

MEDIA ALERT

For release April 14, 2017

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East Bay Forum Aims to Protect Children from Immigration Crackdown

WHAT:

More than 150 nonprofit children's services providers and advocates will gather to strategize how to fight back and protect immigrant children and families in Contra Costa County under the Trump administration.

Nearly half of all children in Contra Costa County have at least one immigrant parent. Contra Costa County is the only Bay Area County renting jail space to ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement), putting these families at much higher risk for separation. Since the Trump administration enacted expanded deportation policies, local families have stopped accessing benefits like food stamps and health care for their children, pulled children from school, and are living in a heightened state of stress and fear. Forum speakers will provide information on:

- How deportation policies that rip families apart threaten children's safety, stability, health, and development.
- Tips for easing children's fears and resources such as legal services, family preparedness plans, local sanctuary policies, and rapid response efforts.
- Efforts in Contra Costa to fight discriminatory immigration and detention practices.

WHEN/WHERE:

April 20, 2017

9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Crowne Plaza Hotel, 45 John Glenn Drive, Concord

WHO:

First 5 Contra Costa is hosting the forum. Speakers include:

Child Development Experts:

Amy Weiss, M.S., LMFT, Director of Refugee and Immigrant Services, Jewish Family & Children's Services East Bay

Vanessa Castillo, Clinician, Behavioral Health, La Clínica de la Raza

Attorneys:

Angie Junck, Supervising Attorney, Immigration Legal Resource Center

Ali Saidi, Public Defender, Contra Costa County

Faith Leaders and Community Organizers:

Shawn Kumagai, California Immigrant and Religious Community Protection Coalition

David Brazil, Faith Alliance for a Moral Economy

Reverend Kamal Hassan, Sojourner Truth Presbyterian Church

Claudia Jimenez, Contra Costa County Racial Justice Coalition

WHY:

Children in immigrant families are the fastest growing segment of the U.S. child population. It is estimated that between 5 and 6 million U.S. citizen children have one unauthorized parent. Family instability and economic hardship caused by the government's expanded deportation policies threatens children's development, health, and learning. First 5 Contra Costa is committed to protecting children and preserving families so that all children reach their full potential.

BACKGROUND:

First 5 Contra Costa helps young children start school healthy and ready to learn by investing Proposition 10 tobacco tax funds in programs focused on children during their first five years, the most important time in children's development. Learn more: www.first5coco.org.

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