



2024-2025

Highlight Snapshot



About

First 5 San Benito



What We Do

In 2024-25, many San Benito County families faced significant stressors related to health, housing and food insecurity, unemployment, social isolation, immigration and barriers to care. These challenges can impact mental health and overall family well-being.

To address these challenges First 5 San Benito and the Family Resiliency Center (FRC) offer a range of programs and services that strengthen five key protective factors which help families thrive and buffer against adversity.

First 5 San Benito strengthens families, child development, health, and systems to help every child thrive from the start.

Vision

San Benito County's children thrive and reach their full potential at home, in school, in the community, and throughout life.

Mission

First 5 San Benito promotes the health, early learning, and social-emotional well-being of children prenatal through age 5 via strategic investments and partnerships.

Protective Factors Guiding Our Work



Family Functioning / Parental Resilience

The ability to manage stress and function 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 knowing strategies to support children's development.



Nurturing and Attachment/ Social and Emotional Competence of Children

Positive parent-child interactions, including being emotionally responsive to children's needs.



Concrete Support

Access to basic needs, including food and shelter.

2024-2025

Year in Review

4 Goal Areas:



Family Functioning

Equip every family with an understanding of early child development, effective parenting practices, and the resources offered by the community.



Child Development

Strengthen early learning and childcare to support all children.



Child Health

Ensure all children will have an early start toward good health, wellness, and development.



Strong Systems

Enhance community systems to consistently address the needs of every child and family with high-quality, lasting solutions.



4,768

Children
ages 0-5
served*



5,245

Caregivers
served**



87

Providers
engaged

*Duplicated = 4,366. Unduplicated = 402.
** Duplicated = 4,856. Unduplicated = 389.





Family Functioning

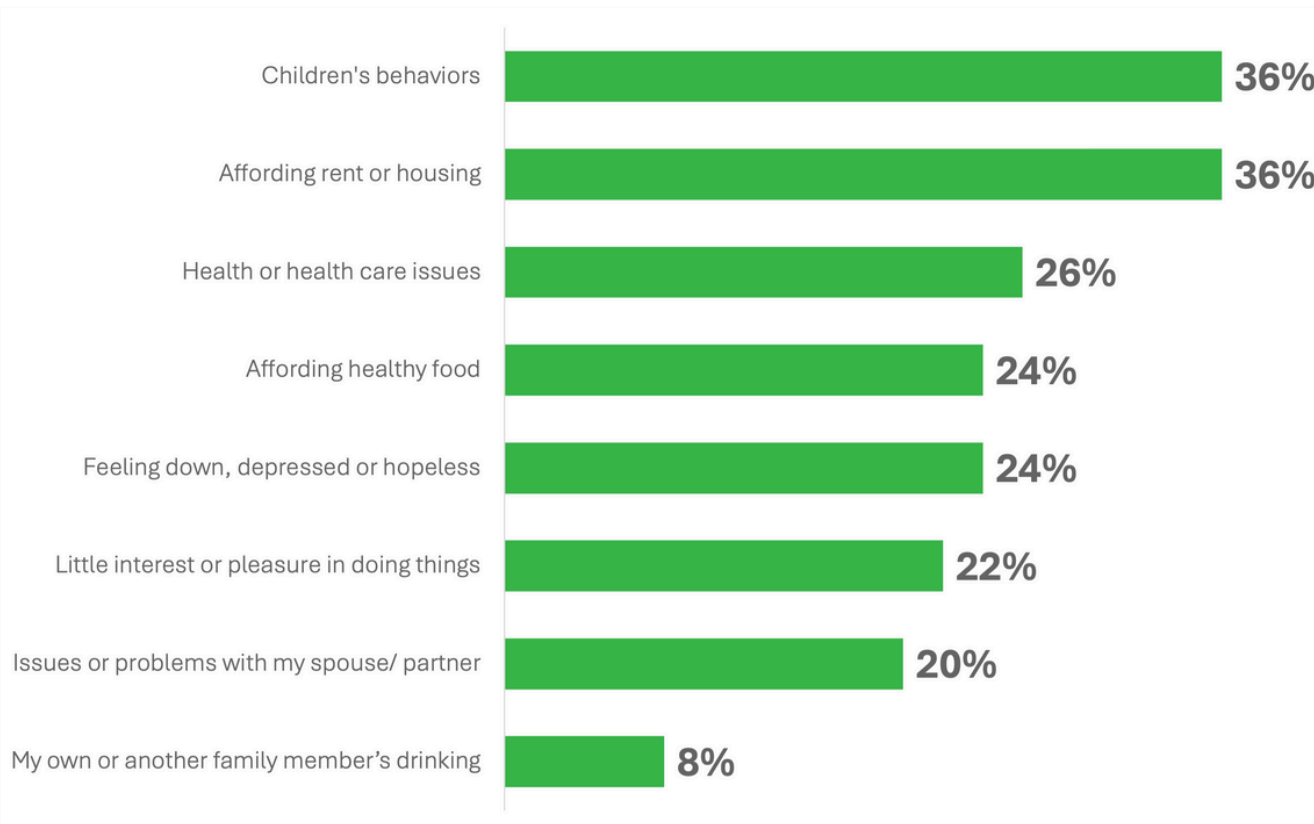


What Are the Needs in Our Community?

Families' Needs and Concerns

First 5 San Benito families reported on how frequently over the past two weeks they have been concerned about a variety of issues. In 2024-25, the most common concerns included housing costs, managing children's behaviors, access to healthcare, and food insecurity. Many caregivers also shared emotional or relational stress. This information, gathered at intake, helps our staff better support our families.

Child behavior, housing costs, and access to healthcare and healthy food are top stressors for San Benito County families.

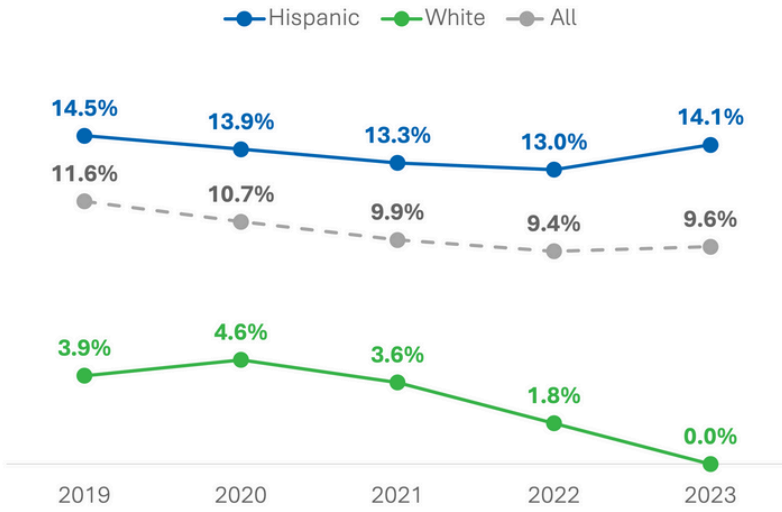


Source: Family Intake Form, 2024-25. N = 55. Percentages reflect the combined total of responses for "Several days," "More than half the days," and "Nearly every day."

Community-Wide Trends

Poverty

Percentage of Children 0-5 Living in Poverty



Child poverty rates remain high among Hispanic families, while White child poverty has dropped to zero in San Benito County.

- The overall poverty rate in San Benito County was 9.6% in 2023, down from 11.6% in 2019.
- While poverty among White (Non-Hispanic) children steadily declined from 4.6% in 2019 to zero in 2023, rates among Hispanic children increased for the second consecutive year.
- In 2023, 14.1% of Hispanic children under age 5 in San Benito County lived in poverty, compared to 0.0% of White (Non-Hispanic), highlighting a significant racial disparity.

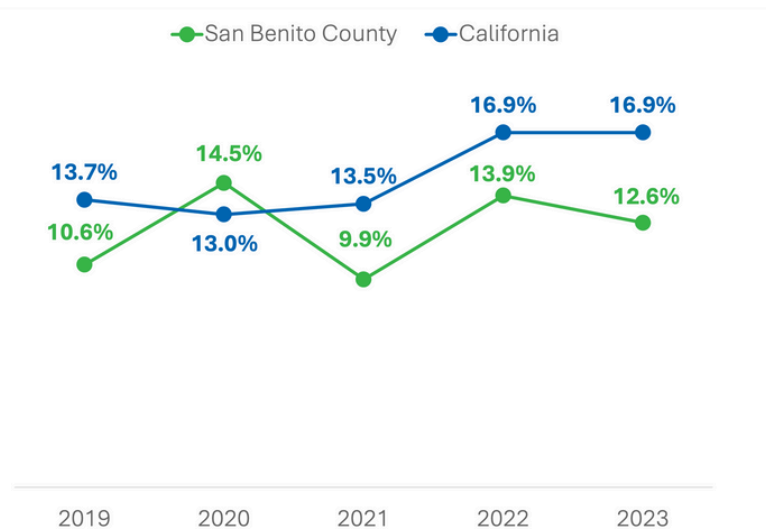
Source: US Census American Community Survey, five-year estimates.

Food Insecurity

Food insecurity is below the state average but has varied year to year.

- In 2023, 12.6% of San Benito County households with children under 18 were food insecure, lower than the statewide average of 16.9%.
- Food insecurity has fluctuated over the past five years.

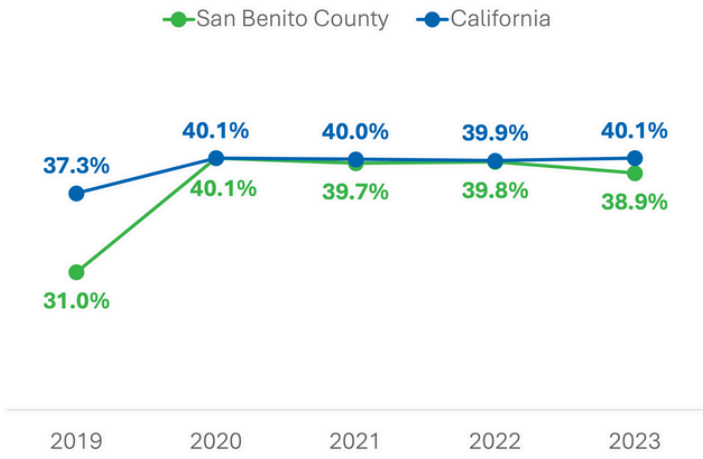
Percentage of Households with Children 0-18 Experiencing Food Insecurity



Source: Feeding America.

High Housing Costs

Percentage of Households Paying More than 30% for Housing



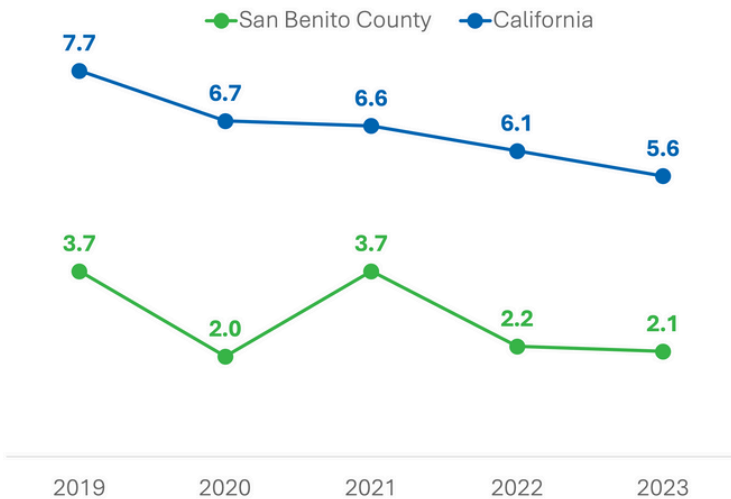
Nearly 2 in 5 San Benito County households are burdened by high housing costs.

- In 2023, 38.9% of households in San Benito County spent more than 30% of their income on housing, slightly below the state average of 40.1%.
- The local housing cost burden has remained relatively stable since 2020, following a sharp increase from 31.0% in 2019 to 40.1% in 2020.

Source: US Census American Community Survey, five- year estimates.

Child Maltreatment

Substantiated Cases of Child Maltreatment per 1,000 Children Under 18



Child maltreatment rates in San Benito County remain well below the state average.

- San Benito County’s substantiated maltreatment rate has remained consistently below the state average over the past five years.
- In 2023, the county reported 2.1 substantiated cases per 1,000 children under 18 compared to the California rate of 5.6.

Source: California Welfare Indicators Project.

How is First 5 San Benito Responding?

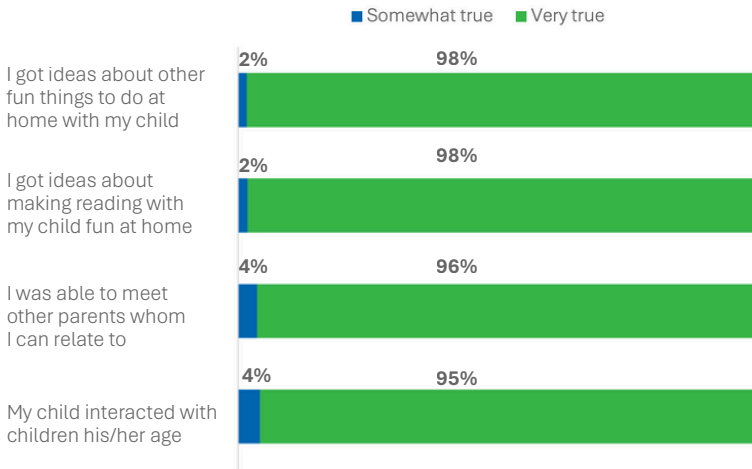
Talk, Read, Sing

The Talk, Read, Sing program promotes early literacy and bilingual language development for children ages 0-5 and their families during the most critical years of brain and language growth. Bilingual storytimes are held three times a week, and offer music, movement and age-appropriate activities to support development, with each week's activity and books following a different theme.

1,766
children
served

1,282
caregivers
served

Survey Results: What Families Gained from Talk, Read, Sing



Over 95% of families said they gained new ideas to support their children's learning through Talk, Read, Sing.

Source: Talk, Read, Sing Satisfaction Survey, 2024-25. N = 1,264.





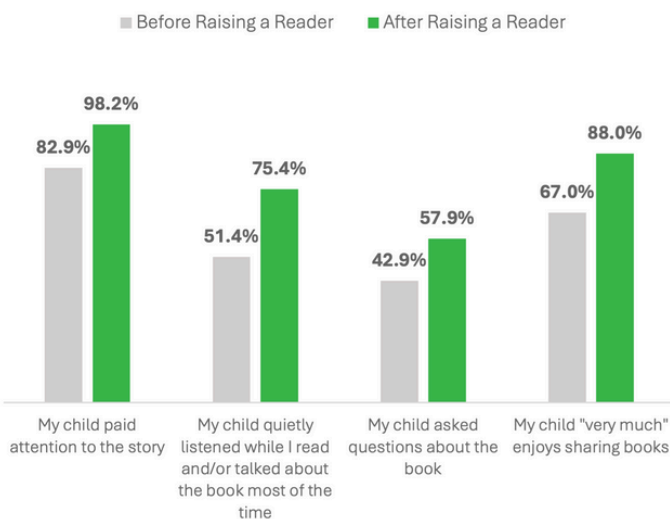
Raising a Reader

Raising a Reader promotes early literacy and family bonding by encouraging regular shared reading at home. The program provides families with book bags filled with age-appropriate books.

Raising a Reader is offered through First 5's Home Visiting program, Family Child Care homes, Family Fun Nights, and preschool classrooms.

After participating in Raising a Reader, children showed more focus, curiosity and enjoyment while reading at home.

Percentage of Caregivers Reporting Positive Reading Behaviors



Source: Raising a Reader Pre and Post Survey, 2024. Non-matched sample. N (pre) = 57. N (post) = 70.

Food Distribution

First 5 San Benito and the Family Resiliency Center partnered with the Community Food Bank of San Benito to provide weekly food distributions to families with young children. The program offered groceries and resources through regular pickup events and delivery services to address food insecurity across the county.

6,370 food boxes given out

2,427 caregivers served

1,584 children served



New Parent Kits

329 New Parent Kits distributed to new and expecting parents, to promote knowledge of parenting and child development.

The kits, available in multiple languages, contain information and resources on a variety of topics, such as child health, brain development, literacy and learning, child safety, and childcare.



Child Development



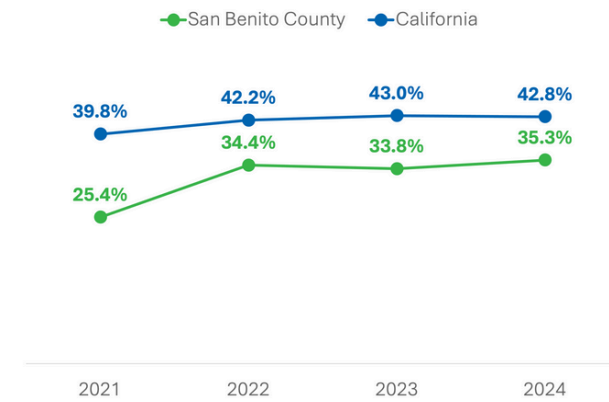
What Are the Needs in Our Community?

Reading Proficiency

3rd graders are making progress in reading with scores steadily improving.

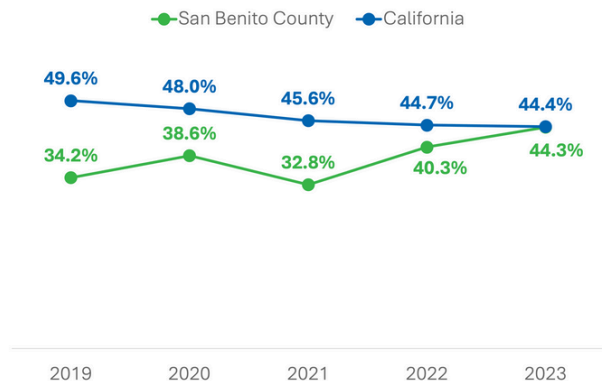
- Reading proficiency among San Benito County 3rd graders improved from 25.4% in 2021 to 35.3% in 2024, marking a nearly 10 percentage point gain over four years.
- San Benito County students continue to perform below the state average, though the gap has narrowed slightly in recent years.

Percentage of 3rd Graders Reading at or Above Grade Level



Source: CA Department of Education, DataQuest.

Percentage of 3-4 Year-Olds Enrolled in Preschool



Source: US Census American Community Survey, five-year estimates.

Preschool Enrollment

Preschool enrollment is rising, now on par with the state average.

Preschool enrollment in San Benito County rose to 44.3% in 2023, continuing a steady increase since 2021 and nearly matching the state average (44.4%) for the first time in five years.

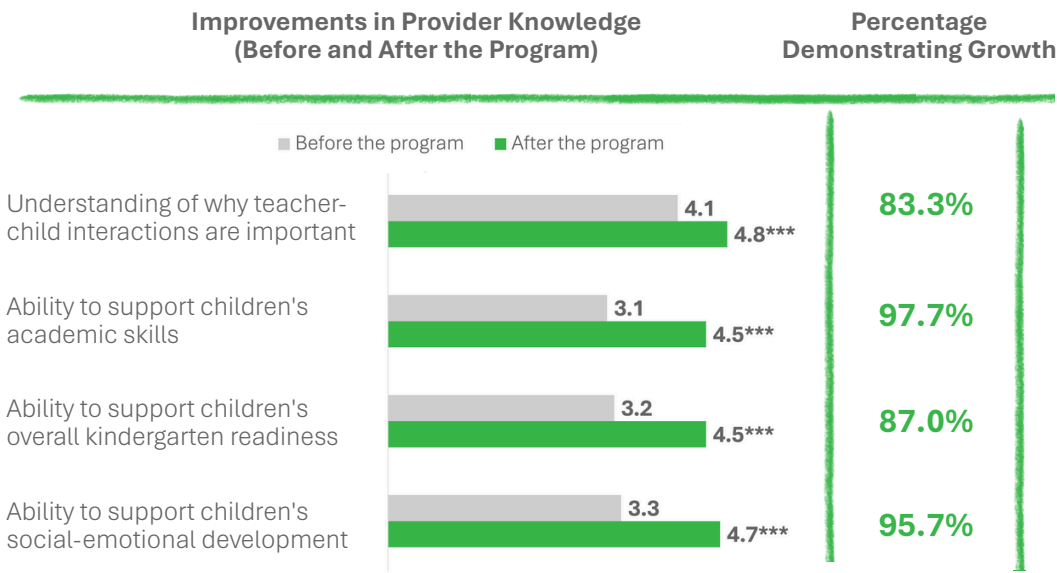
How is First 5 San Benito Responding?

Quality Counts

Quality Counts is a professional development program that supports early learning providers through training, coaching and stipends to improve care and instruction. Participating providers come from family child care homes, community-based programs, and informal care settings, and many serve low-income, bilingual and immigrant children.

52 early learning providers participated

Early learning providers in Quality Counts showed significant growth in their ability to support children's academic, social-emotional, and kindergarten readiness skills.



“ The classes have helped me better myself and learn things I didn't know before. It has been easier for me to help support the children.

-Quality Counts participant



California Preschool Instruction Network (CPIN)

75 early learning providers participated in CPIN workshops

California Preschool Instruction Network (CPIN) builds the capacity of early learning providers to deliver developmentally appropriate, culturally sensitive, and trauma-informed care and instruction.

Trainings align with California Preschool Learning Foundations and cover topics like language and literacy, academic readiness, play and social-emotional learning, and strengthening the community of early learning professionals. Sessions were offered in both English and Spanish and offered continuing education opportunities.

Early learning providers gained practical strategies to support children's development through CPIN workshops.

The Role of Professional Development in Systems Change

F5 San Benito magnifies its impact in the community by engaging in systems change activities that improve the systems of care serving young children and their families. Provider capacity building is one key way in which it seeks to strengthen systems. Through its Quality Counts and CPIN programs, which provide training and support to child care providers, F5 San Benito increases the quality of the early care and education system, creating a ripple effect that benefits young children in child care programs across the county.





Child Health



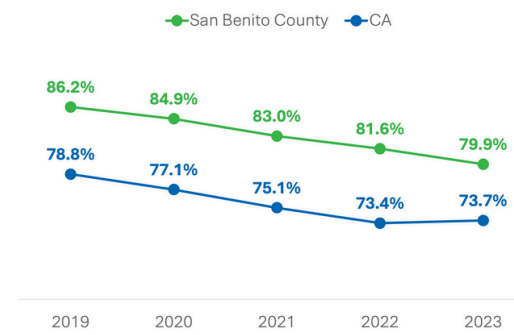
What Are the Needs in Our Community?

Prenatal Care

Prenatal care rates remain higher than the state average.

- San Benito County has consistently outperformed the state in timely prenatal care over the past five years.
- In 2023, 79.9% of births in San Benito County were to mothers who received early prenatal care, compared to 73.7% statewide.
- While rates in San Benito County have gradually declined since 2019, they have remained 6-8 percentage points above the California average.

Percent of Mothers Receiving Adequate/Adequate Plus Prenatal Care



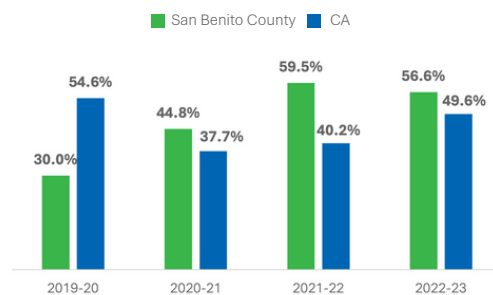
Source: CA Department of Public Health.

Well-Child Visits

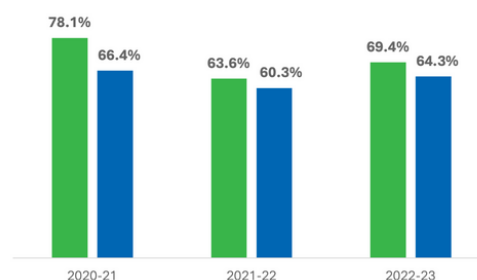
San Benito County has made steady gains in access to well-child visits for young children, now meeting or exceeding state averages for both age groups.

- The percentage of San Benito County children (0-15 months) receiving the recommended 6+ well child visits increased from 30.0% in 2019-20 to 56.6% in 2022-23 surpassing the state average in the most recent year.
- For children ages 15-30 months, San Benito County has consistently outperformed the state, with 69.4% of children receiving 2+ visits in 2022-23, compared to 64.3% statewide.

6+ Well-Child Visits (0-15 Months)



2+ Well-Child Visits (15-30 Months)



Source: Medi-Cal Managed Care Quality Improvement Reports.

How is First 5 San Benito Responding?

Hola Bebe

20 children served

18 caregivers served

Hola Bebe is a support and education program for parents of infants ages 0-12 months. Families can participate in monthly one-hour sessions that include fun activities, and opportunities to connect with other families and learn about infant care. Parents also schedule time during sessions to complete developmental screenings.



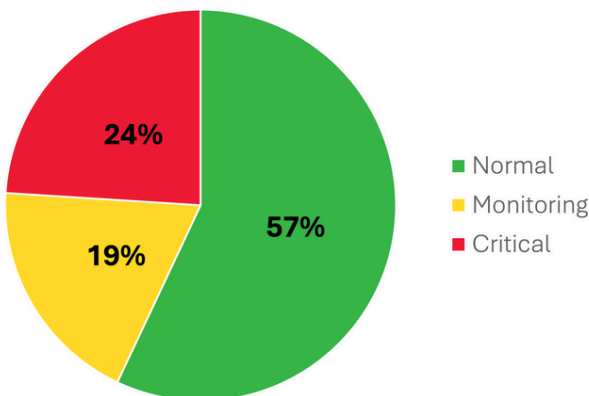
Help Me Grow

Help Me Grow (HMG) is a national model that screens young children and connects families to early intervention services. HMG uses the Ages and Stages Questionnaires (ASQ-3 and ASQ:SE-2) to identify developmental or social-emotional concerns early, and link families to resources and support.

60
children
screened

176
screens
conducted

Developmental Screening Results at a Glance (ASQ-3)



57% of children are on track developmentally, while 43% may need monitoring or further developmental support.

- 57% of children screened were on track with developmental milestones
- 19% fell into “monitoring zone,” suggesting they may need follow-up
- 24% were in the critical range and flagged for potential developmental delays and referrals

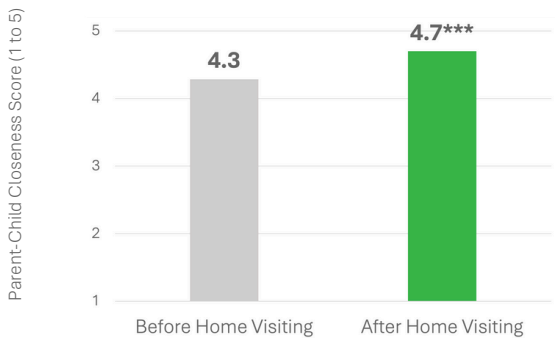
Home Visiting and Case Management

First 5 San Benito supports families of children ages 0-5 through weekly, in-home visits focused on strengthening parenting skills, promoting early childhood development, and providing linkages to community services. Using the evidence-based Parents as Teachers and Promoting First Relationships curricula, program specialists coach caregivers on positive parenting strategies, child development, and school readiness. Families also gain knowledge on attachment, social-emotional growth, and age-appropriate activities to scaffold learning at home.

43
families
served

Home visiting helped 68.5% of families strengthen bonds with their children, supporting early development and secure attachment.

Increase in Parent-Child Closeness Following Home Visiting Participation



Source: The Child-Parent Relationship Questionnaire (CPRS; 2024-25), Positive Aspects of Relationships (Closeness) subscale. Scale: 1 = "definitely does not apply"; 2 = "not really"; 3 = "neutral, not sure"; 4 = "applies somewhat"; 5 = "definitely applies". Parent-child closeness composite score is an average of 10 items. N = 60. ***Statistically significant at $p < .001$.

“ **Todo fue valioso para mí y para mis hijos. Soy más paciente y comprendo cómo apoyarlos mejor.**

Everything was valuable for me and my children. I am more patient and understand how to support them better.

“ **Sometimes I questioned myself about 'If I am doing things, right?' and with this program it kept my mind at ease about my parenting and understanding my parenting journey.**

-Home Visiting participants





Strong Systems



How is First 5 San Benito County Responding?

First 5 San Benito encourages strong systems by engaging in regional and statewide efforts aimed at fostering equity, collaboration, and outreach to improve systems of care for families. By building strategic partnerships with local agencies, advocacy groups, and state-level organizations, First 5 San Benito works to create a seamless network of support services for families with young children. This holistic approach prioritizes the diverse needs of the community, ensuring that families, regardless of their background or circumstances, have access to the resources and opportunities necessary for the well-being of their children. Through these collective efforts, First 5 San Benito not only strengthens the local system of care but also contributes to broader statewide initiatives that advocate for policy change, sustainable funding, and long-term solutions that uplift all families. Activities include:



Outreach efforts

through community events, Resiliency Health Fairs, and media



Advocacy efforts

at local and state levels



Collaborative efforts

including the Commercial Kitchen and community food distribution, FRC space use, and the Home Visiting Collaborative



Regional collaboration

with Region 4 IMPACT HUB Counties inclusive of Alameda, Contra Costa, San Mateo, San Francisco, Monterey, Santa Clara and Santa Cruz

Strong Systems Spotlight:

Regional Home Visiting Collaborative

In 2023, First 5 San Benito was selected by First 5 California to administer regional home visiting coordination (HVC) funding for Region 4, which includes San Benito, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, San Mateo, Alameda, Contra Costa, and San Francisco counties.

5 Regional meetings

Convened by First 5 San Benito. Counties shared updates, breakthroughs and resources, strengthening collaboration and problem-solving across Region 4.

Coordination of technical assistance

Facilitated counties' access to regional technical assistance resources.

Shared tools and planning support

Implemented county progress tracker tool.

What Changed for Families

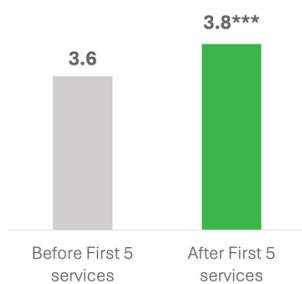
Protective Factors Outcomes



First 5 San Benito programs are grounded in five protective factors that help strengthen families and support children's development (See side bar). Throughout services families are supported in these areas. Changes in protective factors and child resilience are tracked before and after services to understand impact.

Increase in Protective Factor Scores Before and After First 5 Services

■ Before First 5 services ■ After First 5 services

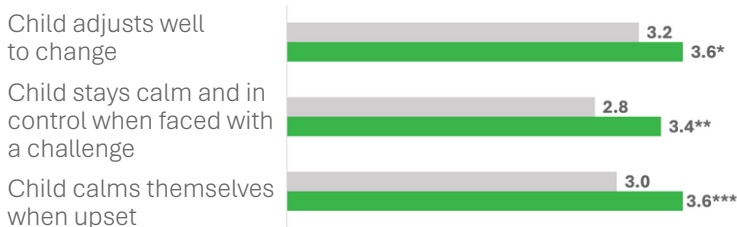


76% of families showed significant improvements in protective factors that help children and caregivers thrive.

Children also showed measurable gains in emotional regulation and adaptability.

Increase in Child Resilience Before and After First 5 Services

■ Before First 5 services ■ After First 5 services



Source: Family Intake and Exit Forms, 2024-25. N = 44-52. ***p < .001, **p < .01, *p < .05.

Protective Factors



Family Functioning / Parental Resilience

The ability to manage stress and function 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 knowing strategies to support children's development.



Nurturing and Attachment/ Social and Emotional Competence of Children

Positive parent-child interactions, including being emotionally responsive to children's needs.



Concrete Support

Access to basic needs, including food and shelter.

Together We're Helping San Benito Families Thrive!

Thanks to the dedication of our partners, staff, and community we're building a stronger start for every child in San Benito County.



Home Visiting



Hola Bebe



Hola Bebe



Home Visiting



Talk, Read, Sing

First 5 San Benito is grateful for the generous funding from our key partners:

- First 5 California
- California Department of Health Care Services
- Monterey Peninsula Foundation host of the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am and Pure Insurance Championship Impacting the First Tee
- Sunlight Giving
- Ridgemark Women's Golf Club