



DIRECTORY OF  
**ADVOCACY EFFORTS IN  
CONTRA COSTA COUNTY**  
RELATED TO EARLY CHILDHOOD ISSUES

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JANUARY 2024

COMPILED BY FIRST 5 CONTRA COSTA



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# INTRODUCTION TO FIRST 5 CONTRA COSTA



## OUR VISION

CONTRA COSTA'S YOUNG CHILDREN WILL BE HEALTHY, READY TO LEARN, AND SUPPORTED IN SAFE, NURTURING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES.



[first5coco.org](http://first5coco.org)

**For more than two decades**, First 5 Contra Costa has worked to support every child in reaching their full potential by focusing on their most critical years of development—prenatal to age 5. We focus on prevention, center our work around equity, and play many roles to reach our vision: funder, convener, and advocate. Working in partnership with others, First 5 Contra Costa aims to change systems of services and supports to better meet the needs of young children and their families through four **core strategies**. These strategies are:

- 1. Advocacy & Community Engagement:** We work to advance local, state and federal policies that foster more integrated systems that proactively support the wellbeing of young children and their families.
- 2. Research:** We use research and data to facilitate collective learning about the problems we face and the solutions to address them.
- 3. Capacity Building:** Our capacity building work supports individuals, organizations, and coalitions in developing the knowledge and skills needed to improve the systems that families and young children interact with in our county.
- 4. Resource Connection:** We connect families to the resources they need and to programs that focus on strengthening families' abilities to foster children's development, health, and school readiness.

## INTRODUCTION TO FIRST 5 CONTRA COSTA



**At First 5 Contra Costa, we prioritize our efforts and investments to focus on eliminating disparities and creating equitable opportunities and outcomes.**

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Research shows that a child’s brain develops most dramatically during the first five years of life. During this critical period, a window of opportunity exists to help shape how a child’s brain matures and to lay the foundation for the years that follow. While the early period in children’s development is critical to their future success, it is also where public investments are lowest. Research shows that early childhood programs have some of the highest returns on investment of social service programs.

At First 5 Contra Costa, we prioritize our efforts and investments to focus on eliminating disparities and creating equitable opportunities and outcomes. We contribute to strengthening and building trauma-informed early childhood systems that prevent, treat, and heal trauma and adverse childhood experiences. We seek out and listen and partner with diverse and under-represented voices, with shared power, clear communication, and agreements as to roles and responsibilities, expectations, decision-making, and accountability. Our three **focus areas** guide our efforts in this work; they include:

- **Early Childhood Education:** Helps ensure children have high-quality early learning experiences that help them succeed in school and in life.
- **Early Intervention:** Ensures that families have access to prevention and early intervention supports that foster the optimal development of all children.
- **Strengthening Families:** Supports families in accessing the information and services needed to help their children thrive.

## INTRODUCTION TO FIRST 5 CONTRA COSTA

First 5 Contra Costa is guided by four **core values and principles** that shape its approach to early childhood development. These include:

- 1. Diversity & Inclusion:** We work to ensure the diverse values, voices, and perspectives of our staff, partners, and community members are heard, represented, and reflected throughout our work.
- 2. Equity:** We work to eliminate systemic and structural barriers that cause or contribute to inequities so that all children and families in our community succeed.
- 3. Cultural Humility:** We continuously reflect on the ways in which our beliefs, cultural identities, power, and privilege influence our actions and interactions. We maintain curiosity and an openness to learning from others' lived experiences and adapting our approaches.
- 4. Community Partnership:** We listen to and learn from families, organizations, and policymakers. We build relationships based on shared values, shared power, trust, respect, and a collective commitment to ensuring the health and well-being of all children.

Our vision is that Contra Costa's young children will be healthy, ready to learn, and supported in safe, nurturing families and communities. Through strategic initiatives and by adhering to our core values, First 5 Contra Costa remains committed to shaping a brighter future for the community's youngest members.

# PURPOSE

Over its 25 years of working in Contra Costa County to support every child in reaching their full potential, First 5 Contra Costa has led, convened and participated in a variety of policy advocacy activities. In June 2023, First 5 Contra Costa’s governing body, the First 5 Contra Costa Commission, adopted a strategic plan to guide its efforts over the next three fiscal years. One goal in the strategic plan related to policy advocacy is:

**Create and identify avenues for parents/caregivers and service providers to understand their power and ability and opportunities to be advocates for policy and systems change in our three focus areas.**

As an initial step to address this goal, First 5 Contra Costa conducted a landscape scan of policy advocacy efforts—led by organizations, informal groups and/or coalitions—in this county that:

- engage parents/caregivers and/or service providers; and
- intersect with one or more of its three focus areas (early childhood education, early intervention, and strengthening families).



## PURPOSE

For the purposes of this effort, First 5 Contra Costa defined policy advocacy as:

**efforts to change regulations, legislation/ law, or public funding levels at either the county, state, or federal levels.**



The advocacy efforts profiled in the landscape scan include a range of efforts—from direct service-focused nonprofits who use their clients’ experiences and stories to fuel their advocacy efforts to professional associations in the early learning space to public oversight entities created by legislation. The efforts profiled engage in a wide variety of advocacy efforts along a continuum from information-sharing to interested stakeholders to offering stipended leadership positions. All of the efforts profiled engage stakeholders (often parents and service providers) in developing their advocacy campaign and priorities, and go beyond that to offer opportunities to parents or service providers to also directly engage in advocacy—whether that is through training parents to lead base-building activities, opportunities to testify on the impact of proposed legislation, attend meetings with leaders, participate in rallies or press events, write letters or hold forums.

First 5 Contra Costa will be using the landscape analysis of advocacy efforts as a “snapshot in time” of current efforts to help identify if there are any gaps in supported opportunities for parents or service providers to advocate on issues related to our three focus areas. First 5 Contra Costa plans to use this information to guide its efforts in FY 2024-2025 and beyond.

First 5 Contra Costa committed to the organizations and coalitions it contacted in this landscape scan that it would share brief profiles of each advocacy effort in a public report, with the intention that the information could be used by others. Through the publication of this directory, we hope that other organizations working in the early childhood space and/or on policy advocacy of any nature in Contra Costa County enhance their understanding of policy advocacy activities in our county.

# METHODOLOGY

**First 5 Contra Costa completed this policy scan between September 2023 and January 2024 using both staff time and consultants.**

To identify advocacy efforts that engage parents/caregivers and/or service providers, First 5 Contra Costa used a list of advocacy efforts compiled by Ensuring Opportunity as part of the Collaborative Advocacy and Power Partnership (CAPP) pilot program which operated from 2021 to 2023. The CAPP program, coordinated by Ensuring Opportunity and First 5 Contra Costa, aimed to bring a broad range of organizational and community leaders together to address inequities in Contra Costa County. One of the program’s goals included increasing knowledge and understanding of advocacy activities and, as a part of that goal, a list of advocacy efforts in our county was compiled that spanned issue areas.

First 5 Contra Costa staff reviewed that list of advocacy efforts and selected those that most likely intersect with First 5’s focus areas and that engage parents and/or service providers in their advocacy efforts. First 5 Contra Costa staff then solicited input from their colleagues about additional advocacy efforts to include. Additionally, the final question of each interview was to ask if the interviewee knew of other policy advocacy efforts in the county that intersect with the focus areas and engaged either parents or service providers in advocacy.

First 5 Contra Costa staff and consultants from Cole Communications, Inc. contacted via email the approximately 28 efforts to schedule an interview. One or more representatives from 22 of those advocacy efforts were interviewed. Two organizations that were interviewed, We Care Services for Children and Brighter Beginnings, stated they do not engage in policy advocacy and were therefore not included in the table or profiled in





## METHODOLOGY

this directory. Five advocacy efforts either did not respond to the invitation to be interviewed or were unable to schedule a time with a point person to complete an interview. The advocacy efforts that were contacted but not interviewed include: Monument Impact, Providers For Quality Child Care, Rubicon Programs, VistAbility, and West County Early Care and Education (led by Glorious Jackson). One policy advocacy effort contacted—Healthy Contra Costa—did not think their work intersected with First 5 Contra Costa’s focus areas. Each advocacy effort that was profiled in this directory was sent a draft for their review and suggested comments.

In addition to the 20 advocacy efforts led by other entities included in this directory, First 5 Contra Costa staff also drafted summaries for three current advocacy efforts it coordinates:

- Early Childhood Prevention & Intervention Coalition
- Early Learning Leadership Group
- Family Economic Security Partnership

While First 5 Contra Costa staffed three Regional Groups for more than 20 years which engaged parents and other residents in advocacy efforts, that effort was put on hold in July 2023 due to staff transitions. For more information about this effort, please visit the [Regional Groups](#) webpage.

In total there are 23 advocacy efforts profiled in this directory, including:

- 6 that intersect with early childhood education
- 8 that intersect with early intervention
- 9 that intersect with strengthening families

# TABLE OF ADVOCACY EFFORTS BY FOCUS AREA

The following tables provide an overview of the advocacy efforts included in this directory organized alphabetically within the focus area that most overlaps with First 5 Contra Costa's three focus areas, which are:

- **Early Childhood Education:** Helps ensure children have high-quality early learning experiences that help them succeed in school and in life.
- **Early Intervention:** Ensures that families have access to prevention and early intervention supports that foster the optimal development of all children.
- **Strengthening Families:** Supports families in accessing the information and services needed to help their children thrive.

# TABLE OF ADVOCACY EFFORTS BY FOCUS AREA

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Name	<u>Advocacy Training/Opportunities for:</u>		Page
	Parents/Caregivers	Service Providers	
Bay Area Professional Family Child Care Network	No	Yes	12
CocoKids	No	No*	12
Contra Costa Local Planning Council for Early Care and Education	Not Currently**	Some	13
Early Learning Leadership Group	No	Yes	13
Northern California Family Child Care Alliance	Yes	Yes	14
Parent Voices	Yes	No	14-15

\*Shares information

\*\*At the time of the scan, had vacant seats for child care consumers/parents

## EARLY INTERVENTION

Alameda County Committee on Children with Special Needs - Lucile Packard Children's Hospital/Stanford Children's Health	Some	No	15
Care Parent Network	Yes	No	16
Early Childhood Mental Health Program	No	Yes	16
Early Childhood Prevention & Intervention Coalition	No	Yes	17
East Bay Legislative Coalition	Yes	Yes	17
Economic Opportunity Council	Yes	Yes	18
Healthy & Active Before 5	No	Yes	18-19
Human Services Alliance of Contra Costa	No	Yes	19

## STRENGTHENING FAMILIES

Child Abuse Prevention Council of Contra Costa County	Yes	Some	20
Contra Costa Budget Justice Coalition	No	Yes	20-21
East Contra Costa Community Alliance	Not yet	Yes	21
Ensuring Opportunity Campaign to End Poverty In Contra Costa	Yes	Yes	22
Family Economic Security Partnership	No	Yes	23
Family Voices of California	Yes	No	24
Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano	Yes	No	24
Mobility LABs	Yes	No	25
Village Community Resource Center	Yes	No	25

# PROFILES OF ADVOCACY EFFORTS

This section includes a brief profile of each advocacy effort included in this directory. The profiles are organized alphabetically within the focus area that most overlaps with First 5 Contra Costa's three focus areas, which are:

- **Early Childhood Education:** Helps ensure children have high-quality early learning experiences that help them succeed in school and in life.
- **Early Intervention:** Ensures that families have access to prevention and early intervention supports that foster the optimal development of all children.
- **Strengthening Families:** Supports families in accessing the information and services needed to help their children thrive.

For reference there is also an alphabetical listing of all advocacy efforts included in the appendix.

# PROFILES OF ADVOCACY EFFORTS BY FOCUS AREA

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

### Bay Area Professional Family Child Care Network

#### Focus/Mission:

Bay Area Professional Family Child Care Network aims to spread a message of hope and compassion. They believe that a single action can make a difference in the community, and that collective action can greatly impact the world. Through advocacy and outreach activities, the team works tirelessly each day to contribute to the greater good of Family Child Care.

#### Description of Members/Participants:

Family child care providers (76 members, 69 in Contra Costa County)

#### Policy Platform/Current Policy Priorities:

No set policy platform, but participates in others' campaigns and platforms.

*Current Intersections with First 5 Contra Costa:*

Overlap with Our Focus Areas	Early Childhood Education	
Dedicated Focus on Children Ages 0-5	Yes	Family child care also serves school-age children
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Parents/Caregivers	No	
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Service Providers	Yes	Provides information-sharing and occasional trainings on advocacy (e.g., at CocoKids conference) or encourage providers to shadow others to learn about advocacy activities

#### For more information:

Benu Chhabra | [benuchhabra2018@gmail.com](mailto:benuchhabra2018@gmail.com) | [bayareapfccnetwork.com](http://bayareapfccnetwork.com)

### CocoKids

#### Focus/Mission:

Mission: Champion and advance quality child care and early education; Focus: Child care resource and referral agency, and child care vouchers (alternative payment program) CalWorks stage 2 and 3.

#### Description of Members/Participants:

Child care providers; parents

#### Policy Platform/Current Policy Priorities:

No policy platform of their own, but they participate with other groups that do have policy platforms (e.g., Early Learning Leadership Group, California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, Families Thrive CA, Every Child California).

*Current Intersections with First 5 Contra Costa:*

Overlap with Our Focus Areas	Early Childhood Education	
Dedicated Focus on Children Ages 0-5	Yes	Believe younger children are overlooked in advocacy efforts that tend to focus on school age. Agency focuses on ages 0 to 12.
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Parents/Caregivers	No	Sponsors Parent Voices (grassroots organizing for accessible/affordable quality child care)
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Service Providers	No, but information-sharing	Provides information on changes in laws/licensing via social media posts. Supports "Tuesday Talks" a forum for family child care providers.

#### For more information:

John Jones | [john.jones@cocokids.org](mailto:john.jones@cocokids.org) | [cocokids.org](http://cocokids.org)

# PROFILES OF ADVOCACY EFFORTS BY FOCUS AREA

## Contra Costa Local Planning Council for Early Care and Education

### Focus/Mission:

The mission of the Contra Costa Local Planning Council for Early Care and Education is to promote quality child care through community assessment, advocacy, resource development, and collaboration with other organizations.

### Description of Members/Participants:

The council is a state-mandated body that consists of 20 volunteers appointed jointly by the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors and the Contra Costa County Superintendent of Schools.

### Policy Platform/Current Policy Priorities:

Broad-reaching platform related to child care from workforce, to availability and affordability, to quality, to facilities, etc. They partner with a lot of state and national groups on advocacy.

*Current Intersections with First 5 Contra Costa:*

Overlap with Our Focus Areas	Early Childhood Education	
Dedicated Focus on Children Ages 0-5	Yes	And school-age children
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Parents/Caregivers	Not currently	Seats for families on council (as child care consumers), but not currently filled; challenging to engage them
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Service Providers	Some	Mostly raising awareness, listening to providers' and families' input and addressing issues raised in Local Child Care Planning Council's Child Care Needs Assessment

### For more information:

Crystal McClendon-Gourdine | [cmccleldongourdine@gmail.com](mailto:cmccleldongourdine@gmail.com) | [bit.ly/local-planning-council](http://bit.ly/local-planning-council)

## Early Learning Leadership Group

### Focus/Mission:

The Early Learning Leadership Group is a countywide group that aims to increase collaboration, share data, identify gaps, improve service delivery, and advocate for policies at the local, state, and federal levels so that the early care and education system meets the needs of all children and their families.

### Description of Members/Participants:

Member agencies include: First 5 Contra Costa; Care Parent Network; Local Child Care Planning Council; CocoKids; Community Services Bureau of Contra Costa County Employment & Human Services Department; County Office of Education. First 5 Contra Costa coordinates this group.

### Policy Platform/Current Policy Priorities:

The group has identified four primary advocacy issue areas: Quality, Workforce Development, Access and Affordability, and a Coordinated and Sustainable System.

*Current Intersections with First 5 Contra Costa:*

Overlap with Our Focus Areas	Early Childhood Education	
Dedicated Focus on Children Ages 0-5	Yes	
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Parents/Caregivers	No	
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Service Providers	Yes	Share information related to policy at the local, state and federal level; submit letters and/or reports to raise awareness of needs/ asks; advocate for more investments, etc.

### For more information:

Ruth Fernandez | [rfernandez@first5coco.org](mailto:rfernandez@first5coco.org) | [bit.ly/early-learning-leadership-group](http://bit.ly/early-learning-leadership-group)

# PROFILES OF ADVOCACY EFFORTS BY FOCUS AREA

## Northern California Family Child Care Alliance (N CALFCCA)

### Focus/Mission:

Dedicated to supporting family child care providers of Contra Costa County, reaching higher standards consistent with current research in the early care and education field by providing resources, information and training to enhance a safe and healthy home environment for children and families. The N CALFCCA is also a vehicle for developing a sense of community among family child care providers by promoting peer support, advocacy, and camaraderie through various programs and activities.

### Description of Members/Participants:

Loose network of about 15 family child care providers

### Policy Platform/Current Policy Priorities:

In progress, but focuses on issues adapted from [Changemakers](#):

- Living wages for providers
- Equitable child care system for all children
- Better child care/racial justice for community and families

*Current Intersections with First 5 Contra Costa:*

Overlap with Our Focus Areas	Early Childhood Education	
Dedicated Focus on Children Ages 0-5	Yes	
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Parents/Caregivers	Yes	25 parents of children in family child care
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Service Providers	Yes	Offers one activity each month tailored for families and providers, featuring information, resources, discussions about advocacy, and emphasizes the importance of the provider's voice at every event; all activities are available in both English and Spanish. Their three points of advocacy for building a better child care system on racial and gender justice are: 1. The system must be built on gender and racial justice, 2. Affordability for all families, and 3. Thriving wages for providers.

### For more information:

Ellie Campos | [brooklyngirl0203@gmail.com](mailto:brooklyngirl0203@gmail.com) | [ncalfcca.org](http://ncalfcca.org)

## Parent Voices

### Focus/Mission:

Through grassroots organizing and leadership development, Parent Voices activates and centers the wisdom of parents to transform child care and ensure all systems that impact families are just, fair, and inclusive. Parent Voices is a partnership of parents throughout California that combines leadership development and community organizing in its efforts to increase funding, improve quality, and provide better access to child care for all families.

### Description of Members/Participants:

This is a statewide organization with local chapters. The Contra Costa County chapter has about 40-50 parents engaged and is looking to expand.

### Policy Platform/Current Policy Priorities:

The statewide organization maintains a list of legislation they have co-sponsored or advocated for on their website. The organization also partners with several statewide coalitions and participates (and encourages its chapters to participate) in those campaigns. Locally, the Contra Costa chapter has been seeking input on local priorities by asking parents, "What are the issues in Contra Costa County that stop families from being great?" To date, the major themes/needs that emerged are:

1. Access to early childhood education programs that meet their needs
2. Mental health
3. Afterschool programming/care
4. Housing

# PROFILES OF ADVOCACY EFFORTS BY FOCUS AREA

## Parent Voices, continued

Current Intersections with First 5 Contra Costa:

Overlap with Our Focus Areas	Early Childhood Education	
Dedicated Focus on Children Ages 0-5	No	
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Parents/Caregivers	Yes	Use a model with local Fellows (parent leaders facilitating local chapters); Fellows receive weekly coaching, stipends, and professional development; chapters offer parents opportunities to attend training on telling their story, state budget, and other advocacy skills; and to be on a mailing list for local activities and policy updates.
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Service Providers	No	

### For more information:

Candy Duperroir | [candyduperroir24@gmail.com](mailto:candyduperroir24@gmail.com)

LeShay Brooks | [leshay@parentvoices.org](mailto:leshay@parentvoices.org)

[parentvoices.org](http://parentvoices.org)

## EARLY INTERVENTION

### Alameda County Committee on Children with Special Needs – Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital/Stanford Children’s Health

#### Focus/Mission:

Share information that affects families with children with special needs as broadly defined; identify concerns with access to services (e.g., service gaps and cutbacks, access barriers, changes in eligibility requirements); take action as appropriate with Committee partners (e.g., health plans, public and private service agencies, providers, family organizations) to address concerns and promote access.

#### Description of Members/Participants:

Representatives of systems serving families of children with special needs (e.g., County agencies, public and private child-serving organizations, health plans, hospitals, providers, family support organizations, advocacy organizations); focus is on Alameda County, but some activities span multiple counties, including Contra Costa County.

#### Policy Platform/Current Policy Priorities:

No formal platform; ad hoc as issues are brought to Committee as they are identified

Current Intersections with First 5 Contra Costa:

Overlap with Our Focus Areas	Early Intervention	
Dedicated Focus on Children Ages 0-5	No	
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Parents/Caregivers	Some	Help families/parents tell their stories to group and explain how policy changes affect them
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Service Providers	No	Some providers attend monthly meetings, but are not focus of this effort

### For more information:

Laurie Soman | [lsoman6708@aol.com](mailto:lsoman6708@aol.com)



# PROFILES OF ADVOCACY EFFORTS BY FOCUS AREA

## Care Parent Network

### Focus/Mission:

Care Parent Network comprises dedicated professionals who are parents of children with special needs. The organization provides information and support to empower individuals to be the best advocates for their children.

### Description of Members/Participants:

Families with children ages 0 to 22 with special needs.

### Policy Platform/Current Policy Priorities:

No formal platform. In addition to other issues, also currently working on trying to make public meetings more accessible to families, particularly non-English speakers.

*Current Intersections with First 5 Contra Costa:*

Overlap with Our Focus Areas	Early Intervention	
Dedicated Focus on Children Ages 0-5	No	Work with families with children up to age 22
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Parents/Caregivers	Yes	Provide 1:1 coaching for families to help them feel more comfortable asking questions in Individual Education Programs (IEPs) process and how to advocate for their child and children with special needs to broader audiences like the Board of Supervisors
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Service Providers	No	

### For more information:

Hannah Michaelson | [info@careparentnetwork.org](mailto:info@careparentnetwork.org) | [careparentnetwork.org](http://careparentnetwork.org)

## Early Childhood Mental Health Program

### Focus/Mission:

To promote the well-being and empowerment of the community by providing access to collaborative early intervention, mental health, and early education services that foster health development, strong relationships, healing, and resilience for infants, young children, and their families who face adversity.

### Description of Members/Participants:

Clinicians who work with families

### Policy Platform/Current Policy Priorities:

No formal platform, but currently focused on changes to CalAIM.

*Current Intersections with First 5 Contra Costa:*

Overlap with Our Focus Areas	Early Intervention	
Dedicated Focus on Children Ages 0-5	No	
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Parents/Caregivers	No	
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Service Providers	Yes	10-12 therapists: communicate impact of policy changes, engage them in letter-writing campaigns, outreach to local and state policy makers, and present to Board of Supervisors.

### For more information:

Jeff Sloan | [jsloan@ecmhp.org](mailto:jsloan@ecmhp.org) | [ecmhp.org](http://ecmhp.org)

# PROFILES OF ADVOCACY EFFORTS BY FOCUS AREA

## Early Childhood Prevention & Intervention Coalition (ECPIC)

### Focus/Mission:

ECPIC is a countywide and multi-disciplinary collaborative that aims to advocate for the prioritization of the social emotional needs of young children (prenatal-6 years old) in state and county systems.

### Description of Members/Participants:

Member agencies include: First 5 Contra Costa; Behavioral Health Services; Contra Costa Health; CocoKids; Community Services Bureau of Contra Costa County Employment & Human Services Department; Care Parent Network; Contra Costa Crisis Center; C.O.P.E. Family Support Center; Early Childhood Mental Health Program; VistAbility/Lynn Center; and We Care Services for Children. First 5 Contra Costa coordinates this coalition.

### Policy Platform/Current Policy Priorities:

No formal platform, but focus on local, state, and federal issues related to early childhood mental health, prevention and intervention services.

*Current Intersections with First 5 Contra Costa:*

Overlap with Our Focus Areas	Early Intervention	
Dedicated Focus on Children Ages 0-5	Yes	
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Parents/Caregivers	No	
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Service Providers	Yes	Share information related to policy at the local, state, and federal level; submit letters and/or reports to raise awareness of needs/asks; advocate for more investments, etc.

### For more information:

Ruth Fernandez | [rfernandez@first5coco.org](mailto:rfernandez@first5coco.org) | [bit.ly/early-childhood-prevention-intervention-coalition](http://bit.ly/early-childhood-prevention-intervention-coalition)

## East Bay Legislative Coalition (EBLC)

### Focus/Mission:

EBLC is an advocate of public policy and legislative action that promotes access for the intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) community, provides opportunities for inclusion/inclusive practices, and highlights the intersection of IDD community issues with all Californians.

### Description of Members/Participants:

5 Core Members: Alameda County Developmental Disabilities Planning and Advisory Council; The Developmental Disabilities Council of Contra Costa County; Regional Center of the East Bay (RCEB); The Provider/Vendor Advisory Council of RCEB; State Council on Developmental Disabilities, Bay Area Regional Office

### Policy Platform/Current Policy Priorities:

15 issue areas ranging from education to transportation to health care. Advocacy focus is on issues affecting the lifespan of an individual with a disability.

*Current Intersections with First 5 Contra Costa:*

Overlap with Our Focus Areas	Early Intervention	
Dedicated Focus on Children Ages 0-5	No	All ages
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Parents/Caregivers	Yes	Annual Town Hall, legislative visits, storytelling, candidate forums, letter-writing, "Partners in Policymaking" training program for family/self-advocates
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Service Providers	Yes	30 providers, 5-10 serving children 0-5 or have early childhood expertise, engage in similar meetings activities as above

### For more information:

Will Sanford | [will.sanford.sccs@gmail.com](mailto:will.sanford.sccs@gmail.com) | [acphd.org/ddc/east-bay-legislative-coalition](http://acphd.org/ddc/east-bay-legislative-coalition)

# PROFILES OF ADVOCACY EFFORTS BY FOCUS AREA

## Economic Opportunity Council (EOC)

### Focus/Mission:

EOC is an anti-poverty advisory board to the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors. In partnership with the community, they work together to address the needs of the low-income population through advocacy and action.

### Description of Members/Participants:

The EOC board composition includes five members of the public/private non-profit sector, five members of the low-income sector and five members of the Board of Supervisors or their designees (several of these categories could include parents).

### Policy Platform/Current Policy Priorities:

Primary focus is low income and anti-poverty issues, and primary role of the EOC is to oversee federal funds granted to local agencies for services to lift people out of poverty. The Council's current focus areas are:

1. Housing
2. Food insecurity
3. Job training and living wage jobs
4. Access to mental health services

The Council is also working on state legislative action to enhance public bodies', like the Council's, ability to have public meetings virtually so as to remove barriers to participation for council members and community members.

*Current Intersections with First 5 Contra Costa:*

Overlap with Our Focus Areas	Early Childhood Education	
Dedicated Focus on Children Ages 0-5	No	
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Parents/Caregivers	Yes if on council	Council members learn about community needs, and can advocate for various issues within the county's legislative agenda
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Service Providers	Yes if on council	Council members learn about community needs, and can advocate for various issues within the county's legislative agenda

### For more information:

Renee Zeimer | [rkzeimer@gmail.com](mailto:rkzeimer@gmail.com) | [ehsd.org/headstart/community-action/eoc-members](https://ehsd.org/headstart/community-action/eoc-members)

## Healthy & Active Before 5 (HAB45)

### Focus/Mission:

HAB45 is a Contra Costa County collaborative that advances health equity through local policy and environmental changes to support the health and well-being of children ages 0-5 and their families.

### Description of Members/Participants:

HAB45 is led by an Executive Committee made up of leadership from the main organizations serving young children in the county (CocoKids, CSB/Head Start, First 5 Contra Costa, County hospital and clinics, public health, La Clínica de la Raza, WIC, and the CCC Office of Education). There is a broader group of about 24 organizations that are active, with many more organizations attending semi-annual Leadership Council and staying informed through updates. Participating agencies include county agencies and nonprofit service organizations.

### Policy Platform/Current Policy Priorities:

1. Promote Land Use & Parks Policies that Expand Physical Activity Opportunities: Access to safe places to move and play is an essential ingredient for early childhood health. HAB45 will advocate for city and countywide policies that increase early childhood active play, preserve existing parks, form new parks, foster park safety, improve air quality, create 0-5 playspaces, and provide opportunities for active living in communities.
2. Prioritize Housing Security: Housing insecurity is a top concern for Contra Costa families. HAB45 works with trusted allies in the housing sector to highlight the needs of families with young children and advocate for policies that Protect tenants from displacement and eviction, Preserve existing affordable housing, and Produce housing that is affordable for low income families.

# PROFILES OF ADVOCACY EFFORTS BY FOCUS AREA

## Healthy & Active Before 5 (HAB45), *continued*

3. Advance Strategies to Increase Food Security: All Contra Costa families deserve access to affordable, healthy foods in their community. HAB45 supports policies at the organizational, local, and state level that increase access to fruits, vegetables, and clean water where children learn, play, and grow. HAB45 will also continue to support policies that promote breastfeeding and lactation accommodation in diverse settings.
4. Advocate for a Robust Safety Net: HAB45 is committed to advocating for a safety net that provides high-quality, comprehensive, and culturally relevant services to support the mental and physical well-being of all Contra Costa children, regardless of race, ethnicity, income, immigration status, or region. In addition to these priority policy areas, HAB45 takes on additional advocacy activities in order to respond to current and emerging community needs. These include, but are not limited to, policies that promote economic security, early childhood education, mental health, climate justice, health care, and racial and immigrant justice.

*Current Intersections with First 5 Contra Costa:*

Overlap with Our Focus Areas	Early Intervention	
Dedicated Focus on Children Ages 0-5	Yes	All 24 member organizations serve children ages 0-5, though not all of them are exclusively focused on this population.
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Parents/Caregivers	No	
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Service Providers	Yes	Leadership Council gatherings twice a year; workshops to help service providers build advocacy skills; keep members informed of updates and possible advocacy activities each quarter

### For more information:

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## Human Services Alliance of Contra Costa

### Focus/Mission:

The mission of the Human Services Alliance is to lead change, advocate for policy and services on behalf of residents in need of support, and provide resources and peer support to our member agencies.

### Description of Members/Participants:

The Human Services Alliance of Contra Costa is a membership organization consisting of more than 30 community-based behavioral health service providers in the county.

### Policy Platform/Current Policy Priorities:

Primarily focus on county and state-level issues related to behavioral health services.

*Current Intersections with First 5 Contra Costa:*

Overlap with Our Focus Areas	Early Intervention	
Dedicated Focus on Children Ages 0-5	No	Not exclusively, many members work with children and families and serve a range of ages in a variety of settings.
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Parents/Caregivers	No	
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Service Providers	Yes	Bi-weekly meetings with member agencies to discuss issues related to behavioral health. Address concerns or issues related to contracting with public agencies, needs of clients, and other issues. Some member organizations solely focus on children and families, and others span the lifecycle.

### For more information:

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# PROFILES OF ADVOCACY EFFORTS BY FOCUS AREA

## STRENGTHENING FAMILIES

### Child Abuse Prevention Council of Contra Costa County

#### Focus/Mission:

To promote the safety of children and prevent child abuse and neglect in Contra Costa County by raising community awareness, influencing public policy, educating our community, providing resources and support programs to families.

#### Description of Members/Participants:

Executive Committee: First 5 Contra Costa, CCH, CocoKids, WIC, HS, La Clínica de la Raza, County Health system. Meet once a month. Work on diff grants. Coordinate services

#### Policy Platform/Current Policy Priorities:

Focused on Strengthening Families Framework which includes the 5 protective factors of parental resilience, social connections, concrete supports in the time of need, knowledge of parenting and child development, and social end emotional competence). They also focus on the following issues:

- Child care or early learning issues
- Early childhood mental health, developmental screenings, ACEs, or early interventions for social emotional health of ages 0-5
- Strengthening families through parent education, child abuse prevention, child development training, navigation or family resource centers for families with kids ages 0 -5

*Current Intersections with First 5 Contra Costa:*

Overlap with Our Focus Areas	Strengthening Families	
Dedicated Focus on Children Ages 0-5	No	
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Parents/Caregivers	Yes	Parent Partner Program (opportunities to advocate/advise on policy-making and planning at local, state levels)
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Service Providers	Some	Through Greater Bay Area Child Abuse Prevention Council Coalition (Day of the Child activities in Sacramento); Executive Director-level staff of CAPC agencies, letter-writing, Board of Supervisors presentations, legislative visits

#### For more information:

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### Contra Costa Budget Justice Coalition

#### Focus/Mission:

The Contra Costa Budget Justice Coalition advocates for community engagement in the Contra Costa County budgeting process and for a set of values-based budgeting principles that support safe and affordable housing, stable employment with fair wages, sufficient healthy food, essential health care, access to critical social services, quality early care and education.

#### Description of Members/Participants:

About 25 organizations including advocacy organizations, direct service agencies, and membership coalitions that work in the county.

#### Policy Platform/Current Policy Priorities:

- Transparency in county budgeting process
- Infusing community voice and equity lens into county budgeting process
- Process related to unallocated Measure X and ARPA funds administered by the county

# PROFILES OF ADVOCACY EFFORTS BY FOCUS AREA

## Contra Costa Budget Justice Coalition, *continued*

*Current Intersections with First 5 Contra Costa:*

Overlap with Our Focus Areas	Strengthening Families	
Dedicated Focus on Children Ages 0-5	No	All residents
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Parents/Caregivers	No	Some trainings on advocacy and county budgets, and information-sharing for community members
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Service Providers	Yes	

### For more information:

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## East Contra Costa Community Alliance (ECCCA)

### Focus/Mission:

ECCCA is a collaborative of organizations dedicated to strengthening policies, services, and resources in East County. The network's purpose is to:

- Develop a common voice on issues affecting East Contra Costa residents, particularly those experiencing poverty, social isolation, or other obstacles to their ability to participate fully in the benefits of the community (advocate).
- Share and leverage resources among participating nonprofits and private funders, to create a more sustainable ecosystem particularly with respect to encouraging the public and private sectors to better support services to disadvantaged populations (collaborate).
- Work towards building nonprofit capacity and sustainability understanding the important role nonprofits play in addressing the needs of the diverse members of the community (build sustainability).

### Description of Members/Participants:

About 20 organizations including advocacy organizations, direct service agencies, and membership coalitions that serve or represent residents in the East County.

### Policy Platform/Current Policy Priorities:

Currently in development

*Current Intersections with First 5 Contra Costa:*

Overlap with Our Focus Areas	Strengthening Families	
Dedicated Focus on Children Ages 0-5	No	All residents
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Parents/Caregivers	Not yet	Is planning advocacy training in 2024 for East County residents
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Service Providers	Yes	Offers trainings and presentations to member agencies, and information-sharing about a variety of local, state, and federal updates

### For more information:

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# PROFILES OF ADVOCACY EFFORTS BY FOCUS AREA

## Ensuring Opportunity Campaign to End Poverty in Contra Costa

### Focus/Mission:

Ensuring Opportunity’s goal is to end economic disparity by addressing the root causes of poverty through system shifts and policy change, focusing on these policy areas: Housing, Food Security, Economic Security, Health Security and Budget Justice (the county budget process). The Campaign’s ultimate vision is that all Contra Costa residents have the resources they need to support themselves and their families, and that they have a powerful voice in shaping local political, cultural and economic systems.

### Description of Members/Participants:

Ensuring Opportunity works with many partners on various campaigns, and engages residents, service providers, businesses, faith-based and community-based organizations, local leaders, and media to take effective and coordinated action toward eliminating poverty in Contra Costa County. The Ensuring Opportunity campaign embraces a “big tent” approach, meaning that all voices, perspectives and interests are welcome as long as racial and economic equity are centered in the work.

### Policy Platform/Current Policy Priorities:

Current campaigns and priorities include:

- Health care access, particularly for undocumented individuals: working in partnership with #OneContraCosta Coalition, Immigrant Health Alliance, and other local partners on this effort.
- Tenant rights and protections: working as a member of the Raise the Roof Coalition and many other partners on strengthening protections for tenants, e.g., by advocating for equitable county-wide housing policies and for municipal policy changes in Concord and Pittsburg.
- Access to affordable and stable housing: working with a regional coalition to support a regional bond measure to fund new affordable housing, preserve existing affordable housing, and increase tenant protections to keep people housed.
- Supporting increased local funding and public policy changes to increase the number of guaranteed income pilot projects in Contra Costa as a strategy to reduce poverty.

*Current Intersections with First 5 Contra Costa:*

Overlap with Our Focus Areas	Strengthening Families	
Dedicated Focus on Children Ages 0-5	No	
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Parents/Caregivers	Yes	While each issue-specific coalition uses different methods to communicate and organize individuals, generally opportunities include activities such as information sharing, letter writing, testimonials, attending public meetings or campaign events. Ensuring Opportunity, in partnership with the Family Economic Security Partnership, also led the development and implementation of a 2-year leadership training program called the <a href="#">Collaborative Advocacy and Power Partnership (CAPP)</a> from 2021 through 2023.
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Service Providers	Yes	Same as above

### For more information:

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# PROFILES OF ADVOCACY EFFORTS BY FOCUS AREA

## Family Economic Security Partnership (FESP)

### Focus/Mission:

FESP is a public, private, and nonprofit collaboration dedicated to increasing the income and building the assets of low-income families in Contra Costa County. While acknowledging the significance of direct service provision, FESP also increases awareness of the importance of policy and advocacy needed to end poverty.

### Description of Members/Participants:

About 60 organizations participate in FESP ranging from advocates to service providers to government officials. The Partnership is led by a Steering Committee. First 5 Contra Costa provides staff support to FESP.

### Policy Platform/Current Policy Priorities:

The following policy priorities were adopted in 2017:

Strengthen economic tools and opportunities

- Increase access to housing that is affordable and establish protections to prevent low-income people from losing their homes
- Support access to higher education
- Support access to early childhood education

Strengthen social safety net programs

- Sustain, simplify and expand access to public benefits (CalFresh, CalWORKs, etc.)
- Modify eligibility requirements to reflect the true cost of living and address benefits cliffs due to wage increases
- Ensure adequate and affordable health care for all

Help build income

- Strengthen sustainable fair wage employment and career opportunities including creating access to critical education and training
- Expand the Earned Income Tax Credit to increase access and eligibility

Revenue generating strategies

- Explore equitable tax reform options (e.g. Prop 13, wealth tax, oil severance tax, estate tax, etc.)

Eliminate predatory practices/wealth stripping

- Eliminate/minimize payday loans, check cashing fees, fines and improve access to free/reduced cost bank accounts, transactions and loans, etc. and support regulation and laws that provide consumer protections.

Increase safe and affordable financial services, education and products

- Support financial education access and opportunities including financial coaching and the use of credit building/debt reduction tools, IDAs, Children's Savings Accounts, etc.

*Current Intersections with First 5 Contra Costa:*

Overlap with Our Focus Areas	Strengthening Families	
Dedicated Focus on Children Ages 0-5	No	
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Parents/Caregivers	No	
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Service Providers	Yes	Holds quarterly meetings with opportunities to learn about state, local, and federal policy and efforts related to reducing poverty; holds occasional trainings on advocacy; shares information about advocacy opportunities.

### For more information:

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# PROFILES OF ADVOCACY EFFORTS BY FOCUS AREA

## Family Voices of California (FVCA)

### Focus/Mission:

Statewide collaborative of parent-run centers (FRCs) working to ensure quality health care for children and youth with special health care needs. FVCA builds the capacity of parent centers throughout California to provide families with the information and support they need to make informed decisions about the health care of their children. FVCA provides information and a forum for parent centers and families to advocate for improved public and private policies, builds partnerships between professionals and families, and serves as a vital resource on health care.

### Description of Members/Participants:

Network of Family Resource Centers and parents they serve

### Policy Platform/Current Policy Priorities:

California Children's Services Whole Child Model and disability rights

*Current Intersections with First 5 Contra Costa:*

Overlap with Our Focus Areas	Strengthening Families	
Dedicated Focus on Children Ages 0-5	No	
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Parents/Caregivers	Yes	Project Leadership: series that prepares parents/caregivers to move from advocacy for their own child to systems affecting many more, it features a training curriculum, paired with mentoring and support, that prepares families to build partnerships with professionals and engage in public policy advocacy on behalf of children and youth with special health care needs.
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Service Providers	No	

### For more information:

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## Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano

### Focus/Mission:

Leading the fight to end hunger, in partnership with our community and in service of our neighbors in need.

Advocacy Mission Statement: Identify the root causes of hunger specific to our region while integrating the experiences and voices of our community members to most effectively advocate for sustainable change in our food systems to eliminate food insecurity.

### Description of Members/Participants:

People living with food insecurity (currently or in the past) in Contra Costa and Solano counties.

### Policy Platform/Current Policy Priorities:

Three policy priorities: (1) Social safety net programs, (2) Strengthening food systems and food banks, and (3) Policy partnerships for hunger solutions. [Detailed 2023 Legislative Agenda](#)

*Current Intersections with First 5 Contra Costa:*

Overlap with Our Focus Areas	Strengthening Families	
Dedicated Focus on Children Ages 0-5	No	
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Parents/Caregivers	Yes	Speaker Series (trains 10-15 people with lived experience of food insecurity); 6-week program. 2 graduates have become Food Bank Board members
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Service Providers	No	Sometimes included in Speaker Series training as advocates/allies, but not the focus

### For more information:

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# PROFILES OF ADVOCACY EFFORTS BY FOCUS AREA

## Mobility LABs (fiscally sponsored by Richmond Community Foundation)

### Focus/Mission:

Develop new solutions in diverse local communities to sustainably lift families out of poverty and improve their mobility. Mobility is defined as including three components: economic success, agency, and belonging.

### Description of Members/Participants:

Community members in East County experiencing poverty

### Policy Platform/Current Policy Priorities:

Anything related to lifting families out of poverty. Currently working on a guaranteed income pilot.

*Current Intersections with First 5 Contra Costa:*

Overlap with Our Focus Areas	Strengthening Families	
Dedicated Focus on Children Ages 0-5	No	
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Parents/Caregivers	Yes	Monthly meetings with parents (about 30, 5-6 with children 0-5), letter-writing, attend City Council meetings. For the guaranteed income pilot, hold a series of eight 1-hour weekly workshops related to movement-building.
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Service Providers	No	

### For more information:

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Loren Dalbert | [ldalbert@richmondcfr.org](mailto:ldalbert@richmondcfr.org)

## Village Community Resource Center

### Focus/Mission:

Improve the quality of life for children and families in East Contra Costa County by promoting equity through education, wellness, leadership and organizing, and partnerships. They operate family resource centers, afterschool programming, parent leadership, mobile health clinics, among other services.

### Description of Members/Participants:

Parents of children in their afterschool program are required to attend the Parent Academy, and it usually engages about 50 parents. The Parent Academy is also available to the general community as well. About 40 parents participate in the Parent Leadership groups, which help develop their leadership skills and confidence and provide opportunities for structural change within their child's schools and school districts.

### Policy Platform/Current Policy Priorities:

Educational equity for the families participating in their programs

*Current Intersections with First 5 Contra Costa:*

Overlap with Our Focus Areas	Strengthening Families	
Dedicated Focus on Children Ages 0-5	No	Elementary age
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Parents/Caregivers	Yes	Two parent leadership programs: Parent Academy (50 participants) who learn about various topics together during hour-long monthly meetings, and Parent Leadership Groups; which offers opportunities for parents who want a deeper engagement to work on projects). The leadership group meetings are monthly in the mornings and selects projects to work on together.
Advocacy Training/Opportunities for Service Providers	No	

### For more information:

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