As the program came to a close, they prioritized and focused on increasing home visits for enrolled clients. Between July 2023 and June 2024, (45) clients were served.
Playgroups and Family Support Navigation	First 5 Humboldt funded and supported 23 free, regularly scheduled playgroups for children 0-5 and their caregivers which provided access to developmentally appropriate play spaces with support by regional playgroup leaders and Family Support Navigators. Navigators visit playgroups and offer support on child development, parenting strategies, and community resources. During this time, playgroups were attended by 1,569 children and 1,509 caregivers.
Trainings and Parent Education	First 5 Humboldt offered 18 trainings and workshops at least 291 people on trauma-informed care, responsive practices, developmental screening to community-based organizations, schools, childcare programs, and community members. There were also two positive parenting classes offered: a 10-session Abriendo Puertas series with an average of 20 participants and a 3-session Triple P Positive Parenting series in Orlean with an average of 26 participants.
Quality Counts and Childcare Workforce	Quality Counts California (QCC) is a statewide effort to strengthen California’s early learning and care system to support young children and their families, which includes the coordination of four programs: IMPACT, California State Preschool Programs (CSPP) block grant, QCC grant, and Pathways (which is in coordination with Changing Tides Family Services). Between July 2023 and June 2024, 45 programs participated in QCC Early Childhood Quality Improvement grants, with participating IMPACT childcare providers achieving a total of 908.5 professional development hours and QCC individual participants achieving a total of 839 professional development hours. Eight state preschools participated in the QRIS-CSPP grant, with three rating at a Tier 4 and five rating at a Tier 5.

Program	More Information
Home Visiting Coordination	<p>The Home Visiting Coordination grant from First 5 California was renewed for an additional, final two-year period, 2023 - 2025. During this reporting period, F5H has continued to work with partners to identify and address barriers in home visiting systems coordination, and navigate the potential of CalAIM Medi-CAL changes for home visiting funding and the Community Health Worker certification.</p>
Open Door PRACTICE Grant	<p>First 5 Humboldt began a Help me Grow like referral system in partnership with Open Door Community Health Center through the ACEs Aware PRACTICE grant in April 2023. This partnership included a bilateral workflow for referrals starting after ACEs screening, connecting with the Navigator for community/parent support referrals and ending with Providers notified of referrals made. Between July 2023 and June 2024, (50) children and (78) parents/caregivers received services from the grant, which included two cohorts of 25 families who attended four monthly Harvest Box and Wellness events.</p>
Better Birthing Project	<p>Starting in 2021 parents and leaders from tribal lands in and around Humboldt County and medical practitioners from Providence St. Joseph Hospital have been working to better the birthing experience of Native parents. This work emerged from the hospital's efforts to improve health outcomes for Native people in partnership with the Native community. Because of her participation as an original team member of the Better Birthing Team, her experience as a Native person, and her work with local Native families, First 5 Humboldt's Community Engagement Coordinator, Danielle Anderson-Reed, had been working to coordinate the activities outlined in the Better Birthing Team's priorities during this reporting period. The Doula and Community Pathways workgroup hosted a 2-day Doula training which trained 18 Native community members. The workgroup ensured the training shared space with local Native elders to create a more culturally specific training. The Better Birthing Team engaged in a day-long meeting in October 2023 with state and regional representatives from Partnership Healthplan of California, where at least a dozen representatives from Partnership received a tour of Hoopa's Cultural Museum, listened to a presentation from the Better Birthing Team about its history, present priorities and future goals at K'ima:w Medical Center, and then received a guided tour of Sue-meg Village in Trinidad. The Team also presented during a Partnership Health maternal health conference and filmed a segment of a Providence Health Equity Series.</p>
Rural Counties Opioid Response Project	<p>In September 2023, it was announced that Open Door received a federal grant: Rural Counties Opioid Response Project. The grant is intended to provide supports to respond to infants born with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS), a significant challenge in Humboldt County. First 5 Humboldt is one of four grant partners, along with the McKinleyville Center's Guaranteed Income Pilot, Providence's Family Medicine Residency Program, and Cal Poly Humboldt's Social Work program. During this reporting period, F5H staff engaged in training and planning a 5-session Infant Massage course to families, prioritizing families impacted by substance use disorder. The series will begin October 2024 in both English and Spanish.</p>

Funding and Investments

First 5 Humboldt receives a large portion of its revenue from tobacco sales in California. The 1998 ballot measure, Proposition 10, added a 50-cent tax on each pack of cigarettes sold in California. Twenty percent of that revenue is allocated to First 5 California, and the remaining 80% is allocated to the 58 counties based on each county's birth rate.

This tax approach has helped accomplish two very different and important goals: reducing the use of tobacco and funding local programs to support young children and families. Unfortunately, this approach also created a declining funding source for First 5 Humboldt and our fellow County First 5's statewide, and that decline has now accelerated due to the passage of Prop 31 in November 2022. First 5 Humboldt's annual revenue from Proposition 10 has declined more than 60 percent from its peak in 2000 and is projected to drop another 28 percent over the next four years .



California Department of Finance. (2023) May Revise (MR) 2023-24 Cigarette and Other Tobacco Products Tax Revenue Projections by County for Fiscal Years (FYs) 2023-24 through 2027-28.

In response to declining revenue, First 5 Humboldt has worked to access state and federal grants to bring in outside dollars to support local services to children and their families. Over the last seven years, the organization has moved from being solely funded by tobacco taxes to now relying on grants to fund about 50 percent of its work. While First 5 Humboldt's efforts at grant writing have been mostly successful, grant funding is unpredictable, short term (one to three years), and targeted to very specific projects or programs defined by the funder.

First 5 Humboldt will continue to seek out additional funding as Proposition 10 revenue declines in the coming years and advocate for investments in young children because we understand that supporting the health and wellbeing of our youngest citizens is both the right thing to do for our state's children and families and a prudent investment in our future. Knowing that 90 percent of a child's brain development occurs before age 5, the state needs to find a sustainable solution for providing services and supports to these most vulnerable California residents.

Our First 5 Commission, officially known as the Children and Families Commission of Humboldt County, is made up of community representatives, ensuring that our work is grounded in the well-being of our local families every day.

First 5 Humboldt Commissioners

Lorey Keele

Co-Chair; Community Services Director
Redwood Community Action Agency

Connie Sundberg

Co-Chair; Division Director
Changing Tides Family Services

Brian Davis

MPH, retired
Community Representative

Megan Blanchard

Public Health Nursing Director, Public Health Branch
Dept. of Health and Human Services

Wendy Hill

Director, Child Development Center
College of the Redwoods

Michele Stephens

Assistant Director
Dept. of Health and Human Services

Hyun-Kyung You

Professor, Child Development Department
Cal Poly Humboldt

Natalie Arroyo

Supervisor 4th District
Humboldt County Board of Supervisors

Sofia Pereira (Alternate)

Public Health Branch Director
Dept. of Health and Human Services

Connie Beck (Alternate)

Director
Dept. of Health and Human Services

Michelle Bushnell (Alternate)

Vice Chair; Supervisor, 2nd District
Humboldt County Board of Supervisors

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Ashley Villagomes

Road to Resilience Project /
Welcome Baby Manager

Christina Chu

Welcome Baby Administrative Analyst

Leticia Padilla Navia

Family Support Navigator

Rosa Guerrero-Gonzalez

Family Support Navigator

Karina Vazquez-Lopez

Health Education Specialist

Jennifer Mager

Home Visiting Coordination

Community Partners

- o-8 Mental Health Collaborative
- North Edge Business Financing and Community Development
- Bridgeville Community Center
- California Center for Rural Policy
- Cal Poly Humboldt, Child Development and Family Relationships Department
- Cal Poly Humboldt Children's Center
- California Department of Education
- California Office of Child Abuse Prevention
- California Surgeon General's Office
- CASA of Humboldt
- Changing Tides Family Services
- Child Abuse Prevention Coordinating Council
- Child Care Champions
- FFPSA Cross System Collaborative
- First 5 Association of California
- First 5 California
- First 5 Center for Children's Policy
- First 5 Butte, First 5 Napa, First 5 Shasta, First 5 Sonoma, and First 5 Tehama
- Food for People
- Hoopa Early Head Start
- Hoopa Tribal Education Department
- Humboldt Area Foundation
- Humboldt County Board of Supervisors
- Humboldt County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
- Humboldt County Library Branches
- Humboldt County Office of Education
- Humboldt County Public Health Branch
- Humboldt Network for Family & Community Resource Centers
- K'ima:w Medical Center
- Little Redwoods Preschool
- LiveWell Humboldt
- North Coast Grantmaking Partnership
- North Coast Health Information and Improvement Network
- Open Door Community Health Centers
- Paso a Paso
- Playgroup Partners (see pg. 7)
- Providence St. Joseph Hospital Eureka
- Quality Counts Humboldt Consortium
- Queer Humboldt
- Redwood Community Action Agency
- Redwoods Rural Health Center
- Southern Humboldt Little League
- United Indian Health Services
- Vesper Society
- West Ed
- Winzler Children's Center
- Wiyot Tribe
- Yurok Tribe Head Start



First 5 Humboldt

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