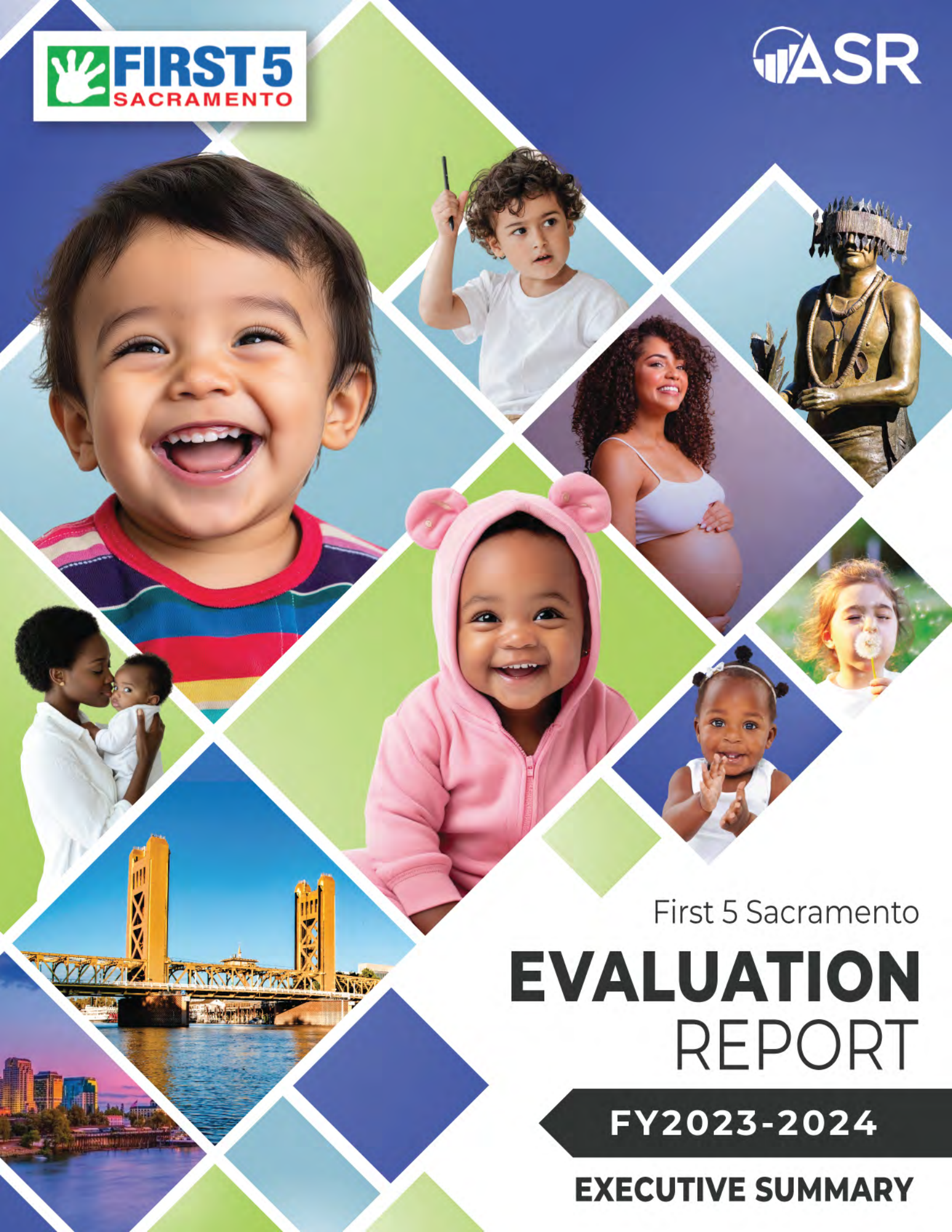




**FIRST 5**  
SACRAMENTO

**ASR**



First 5 Sacramento

# **EVALUATION REPORT**

**FY2023-2024**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

# FIRST 5 SACRAMENTO

## WHO ARE WE? WHAT DO WE DO?

Research shows that **90% of a child's brain develops in the first five years of life.** Children's early experiences and what parents, caregivers, and communities do during these years to support their child's growth will have a meaningful impact throughout life. In 1998, voters approved the California Children and Families Act, adding a tax on tobacco products to support programs for children ages 0-5 and their families.

For more than 20 years, First 5s across the state have leveraged these funds to touch the lives of more than a million kids, their families, and their caregivers. **In FY 2023-24, First 5 Sacramento invested \$21.3 million** to support strategies and results that promote our mission and vision for children and families in Sacramento County.

First 5 Sacramento is committed to being an **anti-racist organization.** We strongly value diverse life experiences, cultures, and heritages and invest in and advocate for programs and policies that ensure all voices are valued and heard.



## MISSION

In partnership with the community, we support a prevention and early intervention system that promotes optimal health and development, narrows disparities, and improves the lives of children 0 to 5 and their families.

## VISION

Sacramento County will have strong communities where children are safe, healthy, and reach their full potential.

The following report summarizes highlights from the FY 2023-24 evaluation of First 5 Sacramento's three priority areas: **Health, Early Care and Learning, and Empowered Families.** Full details by each result area, including service delivery, data analysis, systems impact, and family success stories can be found in the full evaluation report and the interactive dashboards available on the First 5 Sacramento website.

PRIORITY AREA	FUNDED STRATEGY	RESULTS
Health	Reduction of African American Child Death (RAACD) campaign: pregnancy peer support, Safe Sleep Baby education, and a public media campaign	Improve Prenatal Conditions and Reduce Infant Death
	Breastfeeding support in the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program	Increase Breastfeeding
	Systems/policy efforts to increase access to health systems	Increase Utilization of Medical, Dental, and Mental Health Services
Early Care And Learning	Systems/policy efforts to increase access to affordable child care	Increase Access to Affordable Early Care
	Consultation and coaching for early learning providers through Early Learning Partnerships Building Mindful Early Care and Education (PBM)	Increase Quality of Early Childhood Settings
	Developmental screenings, playgroups, provider and parent education, and transition to kindergarten activities throughout nine school districts	Increase School Readiness
Empowered Families	Birth & Beyond: home visiting, group parenting education workshops, crisis intervention, and social and emotional learning and support Crisis Nursery: Emergency care and overnight stays for children whose parents are in crisis	Increase Effective Parenting to Decrease Trauma and Child Maltreatment



## Priority Area:

# HEALTH



Substantial disparities in health outcomes between ethnic groups begin as early as in utero and can have intergenerational impacts. First 5 Sacramento seeks to eliminate health disparities in Sacramento County.

## The Reducing African American Child Death (RAACD) campaign's direct services and community outreach contribute to decreasing countywide rates of African American infant mortality.

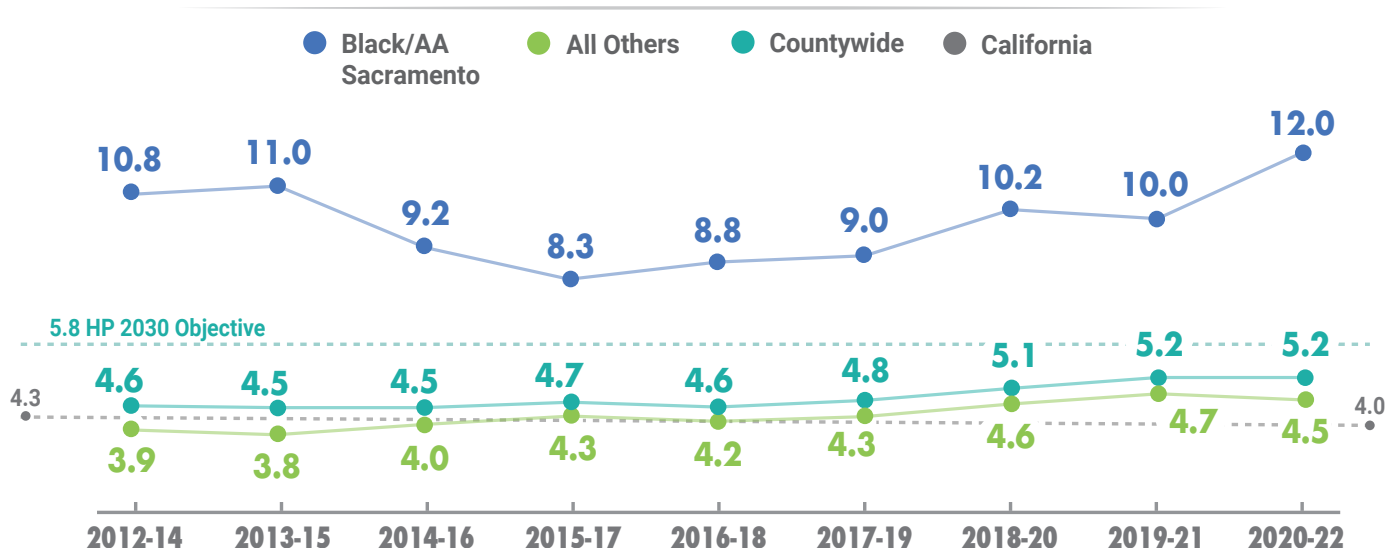
About 2,000 African American infants are born in Sacramento County each year. In 2020-2022, African American infants were more than twice as likely to die compared with all other races, and rates remain well over the Healthy People 2030 goal. While there was a remarkable drop between 2013-2015 and 2015-2017, African American infant mortality has since increased, with the 2020-2022 rate (12.0) exceeding the 2012-2014 baseline (10.8).

Countywide **infant mortality** rates are higher than statewide but lower than the Healthy People 2030 target.

First 5 Sacramento's efforts have had impressive impacts on the individuals reached. In FY 2023-24:

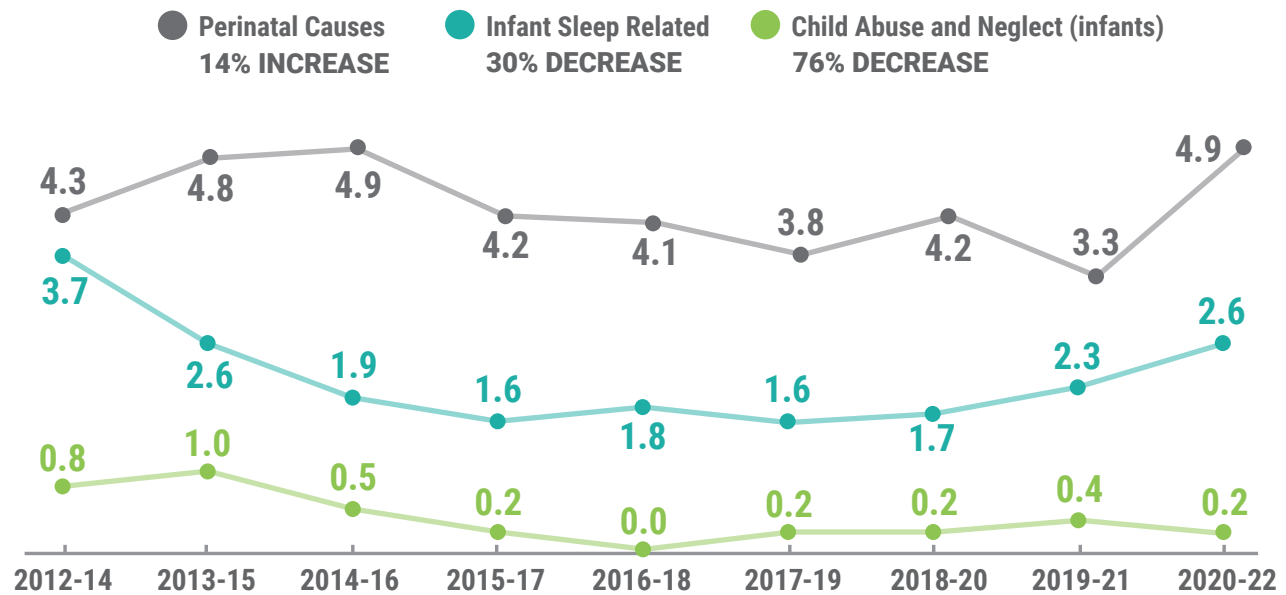
- 121 women received **Pregnancy Peer Support** services. Participants significantly improved access to protective factors and had fewer barriers to maternal and infant health. **For the fifth consecutive year, there were zero newborn deaths among infants born to BMU participants** as of program exit.
- 1,086 caregivers received **Infant Safe Sleep** education workshops and 602 cribs were distributed to safely sleep infants in need. Participants significantly improved safe sleep knowledge and practices.
- The Sac Healthy Baby and Model of Caring **Perinatal Education Campaign** strategies included online content and the development of a toolkit/materials for birth workers.

Sacramento County Infant Mortality per 1,000 Live Births, By Race



Source: Sacramento County Public Health (SCPH) Epidemiology Program; CDC National Center for Health Statistics, Infant Mortality Rates by State. Includes preventable and non-preventable causes.

## Sacramento County Three-Year Rolling Rates of African American Infant Death: Sleep Related, Perinatal Causes, and Child Abuse and Neglect



### WIC programs promoted the initiation and continuation of breastfeeding through at least six months of age.

With First 5 funding, Department of Health Services Women, Infants & Children (DHS WIC) and its subcontractor Community Resource Project (CRP WIC) supported 2,246 mothers through lactation consultants, drop-in support, and a helpline. Among those reached for a follow-up call at or after six months postpartum, 54% (45/84) were exclusively breastfeeding, which exceeds the Healthy People 2030 target (42%), and most recent statewide estimates (27%).

### First 5 Sacramento staff engaged in efforts to impact access to and utilization of important preventative and supportive health systems.

Policy and systems change efforts include the Be Mom Aware Campaign, collaboration with health systems to leverage efforts and resources, breastfeeding support trainings for home health nurses, Safe Sleep Baby 3.0, and the ongoing impact of community water fluoridation and dental clinics.



Priority Area:

# EARLY CARE & LEARNING

Research is consistent about short- and long-term benefits of quality early education experiences for children, particularly in the way such experiences mitigate other risk factors. Formal early learning settings can screen children for developmental delays and connect them to early interventions when needed. First 5 Sacramento fosters these quality experiences and linkages through its investment in early child care.

**The Early Learning Partnership Building Mindful Early Care and Education (PBM) program supported early child care and education programs through short- and long-term coaching and consultation to improve quality of early learning sites.**

PBM reached 205 early educators with short- and long-term efforts to increase their quality of teaching, impacting more than 1,000 enrolled children. Child Action and PBM staff facilitated nearly 3,000 short- and long-term consultation sessions. Short-term participants averaged 13.5 contacts and long-term participants had an average of 15 coaching sessions. Most (75%) long-term participants increased assessment scores by the end of the fiscal year

**Children increased kindergarten readiness after participating in the Transition Summer Camps.**

More than 1,100 families participated in transition orientation activities to help them understand what to expect in kindergarten. Children who attended transition summer camps significantly improved Kindergarten Academic and Social Expression scores, and a larger percentage were considered Fully Ready across all domains.

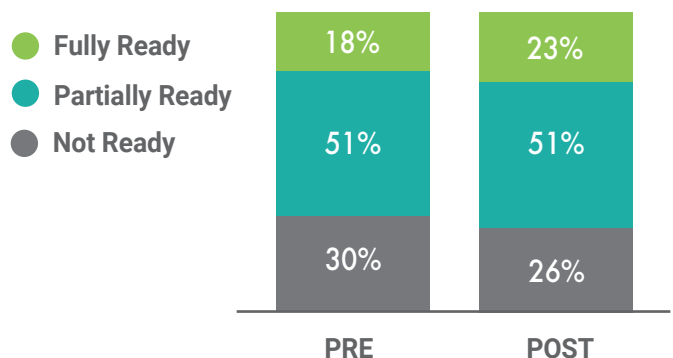
**School districts conducted more than 5,000 screenings to detect health or developmental concerns.**

Early screening, detection, and referrals are essential to address children's health or developmental delays before they reach the school system, when such delays can significantly disrupt progress in school. School districts conducted more than 5,000 child development, speech/language, vision, and/or hearing screenings. More than half (52%, 36/69) of children who received a speech/language screening were provided needed referrals, and 16% (244/1,491) were referred for additional vision services.

**Children, families, and schools increased kindergarten readiness through a range of activities, workshops, and trainings.**

Together, the nine school districts and Help Me Grow (HMG) served 3,100 adults and 3,718 children ages 0-5. In FY 2023-24, 248 children attended playgroups, 435 caregivers took part in text-based parenting education, 784 caregivers took part in parenting education workshops, and 942 caregivers received early literacy support. Additionally, HMG received 765 calls throughout the fiscal year, and 380 families received 945 home visits from HMG Family Advocates.

## Transition Summer Camp Participants' Change in Kindergarten Readiness



Source: Transition Summer Camp Pre/Post Survey, 2024, Matched pair N = 81. Change was not statistically significant.

## Priority Area:

# EMPOWERED FAMILIES



The Center for the Study of Social Policy identifies five protective factors that strengthen families: parental resilience, social connections, knowledge of parenting and child development, concrete support in times of need, and the social-emotional competence of children. Families at risk for maltreatment can benefit greatly from prevention and early intervention services that help strengthen protective factors such as coping skills and connection to concrete supports.

First 5 Sacramento funds Birth & Beyond Family Resource Centers and the Sacramento Crisis Nursery to mitigate barriers and empower families by increasing the five protective factors.

**Birth & Beyond Family Resource Centers reached nearly 4,000 families through a range of light-touch to intensive services to strengthen protective factors, build family resilience, and prevent or reduce child maltreatment.**

Birth & Beyond (B&B) Family Resource Centers provided light-touch activities, connections to community services, short-term crisis intervention, group parenting education workshops, and home visits to 4,110 parents/caregivers and 1,991 children in 3,931 families. One-third of the families served (33%) participated in two or more of the Birth & Beyond strategies during the fiscal year. Participants showed significant improvements on protective factors and parenting knowledge/skills, demonstrated progress in their family's crisis intervention focal areas, and significantly improved protective factors.

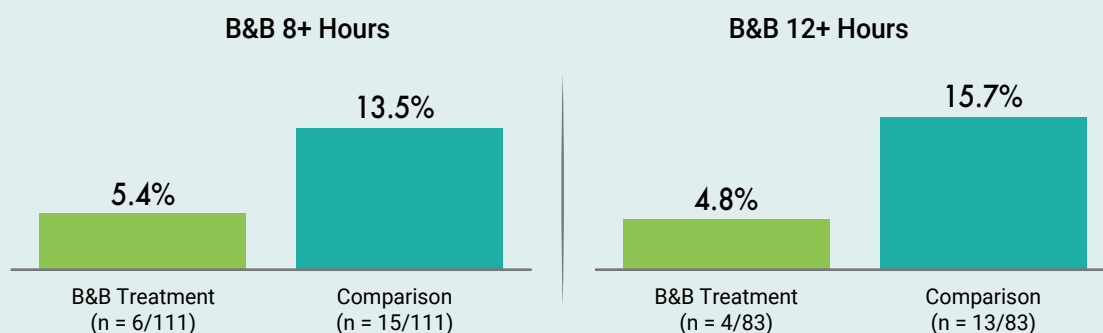


**Birth & Beyond participants were two and a half times less likely to experience substantiated child maltreatment recurrences than a countywide comparison group.**

An analysis of children receiving Birth & Beyond home visiting following a baseline CPS event, compared with a countywide sample, statistically matched on key demographic characteristics provides strong support for the impact of B&B home visiting.

B&B children receiving **8+ hours** of home visiting were two and a half times less likely to experience substantiated recurrence in 12 months (5.4%), compared to the non-B&B matched sample (13.5%).

B&B children receiving **12+ hours** of home visiting were three times less likely to experience recurrence (4.8%) than the comparison group (15.7%).



Source: B&B 2021-2023 Program Data and CPS 2021-2023 Data.

**Sacramento Crisis Nursery offered a safe haven for nearly 350 children in distressed families.**

The Sacramento Crisis Nursery provided emergency daytime and/or 24-hour care for 344 children in 234 families experiencing crisis situations such as employment, housing/homelessness, medical needs, domestic violence, mental health, and substance use. Nearly all caregivers completing an exit survey following each visit (99%) agreed the Crisis Nursery kept their child(ren) safe and secure and felt better able to solve their crisis situations because the Crisis Nursery was available to them. On average, caregivers reported significantly reduced stress levels and impact of stress on their ability to care for their child(ren) between their initial request for service and program exit.



In Their Own Words:

# CLIENT SUCCESS STORIES



**Tori** and her husband **Micah** (fictional names) are the parents of three daughters. The family was temporarily living with Micah's mother who also had foster children placed in her home. Tori spends most of her time in the home since she works remotely and has small children. However, she was spending more time in her bedroom due to her anxiety and depression diagnoses, while Micah was taking on most of the household tasks and child care. Tori admitted that she was struggling with attachment with her two younger children due to her mental health challenges.

Tori was referred to **Birth & Beyond** by a CPS case worker. After the CPS case was closed, a Birth & Beyond home visitor connected with Tori, and enrolled the family in the Parents as Teachers (PAT) home visiting model. In addition to consistently attending home visits, Tori and Micah also benefitted from the FRC's diaper program and received a referral to WEAVE for counseling services. Tori shared that she was happy to participate in the PAT lessons and saw improvements with her mental health, as well as her relationship with her husband and children. Since starting the PAT lessons, Tori learned about the importance of attachment and ways to deal with stress and anxiety. She began spending more quality time with her children and improved her relationship with Micah since she started helping out around the house more.

*"I am happy about doing these PAT lessons. The lessons have helped me deal with my depression and spending more time with my children. It has also helped my relationship with my husband because I am helping more around the home and with the children. It gives him more time to do things for himself. I enjoy being able to talk with someone every week without judgement."*

*- "Tori," B&B Home Visiting Participant*

**Hannah** is a single mother of 13-month-old Elle (fictional names). Hannah experienced substance use issues, had no family support, and was experiencing a stressful, difficult time for her mental health and her ability to provide essential necessities for her child. She was referred to **Crisis Nursery** for emergency daytime child care by her transitional housing case manager to help her navigate work/school schedules and group meetings for her substance use issues. Hannah used Crisis Nursery daytime care consistently for four months while attending group meetings and then transitioned to more sporadic uses while attending classes at a local community college.

*"I love how you guys love her. I get so much joy watching her face light up once she realizes where she is and who she gets to see. You guys are my lifesavers."*

By providing a safe, stable place for her daughter, Crisis Nursery supported Hannah's ability to maintain sobriety and allowed her moments of parental respite to focus on her stability and independence. Hannah also received referrals to more permanent child care resources from her Crisis Nursery case manager. She was grateful that she knew she did not have to worry about Elle while she was in the care of Crisis Nursery and reported reduced stress levels due to the support provided by Crisis Nursery. Hannah was also able to graduate from her substance use group classes and has since found stable child care for Elle. Hannah continues to attend her community college classes and receives emergency backup support from Crisis Nursery, as needed.

