

Early Childhood Resource Mapping

A review of the strengths, gaps, and duplications in City-funded services to San Francisco's children ages birth to five and their families.



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Partners in Public Innovation

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Executive Summary

With the creation of the Department of Early Childhood (combining the former Office of Early Care and Education and First 5 San Francisco) and the passage of “Baby” Prop C in 2018, San Francisco is once again poised to lead the way in providing services to the city’s youngest residents. In recognition of this turning point, the Department of Early Childhood (DEC), with contributions from the Child Care Planning and Advisory Council (CPAC), Children’s Council, and the Family Resource Center (FRC) Alliance funded this effort to map existing resources for children from birth to age 5 and their families and to identify gaps, duplications, and coordination challenges.

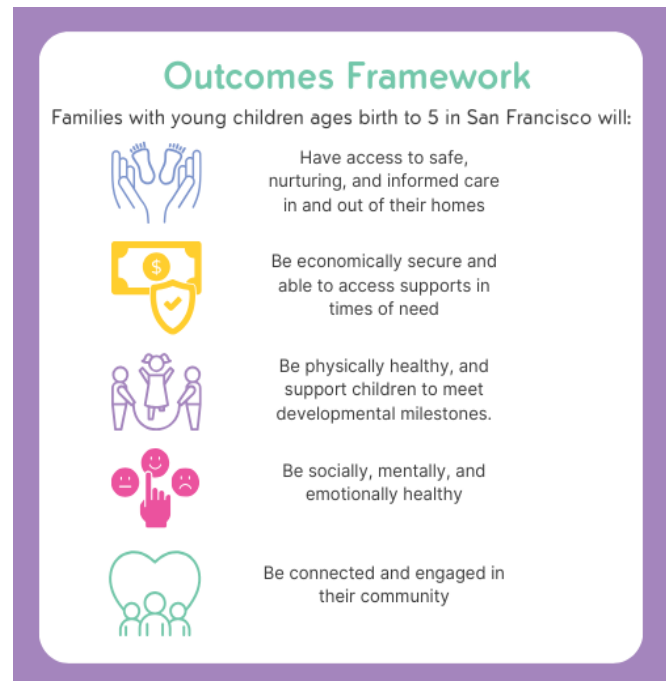
Building on previous work, we developed a new outcomes framework specifically for services in San Francisco for young children and their families, casting a vision for the key needs to be met to allow young children to thrive. We completed 26 interviews with managers and directors from 16 City departments and community agencies, reviewed documentation ranging from strategic plans and budgets to needs assessments and impact statements, and created a data set of 69 City-funded programs that address the needs of young children and their caregivers, parents, and educators within the above framework.

The resulting service map includes a description of all the identified programs ([Appendix D](#)) and an analysis of programs available to meet primarily child and also family needs across the early lifespan. Services are summarized by child life stage, Outcomes Framework category, primary City agency, and special needs. To bound our scope, we included only programs that were explicitly targeted at either young children, educators, or parents in their parental role. However parents also need other general supports (e.g., housing, cash aid, employment) to thrive and raise thriving children. Because of this limitation of the analysis, the report should not be taken as an exhaustive list of parental needs.

Major themes that emerged from that analysis and from qualitative interview findings included:

PROGRAMMATIC STRENGTHS

- **Investments supporting young children and their families:** Stakeholders highlighted San Francisco’s persistent commitment to young children; many cited the reorganization of First 5 and OECE into the new Department of Early Childhood.



- **Improving wages for ECE staff:** Through the Workforce Compensation Initiative, funded through “Baby” Prop C, City-administered ECE sites have been able to substantially increase wages for early care educators within the City's Early Learning Scholarship system. In doing so, the City hopes to improve ECE quality and reduce staff turnover for children and families.
- **Expansion of access to quality ECE settings:** Using Baby Prop C funds, the City has expanded income eligibility for child care subsidies to include families making 110% of the Area Median Income (AMI)¹ and continues to increase quality through development of ten quality standards for certain City-designated ECE sites. Additionally, one clear goal of Prop C is to continue this expansion, with the goal of serving families with incomes up to 200% of AMI.
- **Family Resource Center (FRC) Initiative:** The City funds 26 neighborhood- and population-based FRCs that provide critical linkage to services and basic needs resources as well as many other case management services, family to family connections, and parent education, for families with young children. During the pandemic, many FRCs expanded their reach and ability to respond quickly to family needs, as new families came looking for services.
- **Coalition Building and Impact:** ECE coalitions formed around supporting Prop C have continued, with stakeholders strengthening their advocacy and continuing to make progress in child care service delivery. The FRC Alliance, recently unified with the San Francisco Family Support Network, has also enhanced awareness, coordination, and advocacy for family support.
- **Innovative programs to link healthcare and other supports:** Programs like Healthy Steps and Solid Start are resulting in more co-location of medical services for maternal and infant health, as well as connecting healthcare clients with basic needs and supports. Pilot programs at FRCs also link families to healthcare entities.
- **Enrichment and socialization:** San Francisco offers an array of socialization and enrichment services that children as young as 2 can access with their families, across a range of City departments, including the Library, Rec and Park, neighborhood FRCs and others.
- **Dream Keeper-funded ECE Initiatives:** An increase in Black Educators has been shown to increase educational performance outcomes for Black children. Dream Keeper funding has supported the development of the African-American Early Educator Pipeline to Career cohorts and the African-American Early Care and Education Policy Council. These programs, among others, are designed to support Black ECE professionals and grow their presence in the field.

SERVICE GAPS

Decades of research have shown that in order for young children to thrive, it is essential that parents, caregivers, and educators are well. The following gaps highlight areas where the City lacks holistic two-generation programming with a multidisciplinary and coordinated approach that brings together the key adults in a young child’s life, including parents, caregivers, educators, and other providers to ensure families, living in vulnerable circumstances, and the workforce that supports them receive the support they need to be well, learn, and thrive, and to help close the opportunity gap.

¹ DEC Strategic Plan

- **Special Education, Early Intervention, and Mental Health Services:** Despite an expansion in screening capacity, families still struggle to access and navigate needed early intervention and mental health services for young children. Stakeholders cited persistent staffing shortages among these child-focused professionals driving long wait lists. Parents also lack needed mental health services, particularly when needs co-occur with substance use or domestic violence.
- **Workforce Recruitment and Retention:** Across the entire early childhood sector, City departments, CBOs, and child care providers are struggling to hire and retain qualified staff, an issue that is exacerbated by both the high cost of living in San Francisco and the additional qualifications needed to appropriately support the early childhood population. Wage supports offered to City-funded ECE providers do not apply to non City-funded ECE providers or workers who do similar family-serving work in other settings, such as FRCs, nor do they keep up with the increasing wages of TK-3 public school educators, driving turnover. ECE workplace condition support programs to ECE sites are still to be implemented, and will go only to ELS sites.
- **Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Services:** Families encounter barriers to services and resources to address their needs when they encounter staff who don't speak their language. This problem is exacerbated by difficulties hiring culturally and linguistically diverse staff, including at ECE sites. There continue to be marked inequities in school readiness and maternal outcomes in the City for monolingual families, as well as significant disproportionate involvement of Black and Brown families in the child welfare system.
- **Basic Needs and Essential Resources:** The pandemic opened up further economic disparities in the city, especially for families with young children. Housing, nutrition support, and other forms of essential support do not meet the current need.
- **Eligibility Cliffs for Middle Income Families:** Current eligibility cutoffs for child care subsidies and other public benefits do not meet the family self-sufficiency standard for the high cost of living in San Francisco. While the City is working to expand child care subsidies, middle income families are left contending with high child care costs on their own.
- **Prenatal Parent-focused Services and Service Navigation:** The preventative impact of providing developmental guidance, parent education, and basic needs to expectant parents would be immense, but the City currently has only a few offerings at this stage. Additionally, parents-to-be need more preventative and treatment services to address mental health needs, substance abuse, and domestic violence issues before children are born.
- **Business supports and professional development for all child care providers:** Past funding to support ECE teachers' professional development at ELS-funded sites have been paused, and the new support programs have not yet been implemented. For the many licensed and informal child care providers who are not funded through the City, very few professional supports exist. Private dollars are addressing some of the need, but not enough, and Friend, Family, Neighbor caregivers are almost entirely left out of the conversation.

SERVICE OVERLAP AND COORDINATION ISSUES

- **Lack of transparent budget information about 0-5 investment:** Though we reviewed extensive budget documents and asked explicitly in interviews, DEC and DCYF were the only City

departments who were able to provide any detail about budget for support of young children and their parents, caregivers and educators. This was true even when agencies had dedicated programming or divisions for young children. Because City budgets are not stratified by age, it is extremely difficult to articulate the total dollar amount of San Francisco's investment in early childhood, let alone pregnant people and families. Regarding DEC and DCYF, stakeholders were frustrated that they could not easily understand whether designated funding sources were being spent on appropriate programming and expressed challenges with contracting and timely distribution of funding.

- **DEC's strategic direction, emerging leadership and funding role:** The consolidation of OECE and First 5 into the Department of Early Childhood (DEC) has resulted in disruption, even as it presents opportunities. With the department's creation, some stakeholders expressed confusion about what role other City departments, chiefly the Department of Children, Youth, and Their Families, would play in supporting the Early Childhood system of care.
- **Diffuse, disconnected network of resources that are challenging to navigate:** Many stakeholders identified challenges for both families and staff in knowing what other services are available, even from other City agencies. Multiple agencies have attempted to create resource lists, but these piecemeal efforts are inevitably incomplete and challenging to maintain. Families cannot easily receive multiple services at one location – especially if the services are from different city departments, and especially for basic need supports, as no one agency or community organization can meet a family's whole basic needs. The system lacks culturally-responsive support to help navigate connection to services.
- **Universal Preschool (UPK) mixed setting rollout:** Groups representing child care providers cited concern and confusion in their networks about how the UPK rollout would impact the ECE workforce and community-based early care and education centers and Family Child Care Homes. Addressing these concerns requires coordination between the ECE community, SFUSD, and DEC, but vacancies at SFUSD have delayed collaboration to address concerns. With a new Associate Superintendent of Early Education in place, SFUSD is now positioned to better engage in the process.
- **Warm handoffs from preschool to Kindergarten:** The City lacks a comprehensive mechanism for the ECE and SFUSD systems to share information as children and families transition from one to the other. As the entire ECE and SFUSD systems gear up for the upcoming UPK rollout, families will be navigating an increasingly complex system of care and will need systematic support in place to do so effectively. Further, there is no city-wide data showing the impact various types of child care programs have on a child's kindergarten readiness.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to foster each child's well-being as a foundation for academic and life success, the City should seek to create an integrated, culturally responsive, trauma-informed approach that coordinates services and supports for young children and their parents/caregivers, partners with parents and educators, and focuses on early intervention and prevention. This system should draw on the strengths of young children's entire community, including family, educators, and other key providers and support services. Changes that would support such a system include:

1. **Create community-friendly budget breakdowns.** At DCYF and DEC, create community-friendly, detailed budget breakdowns that show which revenue funds which expenditures, increasing community confidence in how dedicated funds are being spent.
2. **Help families make easy connections to an integrated set of services in the early childhood system of care.** The City should create simple on-ramps and accessible mechanisms for getting child care and family support services as early as possible, using natural touch points such as prenatal care and birth. San Francisco has created a range of supports, but families appearing in one place often demonstrate needs better addressed elsewhere in the system of care. The City should explore opportunities to co-locate services, conduct joint eligibility assessments, integrate major components of the early childhood system of care (e.g., FRCs, clinics, and preschools), ensure cultural competency and language capacity of service providers, and remove barriers to referrals, so that families experience a streamlined assessment of needs and connection to basic needs and family supports.
3. **Create a robust, centralized source of citywide program information and referrals for both providers and families.** Ensure that everyone in the city can access up-to-date information about available services. Replace existing piecemeal systems with a single, City-supported resource database. Ideally, this database should also support “Coordinated Entry-style” inter-agency referrals and tracking.
4. **Leverage existing general City services to connect families and providers to appropriate resources.** Ensure that 311 has appropriate information to direct families to resources. Ensure that the Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD) Office of Small Business provides appropriate business support for child care providers.
5. **Make DEC the leader for Citywide early childhood issues that previously had no clear owner.** DEC is now uniquely positioned to facilitate cross-sector collaboration and play a leadership role on issues including robust community planning, holding transparent and comprehensive plans for implementation of initiatives, planning to address structural and funding gaps in the system of care, moving forward policy initiatives like basic needs support, expansion of 2-Gen programs like home visiting or Early Head Start, and more accessibility and inclusive support services. Transparency and partnership with the community will be key in determining next steps for implementation of DEC’s strategic direction.
6. **Develop better handoffs for children entering SFUSD.** Create a standardized way to transfer and track child assessment data from preschools to the District upon Kindergarten entry and gather systematic data on early childhood intervention impact on school readiness. Develop needed data sharing agreements.
7. **Supplement Early Intervention services and Mental Health services.** Supplement impacted services to adequately address disabilities, developmental delays, developmental concerns not eligible for mandated benefits, and mental health concerns revealed by assessment. Support specialist training, career pathways, and more robust parent navigation.
8. **Build on Workforce Compensation Initiative efforts by further supporting early childhood educators and expanding workforce supports to other family-serving professionals.** Continue implementation of the WCI and consider expansion throughout the child

and family serving system. Supplement wages and support career pathways for Early Intervention staff, family case managers, therapists, and others, particularly for those that reflect the communities where they work.

- 9. Assess changing needs in the ECE system in anticipation of universal pre-K rollout.** Assess how the transition to a mixed-delivery UPK system impacts both ages 0-2 ECE needs, as well as 3-4 year olds, their families, and ECE programs that serve three and four year olds. The City should consider a range of supports for providers and small centers as they navigate a changing market, including economic support and expanding access to early care and education for children ages 0-2.
- 10. Provide additional resources for Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care.** Promote quality care, early assessment, and service provision whether kids are in a licensed center or staying with grandma.

Why Early Childhood Matters

Data continues to confirm what we already knew: A child's earliest experiences create the foundation that a child will build upon throughout their lives. Brain development occurs at its fastest pace between the ages of birth and three, as neural connections are formed and sensitive periods for hearing, language, and cognition peak.² Attachment with parents and connected adults builds maps for how we treat others and expect to be treated. Safe, high quality learning and child care environments promote cognitive connections that will continue to serve children far into adulthood.

When these experiences are positive, children are set up for lives with better mental health, physical health, and opportunity. When children's earliest experiences are marred with abuse, neglect, toxic stress, or violence, it has a lasting impact on their life outcomes across many domains. Ongoing research on adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) confirms that the more difficult experiences a child has to navigate (things like witnessing violence in their community or home or growing up in a household where a parent is incarcerated), the more likely they are to develop substance misuse disorders, chronic health conditions, and mental illnesses such as anxiety and depression. While current research indicates 1 in 5 adults has experienced three or more ACEs before age 18, marginalized racial and ethnic groups as well as women demonstrate higher levels of ACEs, and thus more impact as adults.³

Of course, young children exist in family units and the community support-structures provided for them, which means they are deeply impacted by the well-being of the adults around them. Supporting young children also always means supporting the adults in their lives. Adults with access to mental health services, violence prevention services, and basic need support, among other things, can create a more stable environment for their children during this critical developmental period. Additionally, research from San Francisco's kindergarten readiness assessments in 2007, 2009, and 2015 points to the importance of parental coping and social support in predicting children's academic, social, and emotional skills at kindergarten entry. In 2015, the most recent year for which data was available, families were feeling less connected and less supported, with barely 20 percent of all families reporting that they could seek parenting support from family, neighbors, or friends. Lower-income families reported even lower numbers. While the impact of the pandemic on this sentiment has not yet been measured, we know the pandemic increased feelings of isolation across many domains, and families were not an exception. Supporting families' needs is a critical component of any policy to promote child wellness.

Investment in young children and families, and the workforce that supports them is critical for both individual children and community health. The challenges associated with high ACEs impact neighborhoods and cost taxpayers in the long run. Economist James Heckman, a Nobel Prize winner, has found that investments in high quality early childhood education programs for disadvantaged children averaged a 13% return on investment.⁴ Research has also found that for every \$1 spent on minimum

² "Why 0-3?", ZERO TO THREE, www.zerotothree.org/why-0-3/

³ "ACEs Fast Facts", Centers for Disease and Control, www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/fastfact.html

⁴ García, Jorge Luis, James J. Heckman, Duncan Ermini Leaf, and María José Prados. "The Life-cycle Benefits of an Influential Early Childhood Program." (2016)

wage, there was a 10% reduction in reports of child neglect.⁵ Put another way, every dollar San Francisco spends investing in young children and their families saves money in the long term and makes a real difference in the lives of those individuals.

Why build a 0-5 service map?

Major changes have impacted the landscape of support for young children and their families in San Francisco in the past two years, including the creation of the Department of Early Childhood, the Mayor's Children and Family Recovery plan, the Human Services Agency's Family First Prevention Services (FFPSA) Plan, and the availability of increased child care subsidies and early childhood funding through "Baby" Prop C.

San Francisco makes a significant investment in resources for early childhood; that investment is spread across many City agencies and non-profit partners. Multiple agencies have funded needs assessments and strategic plans for this population in recent years. But precisely because so many agencies have seats at the table, it is difficult to get a single, comprehensive view of San Francisco's programming and supports for young children and their families.

Seeking to build upon existing service mapping projects, the Child Care Planning & Advisory Council (CPAC), Family Resource Center Alliance (FRC Alliance), San Francisco Early Care & Education Advocacy Coalition (SF ECE AC), and the Department of Early Childhood (DEC) engaged Partners in Public Innovation to develop an asset map of services and supports for 0-5 children and their families in San Francisco. A better understanding of current services, resources, and related funding will help ensure that supports are integrated, coordinated, and non-duplicative and that existing gaps are identified. Additionally, this group of organizations wished to articulate a cohesive, strengths-based vision for the experience of young children and their families in San Francisco, including what changes might be necessary to develop a coordinated and comprehensive system of care for diverse communities and describing the role of each relevant City department in that vision.

ABOUT PROPOSITION C

On June 5, 2018, San Francisco voters passed Proposition C ("Baby" Prop C), a Commercial Rent Tax for Childcare and Early Education, that authorizes an additional tax on the lease of commercial property for landlords with annual gross receipts over \$1 million dedicated to 1) closing the early education gap for San Francisco's youngest children and their families, and 2) raising wages for the professionals working in this vital sector.

Through subsequent local legislation, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors charged the San Francisco Office of Early Care and Education (OECE) with developing a 9-month planning process to engage diverse

⁵ Raissian, 2017, cited in Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, (citing sources), available at <https://www.chapinhall.org/research/economics-supports-child-welfare>. (2021).

San Francisco stakeholders in creating the first Five-Year Spending Plan for the Early Care and Education for All Initiative. The Spending Plan, published in 2019, established the following funding framework:

- Prioritize increasing workforce compensation and increasing access for low and moderate-income families
- Leverage existing resources and work to identify additional resources to fund the expansion of other services that support the physical, emotional, and cognitive development of children under the age of six

Legal challenges to the proposition delayed the City's ability to spend tax revenues until April 2021.

WHAT WE DID

PPI conducted a comprehensive mapping effort of San Francisco programs focused on supporting families with young children. Major steps of this effort included:

- **Framework development:** Together with the sponsor group, we explored existing frameworks for supporting child and family development (described in [Appendix A](#)) and ultimately developed a new framework for supporting children ages 0-5 and their parents/caregivers in San Francisco.
- **Document review:** We reviewed relevant strategic plans, budget reports, needs assessments, service maps, and other reports, with a goal of synthesizing existing research rather than reinventing the wheel. DEC, CPAC, and the FRC Alliance provided us with an initial list of relevant documents; others were identified in the course of our work. We accessed public-facing City department and partner organization websites, and made formal requests from stakeholders for access to relevant reports and presentations. We then conducted a systematic review of the information to develop a comprehensive understanding of services, gaps, and challenges. [Appendix C](#) lists the primary documents reviewed.
- **Stakeholder interviews:** We also conducted 26 stakeholder interviews to gather information on department and organization services. In collaboration with project sponsors, we developed a general interview protocol including questions about services provided for children ages 0-5 and their families; target populations and eligibility criteria; service gaps, duplications, and coordination challenges; and budgetary questions. A preliminary list of interviewees were identified through discussions with DEC, CPAC, and the FRC Alliance; additional interviewees were identified during the interview process. Major themes and findings from the interviews are described below; [Appendix B](#) gives a complete list of interviewed agencies.
- **Programmatic analysis:** Through the course of our interviews and document review, we developed a comprehensive list of 69 City-funded programs for young children and their caregivers. Our initial program list was provided back to the sponsor group, who identified programs that we did not initially document. We coded these programs by factors including framework category and target population and summarized the findings. A complete listing and short description of all identified programs is included in [Appendix D](#); the coded program spreadsheet has been provided to project sponsors.

Outcomes framework

In order to determine an ideal set of early childhood programming, we first sought to establish the core desired outcomes for young children and their parents or caregivers. The sponsor team evaluated multiple existing frameworks for child development, including both nationally recognized models such as the Aspen 2-Gen Approach and local San Francisco resources such as the Our Children Our Families outcome frameworks. While the team found value in all these frameworks, they ultimately determined that they were not focused enough on young children, needed the inclusion of the caregiving/educator workforce well-being on child outcomes, and decided to collaboratively develop an outcomes framework informed by prior work that focused specifically on 0-5 age children and their parents, caregivers, and teachers. [Appendix A](#) lists frameworks that informed this development.

The resulting outcomes framework seeks to acknowledge that young children's outcomes cannot be separated from that of their families or the workforce that supports them and their families. A thriving family leads to a thriving child; a child whose family is in crisis will be impacted, no matter how committed the parents are to that child's well-being. Similarly, when caregivers' and teachers' well-being is addressed, they can provide better support to children and families. The outcomes look at a range of life domains, but all point toward one critical goal: that by the time they are five years old, a child, with the support of a strong family, is ready to thrive in kindergarten and beyond. Kindergarten readiness is central to the Department of Early Childhood's mission, and is tied to equity goals, as the city's Black and Latino children face a persistent kindergarten readiness gap.

The five outcomes are ordered in a rough hierarchy, from most basic needs to higher-level needs:

Access to safe, nurturing, and informed care in and out of their homes: Perhaps the most fundamental need a child has in their earliest years is safe, nurturing, and attuned care in their primary caregiving environments. Children need safety and freedom from abuse and neglect to develop appropriately. Parents who are knowledgeable about child development and access high quality early child care and education settings serve as a foundation for children to thrive and to have unique needs identified early. All San Francisco children should be nurtured in their homes and their care settings, and caregivers and teachers of all kinds should have easy access to effective learning about child development and positive child-raising strategies.

Be economically secure and able to access supports in times of need: Families need access to meaningful and sustaining work, and social safety net supports to assure that they can provide for their family's basic needs: housing, food, child care, and medical care. Concrete supports can serve the material needs of the whole family. We envision a San Francisco where information about such services is readily available, where services can be accessed without delay, and where there is no stigma for needing help to provide the brightest future for a child.

Be physically healthy and support children to meet developmental milestones: The first five years of life are a critical period in development. Physical health, dental care, and children's developmental needs must be attended to in order for kids and families to thrive. Early intervention in key developmental domains can make a world of difference for both children and their families. We desire a

San Francisco where healthcare is accessible to all young children and their families, and parents and educators receive prompt developmental assessment and intervention for their children, as well as supports for themselves.

Be mentally and emotionally healthy: Caring for young children sometimes stretches parents, caregivers, and educators past their capacity. Young children also have their own social emotional learning needs, and some struggle with the early indicators of mental health challenges. Services that invest in parental resilience and children's social emotional learning are critical. Such services not only stabilize home life, but help children develop positive social emotional skills such as emotional regulation; these skills are a key factor in kindergarten readiness. Current systems often are set up to address the needs of either the adult or the child; families need access to supports that acknowledge how intertwined those needs are. All San Francisco families, caregivers, and educators need the City to support making mental health and social supports readily available and able to flexibly meet the needs of both child and adult.

Be connected and engaged in their community: The pandemic revealed the truth of the old adage, "It takes a village to raise a child." Many families suddenly had to figure out what to do without their village; many sites of care and education had to revamp their programming. The experience highlighted the lack of connections in families' daily lives even before COVID-19, and the need for services that connected them. As San Francisco turns to a new kind of normal, young children and their families need help reconnecting with neighbors, sites of care and education and family support services need to adjust to new needs, offering cultural and linguistic communities, and enrichment opportunities. We desire a San Francisco where early childhood-serving government services are a conduit to thriving neighborhoods and communities.

Outcomes Framework



Families with young children ages birth to 5 in San Francisco will:



In order to thrive and support children to be ready in kindergarten and beyond

PROGRAM CATEGORIES SUPPORTING DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS BY LIFE STAGE

Outcome Area	Prenatal	Newborn/Infant	Toddler	Preschooler
<i>Access to safe, nurturing, and informed care in and out of their homes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent information and education on community resources • Pre-birth parenting skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent information and education on community resources • Parent developmental education and skills • ECE access • Child safety • Parental support and abuse prevention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent information and education on community resources • Parent developmental education and skills • ECE access • Child safety • Parental support and abuse prevention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent information and education on community resources • Parent developmental education and skills • Preschool/ECE access • Child safety • Parental support and abuse prevention
<i>Be economically secure and able to access supports in times of need</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic needs, including nutrition • Stable housing • Parental economic development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic needs, including infant supplies (formula, diapers, etc.) • Stable housing • Parental economic development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic needs • Stable housing • Parental economic development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic needs • Stable housing • Parental economic development
<i>Be physically healthy and support children to meet developmental milestones</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prenatal health care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birth and breastfeeding support • Health care access for children and families • Developmental screening and supports • Healthy Food in child care settings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health care access for children and families • Developmental screening and supports • Healthy Food in child care settings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health care access for children and families • Developmental screening and supports • Healthy food in child care & preschool settings
<i>Be socially, mentally, and emotionally healthy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental mental health • Substance use treatment for pregnant people and other adults 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental Mental Health (PPD/PPA) • Substance use treatment for caregivers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early literacy and numeracy • Parent and child mental health • Special needs family support • Substance use treatment for caregivers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connection to kindergarten • Special needs family support • Parent and child mental health • Substance use treatment for caregivers
<i>Be connected and engaged in their community</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer support during pregnancy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family and infant socialization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Socialization and enrichment • Family socialization and support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family socialization and support • Connection to school resources • Child enrichment opportunities

Qualitative Interview Themes

PPI conducted interviews with key staff at 16 agencies and community organizations in order to flesh out the service mapping with qualitative data from people and agencies engaged in serving children from the prenatal stage to age five and their families in San Francisco. In collaboration with project sponsors, we developed an interview protocol focused on eliciting:

- Existing strengths in the service delivery models
- Coordination needs
- Gaps and challenges in the existing services
- Hopes for future direction of the service delivery system

We held to this interview protocol loosely, asking more targeted or specific questions of each interviewee as appropriate.

Stakeholders included a mix of City department representatives, community advocates, and community-based organizations holding relevant City contracts for service delivery to young children and their families. A complete list of interviewees is available in [Appendix B](#).

INTERVIEW THEMES: EXISTING STRENGTHS

Investments supporting young children and their families

According to American Community Survey data (2020) approximately 5% of San Francisco residents are children ages 0-5, compared to approximately 7% nationwide. Stakeholders agreed that despite the relatively small population of young children, the City has made significant investment in supporting their needs and their families' needs. In 1991, San Francisco voters created the first-in-the-nation Children's Fund, setting aside 4% of property tax revenues for children, youth, and their families; voters overwhelmingly renewed the Children's Fund in 2000 and again in 2014. Twenty years ago, the City committed to funding the Preschool for All tuition credit program, which is available to families regardless of income; currently 90% of four year olds are enrolled in preschool. More recently, the City has expanded the reach of City-funded early care and education through the Early Learning San Francisco sites (subsidies available based on household income and family size) and the passage of Baby Prop C, which provides additional support to low- and moderate-income families as well as wage supplementation for ECE staff. Stakeholders cited the formation of the new Department of Early Childhood as a sign of the City's commitment to supporting young children and their loved ones through the critical first five years of life.

Improving wages for ECE staff

Stakeholders also cited the Workforce Compensation Initiative (WCI) as a victory in fighting wage disparity in the ECE sector. Early educators provide care to children as much as 10-12 hours per day, five days per week so that primary caregivers are able to work. This workforce, composed primarily of women, and often women of color, has historically been undercompensated, a disparity the WCI seeks to address. Launched in July 2022, the WCI is unique in the nation. The Initiative's goals are to advance pay increases, increase benefits, and improve working conditions and professional development for San Francisco's early educators. The program is limited to educators working at City-funded early care and education programs, and by 2025 will bring all eligible (ELS-funded) educators to a minimum wage of \$28/hr through grants and educator stipends. Additional phases supporting additional benefits, workplace conditions improvements, and professional development pathways are being planned but have not been implemented yet. During the pandemic, California overall lost 12% of its licensed child care slots; yet San Francisco's licensed slots grew by between 3-4%, per the most recent CPAC Needs Assessment. In subsidizing child care worker wages, the City is investing in the long-term sustainability of the sector.

Coalition building

Unsurprisingly in a city known for its long history of community activism, stakeholders named coalition building, particularly in the ECE community, as a source of strength in the current service delivery system: the Child Care Planning & Advisory Council has fostered coordination between different parts of the child-serving sector; the SF ECE Advocacy Coalition has provided a platform for advocacy with the Board of Supervisors and other decision-makers, and the Family Child Care Association of San Francisco and the Early Care Educators of San Francisco has given voice to the needs of family child care providers and community-based centers respectively across the city. Multiple stakeholders cited the importance of continuing to operate as an early childhood-focused coalition to strengthen their advocacy and to continue to make progress in child care service delivery.

The FRC Alliance, recently unified with the San Francisco Family Support Network, has been able to raise public awareness about FRCs and the benefits of family support to prevent family crises as well as increased investment in these services, ensure the voices of marginalized families are included in city and state initiatives, and develop a more coordinated network of family support organizations.

INTERVIEW THEMES: COORDINATION CHALLENGES

Lack of budgetary transparency

Though we reviewed extensive budget documents and asked explicitly in interviews, DEC and DCYF were the only City departments who were able to provide any detail about budget for support of young children and their parents, caregivers and educators. This was true even when agencies had dedicated

programming or divisions for young children. For example, the Recreation and Parks department has an Early Childhood Programs lead, but expressed challenges obtaining budget data about those programs that wasn't entangled with other age groups or programs. We experienced similar challenges with SFPL and HSA, among others. While many departments have divisions or programming that is specific to early childhood, budget numbers are difficult to tease out.

Because City budgets are not stratified by age, it is extremely difficult to articulate the total dollar amount of San Francisco's investment in early childhood. Describing investment in pregnant people and families is even more difficult: funding sources dedicated to adults are often completely distinct from funding sources for children, even though children's welfare is bound up with that of their caregivers. For example, we cannot describe our child-focused investment in substance abuse prevention (i.e., for parents), even though addressing parental substance abuse is critical to childhood stability.

At DEC and DCYF, stakeholders were frustrated that they could not easily understand whether designated funding sources were being spent on appropriate programming. We also heard concerns about DCYF's lack of investment in families, despite families being a core part of DCYF's mission.

DEC's emerging leadership role

Top of mind for most stakeholders was the role of the newly formed Department of Early Childhood (DEC) in addressing their concerns and coordinating with other departments and entities within San Francisco. Overall, enthusiasm for the new department was high, as was understanding of the tremendous task of standing up a new City department. Stakeholders did express desire for guidance, relationship development, strong leadership, and notably clarity on how DEC and DCYF would work together, fund essential programs, and define their roles with regard to young children. For example, one stakeholder raised how partnership with DEC ECE providers was hindered because of uncertainty about how to transport children to events in a compliant manner. They believed DEC was the appropriate agency to provide such guidance. More than one stakeholder expressed that they wished they had a contact with the new department to help broaden the reach of their programs.

Relatedly, stakeholders expressed frustration about just how many strategic plans and child-focused efforts were underway, feeling that these plans were sometimes made in silos, without taking other efforts into account, and lacked clear ownership for follow-up. They hoped that DEC would be able to provide a coordination and integration role with other City agencies on issues related to young children and their families.

Diffuse network of resources that are challenging to navigate

Knowledge coordination was a major issue for stakeholders, particularly as it related to families' ability to meet their economic needs. Many stakeholders wished that resource information could be centralized and noted the negative impacts of decentralized information: family child care providers uncertain where to access needed professional development trainings or Rec and Park partners unsure of how families or providers would learn about their programming. This is not to say that San Francisco lacks organizations

that provide information about multiple services and supports: families can contact two resource and referral agencies for child care, the Women and Children's Health Hotline through MCAH, the 26 Family Resource Centers and other family support organizations, and the two parental stress lines to be connected to resources and supports; yet the feedback is clear that direct referrals, with available and accessible resources, are difficult to come by, for both providers and families. In fact, multiple parties identified confusion about the roles of the resource and referral agencies and the Family Resource Centers in locating resources and disseminating information into the community. One stakeholder summed it up when stating that these kinds of agencies "need to develop referral relationships" with one another.

Patchwork services for basic needs

Multiple stakeholders identified the challenges faced by families trying to coordinate multiple services for meeting basic needs. Stakeholders spoke to the burden faced by families seeking housing support or food support, and how challenging it was to know what the family may have already accessed or on which waitlists they might sit. Stakeholders cited how the City centralized pandemic rent relief through one provider and wondered if that model could be used in tracking needed services for families that different providers may be supporting. Stakeholders spoke to us about the work families must do to cobble together enough food resources, for example, to meet their needs. Infant formula might be accessed through WIC, groceries for adults through a combination of CalFresh and the SF-Marin Food Bank, and culturally appropriate groceries through a private food distribution entity in the neighborhood. With many working families struggling with food insecurity, it is not hard to imagine the impact of this piecemeal approach on a family's stress level as they navigate the multiple demands of raising children and working.

Transition to Kindergarten

Of particular importance to early childhood stakeholders was the transition from preschool or other forms of ECE or child care to kindergarten. Stakeholders largely agreed that there is no established process for information-sharing with the school district as children transition into kindergarten. One stakeholder wondered whether children might benefit if elementary schools had access to the number of preschool placements or moves a child had been through before arriving in their care. As things stand now, information about milestone and developmental assessments, identification of special learning needs, and children's social-emotional functioning is left behind when a child transitions to kindergarten, resulting in additional work for families (and district teachers) to re-establish baselines and supports. This lost time has real consequences for children and families who may temporarily go without needed help.

With the upcoming rollout of Universal Preschool (UPK) these coordination challenges are even more important to address, not just for families, but for ECE providers. Groups representing providers cited concern and confusion in their networks about how the UPK rollout would impact the ECE workforce,

Family Child Care Homes, and community-based centers. The commitment to a mixed-delivery model notwithstanding, providers cited concerns about the economic impact of losing significant numbers of four-year-olds to district sites.

INTERVIEW THEMES: GAPS

Stakeholders spoke about key areas that remain unmet for young children and their families as well as for the providers that support them, even when there has been considerable advocacy and ground gained. These included unique workforce challenges, ongoing challenges around providing culturally and linguistically responsive services, and addressing basic needs for young children and their families.

Workforce Recruitment and Retention

Stakeholders across a range of departments and disciplines cited the difficulty in recruiting and retaining a workforce with the specialized skills and training needed to serve very young children and their families. Whether it was recreation counselors, mental health clinicians, case managers, teachers or assistant teachers in a child care setting, the demand for services outpaces the qualified workforce. Since the pandemic, hiring for all kinds of work has been a challenge, but the specialized developmental knowledge (and in some cases, certifications or licenses required by law) poses specialized challenges to the 0-5 workforce. Departments whose workforce does not need any certification identified the need to provide developmental training for their staff to improve their ability to contribute to the well-being of young children and families in San Francisco.

Stakeholders acknowledged the gains made due to the City's Minimum Wage and Minimum Compensation Ordinances (MCO) which created a wage floor for all workers, and all City-contracted community organizations respectively, the latter including including FRCs, and the Workforce Compensation Initiative (WCI) which provides compensation support to ECE providers within the ELS program – but they also identified continued challenges.

The first phase of the WCI provided significant wage increases but still faces several challenges: it does not keep pace with TK-12 educators, excludes annual cost-of-living adjustments, and has compression issues in the first-released wage scale which does not differentiate pay levels for the first three tiers.. Current concerns expressed include disagreements on allocations to different teacher levels as well as concern that a teacher may make above site supervisors. Several WCI phases still in planning should address professional development supports and improvements in workplace conditions. Additionally, San Francisco remains a high-cost of living area and even with these wage supports in place, many staff commute long distances from outside the city, which can contribute to retention difficulties. Also, MCO and WCI only apply to City-contracted entities. Stakeholders noted specifically that the WCI wages then put unrealistic demands on ECE sites outside of the system and worsened their staffing difficulties.

Other workforce needs were specific to early educators and child care professionals. Stakeholders voiced desire for more City-funded business supports to help new or prospective providers with start-up or compliance issues. Wu Yee and Children’s Council offer these services for Family Child Care providers, with both reporting that requests outpaced funding, which was often supplemented by private dollars. Stakeholders report no start-up and compliance services for community-based centers. Child care providers also cited the need for general business knowledge, desiring support with hiring law, tax information, employee benefits, and other business development needs. Stakeholders further identified a deficit in the workforce pipeline, including course offerings at City College of San Francisco and other sites, and wondered what role the City could play in increasing the appeal of a career in early education. Unofficial labor in this sector is also a puzzle that stakeholders say needs solving: as many as 50% of children in San Francisco under age three are not cared for in licensed child care settings but in Friend, Family, and Neighbor (FFN) settings. These informal caregivers play a huge role in getting children kindergarten-ready but have very limited access to tools and resources.

Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Services

Stakeholders voiced that young children and their families continue to have difficulty accessing services and supports that reflect their cultural or linguistic backgrounds. Stakeholders identified the low number of African-American and Black child care providers as a barrier to care access for Black families in San Francisco, with one stakeholder estimating that only 10 of the City’s approximately 300 ELS-designated sites are run by Black providers. The latest CPAC Needs Assessment cites that around half of San Francisco’s young children attend an ECE site outside of their home zip code, and stakeholders speculated that one driver of this distribution was families’ desire to find cultural and linguistic matches for their children in their ECE setting.

Families encounter barriers to services and resources to address their needs when they encounter staff who don’t speak their language. This problem is exacerbated by difficulties hiring culturally and linguistically diverse staff, including at ECE sites.

This also holds true in the family support field with very few of the organizations having Black leadership or Black direct service providers. Families continue to report the need for family support organizations to be staffed and led by individuals who reflect their cultural or linguistic background and have the community’s trust. Difficulty hiring and retaining staff that reflect the city’s diversity was cited across many of both the public and nonprofit child-serving sectors.

There continue to be marked inequities in school readiness and maternal outcomes in the City for monolingual families, as well as significant disproportionate involvement of Black and Brown families in the child welfare system.

Basic Needs

Years of increasing income inequality, coupled with the economic disruptions of the pandemic, have pushed many families with young children into economic instability. Stakeholders acknowledged the large number of services available to help families address the need for food, housing, and other basic needs, but reported significant gaps. The health impacts of economic instability on children from birth to age five may be obvious, but it also poses substantial challenges to the City's goal of increasing kindergarten readiness. According to the 2015 School Readiness Report, school readiness was negatively correlated with family risk factors such as housing instability, job loss, teen motherhood, single parenthood, and lack of support. Moreover, recent research has shown that reduction in state welfare benefits to families, such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)/CalWorks, are associated with increased child neglect and entries into foster care.⁶ Stable housing was of particular concern. While San Francisco has worked to streamline access to housing supports for families and expecting mothers, stakeholders, almost to a person, lamented their inability to directly influence housing policy, as it is fundamental to child and family well-being. Stakeholders expressed frustration with their limited ability to address the housing and financial needs of the families and children they serve, and with the patchwork system families have to navigate to address it. As one stakeholder put it, "No one will fund [a family's] whole basic needs." Thus, families already managing a challenging life phase have to interact with many different CBOs and City departments to increase their economic stability.

Child Care and Public Benefit Eligibility Cliffs for Middle Class Families

San Francisco remains a high cost of living city. According to CPAC's 2023 Needs Assessment, a family of four (2 adults, 1 infant/toddler, and 1 preschooler), needs an annual income of \$164,713 to cover the cost of housing, child care, and other necessities. This is considered the "self-sufficiency" standard - the income required to cover all the expected costs of living without subsidy or support. While the City is working to expand child care subsidies, even offering subsidies up to 110% of AMI (approximately \$158,000) does not meet the self-sufficiency standard for such a high cost of living area. Other City departments spoke to this difficulty, such as Recreation and Park staff, who spoke highly of the amount of scholarships available for play and enrichment activities that support healthy child development, but noted how working and middle class families often fell into a gap, neither eligible for City scholarships nor able to afford private recreation activities.

Mental Health and Special Needs Services

⁶ Chapin Hall of the University of Chicago, (citing sources, Ginther 2017; Paxson 2002), available at <https://www.chapinhall.org/research/economics-supports-child-welfare>. (2021)

Stakeholders across the board reported that there are not enough available mental health or special needs services for young children and their parents. Existing programs for young children are impacted, with long waiting lists that require strong parental advocacy to navigate. Stakeholders reported that although the City made a concerted effort to roll out developmental screening through the DEC Early Identification/Intervention Initiative, once developmental (or social-emotional) needs are discovered, families cannot access the Early Intervention services their children need. Stakeholders further described an ongoing need to train and provide ongoing support to ECE providers for inclusion in ECE settings. Stakeholders across City departments identified a desire to train children or family-facing staff on inclusion strategies (for example, ensuring library staff are trained to support families of special needs children in accessing the full range of library services) but were uncertain how to best do that as resources are already stretched thin. Additionally, there continues to be a significant lack of mental health services for parents/caregivers of young children. Stakeholders noted that while there are efforts to support new parents and help ensure that families stay together, i.e., Team Lily and Plan of SafeCare, this is particularly hard when parents face multiple co-occurring challenges such as substance use, domestic violence, and mental health. Many new parents articulate that after a baby is born, there is no more focus on the well-being of the parents/caregivers, including for postpartum issues.

CONCLUSION

Stakeholder interviews revealed an early childhood system at a transition point: with new leadership through DEC and new funding through Baby Prop C, stakeholders across the system are asking important questions about access, coordination, and next steps to best serve young children and families in San Francisco. These issues, coupled with analysis of existing programming, informed our recommendations.

Analysis of City Programs

In the course of our interviews and document review, we identified 69 distinct City-funded programs focused on young children and their caregivers. The boundaries of which programs were included were necessarily fuzzy, particularly because the City does not track nor provide accessible information about the extent of its investment in pregnant people and parents/caregivers of young children. The resulting program list generally includes programs that are:

- Focused *specifically* on young children, their families, child care or preschool staff, or systemic community issues. General social supports that benefit children via providing support for adults (e.g., cash aid through the County Adult Assistance Program) were not included.
- City-funded, including programs where the City provides pass-through federal or state funding. Programs that are provided in the local non-profit community without a significant contribution of local public funds are not included.
- Providing services that are reflected in our outcomes framework. This *does* include support for child care staff or coalition or systems work that supports the broader community of providers and organizations that support young children and their families.

Although this list has been repeatedly vetted with our sponsoring organizations, it is surely incomplete, and we have likely characterized some programs differently than others would. Additionally, this complex mix of services is constantly changing; this list reflects our best understanding as of December 2023.

We identified nine City departments that either fund or provide direct services to this population.

Lead City Department	# identified programs
Dept of Children, Youth, and Their Families	1
Dept of Early Childhood	13
Department of Public Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavioral Health (2) • Maternal, Child, and Adolescent Health (11) • Zuckerberg San Francisco General (6) 	19
Human Services Agency	9
Dept of Homelessness and Supportive Housing	2
Office of Economic and Workforce Dev.	1
Recreation and Parks	8
San Francisco Public Library	2
San Francisco Unified School District	11
Community Partners*	3
TOTAL	69
*Programs here are either primarily administering federal or state funding directly or have multiple small City funding streams such that no lead was able to be identified.	

Note that these programs are not equivalent in size, scope, or funding. The program list includes major initiatives that serve the whole city, such as the Family Resource Center program and the Early Learning San Francisco (ELS) program, as well as smaller programs that serve targeted neighborhoods or communities. Context is therefore important to understand the degree to which these programs are adequate to meet community needs.

Our initial task included a high-level analysis of City department budgets to determine ballpark investments in early childhood. To find this investment, we reviewed departments' City budgets in the Mayor's Budget Book, departmental websites, and strategic plans; we also asked about financial investment in our interviews. With the exception of DEC and DCYF, no City department was able to provide any concrete information about financial investment in early childhood, even at a high-level. This was true even when agencies had dedicated programming or divisions for young kids. Because City budgets are not stratified by age, it is extremely difficult to articulate the total dollar amount of San Francisco's investment in early childhood. Describing investment in pregnant people and families is even more difficult.

Using the life stages of prenatal, infancy, toddler, and preschool, we synthesized information from stakeholder interviews and needs assessment reviews to identify core needs that emerge at each child life stage for children and families, mapping these onto the categories of the outcomes framework (see table above on p. 16). The tables below map identified programs onto these needs by life stage, highlighting gaps, duplication, or coordination issues at each stage.

Needs and Services: Prenatal Stage

Framework category	Needs at this stage	Government-funded Services	Program Description
Access to safe, nurturing, and informed care in and out of their homes	Parent information and education on community resources	Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies	Help families navigate complex options for child care and preschool and connect them to other parenting supports and social services.
		Family Resource Center Initiative	Network of 26 centers located throughout neighborhoods in SF that provide parenting education, basic needs, supports, and other services to support families.
		Nurse Home Visiting Programs	Home-based services for pregnant and postpartum women who live in San Francisco.
		Women & Children's Health Referral Line	Referral line to connect women and children to all kinds of health care services.
	Pre-birth parenting skills	Family Resource Center Initiative	Network of 26 centers located throughout neighborhoods in SF that provide parenting education, basic needs, supports, and other services to support families.
		Nurse Home Visiting Programs	Home-based services for pregnant and postpartum women who live in San Francisco.
Be economically secure and able to access supports in times of need	Basic needs, including nutrition	CalWorks Families Rising	Home visiting program for participants who are pregnant or are children under age 2. Includes pre and postpartum supports, child health screenings, subsidies for ECE sites, and other referrals.
		EatSF + WIC vouchers	Additional vouchers for fruits and vegetables provided to pregnant WIC recipients.
		Expecting Justice Abundant Birth Project	Provides unrestricted income supplements to Black and Pacific Islander pregnant people.
		Homeless Prenatal Program	Wraparound services for pregnant people experiencing homelessness, in contract with HSA.
		Woman, Infant, Children Supplemental Nutrition Program (WIC)	Food and formula support for individuals who are pregnant or just had a baby, and children up to age 5
	Stable housing	Emergency Congregate Shelter for Pregnant People	14-day emergency housing for pregnant people or couples without minors.
	Parental economic development	Homeless Prenatal Program	Wraparound services for pregnant people experiencing homelessness, in contract with HSA.
Be physically healthy and support children to meet developmental milestones	Prenatal healthcare	Black Infant Health Program	Group prenatal intervention for Black women who are pregnant or up to 6 months postpartum.
		Centering Pregnancy	Group prenatal care program offers Spanish or English language facilitated group prenatal care.
		Nurse Home Visiting Programs	Home-based services for pregnant and postpartum women who live in San Francisco.
		Perinatal Services	Coordinates the comprehensive Perinatal Services Program (CPSP), a Medi-Cal reimbursement program for enhanced perinatal services.
		Perinatal Outreach and Education (POE)	First trimester-focused prenatal intervention targeting African-American and Latina women.

Framework category	Needs at this stage	Government-funded Services	Program Description
		Preterm Birth Initiative at UCSF	Addresses race-based disparities in maternal and infant health outcomes by conducting and funding innovative birth research that centers BIPOC lived experiences and is explicitly anti-racist.
		Solid Start	Service hub of integrated direct services, focused on prenatal and developmental years at ZSFG.
		Team Lily	Multidisciplinary care team providing wrap-around services to pregnant and postpartum people experiencing significant barriers to accessing clinic-based prenatal care, such as homelessness, substance use disorders, incarceration, intimate partner violence, and/or mental illness.
Be socially, mentally, and emotionally healthy	Parental mental health	BHS Outpatient Mental Health Treatment	Mental health treatment for adults, including pregnant people.
		Family Resource Center Initiative	Network of 26 centers located throughout neighborhoods in SF that provide parenting education, basic needs, supports, and other services to support families.
		Foster Care Mental Health	Mental health services that are available to pregnant minors in the foster system.
		Foster Care and Adoption	Child welfare services focused on the safety, permanency, and well-being of children, youth, and families
		Team Lily	Multidisciplinary care team providing wrap-around services to pregnant and postpartum people experiencing significant barriers to accessing clinic-based prenatal care, such as homelessness, substance use disorders, incarceration, intimate partner violence, and/or mental illness.
	Substance use treatment for pregnant people and other adults	Behavioral Health Outpatient Clinics programs	Substance abuse treatment for adults, including pregnant people.
Be connected and engaged in their community	Peer supports during pregnancy	Black Infant Health Program	Group prenatal intervention for Black women who are pregnant or up to 6 months post-partum.
		Family Resource Center Initiative	Network of 26 centers located throughout neighborhoods in SF that provide parenting education, basic needs, supports, and other services to support families.
		Homeless Prenatal Program	Wraparound services for pregnant people experiencing homelessness, in contract with HSA.
		Young Mothers United	Advocacy and support for pregnant and parenting moms to interrupt the cycle of violence and trauma they have experienced and to heal in order to create healthier habits and routines as a parent.

***Programs are not equivalent in size, scope, or funding.**

DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS AND SERVICES: PRENATAL

Expecting a baby marks a major turning point in the lives of many individuals and families, presenting opportunities for change while introducing new stressors and challenges. San Francisco's prenatal offerings reflect this transition phase, with many services aimed at the mother's health and at stabilizing the family economically. Maternal health and wellness are of paramount importance in the prenatal stage, as the mother's nutrition and mental wellness directly impact fetal development. Connection to prenatal care supports wellness for mother and baby, while fathers or other co-parents need spaces to learn about child development, supporting a birthing partner, and otherwise become engaged. Families are in a critical time period for changing behaviors and may be open to new supports or knowledge if they can access it.

Foundations to Build On

- **Prenatal Medical Care:** San Francisco's Department of Public Health, particularly the Maternal, Child, and Adolescent Health division, provides a number of prenatal care offerings that aim to build community and combat isolation, along with monitoring the pregnancy. This includes the Black Infant Health Program, which uses an evidence-informed prenatal intervention centering a group-based approach, where participants get to meet, interact, and build connections with other Black women who are pregnant at the same time. Family Resource Centers also serve as a hub for information and community, through classes and support groups, some of which are available at the prenatal stage.
- **Innovation in co-locating services:** DPH and ZSFG are testing out innovative models that combine referrals for basic needs, maternal mental health services, and prenatal (and later, pediatric) medical care. Solid Start at ZSFG uses a service delivery hub model to integrate services into a "one-stop shop" for mothers and families. The Nurse Home Visiting Programs (the Nurse Family Partnership Program and the Field Public Health Nursing Program) also couple prenatal medical care and maternal health and wellness, with public health nurses coming into people's homes to reduce barriers to service access.
- **EatSF Partnership:** While much need remains in this area, San Francisco is bolstering the availability of healthy food to pregnant people through the EatSF and WIC partnership. Any pregnant mother on WIC automatically qualifies for EatSF vouchers for fruit and vegetable purchases for the duration of the pregnancy.

What Needs Work

- **Basic Needs:** With the extremely high cost of living and ever-increasing wealth disparity in San Francisco, parents and caregivers often live in vulnerable circumstances and lack access to essential needs to support the well-being of their families, including stable housing, food, and economic opportunities. This begins during the critical period of pregnancy and lasts throughout the life stages of children. As noted throughout this report, when a family's basic needs are not met, it is significantly more challenging for the parents/caregivers to support the health and well-being of their children in order to reach the outcomes and goals necessary for young children and their families to thrive.
- **Service Navigation and Access:** Service access issues begin during the prenatal stage and continue throughout a child's early years. While we identified many hotlines, warmlines, and referral

services in the above table, nevertheless we heard over and over again that families struggle to access these supports. There are many tools and supports to connect people to medical care before birth, but we uncovered fewer avenues for connecting people to other resources during this critical transition period.

- **Prenatal Mental Health/Substance Abuse/Domestic Violence Resources:** There are significant gaps in services related to mental health, substance use, and domestic violence for pregnant people and beyond. Recent research has shown that 75% of child neglect cases investigated by California child welfare are connected to one of these three parental challenges⁷, and therefore, increased investment in these areas is necessary to reduce child maltreatment and trauma.
- **Prenatal Parent Education:** While many programs offer development of parenting skills, few of these programs are explicitly provided to expecting parents. Family Resource Centers do offer some prenatal parent education opportunities, and they show up throughout the service sector, yet the preventative impact of providing developmental guidance and parent education would be immense.

⁷ Palmer, Lindsay, et al., What does Child Protective Services Investigate as Neglect: A Population-Based Study. (2022), found at <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35829657/>

Needs and Services: Infants

Framework category	Needs at this stage	Government-funded Services	Program Description
Access to safe, nurturing, and informed care in and out of their homes	Parent information and education on community resources	Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies	Help families navigate complex options for child care and preschool and connect them to other parenting supports and social services.
		Kinship Support Network	Edgewood program supporting kinship caregivers and the children they care for through case management, social connections, and specialized services for each family.
		Nurse Home Visiting Programs	Home-based services for pregnant and postpartum women who live in San Francisco
	Parent developmental education and skills	Family Resource Centers	Network of 26 centers in neighborhoods in SF that provide parenting education, basic needs, supports, and other services to support families.
		Positive Parenting Program (BHS)	Implementation of evidence-based parenting practices across family resource centers, etc.
	ECE access	Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies	Help families navigate complex options for child care and preschool and connect them to other parenting supports and social services.
		Early Learning SF	Provides financial assistance to pay for quality early care and education to eligible San Francisco families with children 0-5 years old.
	Child safety	Family and Children's Services (includes Infant Surrender)	Responds to reports of suspected child abuse or neglect
		Foster Care and Adoption Services	Child welfare services focused on the safety, permanency, and well-being of children, youth, and families
	Parental support and abuse prevention	API Parental Stress Line	APA hosts a collaborative multilingual hotline service available in seven different languages and dialects. The line is free and geared towards those who have language barriers.
Resilient Families		Partnership between La Casa de las Madres and FCS to champion resilient, healthy kids and families from inside the child welfare system when indicators of domestic violence and child abuse are discovered. Includes case management and counseling, as well as other forms of support.	
TALK Line		24-7 talkline staffed by highly trained volunteers to support parents through the many challenges of parenting.	

Framework category	Needs at this stage	Government-funded Services	Program Description
Be economically secure and able to access supports in times of need	Basic needs, including infant supplies (diapers, formula)	CalFresh	CA's food stamp program
		CalWorks Families Rising	Home visiting program for participants who are pregnant or are children under age 2. Includes pre and postpartum supports, child health screenings, subsidies for ECE sites, mental health supports, and referrals to other services.
		Family Resource Centers	Network of 26 centers located throughout neighborhoods in SF that provide parenting education, basic needs, supports, and other services to support families.
		SFPL Community Events (Community Baby Shower)	Library offerings targeted at the whole community: Community Baby Showers provide diapers and other items to families in need
		Women, Infants, and Children Supplemental Nutrition Program (WIC)	Food and formula support for individuals who are pregnant or just had a baby, and children up to age 5
	Stable housing	Family Coordinated Entry	Access points to SF's Homelessness Response System for families with children under age 18 experiencing homelessness
		La Raza Community Resource Center Rental Assistance	Rental assistance for individuals and families in need
	Parental economic development	Family Resource Centers	Network of 26 centers in neighborhoods in SF that provide parenting education, basic needs, supports, and other services to support families.
		Homeless Prenatal Program	Wraparound services for pregnant people experiencing homelessness, in contract with HSA.
	Be physically healthy and support children to meet developmental milestones	Birth and breastfeeding support	Black Infant Health Program
Nurse Home Visiting Programs			Home-based services for pregnant and postpartum women who live in San Francisco
Sister Web Doula Services			Culturally congruent doula services to Black/Latinx/Pacific Islander pregnant people and development of community doula workforce
Health care access for children and families		California Children's Services	County-administered state program that helps children with certain diseases, physical limitations, or chronic health problems.
		Children's Health and Disability Prevention (CHDP)	Preventative health services
		HealthySteps	Co-located parental and well child health care at pediatric clinics
		Perinatal Services	Coordinates the comprehensive Perinatal Services Program (CPSP), a Medi-Cal reimbursement program for enhanced perinatal services.
		Solid Start	Service delivery hub of integrated direct services, focused on prenatal and developmental years at ZSFG.

Framework category	Needs at this stage	Government-funded Services	Program Description
		Team Lily	Multidisciplinary care team providing wrap-around services to pregnant and postpartum people experiencing significant barriers to accessing clinic-based prenatal care, such as homelessness, substance use disorders, incarceration, intimate partner violence, and/or mental illness.
		Women and Children’s Health Referral Line	Referral line to connect women and children to all kinds of health care services.
	Developmental screening and supports	DEC Early Identification/ Intervention Initiative	Developmental screenings services at primary care and ECE settings
		Multi-Disciplinary Assessment Center (MDAC)	Provides assessment of suspected or actual developmental delays
	Healthy food in child care settings	Child Care Food Program	Reimbursement through CACFP for healthy food costs for ECE providers
Be socially, mentally, and emotionally healthy	Parental mental health	Behavioral Health Outpatient Clinics programs	Wide range of mental health services for adults and families.
		Resilient Families	Partnership between La Casa de las Madres and FCS to champion resilient, healthy kids and families from inside the child welfare system when indicators of domestic violence and child abuse are discovered. Includes case management and counseling, as well as other forms of support.
		TALK Line	24-7 warmline staffed by highly trained volunteers to support parents through the many challenges of parenting.
		Team Lily	Multidisciplinary care team providing wrap-around services to pregnant and postpartum people experiencing significant barriers to accessing clinic-based prenatal care, primarily those experiencing homelessness, substance use disorders, incarceration, intimate partner violence, and/or mental illness.
	Substance abuse treatment for caregivers	Behavioral Health Outpatient Clinics programs	Substance abuse treatment for adults
Be connected and engaged in their community	Family and infant Socialization	Family Resource Centers	Network of 26 centers in neighborhoods in SF that provide parenting education, basic needs, supports, and other services to support families.
		Homeless Prenatal Program	Wraparound services for pregnant people experiencing homelessness, in contract with HSA.
		Kinship Support Network	Edgewood program supporting kinship caregivers and the children they care for through case management, social connections, and specialized services for each family.
		Recreation and Arts Programming (Tot Aquatics)	Recreational classes for young children and families.
		Recreation Centers (A Place to Play)	Drop-in socialization groups for young children at local rec centers.
		SFPL Literacy Programs (Storytime)	Range of library programs designed to support early literacy and socialization.

*Programs are not equivalent in size, scope, or funding.

DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS AND SERVICES: INFANT

The newborn and infant stage brings new concerns into a family's life, including decisions about who will care for the baby. How a family answers this question has long-lasting implications over family finances, maternal economic security, and kindergarten readiness. Infants need a loving, stable bond with an adult to support the critical brain development happening in the first few years of life. Parental involvement and education are therefore critical at this juncture, as are high-quality child care spots where children will be secure and enriched. While these may look like spots in a child care center or family child care home, many families want babies to spend time with extended family networks.

Infancy coincides with increased vulnerability in parents' physical and mental health, especially birthing parents, who are at increased risk for postpartum depression and anxiety in the child's first year of life. Mental health supports are key to developing healthy, safe families.

Foundations to Build On

- **Family Resource Center Initiative:** Family Resource Centers are trauma-informed, culturally and linguistically-responsive centers for family support and play a critical role in supporting the needs of families throughout childhood. With their wealth of parent education classes, playgroups, and diaper giveaway, they provide important support to families with new babies. These centers provide a place for families to gather and gain needed community or knowledge, while supporting basic needs. Additionally, the SafeStart collaboration offers families facing violence in the home or community case management and parent education services. Approximately 9,000 families annually are served across the 26 City-funded FRCs.
- **Parental Stress Lines:** The TALK Line and API Parental Stress Line, parental stress warmlines, connect families with needed referrals, and Talk Line provides longer-term support to parents/caregivers about the challenges of parenting.
- **Innovation in holistic family medical care:** Innovation in meeting a whole family's medical needs continues in infancy, with the HealthySteps program planning to roll out their pilot across DPH's primary care pediatric clinics in late 2023. The HealthySteps program, a proven dyadic model, is a team-based integrated model of care that targets the dyad in order to promote developmental, social-emotional, and family well-being while preventing psychopathology from developing in children. It co-locates services for children and adults in a pediatric clinic in order to better serve maternal mental health.

What Needs Work

- **Child care capacity for 0-2:** According to the most recent CPAC Needs Assessment, San Francisco's licensed child care centers and family child care homes only have enough slots to serve 16.5% of the city's 0-2 age children. Fewer families opt into licensed care in infancy and toddlerhood, and the City does not report a waitlist for child care spots for this age group, the restricted supply of providers poses difficulties: Families may not be able to find care in their neighborhood, in their primary language, or in a culturally appropriate setting. Only about 5% of City-funded sites offer overnight care for parents who perform shift work.

- **Friend, Family, and Neighbor care support:** The great majority of children in infancy and toddlerhood who do participate in out-of-home care are cared for in Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) care settings – either by choice, or because of the lack of other options. These unlicensed caregivers support up to half of the 0-2 year-old children in San Francisco but receive limited support from the City.
- **Gaps in basic needs:** Despite the number of programs focused on providing basic needs, including nutrition support, to families with infants, there is still an overall gap in meeting the need. No one program can cover a family’s basic needs if they are struggling economically. Data from the San Francisco Food Security Task Force’s 2023 Recommendations Report indicates for households with children ages birth to 17 years, 30 percent were food insecure, with the highest rates of food insecurity among Medi-Cal and CalWorks recipients (57% and 90%, respectively) and Black/African American families (77%). The pandemic has been a major driver of food insecurity, as well as other kinds of challenges meeting basic needs. Data indicates that between 2020-2022, WIC participation in San Francisco increased by 30% and SFUSD served 20% more meals.
- **Supports for parents/caregivers mental health and relational challenges:** There are gaps in programs and systems to support parents/caregivers with infants, particularly for mental health, domestic violence, and substance use challenges. These are exacerbated when there are economic struggles as well. Despite the City’s investment in some models that support the health and well-being of both the young child and the parent, much greater attention needs to be paid to ways to do both through holistic, two-generation programming where families can access what they need through one connected system.

Needs and Services: Toddler Stage

Framework category	Needs at this stage	Government-funded Services	Program Descriptions
Access to safe, nurturing, and informed care in and out of their homes	Parent information and education on community resources	Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies	Help families navigate complex options for child care and preschool and connect them to other parenting supports and social services.
		Kinship Support Network	Edgewood program supporting kinship caregivers and the children they care for through case management, social connections, and specialized services for each family.
	Parent developmental education and skills	Family Resource Centers	Network of 26 centers in neighborhoods in SF that provide parenting education, basic needs, supports, and other services to support families.
		Positive Parenting Program (BHS)	Implementation of evidence-based parenting practices across family resource centers, etc.
	ECE access	Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies	Help families navigate complex options for child care and preschool and connect them to other parenting supports and social services.
		Connecting Children with Nature	Partnership that facilitates Rec and Park natural materials to be used to build nature play spaces at ECE sites.
		Early Learning SF	Provides financial assistance to pay for quality early care and education to eligible San Francisco families with children 0-5 years old.
	Parental support and abuse prevention	API Parental Stress Line	APA hosts a collaborative multilingual hotline service available in seven different languages and dialects. The line is free and geared towards those who have language barriers.
		Resilient Families	Partnership between La Casa de las Madres and FCS to champion resilient, healthy kids and families from inside the child welfare system when indicators of domestic violence and child abuse are discovered. Includes case management and counseling, as well as other forms of support.
		TALK Line	24-7 talkline staffed by highly trained volunteers to support parents through the many challenges of parenting.
	Child Safety	Family and Children's Services	Responds to reports of suspected child abuse or neglect
		Foster Care and Adoption Services	Child welfare services focused on the safety, permanency, and well-being of children, youth, and families

Framework category	Needs at this stage	Government-funded Services	Program Descriptions
Be economically secure and able to access supports in times of need	Basic needs	CalFresh	CA's food stamp program
		CalWorks Families Rising	Home visiting program for participants who are pregnant or are children under age 2. Includes pre and postpartum supports, child health screenings, subsidies for ECE sites, mental health supports, and referrals to other services.
		Family Resource Centers	Network of 26 centers in neighborhoods in SF that provide parenting education, basic needs, supports, and other services to support families.
		Student Nutrition Services	Provides meals at SFUSD ECE sites and supper/summer meals to minors
		Women, Infants, and Children Supplemental Nutrition Program (WIC)	Food and formula support for pregnant individuals or who just had a baby, and children up to age 5
	Stable housing	Family Coordinated Entry	Access points to SF's Homelessness Response System for families with children under age 18 experiencing homelessness
		La Raza Community Resource Center Rental Assistance	Rental assistance for individuals and families in need
	Parental economic development	Family Resource Centers	Network of 26 centers in neighborhoods in SF that provide parenting education, basic needs, supports, and other services to support families.
	Be physically healthy and support children to meet developmental milestones	Healthcare access for children and families	California Children's Services
Children's Health and Disability Prevention (CHDP)			Preventative health services
HealthySteps			Co-located parental and well child health care at pediatric clinics
Solid Start			Service hub of integrated direct services, focused on prenatal and developmental years at ZSFG
Women and Children's Health Referral Line			Referral line to connect women and children to all kinds of health care services.
Developmental screening and supports		DEC Early Identification/ Intervention Initiative	Developmental screenings services at primary care and ECE settings
		Family Resource Centers	Network of 26 centers located throughout neighborhoods in SF that provide parenting education, basic needs, supports, and other services to support families.

Framework category	Needs at this stage	Government-funded Services	Program Descriptions
		Multi-Disciplinary Assessment Center (MDAC)	Provides assessment of suspected or actual developmental delays
		Positive Parenting Program	Implementation of evidence-based parenting practices across family resource centers, etc.
	Healthy food in child care settings	Child Care Food Program	Reimbursement through CACFP for healthy food costs for ECE providers
Be socially, mentally, and emotionally healthy	Early literacy and numeracy	Early Learning SF sites	Provides financial assistance to pay for quality early care and education to eligible San Francisco families with children 0-5 years old.
		SFPL Literacy Programs	Range of library programs designed to support early literacy and socialization.
	Parent and child mental health	BHS Outpatient Mental Health	Mental health services for Medi-Cal youth up to age 21
		Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Initiative	Mental health consultation services provided to eligible ECE sites to build system capacity.
		Foster Care Mental Health	Provides foster care mental health referrals through First 5 Initiative
	Resilient Families	Partnership between La Casa de las Madres and FCS to champion resilient, healthy kids and families from inside the child welfare system when indicators of domestic violence and child abuse are discovered. Includes case management and counseling, as well as other forms of support.	
Special needs family supports	--	--	
Substance use treatment for caregivers	Behavioral Health Outpatient Clinics programs	Substance abuse treatment for adults	
Be connected and engaged in their community	Child socialization and enrichment	EcoCenter at Heron's Head	Science classroom located at Heron's Head Park with tot programming
		Randall Museum Tot Programming	Rec Park operated nature museum geared toward children and families
		Rec and Park Recreation, Arts, and Athletics	Arts, dance, aquatics, athletics, and play classes that include "tot" programming for children under 5
		Requity	Rec and Park programming for minors living in a variety of public housing developments or shelters.

Framework category	Needs at this stage	Government-funded Services	Program Descriptions
		SFPL Community Events	Large scale library offerings targeted at the whole community
	Family socialization	Family Resource Centers	Network of 26 centers in neighborhoods in SF that provide parenting education, basic needs, supports, and other services to support families.
		Kinship Support Network	Edgewood program supporting kinship caregivers and the children they care for through case management, social connections, and specialized services for each family.
		Recreation Centers	25 large rec centers in neighborhoods across SF

***Programs are not equivalent in size, scope, or funding.**

DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS AND SERVICES: TODDLER

As young children move into toddlerhood, many of their and their family's needs carry forward, with the addition of potentially more complex monitoring of developmental concerns, and increasing importance of child socialization. Two year olds are rapidly developing in both body and mind, with language development, pre-literacy skills, and the beginnings of peer social connections among the important milestones. The shift from parallel play to emerging interactional play highlights the need for rich social opportunities for toddlers. Needs for high-quality ECE, essential family resources and economic stability, and mental health supports for parents/caregivers and children with special needs continue into this life stage.

Foundations to Build On

- **Enrichment and socialization:** San Francisco offers an array of socialization and enrichment services that children as young as age 2 can access with their families. Community events hosted by San Francisco Public Libraries, Rec and Park, neighborhood Family Resource Centers, and others provide safe community time for families. Literacy is built through public library storytimes, and opportunities for movement are addressed through a robust set of offerings through the Recreation and Parks Department. Parents can attend groups and classes at FRCs to connect with other parents.
- **High-quality subsidized child care:** As far as ECE, Early Learning SF, an income-contingent child care subsidy program, now encompasses 400 ECE sites. Early Learning SF, or ELS, sites adhere to 10 quality standards in order to remain program-eligible. Families earning up to 110% of area median income (AMI) can access local funds to help them afford child care, with the goal of expanding eligibility to encompass families earning up to 200% of AMI.

What Needs Work

- **Low capacity for Early Intervention:** While the City has developed a robust developmental screening program through DEC Early Identification/Intervention Initiative, which trains ECE providers and medical primary care staff to screen for developmental concerns throughout the first five years, the City has limited ability to support families and children once a need is identified. DPH's Multi-Disciplinary Assessment Center, or MDAC, is supposed to coordinate with Golden Gate Regional Center to connect families with services, but that process is hampered by understaffing at both ends. Children need to be age 3 or older to access developmental services through the school district, making toddlers particularly vulnerable.
- **Increased Access to Family Support and Resource Connections:** Funding for the FRC Initiative comes from DEC, HSA, and DCYF with FRC funding representing just over 3% of DCYF's distribution of funds under the Children's Fund. Although important, City funding does not fully support FRC programming or that of other family support CBOs. FRCs, which act as community anchors, do not have the capacity to meet all the needs of the families seeking their support. In addition to the need for more essential resources (i.e., housing, food), parents express desire to encounter culturally and linguistically-responsive staff knowledgeable on parenting questions and be connected to resources to address family needs in one place. This includes receiving support for

their children and themselves in places where they may regularly interact, such as central community organizations, pediatric healthcare, child care, and faith-based institutions.

Needs and Services: Preschool Stage

Framework category	Needs at this stage	Government-funded Services	Program Descriptions
Access to safe, nurturing, and informed care in and out of their homes	Parent information and education on community resources	Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies	Help families navigate complex options for child care and preschool and connect them to other parenting supports and social services.
		Kinship Support Network	Edgewood program supporting kinship caregivers and the children they care for through case management, social connections, and specialized services for each family.
	Parent developmental education and skills	Family Resource Centers	Network of 26 centers in neighborhoods in SF that provide parenting education, basic needs, supports, and other services to support families.
		Positive Parenting Program (BHS)	Implementation of evidence-based parenting practices across family resource centers, etc.
	Preschool/ECE Access	Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies	Help families navigate complex options for child care and preschool and connect them to other parenting supports and social services.
		Early Childhood Summer Camps	Half-day drop-off summer camp programming for campers ages 4 & 5 at Rec Park
		Early Learning SF	Provides financial assistance to pay for quality early care and education to eligible San Francisco families with children 0-5 years old.
		Migrant Education Program	Home-based services for pre-k migrant children not enrolled in other ECE
		Out-of-School Time Programs	SFUSD-run after-school and summer/holiday programming for TK-5th grades
		Preschool for All	Tuition credit program to provide universal access to preschool for all SF 4yos.
		SFUSD Prekindergarten Sites	SFUSD early education offerings (some standalone sites, some at PreK - 5th)
	Child safety	Family and Children's Services	Responds to reports of suspected child abuse or neglect
		Foster Care and Adoption Services	Child welfare services focused on the safety, permanency, and well-being of children, youth, and families
	Parental support and abuse prevention	API Parental Stress Line	APA hosts a collaborative multilingual hotline service available in seven different languages and dialects. The line is free and geared towards those who have language barriers.
		Resilient Families	Partnership between La Casa de las Madres and FCS to champion resilient, healthy kids and families from inside the child welfare system when indicators of domestic violence and child abuse are discovered. Includes case management and counseling, as well as other forms of support.
TALK Line		24-7 talkline staffed by highly trained volunteers to support parents through the many challenges of parenting.	

Framework category	Needs at this stage	Government-funded Services	Program Descriptions
Be economically secure and able to access supports in times of need	Basic needs	CalFresh	CA's food stamp program
		Family Resource Centers	Network of 26 centers in neighborhoods in SF that provide parenting education, basic needs, supports, and other services to support families.
		Student Nutrition Services	Provides meals at SFUSD ECE sites and supper/summer meals to minors
		Women, Infants, and Children Supplemental Nutrition Program (WIC)	Food and formula support for pregnant individuals or who just had a baby, and children up to age 5
	Stable housing	Family Coordinated Entry	Access points to SF's Homelessness Response System for families with children under age 18 experiencing homelessness
		La Raza Community Resource Center Rental Assistance	Rental assistance for individuals and families in need
Parental economic development	Family Resource Centers	Network of 26 centers in neighborhoods in SF that provide parenting education, basic needs, supports, and other services to support families.	
Be physically healthy and support children to meet developmental milestones	Health care access for children and families	California Children's Services	County-administered state program that helps children with certain diseases, physical limitations, or chronic health problems.
		Children's Health and Disability Prevention (CHDP)	Preventative health services
		DEC Early Identification/ Intervention Initiative	Developmental screenings services at primary care and ECE settings
		HealthySteps	Co-located parental and well child health care at pediatric clinics
		Solid Start	Service hub of integrated direct services, focused on prenatal and developmental years at ZSFG
	Developmental screening and supports	DEC Early Identification/ Intervention Initiative	Developmental screenings services at primary care and ECE settings
		Multi-Disciplinary Assessment Center (MDAC)	Provides assessment of suspected or actual developmental delays
		SFUSD Early Childhood Special Education	Assesses and coordinates special education services through an Individual Education Program (IEP) and other programs.
		Shoestrings Children's Center	An intensive assessment and intervention diagnostic program through SFUSD
	Healthy food in child care and preschool settings	Child Care Food Program	Reimbursement through CACFP for healthy food costs for ECE providers
		Student Nutrition Services	Provides meals at SFUSD ECE sites and supper/summer meals to minors

Framework category	Needs at this stage	Government-funded Services	Program Descriptions
Be socially, mentally, and emotionally healthy	Connection to kindergarten	Foster Youth Educational Case Management	SFUSD program to address educational challenges faced by foster youth
		RISE-SF Newcomer Programming	Orients immigrant and refugee students to SFUSD
		SFPL Literacy Programs	Range of library programs designed to support early literacy and socialization.
		Students and Families Experiencing Homelessness (SAFEH)	Reduces the barriers that students experiencing homelessness face in enrollment, attendance, and success in school.
	Special needs family supports	SFUSD Early Childhood Special Education	Assesses and coordinates special education services through an Individual Education Program (IEP) and other programs.
	Parent and child mental health	BHS Outpatient Mental Health Treatment	Mental health services for Medi-Cal youth up to age 21
		Resilient Families	Partnership between La Casa de las Madres and FCS to champion resilient, healthy kids and families from inside the child welfare system when indicators of domestic violence and child abuse are discovered. Includes case management and counseling, as well as other forms of support.
Student Intervention Team (School-based MH Services)		Counseling services, including individual and group play and talk therapy, provided counseling and social work interns.	
Substance use treatment for caregivers	Behavioral Health Outpatient Clinics programs	Substance abuse treatment for adults	
Be connected and engaged in their community	Family socialization and supports	Family Resource Centers	Network of 26 centers located throughout neighborhoods in SF that provide parenting education, basic needs, supports, and other services to support families.
		Kinship Support Network	Edgewood program supporting kinship caregivers and the children they care for through case management, social connections, and specialized services for each family.
		Monthly Family Night for American Indian/Alaskan Native students	Monthly culturally responsive family night programming for American Indian and Alaskan Native students.
	Connection to school resources	--	--
	Child enrichment opportunities	EcoCenter at Heron's Head	Science classroom located at Heron's Head Park with tot programming
		Rec and Park Recreation, Arts, and Athletics	Arts, dance, aquatics, athletics, and play classes that include "tot" programming for children under 5
Requity		Rec and Park programming for minors living in a variety of public housing developments or shelters.	

*Programs are not equivalent in size, scope, or funding.

DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS AND SERVICES: PRESCHOOLER

One of the core tasks families of preschoolers face is preparing children for kindergarten entry, both academically and social-emotionally. As more children enter some form of preschool, families have even more need to make sure they can afford this care. Children in this life stage continue to need developmental support, tackling important milestones such as increasing emotional regulation and developing fine motor control, as well as continuing social and cognitive development. Children who have successfully navigated attachment and independence in infancy and toddlerhood are best prepared to enter the preschool years navigating complex needs for independence and support⁸.

Families also need enrichment opportunities to continue building bonds, and parents/caregivers continue to need basic needs support and support for their mental and physical well-being. Families also need to manage increasingly complex systems, specifically the transition between systems that often accompanies the move into kindergarten. This applies to systems of care for children, but families also can lose eligibility for needed services as children turn five, WIC being one example.

Foundations to Build On

- **Preschool for All:** Twenty years ago, the City made a significant investment in helping San Francisco's children be ready for kindergarten through the Preschool for All program. The City made preschool universally accessible for all four year-olds through a subsidy program that is available regardless of income. Today, around 90% of all four-year-olds in San Francisco attend preschool. In combination with the income-based Early Learning SF program, San Francisco provides significant child care cost support to families of preschoolers.

What Needs Work

- **Early Intervention and Mental Health support:** Like at other life stages, services for children with additional need for support (whether due to physical disabilities, developmental delays, or mental health) are present but do not meet the need. Preschoolers can access special education and early intervention supports through SFUSD, yet staffing and time-to-service continue to be problems. While the City and the school district have invested in mental health and social-emotional supports for families and children, such as Outpatient Mental Health treatment through Behavioral Health and Student Intervention Team services at schools, wait lists continue to be a challenge, as well as finding qualified providers to work with our youngest children and families, as well as finding cultural and linguistic matches.
- **Warm handoffs from ECE sites to Kindergarten:** In the above table, there are many early education programs provided by San Francisco Unified School District, and many independent ECE sites. What's lacking is a comprehensive system for the ECE and SFUSD systems to speak to each other as children and families transition from one to the other. As it stands, there is no system to pass over information about how a child has fared in preschool or home settings, the outcomes of developmental screenings or early intervention, or a child's literacy or other academic skills. This may be particularly true for children who were screened but did not qualify for or were not able to

⁸ University of Missouri Extension. "How Children Develop During the Preschool Years."
<https://extension.missouri.edu/publications/gh6122>

access early intervention services outside the school district. As the entire ECE and SFUSD systems gear up for the upcoming Universal Preschool (UPK) rollout, families will be navigating an increasingly complex system of care and will need systematic supports in place to do so effectively. Further, there is no city-wide data showing the impact various types of child care programs have on a child's kindergarten readiness.

- **Family Connection to and Engagement with Community:** As children move from early child care and education to the larger and more complex, K-12 school system, and connection to these systems as well as family logistics become more challenging, parents/caregivers need increased support from the broader community as well as information and advocacy skills. The pandemic, language and cultural barriers, and violence in communities have increased isolation for many families with young children. It is necessary to provide families with more opportunities to build their web of support with other parents/caregivers and members of their community.

NEEDS AND SERVICES: PROVIDERS AND SYSTEMS

Needs	Government-funded Services
Inter-agency Coordination	DEC Early Identification/Intervention Initiative Child Care Health Program HSA Family First Prevention Services Plan and its Community Pathway
Professional Development	African-American Early Educator Pipeline-to-Career Healthy Apple Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Workforce Compensation Initiative for ECE SF Family Support Network for family support professionals Training in the Positive Parenting Program Motivational Interview Training
Business Startup and Supports	African-American ECE Policy Council BizNest (Family Child Care Business Incubator) FCC Educator Support Services Technology Help Desk
Peer Supports	Early Care Educators of San Francisco (ECESF) Family Child Care Association of San Francisco (FCCA SF)
Child Care Site Enhancements	Workforce Compensation Initiative Child Care Food Program (CACFP) Connecting Children with Nature
ECE Financial Supports & Subsidies	Title 5 CA Alternative Payment Program (APP) Family Child Care Home Education Network (FCCHEN) CalWorks/CalLearn Head Start and Early Head Start SF HSA Family and Children's Services Preschool For All Early Learning SF Early Care and Education for Children Experiencing Homelessness

Note: these programs are not equivalent in size, scope, or funding.

ECE providers and other child and family support professionals play a critical role in helping families meet all of the needs discussed above. Thus, it is key that the City support their needs as well. As these careers have historically been underpaid and undervalued, much work is needed to build up the professions and make them appealing to a new generation of workers. CPAC has identified support to the ECE workforce and access as priority needs, and community members organized to pass Prop C to establish dedicated funds for this purpose.

Foundations to Build On

- **Workforce Compensation Initiative:** Increasing the minimum wages at City-funded early learning programs is a huge step toward supporting the early childhood workforce and reducing turnover in the field. The goal of the WCI is to increase the hourly minimum wage to \$28/hr by 2025. This indicates a significant commitment from the City to build early childhood workforce capacity. Additional phases are still to be implemented, including professional development and improved workforce conditions.
- **Dream Keeper Initiatives:** Rolled out by Mayor London Breed in 2020 to address the programming needs in San Francisco's Black community, Dream Keeper funding has supported the development of the African-American Early Educator Pipeline to Career cohorts, a partnership between Children's Council and City College of San Francisco, and the African-American Early Care and Education Policy Council. These programs, among others, are designed to support Black ECE professionals and grow their presence in the field. With research indicating the value for Black children in having just one Black teacher during their early learning years, this is a significant step toward reducing educational inequality in San Francisco while developing needed cultural capacity in ECE settings.

What Needs Work

- **Supporting other family service professionals:** While the Workforce Compensation Initiative is a significant win for the early childhood community, staffing shortages are endemic to the ECE and family support sector, driven in part by the mismatch between San Francisco's high cost of living and the low wages across the sector. Due to the restricted eligibility of the WCI, workers who do similar work in other settings, and sometimes at the same center, have seen no growth in wages. Family support specialists or referral specialists, playing a critical role in connecting families to needed resources, also continue to struggle with low wages.
- **Business supports and professional development:** Overall, City funding for professional development and business supports lags behind what family service professionals and ECE providers say they need, particularly for the many licensed child care providers who are not funded through the City. Local agencies have taken on this role, offering services like BizNest's Family Child Care Business Incubator (Children's Council) and the FCC Educator Support Services (Wu Yee Children's Agency) but they report having to rely largely on private dollars to maintain these offerings. Community-based centers do not have direct support for HR or other administrative needs, and professional development pathways for ECE educators and workforce condition improvement supports have not yet been rolled out. Providers deserve easily accessible pathways for professional development and training programs that equip them with a theoretical foundation based on the importance of early childhood, and the practical skills to do challenging jobs well.

- **UPK mixed setting rollout:** Providers are concerned about the economic impact of the state’s UPK initiative. Provider advocacy groups want key stakeholders such as SFUSD, DEC, and others to include them in the process and consider supports that may be needed as the system adjusts to this significant change. For its part, SFUSD stakeholders identified the need for all stakeholders to collaborate to give families a “true choice” in ECE setting for their children that is provider agnostic.

NEEDS AND SERVICES: SPECIAL POPULATIONS

Disability / Special Needs

Programs with focus on disability or special needs
California Children’s Services DEC Early Identification/Intervention Initiative Multi-disciplinary Assessment Center (MDAC) SFUSD Early Childhood Special Education Shoestrings Children’s Center Support for Families with Children with Disabilities, a Family Resource Center

When a child has a physical disability, developmental delay, or other forms of special needs, families must navigate a maze of government agencies to access needed support. San Francisco departments offer local services, while also housing state programs (like California Children’s Services in the Department of Public Health, that supports families of children with disabling medical conditions). At other times, the City needs to coordinate with local Regional Centers, operating independently through state and federal funding.

Foundations to Build On

- **DEC Early Identification/Intervention Initiative:** The City, in partnership with First 5 and now DEC, has made significant headway in training family serving professionals across sectors to screen for developmental needs. ECE educators have asked that additional funds be provided to increase staffing to support special needs children. The City is implementing a digital-based platform, Sparkler, to continue connecting families, ECE providers, primary care physicians, and others to timely developmental guidance. Having a better understanding of children and families’ true need for developmental services is a necessary first step in providing the right supports.
- **Family Resource Centers:** The Family Resource Center Initiative’s inclusion of a site dedicated to families of children with disabilities (Support for Families) provides important resourcing for families facing additional needs for support.

What Needs Work

- **Service Availability:** Many stakeholders raised concerns about the gap between the City’s screening capacity for developmental disabilities and special needs and the services available to address those needs. As more and more children are able to access screening services and are referred for either further assessment or early intervention services, the strain on the system is

apparent. The Early Intervention system relies on partners outside the City’s purview, like the state-funded Golden Gate Regional Center. Yet these differences in funding streams and authority matter little to families who are trying to get their child’s needs met. ECE community members have asked for ELS funds to go to additional staffing to support special needs children on site.

Racial, ethnic, or cultural groups

Programs with focus on specific racial, ethnic, or cultural groups
<p>African-American ECE Policy Council API Family Stress Line Black ECE Achievement Program Black Infant Health Program Expecting Justice Abundant Birth Project Family Resource Center Initiative The Preterm Birth Initiative at UCSF RISE-SF: Newcomer Programming SFUSD Indian Education Program: Monthly Family Night SFUSD Migrant Education Program Sister Web Doula Services</p>

Culturally congruent programming can be the difference between families connecting to needed resources or struggling on their own. Paired with inequities in kindergarten readiness among SFUSD kindergarten students, there is a strong desire among San Franciscans to fund programming focused on specific racial, ethnic, or cultural groups. While the table above identified programs with an explicit focus on supporting a particular racial, ethnic, or language group, many programs across City departments are attempting to address the needs of different cultural groups: offering bilingual programs, providing targeted programming in zip codes with with marked inequities by race, and using equity as a lens for where to invest in additional programming or facilities. Additionally, all sectors reported on efforts to recruit a diverse workforce of family and child-serving professionals to support all San Franciscans.

Foundations to Build On

- **Culturally congruent birth supports:** Programs through MCAH and other DPH public-nonprofit partnerships, like Expecting Justice and the Sister Web project, are supporting advancement in maternal health for historically vulnerable populations. Programs like the Black Infant Health Program have the additional benefit of supporting community connections among Black women, and the Sister Web program is increasing workforce capacity for Black, Latino, and Pacific Islander doulas.

What Needs Work

- **Ongoing inequities:** While San Francisco continues to invest in programs to combat inequities in early childhood outcomes, the city continues to see disparities across many outcomes. Race- and language-based inequities exist in child poverty levels, school readiness results, ECE and family support provider staffing, child welfare involvement, and more. Workforce mismatches continue to

result in additional wait times for families looking for a child care site or a mental health professional that looks like them or speaks their language.

Recommendations

In order to foster each child's well-being as a foundation for academic and life success, the City should seek to create an integrated, culturally responsive, trauma-informed approach that coordinates services and supports for young children and their parents/caregivers, partners with parents and educators, and focuses on early intervention and prevention. This system should draw on the strengths of young children's entire community, including family, educators, and other key providers and support services.

The following changes would support such a system, and include both recommendations to address coordination and integration challenges, as well as service gaps that City agencies should address as capacity is available.

1. Create community-friendly budget breakdowns.

As DEC continues to build out its administrative capacity in general and its finance staff in particular, it should work collaboratively with the community to develop transparent, community-friendly, detailed budget breakdowns that make clear:

- Which revenue funds which expenditures, especially for funding sources explicitly dedicated to specific programmatic uses
- Investments in families and child-focused professionals

DCYF should similarly work to explicitly describe its investment in families.

Outside of DEC and DCYF, other City agencies should explore ways to better articulate their investments in young children, at least at the level of major programmatic expenditures. DEC could eventually serve in a coordinating role for this kind of investment.

2. Help families make easy connections to an integrated set of services in the early childhood system of care.

Many City agencies and community organizations have referral services or case management functions – and in general, staff at any one agency are doing their best to assess family and child needs and direct families to services. The effectiveness of this “no wrong door” policy, however, depends on (1) getting families in the door in the first place and (2) each agency having equal access to up-to-date referral information.

One of the key findings from the Mayor's Children and Families Recovery Plan was that families are struggling with the lack of centralization in resources and services. Per that report, “Families and youth had trouble easily finding information on available resources and services.” Families often appear at one place in the system of care demonstrating needs that are better addressed elsewhere. When families, especially families with young children who may be struggling with poverty or adaptation to a new county or language, are confused about where to go for help, they may continue to suffer or make do. In short,

San Francisco's families have enough on their plates, and the City should do what it can to alleviate the burden of finding existing services and supports.

The City should create simple on-ramps and accessible mechanisms for getting child care and family support services as early as possible. Strategies to more consistently help families make connections to services could include:

- **Linking referral services to prenatal and birthing care.**

Parents have requested to be able to access parenting supports and parenting tips in more locations throughout the city. Parents want more immediate access to information and resources where they already go – doctor's offices, preschools and other locations.

Most parents of young children in San Francisco receive prenatal care in the city and give birth in the city. The months when a family knows a child is coming – particularly a first child – are a critical time of preparation for parents. When parents are having a child, they re-form habits: the City should connect with parents during pregnancy to link them to services for both children and parents/caregivers.

While relatively few parents will call a referral line or speak with a case manager, most will have some prenatal care, and nearly all will connect with medical care at birth. Providing clear avenues for assessment and referral at these known touch points would go a long way towards getting parents "in the door." San Francisco does important work targeting outreach to communities with particular needs, such as people who are pregnant and unhoused. This important work should continue, yet every family can benefit from receiving clear referral pathways at this critical juncture.

Importantly, these referral linkages should include not only ZSFG and DPH Primary Care clinics, but also the private health care system that serves the majority of San Franciscans. The City is making strides co-locating these services (e.g., through Solid Start and HealthySteps) for families using public insurance or hospitals, but every pregnant person in San Francisco, regardless of income or health care provider, should be informed about how to access supports they may need as a new parent.

- **Ensuring simple and consistent city-wide messaging about where to go for resources.**

If an overwhelmed family just wants to know, "Where do I go to get help?", at present, the answer is: A lot of places! San Francisco has a wealth of available referral supports: you can get a child care referral and subsidy information one place, support with parental stress at another, prenatal or pediatric referrals somewhere else. All of these places will also try to assess a family's needs and connect them to a broader range of services. Community hubs, resource and referral agencies, parental stress lines, the Our415 service repository being developed by DCYF, and the community pathway structure for HSA's Families First Prevention Services Act plan are all valuable sources of service information.

Unfortunately, this very abundance can result in confusion that makes families less likely to reach out. As noted above, a key complaint from families is that they don't know where to go to access services.

Instead, the City should create a simple answer to where to go for help that could be used consistently across public messaging: Call this number, visit this website. None of the existing resources currently have the capacity and community buy-in to meet this need – the next recommendation addresses what’s needed to get there.

- **Integrating and co-locating services.**

Families should experience a streamlined assessment of needs: ideally, their needs would be addressed directly at the place where they first enter the early childhood system of care, whether that is a clinic, a preschool, or an FRC. Failing that, they should receive a rapid referral to an appropriate resource.

This might look like:

- Housing multiple services in one location (e.g., providing both pediatric and maternal health care in the same clinic visit—as is being piloted in the HealthySteps program)
- Conducting joint eligibility assessments (e.g., aligning ELS eligibility criteria with WIC, so that eligibility in one program grants automatic acceptance to the other)
- Providing “warm handoffs” between agencies, not just contact information, along with peer and community navigation.

- **Ensuring cultural responsiveness and language capacity of service providers.**

Families are more likely to access and engage in a service or support if they are able to connect to a provider or program that speaks their language - spoken or cultural. The City should continue all efforts to recruit and retain service providers from diverse cultural backgrounds and language groups across the system of care. Moreover, the City should consider broadening the use of partnerships (like DPH has with SisterWeb, among many other examples) with community-based organizations that already have the trust of their community.

3. Create a robust, centralized source of citywide program information and referrals for both providers and families

Many City agencies and community non-profits serve young children in San Francisco; the city benefits from the creativity and hard work of dozens of organizations and thousands of staff in every neighborhood in the city. The flip side of this strength, however, is that it’s impossible for any one organization or staff person to know about all the resources available in the city. We heard about innovative programs like Connecting Children with Nature (bringing together ECE providers that want to renovate their outside spaces to include more natural materials and extra materials from Rec and Park for renovations and repairs) that struggled to get the word out about their services. Staff in organizations central to early childhood rely largely on informal social connections to stay in the know; staff in organizations more peripheral to early childhood often have only a few connections into the broader systems that support young kids and families – several such interviewees still referred to OECE and First 5. If it’s difficult for professionals in this sector to stay abreast of available services, how much more difficult is it for families!

The entire community needs a robust, centralized source of up-to-date information about available programs and services that includes eligibility information, service hours, geography, language, and more. All major service providers across the city should have access to this database – not just resource and referral agencies.

Many efforts have been made to address this gap already: databases of services exist with Unite Us, the Resource and Referral agencies, the community pathway of family support organizations developed in Families First planning, parental warmlines, and DCYF's Our415 effort. Unfortunately, none of these data sources are robust enough, comprehensive enough, or have enough community buy-in to fully meet the need. As a result, piecemeal efforts to develop resource lists may actually make the bigger coordination problems harder, as each stakeholder is invested in the maintenance of their own system at the expense of the others.

In the words of one stakeholder, “we need to put an end to everyone creating their own new system.” Doing so would require investment of energy, political capital, and financial resources from a centralized City agency like DEC to create an IT solution that could in the medium-term serve as a comprehensive source of program information and in the long-term build a closed-loop referral system for agencies to connect families to services.

Programs that are recorded in the database should be able to update their information as program offerings, hours, or eligibility change. Crowdsourcing program data will help create a one-stop shop, though dedicated staffing would still be needed to maintain quality. Parents and other caregivers should also be able to access some view of this database, so that they can search for services available in their neighborhood, their language, or their area of concern.

Eventually and ideally, this database should also enable closed-loop, trackable referrals to services like child care, disability support, and basic needs. The City's coordinated entry system for homelessness services, while not perfect, can nevertheless be used as a conceptual framework for how a diverse set of community providers can knit multiple services together across the city to meet a family's needs through a centralized IT platform.

4. Leverage existing general City services to connect families and providers to appropriate resources

In all our interviews and data collection, we heard much about cooperation and coordination within agencies and organizations that focus on kids and families – but some of the City's more general supports were conspicuously absent:

- **311** is the City's clearinghouse for access to City services and information – it provides basic information and referrals to services 24 hours a day and in 160 languages, but no stakeholder referenced 311 as a resource for families. The extent to which families currently attempt to get services via 311 is unclear.⁹ At a minimum, organizations that support young children and their

⁹ 311 case data is available via the City's Open Data portal; however, the case data is specifically limited to cases with location information (e.g., reports of graffiti or homeless encampments) and excludes “cases logged by a user regarding their own needs.” Further conversation with 311 would be needed to establish how the

families should ensure that 311 itself has appropriate information about connecting families to services and supports.

- **The Office of Small Business (OSB)** helps entrepreneurs in San Francisco start businesses and navigate City requirements. They provide free business counseling, startup guides, recruitment assistance, and more. Multiple stakeholders cited the need for more business supports for small child care providers, yet none mentioned OSB. On the OSB side, child care is not among the business types for which they provide starter guides.

According to KidsData.org, San Francisco has more than 1,000 child care centers and in-home child care providers.¹⁰ That's 1000 small business owners – many of whom are low-income, non-native English speakers, or people of color – who are apparently not being served by the City's primary resource for small businesses. Referring prospective child care providers to existing services, such as the Children's Council business incubator program or Wu Yee's educator supports for FCC providers, would be a reasonable start.

DEC and the broader community that supports young children and their families should establish working relationships with 311 and OSB, at a minimum to create good referral mechanisms, but ideally to have their assistance as additional resources for referral and business support respectively. The community should also look beyond their traditional partnerships for other similar generalized City supports where connections could be made. Even if these other agencies lack specialized knowledge about early childhood, ensuring that they can at least route families and providers who come their way to appropriate services is an easy win.

5. Make DEC the leader for Citywide early childhood issues that previously had no clear owner.

Before the creation of DEC, no one City agency bore primary responsibility for young kids: First 5, OECE, DCYF, OCOF, SFUSD, and others all shared some responsibility. Now with DEC as the clear lead for issues related to 0-5 children and their families and DCYF more focused on school-age kids and transition-age youth, many interviewees wished for DEC to take a stronger, clearer leadership role in coordinating support services for young children and their families.

Some interviewees expressed difficulty from the loss of their prior informal connections with OECE or First 5. Others were looking for guidance about specific issues that seemed to be no one's specific responsibility but were creating barriers to service access.

Specific issues that we heard about included:

service is currently used by families and to what degree 311 has accurate and up-to-date information about services for young children and their families. See data.sfgov.org/City-Infrastructure/311-Cases/vw6y-z8j6.

¹⁰<https://www.kidsdata.org/topic/102/child-care-facilities/table#fmt=260&loc=265&tf=141&ch=222,223,224&sortColumnId=0&sortType=asc>

- Clear and transparent DEC Budget that clearly shows which revenue sources are funding each expenditure
- Transportation guidance for agencies serving young children
- Upcoming UPK rollout and its impact on community-based family child care and centers, as well as the ECE workforce.
- Increased linkages among child- and family-serving systems and connection of programming for young children and their families to basic needs support
- Expansion of 2-Gen Birth-to-Three programs like home visiting or Early Head Start.

Where ambiguity exists about responsibility for such policy questions, DEC should take responsibility for resolving the issue – or using its convening power to bring necessary stakeholders to the table. The community strongly expressed the desire for public transparency and partnership to determine next steps for the implementation of DEC’s strategic plan, setting direction for new programming, and bringing together child care and the FRC initiative.

Relatedly, interviewees expressed frustration with prior planning efforts around young children and families that were created independently of other current or historic planning efforts. DEC now has an opportunity to facilitate cross-agency collaboration on policy issues for 0-5 age kids, so that plans for economic recovery, preparing for legislative changes, budget priorities, and more can be integrated and coordinated City-wide.

6. Develop better handoffs for kids entering SFUSD

One of the four key outcomes from DEC’s strategic plan is that “Children enter kindergarten with the cognitive, social/emotional, and physical skills that support school success.” The City has done significant work in supporting those cognitive, social/emotional, and physical skills – ensuring quality care, assessing for gaps, and providing supports where possible. The DEC Early Identification/Intervention Initiative program provides a robust set of information on disabilities and other developmental delays, and child care and preschool providers across the city are being trained to assess ASQs and recognize issues early.

Though preschools are conducting robust assessments, there’s no consistent mechanism to relay this information about a child to SFUSD upon school entry. Getting resources (like an Individualized Education Plan) for kids with special needs relies upon parent knowledge and advocacy or upon re-discovery of the issues by a classroom teacher, adding significant burden to parents and other connected adults, oftentimes asking them to re-do work and assessments that they have already completed earlier in their child’s development. This reassessment can require a large amount of coordination for parents, often during the workday, and can also mean that needed services go unprovided until the new round of evaluations can be conducted. Families have told stakeholders time and again that being asked to complete multiple assessments or evaluations can be traumatizing, as parents are required to rehash difficult history for each new provider or system. At best, kids and families need to restart a new round of assessments; at worst, issues identified in the child care or preschool setting are left unaddressed in Kindergarten and information is gathered in a way that is not trauma-informed.

Development of a robust data source about transition to Kindergarten would also allow the City to better investigate systematic questions about effective early education. For example, data about early childhood pathways could help identify root causes of inequitable academic outcomes for Black and Latinx children. At present, District data does not generally extend back earlier than Kindergarten.

DEC and SFUSD should work together to develop standardized ways for City-designated preschools to transfer information about kids to SFUSD – especially for those assessed with developmental disabilities and other forms of educational need – that can be used to inform classroom strategies in Kindergarten and service provision through the district. The recent federally-funded Mission Promise Neighborhood pilot did just that, though only with District-run preschool sites at two Mission neighborhood elementary schools. The initiative provided Kindergarten teachers and school administrators basic readiness data about rising Kindergarteners. DEC and SFUSD should carefully review the results of that pilot,¹¹ including lessons learned, and explore how to support similar knowledge transfer citywide and between the District and non-District preschool sites.

Relatedly, DCYF, DEC and SFUSD can foster greater partnership around successful transitions to Kindergarten and similar issues for 5-year-olds. DEC's strategic plan emphasizes the need for parental support to navigate K-12 education, especially when advocating for children without a typical learning profile. One possible area of collaboration could be the data sharing agreements necessary to allow for the coordinated assessments and supports discussed above. SFUSD's Early Education leadership agrees on the need to share information and have experience creating such systems in other districts; bringing this kind of work to San Francisco is a needed next step.

7. Supplement Early Intervention services and Mental Health services

As noted above, the City provides robust support for early identification of disabilities and delays through the ZSFG Multidisciplinary Assessment Center, primary care medical providers, SFUSD, and child care providers via DEC's Early Identification/Intervention Initiative - but identifying needs is of limited value if early intervention supports are unavailable to meet them, or if they are provided in too low of a dose to be effective.

Though the City does not have control over state-funded Early Intervention services through the Golden Gate Regional Center, the City should consider how it might support or supplement these services when the regional center is impacted. Early childhood mental health services are similarly impacted: consultants may identify a need but be unable to provide care to meet it. Funding additional services in mental health, occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech-language pathology, and similar professional services would be needed to effectively address identified needs.

Also needed are better training for providers to meet the needs of children with special needs, increased incentives to encourage more providers to specialize in these support services, and more parental resources and aides to assist parents in navigating the various supports offered by the City.

¹¹

https://missionpromise.org/update/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Mission-Promise-Neighborhood-Interim-Assessment_060217.pdf

However, the restricted availability of these services is due not only to funding, but also to systemic workforce issues – see the following recommendation.

8. Build on Workforce Compensation Initiative efforts by further supporting early childhood educators and expanding workforce supports to other family-serving professionals.

The shortage of professional services for young children and their parents/caregivers is not driven solely by a lack of funding, but also by the inability of FRCs as well as the regional center and mental health agencies to fill positions with qualified staff. Early Intervention supports require highly trained licensed professionals; early childhood mental health similarly requires licensed or license-track therapists and social workers *with specialized training to work with kids*. These are difficult staff to find, particularly in the current tight labor market, in a high cost-of-living area, when private-sector work pays better.

We heard repeatedly about staffing shortages in areas including primary care, mental health, and FRC support staff. These shortages are more acute when you consider the need for language or cultural match. The City has made substantial investment in wage supports for child care providers, but these other family-serving professionals face similar workforce issues without similar investment. Further implementation of the WCI could expand throughout the child and family serving system to encompass these professionals.

While direct wage support for these roles would of course help, the City could also explore working with educational institutions such as City College to develop stronger career pipelines for not only child care providers, but other family-serving professionals as well.

9. Assess changing needs in the ECE system in anticipation of universal pre-K rollout.

As described above, the City has made large investments in preschool, but fewer in infant and toddler care. While overall enrollment is strong, and there is no citywide wait list, this belies problems in matching a relatively small pool of slots to specific needs by neighborhood, language or cultural match, or non-standard hours.

If families are faced with a choice between a free UPK slot at a local school through SFUSD or even a subsidized slot at their existing ECE provider, that is not a true choice for many families in difficult economic situations. Though universal pre-K planning is ongoing, the reality may be that if the City does not take intentional supportive action, many existing family child care in-home providers and community-based centers will have to shift to providing more of their care to 0-2 age kids. In the economics of child care, many small providers take a loss on care for infants and toddlers, relying on older kids (who have less stringent child-to-caregiver ratios) to turn a profit. As more older kids turn to UPK, DEC needs to provide resources to community-based in-home family child care and center providers. This may take the form of advocacy for subsidy increases with state and federal partners, direct subsidy, or other business supports, such as technical assistance to providers who may wish to adapt their current offerings to better fit the needs of the 0-2 age cohort.

10. Provide additional resources for Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care

Most kids, particularly in infancy and toddlerhood, are cared for either by a stay-at-home parent or in Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) care settings. The City currently provides few formal supports to these “invisible,” non-licensed child care settings.

As it is able, DEC should both expand the reach of licensed child care by supporting more 0-2 age child care slots while also investing in where kids already are (FFN), license or no, so that the kid being raised by grandma gets off to just as good a start as the kid in licensed child care. Community partners like Children’s Council have used private funds to provide early literacy kits to FFN caregivers over the years – DEC should consider how to fund such supports as part of its commitment to increasing equity in school readiness. DEC and the City should support FFN providers in their informal child care role so that they can:

- Access evidence-based tools for child development
- Screen for delays and disabilities
- Access learning opportunities to increase child safety (like Triple P)
- Access tools to increase caregiver knowledge of early literacy

These FFN providers, like all families, also need substantial support to ensure that basic needs are met.

DEC and other City providers could consider reaching these informal caregivers through:

- Family Resource Centers in local neighborhoods
- Community events
- Resource and Referral Agencies
- Partnerships with SFPL: DEC already partners with the Library on early literacy investment through the Scholars at Home program, which gets books into the hands of new families, and the Library itself invests heavily in early literacy programming. DEC should consider building on this partnership to connect with informal caregivers.

Appendix A: Frameworks reviewed

In developing the SF Early Childhood Outcomes Framework, we reviewed and drew from existing outcomes frameworks and best practices in the field. A summary of each framework that was reviewed as part of the development of the SF Early Childhood Outcomes Framework follows.

1. Strengthening Families Protective Factors

The Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP)'s Strengthening Families Framework sets out five protective factors that are key to developing strong families and communities. CSSP defines protective factors as “characteristics or strengths of individuals, families, communities or societies that act to mitigate risks and promote positive well-being and healthy development.” The five protective factors are:

- Parental Resilience
- Social Connections
- Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development
- Concrete support in times of need
- Social and emotional competence of children

2. Our Children Our Families (OCOF) Outcomes Framework

In 2014, the Our Children Our Families Council in San Francisco developed a set of outcomes for San Francisco children, youth, and families. The OCOF Council has 42 members, including the Mayor and SFUSD Superintendent, with the goal of enabling “all children, youth and families in San Francisco to stay, thrive and contribute to the city’s vibrant future.” The outcomes include:

- Live in Safe and Nurturing Environments
- Attain Economic Security and Housing Stability
- Are Physically, Emotionally, and Mentally Healthy
- Thrive in a 21st Century Learning Environment
- Succeed in Post-Secondary and/or Career Paths

3. The Ascend Network at the Aspen Institute's 2Gen model

The Aspen Ascend 2Gen Model is built on the idea that parent and family functioning and child functioning cannot be separated fully from one another. 2Gen approaches do not focus exclusively on either a child’s development or an adult’s needs because their well-being is interconnected and interdependent. The 2Gen approach acknowledges a spectrum of services, from child-focused to whole family focused to adult-focused. The outcomes include:

- Early Childhood Education
- K-12 Education
- Postsecondary and Employment Pathways
- Social Capital
- Health, including Mental Health
- Economic Assets

4. Head Start's Whole-child Whole-family Approach

Implemented by the Department of Social Services, Head Start's Whole-child Whole-Family approach acknowledges the needs of families and children in challenging circumstances, tackling four components:

- Education
- Health
- Parent Involvement
- Social Services

5. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Developed by psychologist Abraham Maslow in 1943, the hierarchy of needs is a tiered theory of human needs, in which needs at the base of the pyramid must be fulfilled before needs further up the pyramid. It is a model of human growth and development which recognizes the importance of basic needs being met in order for humans to flourish. The needs are:

- Physiological needs
- Safety needs
- Love and Belonging needs
- Esteem needs
- Self-actualization needs

6. **Building Blocks of Readiness**

School readiness is broadly defined as the set of physical, social/emotional, and academic skills students need to make a successful transition to kindergarten. The Building Blocks of Readiness, from research conducted by ASR, are measured by the Kindergarten Observation Form (KOF) which is used in DEC's School Readiness Assessment reports. The Building Blocks of Readiness are:

- Motor Skills (fine and gross motor coordination)
- Self-Regulation (emotion regulation and self-control skills)
- Social Expression (interacting with others and engagement in play)
- Kindergarten Academics ("nuts and bolts" academic skills that must be explicitly taught)

These form a progression, with the base of the pyramid representing foundational skills that inform the skills above it.

7. [Sequal](#)

SEQUAL is a research tool by the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment (CSCCE) to help examine early educators' own perspectives on their work and work conditions. Recognizing the strong correlation between children's care and learning environments and early educator work environments and well-being, CSCCE tools focus on improving ECE quality through a focus on improved work conditions. Different tools are developed for center-based and Family Child Care provider staff. Both tools measure three domains:

- Teaching Supports
- Learning Community
- Adult Well-being

The Center-Based provider tool additionally measures Job Crafting and Program Leadership, while the Family Child Care provider tool measures Business Practice Supports and Program Management and Leadership. The tool measures five domains for each kind of setting, in total.

Appendix B: List of interviewees

Agency	Interviewee(s)
Child Care Planning and Advisory Council (CPAC)	Mona Malan Secretary, Co-Chair for Needs Assessment and Workforce Committees
Children's Council	Dr. Gina M. Fromer President/CEO Naeemah Charles Senior Director of Public Policy Communications Ben Doyle Chief Programs Officer
Early Care Educators of San Francisco	Sara Hicks-Kilday Co-Director
Family Child Care Association of San Francisco	Oscar Tang Board Member
Felton Institute	Michelle Kaye Clinical Director, Children, Youth & Family and Transitional Age Youth Division Dr. Yohana Quiroz Chief Operations Officer
Office of Mayor London N. Breed	Eileen Mariano, MPH Manager of State and Federal Affairs former Youth and Families Advisor
Safe & Sound	Jenny Pearlman Chief Policy Officer
San Francisco Department of Children, Youth and Their Families (DCYF)	Dr. Maria Su Executive Director
San Francisco Department of Early Childhood	Ingrid Mezquita Executive Director Derik Aoki Senior Program Officer

Agency	Interviewee(s)
San Francisco Department of Public Health	<p>Farahnaz Farahmand, Ph.D. Director, Children, Youth, & Families System of Care, Behavioral Health Services</p> <p>Katie DellaMaria Nurse Manager, Child Care Health Program, Maternal, Child, and Adolescent Health</p> <p>Paula Jones Vice Chair, Food Security Task Force</p> <p>Marcy Spaulding Public Health Nurse</p>
San Francisco Human Services Agency	Tommy Pazhempalil Protective Services Supervisor
San Francisco Parks and Recreation	<p>Maria Durana Director of the SF Children & Nature Collaborative</p> <p>Terry Trejo, CPRP Recreation Supervisor</p>
San Francisco Public Library	<p>Hillary Ake Early Learning Coordinator</p> <p>Christy Estrovitz Manager of Youth Services</p>
San Francisco Unified School District	<p>Pamela Geisler Planning and Development Director, Early Education</p> <p>Christie Herrera Assistant Superintendent of Early Education</p>
UCSF School of Medicine	Dr. Anda Kuo Professor, Pediatrics
Wu Yee Children's Services	Monica Walters Chief Executive Officer

Appendix C: List of reviewed documents

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Appendix D: Detailed program descriptions

Following are brief descriptions of the programs we identified in the course of our mapping project. A spreadsheet of these programs, coded by various factors, was also provided to project sponsors as a deliverable of the work.

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API Parental Stress Line

APA hosts a collaborative multilingual hotline service available in seven different languages and dialects. This API Parental Stress Line is free and geared towards those who have language barriers. The API Parental Stress Line is available in the following languages, each hosted by different community partners: Cantonese/Mandarin, Cambodian, Vietnamese, Samoan, Tagalog, and Laotian.

Child Care Resource and Referral Lines (Children's Council and Wu Yee Children's Services)

Help families navigate complex options for child care and preschool and connect them to other parenting supports and social services. Resource and referral agencies can help walk families through the eligibility assessment and application process for child care spaces and child care subsidies and can provide them with more information on the early care and education programs. Additionally, families can access general referrals to general supports and programs across the City.

Early Learning SF

Early Learning SF simplifies the process of connecting families to early care and education financial aid through a user-friendly website. It empowers families to choose child care or preschool programs that suit their needs and connects them with early education programs that match their preferences. For instance, a family of four with an annual income of up to \$158,500 may qualify for free early care and education through this program. Nearly 300 Early Care and Education Centers and Family Child Care Homes in San Francisco participate in ELS, prioritizing quality and continuity of care for children.

Family Resource Center Initiative

The Family Resource Center Initiative, through DEC, offers free parenting support and resources via a network of 26 Family Resource Centers (FRCs) throughout San Francisco neighborhoods. These FRCs serve as safe spaces where families engage in enjoyable activities and enhance their parenting skills and knowledge of child development. Research underscores the importance of parental coping, social support, and strong parent-child relationships for children's academic, social, and emotional readiness for kindergarten. San Francisco's FRCs assist families in making connections and finding resources to support their children's lifelong success.

La Raza Community Resource Center's Rental Assistance Program

Individual FRCs contain a wealth of programming, such as La Raza's Rental Assistance program. Families (as well as individuals) can apply for rental subsidies or emergency rental assistance in order to stabilize their housing situation.

Early Identification/Intervention Initiative (Child Development Screenings)

The Early Identification/Intervention Initiative, provided by the Department of Early Childhood, offers free developmental screenings, recognizing that early intervention is crucial for children to reach their full

potential. Developmental screenings assess a child's movement, play, speech, and interactions at various ages, ensuring their development is on track. Identifying developmental delays early and providing additional support can significantly benefit a child. Pediatricians in San Francisco screen children from birth to age 3, and the Department of Early Childhood helps City-funded child care programs screen children ages 3-5.

Preschool for All (PFA)

The Preschool for All Tuition Credit (PFA) program aims to provide universal access to preschool for all 4-year-olds in San Francisco. Eligibility requires families to reside in San Francisco, and children must turn 4 on or before December 2nd of the enrollment year. PFA is open to all families, regardless of income. Families may receive a tuition credit of up to \$4,440 annually, reducing the cost of preschool and supporting program quality. PFA also offers professional development opportunities for teachers and fosters a community of peers in qualified preschools across San Francisco. Exceptions are made for children with special needs or those requiring an extra year of preschool.

TALK Line

Safe and Sound offers The TALK (Telephone Aid in Living with Kids) Line, a 24-hour parent & caregiver support warmline providing early interventions, support, and community-based referrals to parents and caregivers experiencing stress. The TALK Line is primarily staffed by trained and supervised volunteer line operators. They respond to incoming calls and also conduct regular follow-up with parents and caregivers with heightened needs.

Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Initiative (ECMHCI)

The San Francisco Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Initiative (ECMHCI) is rooted in the evidence-based work of mental health professionals. It offers support to children, parents, and caregivers of San Francisco's youngest residents (ages 0-5). Services are provided in various settings, including center-based and family child care, shelters, housing facilities, family resource centers, and substance abuse treatment centers. The ECMHCI is a partnership between three county agencies: San Francisco's Department of Early Childhood, Department of Public Health/Behavioral Health Services, and the Department of Children, Youth, and Their Families. Funding for this initiative comes from all three county departments, as well as funds from the MHSA.

Mental health consultation and capacity building services encompass case consultation, program consultation, training and support for staff and parents, referrals for specialized services, therapeutic play groups, direct psychotherapeutic intervention, crisis intervention, parent education, support groups, and advocacy for families. These services aim to leverage early intervention to enhance the success of children and families facing early developmental challenges.

San Francisco Department of Public Health

Positive Parenting Program (Triple P)

The Positive Parenting Program (Triple P) is a 12-week program designed for parents of children between the ages of 2-12. These court-approved and curriculum-based classes provide child-watch services, offer dinner before each meeting, and provide bus tokens for participants. Triple P equips parents with

evidence-based strategies and techniques to enhance their parenting skills, improve child behavior, and build positive family dynamics. Parents who complete the program receive a certificate, gaining valuable insights into effective parenting practices that promote healthy child development.

Black Infant Health Program

The Black Infant Health (BIH) program addresses poor birth outcomes among Black women,

considering factors like anti-Black racism, social and economic stressors. BIH uses a group-based approach within a culturally supportive environment. Participants meet, interact, and build a sisterhood with other Black women. Group sessions are supplemented with client-centered life planning, goal setting, and referrals to services. This approach enhances life skills, reduces stress, and builds social support, benefiting participants and future generations of Black women, infants, and families. The program is open to all Black women aged 16 or older, pregnant, or up to six months postpartum, regardless of income. Services are provided by Family Health Advocates, Group Facilitators, Public Health Nurses, and Mental Health Workers.



black infant health

Empowering Pregnant and Mothering Black Women

California Children's Services

A county administered state program, services are provided by California Children's Services for 2,500 infants, children and youth, in San Francisco, with severe medical conditions or physical disabilities. The staff at California Children's Services are committed to obtain and assist clients obtain pediatric specialty care; Rehabilitative care is provided through the Medical Therapy Unit, including occupational therapy, physical therapy and physician services; and Public Health Nurses provide case management services, including authorization of medically necessary diagnostic and treatment services; coordination of client services are provided by a dental hygienist, social workers, eligibility workers, clerical staff and billers.

Centering Pregnancy at ZSFG

CenteringPregnancy is prenatal care that is done in a group setting instead of in the traditional 1:1 visit. Each prenatal visit is done with the same group of women, all with a similar due date. Partners and support people are invited to participate as well. Each session is 2 hours long and includes time for midwives to complete examinations of the pregnant person and baby. Topics covered in the sessions include getting ready for labor and childbirth, parenting, healthy relationships, pregnancy aches and pains, birth control. Groups are offered in either Spanish or English.

Child Care Health Program

The Child Care Health Program serves children aged 0-5 in various child care settings, providing health and safety consultation, screening, training, and disaster preparedness for providers and families. The program's objective is to improve health and safety outcomes for San Francisco children by promoting high-quality child care and coordinating linkages between providers and health resources.

EatSF - WIC Partnership

EatSF addresses food affordability in San Francisco, where 44% of low-income residents struggle to afford nutritious food. The program provides vouchers for free fruits and vegetables, supporting thousands of low-income individuals and families in developing healthy eating habits.

Expecting Justice's Abundant Birth Project

Expecting Justice piloted the Abundant Birth Project, an initiative to provide an unconditional monthly income supplement of \$1,000 to approximately 150 Black and Pacific Islander in San Francisco for the duration of their pregnancy and the first six months of their baby's life. The USCF Preterm Birth Initiative studies the resulting health impacts of the pilot with a focus on reducing preterm births and improving birth outcomes for all participants.

Nurse Home Visiting Programs

Through the Nurse Home Visiting Programs, public health nurses meet with pregnant and postpartum women to provide guidance on a healthy pregnancy, parenting skills, and support for the baby's development. The program helps families take steps for a healthy pregnancy, prepare for the baby, become a confident parent, and help the baby learn and grow. Nurses support the family's health, connect them to community resources, reach goals and dreams in school, work, and life, and obtain needed supplies like cribs and diapers. The initiative includes two programs: The **Nurse Family Partnership Program** is for women who are pregnant with their first child, in their first or second trimester (less than 28 weeks), and meet income requirements. The **Field Public Health Nursing Program** is for all pregnant or postpartum women living in San Francisco, including those who already have children.

Outpatient Behavioral Health Services

The San Francisco Behavioral Health Plan offers a full range of specialty Behavioral health services provided by a culturally diverse network of community Behavioral health programs, clinics and private psychiatrists, psychologists, and therapists. Most people seeking behavioral health services need only basic counseling services. For those who are in need of more extensive treatment, the S.F. Behavioral Health Plan offers an array of services.

Perinatal Services

Perinatal Services aim to enhance pregnancy outcomes through the Comprehensive Perinatal Services Program (CPSP). The program conducts quality assurance reviews, develops perinatal protocols, coordinates the S.F. Perinatal Forum, and offers training and technical assistance to obstetric providers.

Perinatal Outreach and Education (POE)

Perinatal Outreach & Education (POE) helps women have healthy babies through encouraging prenatal care in the first trimester. POE primarily targets African-American & Latina women, whose rates of early prenatal care are substantially lower than the current goal of 90%.

Preterm Birth Initiative at UCSF

PTBi is dedicated to ending racial disparities in birth. We conduct and fund innovative birth research that centers BIPOC lived experiences and strives to dismantle the racist structures and beliefs driving the epidemic. We work with communities that are most impacted by the epidemic to generate evidence on promising interventions that can help prevent preterm birth and improve outcomes for babies born too soon. By improving outcomes for those who experience the worst outcomes, we can improve outcomes for everyone. In partnership with SFDPH.

Sister Web

Sister Web partners with MCAH to provide culturally congruent doula services to Black/Latinx/and Pacific Islander birthing people. SisterWeb was founded as a community doula organization to address these inequities by offering community doula care at no cost to Black and Latine pregnant and birthing people in San Francisco through two different programs: Kindred Birth Companions and Semilla Sagrada. The program also offers workforce development to increase the number of culturally congruent doulas in San Francisco.

Team Lily

Team Lily is a Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital-based multidisciplinary care team providing person-centered, trauma-informed, wrap-around services to pregnant and postpartum people. The program supports pregnant people experiencing significant barriers to accessing clinic-based prenatal care, primarily those experiencing homelessness, substance use disorders, incarceration, intimate partner violence, and/or mental illness. Offers flexible and off-site appointments, pregnancy counseling, mental health services, addiction services, case management, and support around navigating interactions with CPS.

Woman, Infant, Children, Supplemental Nutrition Program (WIC)

WIC is a comprehensive program dedicated to promoting the health and well-being of women, infants, and children. Through individual conversations, group video classes, and online classes, participants receive valuable nutrition education and tips for a healthy life. One of the program's key features is providing families with a WIC card, enabling them to purchase a wide range of nutritious foods, including fruits, vegetables, dairy products, whole grains, and more. WIC also strongly supports breastfeeding and offers various resources to help mothers meet their breastfeeding goals.



Beyond nutrition, WIC connects families to crucial healthcare services and other community resources, including Medi-Cal, CalFresh, CalWORKS, immunizations, child care, and mental health support. This program plays a pivotal role in ensuring that families, especially those with limited means, have access to essential nutrition, health education, and valuable resources that contribute to the well-being of both mothers and children.

Women's & Children's Health Referral Line

The Women and Children's Health Referral line provides referrals to all kinds of healthcare for women and children (for example, prenatal care, Pap tests, breast exams, immunizations, child dental care, and

well baby exams) in English, Spanish, Cantonese, and Mandarin. Providers are encouraged to send information about their programs and classes.



HealthySteps

HealthySteps is a pediatric primary care network that promotes nurturing parenting and healthy development for babies and toddlers. Patients from birth through age five can get extra support to help their family thrive through connection to a Health Advocate. The HealthySteps team gives extra help around parenting questions, connecting with community partners, and supporting parents around their own health and basic needs.

Foster Care Mental Health

Foster Care Mental Health (FCMH) Program works together with Family and Children's Services to address the mental health needs of children/youth and families in the child welfare system.

Multi-disciplinary Assessment Center (MDAC)

The UCSF Multi-Disciplinary Assessment Center (MDAC) at Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital provides family-centered assessment services, diagnosis, service linkage, short-term intervention and case management to children and families needing neurological, psychological and medical assessment for suspected or actual developmental delay. It provides assessment and diagnosis for all SF residents 0-5 and for SFGH/ COPC patients 6+ and up and limited "bridge" therapy for patients who are awaiting evaluation and services from GGRC/SFUSD.

Solid Start

The Solid Start initiative's mission is to develop and assess innovative models of integrated care for pregnant women and families with children aged 0 – 3 at Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital (ZSFG). This involves systematically incorporating the social, legal, mental health, and behavioral needs of families into the delivery of quality healthcare across ZSFG clinical settings. Its goal is to bring about fundamental changes in healthcare delivery by ensuring that all pregnant women and families with children aged 0-3 at ZSFG are screened for social and behavioral health needs in addition to receiving high-quality medical care.



San Francisco Human Services Agency

CalFresh (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)

CalFresh is the state food stamps program that provides assistance to low or no income individuals and households to purchase nutritious food. CalFresh is known federally as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). CalFresh issues monthly benefits on an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card, similar to an ATM card, to purchase food at retail stores and farmers markets that accept EBT cards. The monthly benefit amount is based on a person's or household's income, expenses, and household size.

CalWorks Families Rising (FaR)

CalWorks' Families Rising (FaR) is a Home Visiting Program that provides services to households that have a member who is pregnant or children under the age of two. Home visits can take place in a home, community location, or virtually. Visits cover parent-child interactions, child development, and overall family well-being. Services include: Pregnancy or post-partum support; Early child care and education to prepare children for school; Child health screenings to ensure children meet their developmental milestones; Referrals for services including housing, domestic violence, and substance abuse; Mental health support for parents experiencing stress; Voluntary parent support groups with other program participants.

Family and Children's Services

Family and Children's Services (FCS) is responsible for addressing reports of suspected child abuse, neglect, or exploitation. Confidential reports of suspected child abuse, neglect, or exploitation can be made by anyone. FCS offers talk lines and in-person support for parents, foster families, and caregivers dealing with youth in crisis. Additionally, any parent or individual with lawful custody can surrender a baby safely and confidentially within 72 hours of the child's birth, without fear of prosecution.

The Child Health and Disability Prevention Program (CHDP)

The Child Health and Disability Prevention (CHDP) Program in San Francisco County is dedicated to providing preventive health services that aim to identify and prevent diseases and disabilities among low-income children and youth. This program focuses on proactive health measures to maintain children's well-being before they become ill.

The CHDP program achieves its objectives by offering regular, no-cost health check-ups that encompass various aspects of health and development. These check-ups typically include health and developmental history assessments, physical examinations, necessary vaccinations, oral health screenings with referrals to dentists starting at age one, nutrition screenings, behavioral screenings, vision and hearing screenings, provision of health information, and laboratory tests as needed, such as screenings for anemia, lead exposure, tuberculosis, and other health concerns. Furthermore, the program provides referrals to the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program for children up to age 5 when appropriate.

Foster Care and Adoption

Foster-SF

Foster-SF primarily focuses on providing support to children and youth in foster care in their journey toward reunification with their families. This process can vary in duration, spanning from a few weeks to several years. San Francisco faces unique challenges in foster care due to a shortage of local foster or resource families, resulting in many children and youth being placed in other counties. When individuals become resource parents in San Francisco, they play a vital role in helping children maintain their essential connections while also fostering new, positive relationships. By offering a safe and stable home environment, resource parents facilitate the growth and development of the children placed in their care.

Adoption SF

Adoption SF is a collaborative effort between Family Builders and the San Francisco County Human Services Agency. The program's primary objective is to facilitate the adoption process for families in San Francisco and other Bay Area counties who are interested in adopting children currently in foster care within San Francisco County.

Adoption SF offers a comprehensive range of services, including recruitment, preparation, training, and assessments for prospective adoptive families. The program guides these families through both the short-term needs of children in foster care and the long-term goal of finding permanent, loving families for those children. Family Builders, in partnership with Adoption SF, supports both couples and single parents across all ten Bay Area counties to ensure the well-being of children in foster care.

Homeless Prenatal Program



The Homeless Prenatal Program (HPP) is a family resource center in San Francisco, focusing on empowering homeless and low-income families, especially pregnant mothers and parents. HPP annually serves over 3,500 low-income and homeless families, offering various programs and services aimed at promoting health, stability, and self-sufficiency.

HPP's key goals include promoting healthy pregnancies and bonding, providing housing support, strengthening family relationships, and encouraging economic sustainability through job training and financial education. The program's approach is rooted in the Strengthening Families Framework, which emphasizes protective factors such as parental resilience, social connections, parenting knowledge, concrete support in times of need, and children's social and emotional competence.

Kinship Support Network at Edgewood

Kinship Support Network was established to recognize and support the many family members who often step up when crises, abuse, illness, incarceration, or violence separates children from their parents. Kinship Support Network offers comprehensive services to support kinship families, including: Case management; Caregiver support groups in multiple languages located throughout San Francisco; Parenting and educational workshops; Food and supplies; Independent living skills and classes; Family activities and celebrations; Wellness activities for caregivers (mindfulness, stress reduction, harm reduction); Referrals to Edgewood's Outpatient Mental Health Services program.

Families can also access support through HealthyKin, a nursing case management program provided to families through home and office visits, including nursing assessments, implementation and management of a care plan, and coordination of health care with other community service providers.

Resilient Families

Partnership between La Casa de las Madres and FCS to champion resilient, healthy kids and families from inside the child welfare system when indicators of domestic violence and child abuse are discovered. Includes case management and counseling, as well as other forms of support.

Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing

Emergency Congregate Shelter for Pregnant People

This special 14-day Emergency Placement at Hamilton Family Emergency Shelter is for pregnant people and pregnant couples experiencing homelessness, without minor children. This program is designed to provide low barrier access to shelter for pregnant persons and pregnant couples experiencing homelessness. The program goal is to ensure the pregnant person or couple is engaged in the Coordinated Entry process, completes a Family Success Plan, and is connected to HSA Program benefits (i.e. Medi-Cal, CalWORKs, CalFresh), prenatal care programs, Behavioral Health, and Financial Coaching.

Family Coordinated Entry

The Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing offers Family Coordinated Entry at community Access Points. Family Access Points are localized community gateways for families with children under the age of 18 experiencing homelessness to access San Francisco's Homelessness Response System, which is the overall system of programs and housing opportunities for families experiencing homelessness. Family CE Access Points are operated by two non-profit service providers, Catholic Charities and Compass Family Services, at three community locations: Central City Access Point, Bayview Access Point and Mission Access Point. Family Access Points provide problem solving, assessment, prioritization, and referral to housing, and other community services for San Francisco families experiencing homelessness.

San Francisco Recreation & Parks

San Francisco Children & Nature

San Francisco Children & Nature is a collaborative initiative with participation from over 30 government agencies, non-profit institutions, and community-based organizations. Founded in 2017 as part of the National League of Cities' national initiative, this organization is dedicated to ensuring that all children and youth in the city have equitable opportunities to engage in play, learning, and growth in natural environments. Their vision is to provide nature experiences for every child, every day, and their mission is to address disparities in nature access along socioeconomic and racial lines, striving to make nature an integral part of children's lives. They value the importance of nature in childhood, equity in nature connection, and the accessibility of nearby nature in schools, early childhood centers, neighborhoods, and citywide nature-based places and programs.



Early Childhood Summer Camps

SF Rec Park offers half-day summer camps for young children ages 4-5, focused on discovering the outdoors and on art. Camps provide socialization opportunities and encourage children to play, explore, investigate, and use their senses.

EcoCenter at Heron's Head

The EcoCenter at Heron's Head offers diverse programs. Their school-year program is a bilingual interactive workshop for Pre-K youth, featuring guided sensory hikes and story time. The Storytime Legends program engages children aged 1 to 5 and their families through book readings and hands-on activities. They also provide the Wetland Explorers Summer Camp for ages 5-10, emphasizing outdoor exploration, nature hikes, habitat restoration, games, art projects, and science-based activities during two-week sessions.

Randall Museum

The Randall Museum offers a variety of family classes that provide engaging learning experiences for toddlers, older children, and their parents or caregivers. These classes are available as either multi-week seasonal courses or drop-in sessions. Instructors specialize in interactive sensory exploration and artistic expression. Classes include "Art and Animals," in which children and adults encounter different animals, learn fascinating facts, and create art inspired by these creatures; "Dynamic Clay Duo," in which both child and adult explore the tactile medium of clay together; "Playing with Tots," offering play-based art exploration for toddlers and caregivers; and "Woodworking with Tots," providing a unique opportunity for young children and their adult companions to work in a woodshop, learning to use tools and crafting exciting projects. Each class is designed for both children and adults to enjoy together.

Recreation and Arts Programming

Arts, dance, aquatics, athletics, and play classes that include "tot" programming for children under 5. Includes Therapeutic Recreation classes focused on children with special needs and their families.

Recreation and Park Athletics

Sports and athletics classes available for young children ages 3-5, with scholarships available.

Recreation Centers

Rec and Park operates 25 large rec centers in neighborhoods throughout the city that provide an array of recreation opportunities tailored to the local community. Some centers offer drop-in programming for early childhood ages, called "A Place to Play"

Let'sPlaySF!

Let'sPlaySF! is a partnership between the SF Recreation & Park Department and SF Parks Alliance. The Campaign supports the transformation of 13 of San Francisco's most timeworn playgrounds into dynamic hubs for creativity and family life.

Requity

Requity is a citywide program of the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department that offers free dynamic, engaging, and culturally relevant recreation programming to youth under 18 living in shelters, foster care, public housing or housing developments. The program is designed to support participants and their families by connecting them to Rec and Park programming and other relevant resources to promote a healthy and active lifestyle. [This video](#) gives an overview of the program.

San Francisco Public Library

YouthMobile

The YouthMobile program at the San Francisco Public Library in partnership with Recreation and Parks makes children's library materials easily accessible for checkout using an SFPL library card, fostering early literacy and a love for reading. This initiative operates through the city's dedicated bookmobile and extends support by facilitating library card creation and offering information about library services and programs.

Storytimes

Storytimes provide an opportunity for parents and caregivers to acquire new songs and ideas aimed at enriching their daily early literacy interactions with their children. These engaging sessions are available at all San Francisco Public Library locations on a weekly basis. They are tailored to various age groups, including Storytime for Babies, featuring songs, rhymes, and books for infants and their caregivers; Storytime for Toddlers, incorporating books, songs, movement, and more, catering to toddlers aged 16 months through age 2 and their caregivers; Storytime for Preschoolers, involving books, songs, fingerplays, and more, designed for children aged 3–5; and Storytime for Families, offering books, songs, rhymes, and enjoyable activities suitable for children of all ages.

Community Events

The San Francisco Public Library offers a variety of community activities for families and young children, including:

- Community Baby Showers: Providing diapers and essential items to families in need.
- BIG SF Playdate: Offering accessible activities to encourage adults to recognize the importance of play for young children.
- Tricycle Music Festival: A free music festival featuring children's musical artists.
- Dia de los Ninos/Libros: A literacy-focused block party celebrating children and books.

San Francisco Unified School District

Early Childhood Special Education

The SFUSD Early Childhood Special Education program is dedicated to providing a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE) for eligible students with disabilities. This program tailors educational services to the unique needs of each child identified with a disability that affects their education, offering support through the development of an Individual Education Program (IEP). The IEP is collaboratively designed by a team that includes the parent/guardian, SFUSD evaluators, professionals, teachers, and translators when required, along with additional representatives as deemed necessary by the family or district. Students enrolled in this program primarily attend General Education classrooms, where they are assigned Special Education case managers and provided with accommodations, modifications, supplementary aids, and supports as outlined in their IEPs. The program also includes an Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) Preschool Intake Packet, available in multiple

languages, to facilitate the assessment process and ensure that each child's needs are accurately identified and addressed.

Foster Youth Services: Educational Case Management

The Foster Youth Services: Educational Case Management program is dedicated to supporting children and youth in the foster system. This program encompasses children living at home, those placed outside the home, and youth placed out of home by the delinquency court. SFUSD ensures immediate enrollment for foster children, even if they cannot provide required documentation or clothing. The program allows foster children to remain in their school of origin during home placement changes or exits from foster care, including high school students who can stay until graduation. For out-of-county placements, an inter-district transfer is arranged without delay. Each SFUSD school designates a site-based FYSCP Site Contact/School Social Worker, serving as a primary point of contact for FYSCP services. These professionals facilitate communication between school staff and the youth's care providers and oversee academic progress, referrals, and related services for foster youth within their respective schools.



Indian Education Program: Monthly Family Night

The SFUSD Indian Education Program offers engaging activities for students and their families. The Cultural Arts Pine Needle Basket Weaving class is a monthly gathering aimed at creating a safe and inclusive space for families to learn and create together. This class is suitable for beginners to those with intermediate skill levels. The Wisdom Moving Forward Cultural Event is an annual celebration held in May, bringing together youth, elders, families, and friends of the Indian Education Program.

Migrant Education Program Pre-K Services

The Migrant Education Program offers Pre-K services for eligible children. If a Pre-K Migrant child is not receiving services from any Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) or Head Start programs, they will be supported by the Migrant Education Team. This includes services provided by a certified teacher who offers academic support to the child within a home-based setting. Additionally, parents are actively engaged and educated on how to promote and facilitate their child's academic development before they enter Kindergarten.

Out-of-School Time Programs

The Early Education Department's Out-of-School Time Program (OST) provides classes at various locations in the city, including Early Education Schools and Elementary Schools. These OST classrooms are specifically designed to serve students during breaks such as Summer Break, Spring Break, Thanksgiving Break, and after the regular school day ends. Parents have the option to keep their child at their daytime TK or elementary school or arrange for transportation to a designated OST site after the regular school day.

RISE-SF Newcomer Programming

RISE-SF Newcomer Programming, which stands for Refugee and Immigrant Supports in Education, has a clear mission of increasing educational access for immigrant and refugee students by advocating for culturally and linguistically inclusive programs and services. This initiative is focused on two primary areas. Firstly, it caters to newly arrived refugee and immigrant English Language Learners by providing orientation to San Francisco schools, helping them connect with district and school staff, advocating for their needs at school sites, offering referrals to community support services, and enhancing service coordination, especially for those in immigration removal proceedings such as unaccompanied minors and refugees/asylees. Secondly, RISE-SF contributes to creating a sanctuary education environment within SFUSD, ensuring that all students have the right to feel safe and supported at school. This includes supporting students and families in understanding their rights as immigrant students and mixed-status families in San Francisco, connecting them with district and school resources, and providing referrals to community support services, including legal assistance.

SFUSD Pre-kindergarten Sites

SFUSD Pre-kindergarten Sites are dedicated to preparing students for success in kindergarten and beyond, aligning their educational approaches with California's Common Core Standards. These programs emphasize a holistic development approach, integrating social-emotional, physical/motor, math, science, language and literacy, and visual/performing arts elements. The Early Education Department (EED) places a strong emphasis on early literacy development, fostering meaningful reading, writing, listening, and oral language skills while nurturing creativity and curiosity in the classroom. Additionally, the Dual Language Learning Program accommodates students who speak Spanish, Cantonese, or Samoan, celebrating their linguistic diversity and enhancing their language proficiency in both their home language and English.

Shoestrings Children's Center

Shoestrings is an intensive assessment and intervention diagnostic program, Shoestrings is not an educational placement. The program is designed to support students and families who continue to face barriers to school success particularly in settings which struggle to create and sustain supportive and nurturing school environments. Shoestrings provides longer-term assessment and evaluation.

Student Internships Team (SIT): School-Based Mental Health Services

The SFUSD Internships Team (SIT), formerly the Student Intervention Team, recruits, trains and supervises a yearly cohort of approximately 40-50 graduate-level clinical interns to provide individual and group school-based mental health support to SFUSD students. Under the direct clinical supervision of SIT staff and in conjunction with site School Social Workers, interns counsel students (beginning in Pre-K) experiencing emotional issues that impact learning. Counseling services include individual and group play and talk therapy. Interns serve students in general education and special education throughout the District.

Student Nutrition Services

Student Nutrition Services (SNS) is committed to providing students the equitable support they need to succeed in the classroom and beyond, by keeping them nourished along the way. School meals are offered

at no cost to all students. Thanks to California Meals for All, all school meals will continue to be offered at no cost to all students in the 2023-24 school year..

Students and Families Experiencing Homelessness (SAFEH)

Students and Families Experiencing Homelessness (SAFEH) works to increase the capacity of all schools to identify and support students eligible under the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act by reducing the barriers that students experiencing homelessness face in enrollment, attendance, and success in school.



This includes students and families who, due to loss of housing, economic hardship, natural disaster, or similar reasons, live in: hotels, motels, or SROs or with another family. It also includes students and families who are

- Living in a car, park, trailer park, campground, abandoned building, on the streets, or other inadequate accommodations (i.e., lack of water, electricity, or heat)
- In a shelter (family, domestic violence, youth shelter, or transitional living program)
- With friends or family because they run away or are an unaccompanied youth

Provider-focused Programs

BizNest at Children's Council

Training of the trainers. BizNest helps caregivers launch and nurture a thriving sustainable home-based child care program and improve their skills as an educator and business owner. BizNest can assist in marketing services, connecting with families who receive subsidies. They will provide nutrition and wellness support for children, help to utilize technology, like texting, email and social media to connect with families, provide for emergencies and save for the future.

Black Early Childhood Educator Policy Council

The Black Early Educator Policy Council (BEEPC) was formed as a stakeholder group with early childhood experts from across San Francisco. This twenty-two plus member council, comprised of industry experts from a variety of ECE settings, were tasked with providing insight, analysis and racial justice recommendations centered on improving student outcomes for AA children 0-5. **Children's Council of San Francisco is committed to improving access to high quality, culturally competent child care for our Black/African American communities.** We have invested in solutions that target child care workforce and career programming, child care business development, policy leadership and family support.

Black Early Childhood Education Achievement Program

Black individuals who are passionate about working with children AND want to build a career in Early Childhood Education (ECE). Participants will attend all class meetings virtually (Courses include Child, Family & Community, Child Growth & Development, Early Childhood Curriculum and ECE Principles & Practice) obtain a teaching permit through the California Department of Teaching and Credentialing will work



cooperatively as a cohort to accomplish personal goals and actively support an improved ECE system that supports Black children, families and early educators.

Child Care Food Program (CACFP)

The program provides monthly financial support to family child care providers for serving nutritious meals through the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program. The average annual amount of reimbursement for providers in the Food Program is roughly \$4,500-\$6,700. Providers receive direct deposit payment, guidance on food service, meal planning, nutrition budgeting, access to workshops featuring nutrition information, recipes and free online claiming with KidKare.

Early Care Educators of San Francisco

Early Care Educators of San Francisco (ECESF) is a non-profit community-based organization dedicated to bringing the voice of early care educators to the broader community, leaders, policy makers, allies, and peers to affect change. ECESF meets regularly with teachers and onsite educators, holding community dialogues, sharing information and peer support, identifying priority needs, supports educators in speaking to change agents, and brings educator priorities to policy leaders and forums.

Family Child Care Association of San Francisco

Family Child Care Association of San Francisco (FCCA SF) ensures that all children in family child care benefit from providers who have access to the support they need: Individual technical assistance, support, and referrals; Citywide and neighborhood meetings; Substitute Reimbursement for Professional and Leadership development; Health Benefits Assistance; Peer Networks support. FCCASF helps shape policy, programs, and training. It ensures that the role of family child care in serving young children and working parents is fully considered in local and statewide policy planning. FCCASF is a resource for children's services agencies and training institutions who serve children, families and family child care providers.

Family Child Care Business Incubator at Children's Council

FCC Business Incubator participants reside in neighborhoods that reflect a variety of socioeconomic levels. Specifically, participants predominantly reside in the Excelsior, Bayview, and Visitacion Valley neighborhoods which have median household incomes below the average for San Francisco and unemployment rates above the average for San Francisco. Thus, FCC Business Incubator participants primarily serve neighborhoods that are relatively more in need of affordable child care options to support economic development. The FCC Business Incubator workshops supported aspiring provider participants with gaining the confidence needed to start and expand their business.

Family Child Care Coaching at Wu Yee Children's Services

Through coaching we create opportunities for family child care educators to grow their knowledge, skills and use evidence-based practices of the educator and to support the program to improve the child's learning and experience.

FCC Educator Support Services at Wu Yee Children's Services

Wu Yee's Family Child Care (FCC) Educator Support Services helps coach, train and collaborate with Family Child Care Educators and those who are interested in becoming a Family Child Care Educator. Partners with both new and experienced family child care educators to support children and their families. Services are available in English, Cantonese, and Spanish.

Healthy Apple (via Children's Council and Wu Yee Children's Services)

Healthy Apple is a FREE program that supports child care educators in implementing research-based best practices in nutrition and physical activity for children from birth to age 5. Using the Healthy Apple Interactive Guide helps to promote physical activity throughout the day and connects the user to free Healthy Apple resources to make all child care programs healthier.



Professional Development at Wu Yee Children's Services

Wu Yee works to support and collaborate with FCC educators and enable them to operate successful, high-quality child care businesses. Wu Yee conducts pre-licensing inspections for first-time family child care applicants and expansion applicants to help ensure that licensing application requirements are met. We also offer site visits to recommend improvements and/or changes for current licensees.

Technology Help Desk at Children's Council

The Help Desk at Children's Council provides support for Early Learning Scholarship (ELS) and Preschool for All (PFA) providers with their reporting and business needs.

Appendix E: Common Acronyms

ACEs	Adverse Childhood Experiences
AMI	Area Median Income
CBO	Community-based Organizations
CNA	Community Needs Assessment
ECE	Early Care and Education/Early Childhood Education
DEC	Department of Early Childhood
DCYF	Department of Children, Youth, and Their Families
DPH	Department of Public Health
HSA	Human Services Agency
HSH	Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing
IEP	Individualized Education Program
OECE	Office of Early Care and Education
OEWD	Office of Economic Workforce and Development
OSB	Office of Small Business
OST	Out of School Time
RPD	Recreation and Park Department
SFPL	San Francisco Public Library
SFUSD	San Francisco Unified School District
WCI	Workforce Compensation Initiative
WIC	Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children
ZSFG	Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital