

TRINITY COUNTY
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES FIRST
COMMISSION
STRATEGIC PLAN
2009-2014



Adopted By:
Trinity County Children and Families First Commission
Trinity County Courthouse
P.O. Box 1362
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Adopted
June 30, 2009

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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June 30, 2009**

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The Commission would like to thank all of the people and organizations that served on the Advisory Committee or otherwise participated in the planning process. The ideas and information contributed were invaluable to the development of the strategic plan. Members of the Advisory Committee are:

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**TRINITY COUNTY CHILDREN AND FAMILIES FIRST COMMISSION
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TRINITY COUNTY CHILDREN AND FAMILIES FIRST COMMISSION STRATEGIC PLAN

Executive Summary

In 1998, the California Children and Families First Act (also known as Proposition 10) was enacted, increasing taxes on tobacco products in order to provide the funds to create a comprehensive and integrated delivery system of information and services to promote early childhood development prior to entering kindergarten. Trinity County Children and Families First Commission, also known as First 5 Trinity County (referred to as simply “the Commission” throughout) has received approximately \$200,000 a year from these funds. Additionally, the Commission has received \$115,000 of augmentation funding to support staff and operation costs; program support for grantees (Technical Assistance); and evaluation. . In order to access these monies, the Commission adopted a strategic plan that showed how Proposition 10 funding would be used to promote a comprehensive and integrated system of early childhood development services.

The Commission was created in December 1998 for the express purpose of evaluating the current and projected needs of young children and their families, developing the strategic plan that describes how the community needs will be addressed, determining how to expend local monies available from the State Children and Families Trust Fund, and evaluating the effectiveness of programs and activities funded in accordance with the strategic plan. Since its inception, the Commission has awarded more than \$2,134,946. in grant funds to programs and services for children and families in Trinity County.

The 2009 – 2014 Strategic Plan

This is the sixth revision to the strategic plan adopted by the Commission. The first strategic plan was adopted in June 2000. A total of 28 public meetings were held throughout the first planning process, welcoming input and involvement from all members of the community that wished to participate. The first strategic plan documented the needs of children and families in Trinity County and identified four long-range goals to enhance the early growth experiences of children. For each goal, specific objectives were developed along with a set of strategies or actions to be implemented in order to achieve each objective.

The Commission and its Advisory Committee met to review the original plan, revisit the needs of Trinity County children prenatal to kindergarten entrance and their families, and to revise the objectives in accordance with current conditions in the County. During the review of the plan, it was apparent that the original goals remained appropriate, but that several of the objectives and strategies were no longer applicable. Therefore, the second revision of the plan reflects changes that make implementation of the plan more feasible in today’s climate.

The third revision, simplified the second version and eliminated some of the duplication, and the fourth revision provided updates and a Long Range Financial Plan.

The Advisory Committee met three times to review and update the sixth version of the strategic plan. A fourth result area was added to bring the plan into line with principles established by First 5 California, while continuing to address priority needs identified in our county.

The intent of the first strategic plan was to provide a global plan for early childhood development services, not just a "Proposition 10" plan. As such, the plan is still a living document and will not be discarded. While the first strategic plan included documentation of existing community needs and resources, this revision does not include those details, but rather highlights the strategies the Commission believes would provide the intended results for local children and families. These are the type of strategies that the Commission would be interested

in supporting with Proposition 10 funding. The Commission will consider promising programs and services that have not been identified in this document.

Goals and Objectives

Through the assessment of information from various data sources and extensive input by service providers and members of the community, four primary goals were established in 2000 with a total of eleven objectives linked to those goals. The subsequent revisions maintained many of the goals that were identified in the first strategic plan and updates the wording of the objectives, and incorporates the State Commission result areas under the evaluation section.

An integral part of the plan is regular evaluation of the progress made toward achieving the goals and objectives, as well as assessing the effectiveness of funding allocation decisions. The foundation of the evaluation process are the indicators contained in the plan; the long-term indicators define specific performance targets (outcomes) to be achieved for each objective and the short-term indicators represent the data that will be used for the evaluation.

Fund Allocation

Proposition 10 revenues to the counties are calculated based on the number of births to families residing in the county each year. However, because Trinity County is one of the eight minimum allocated counties in California, the Commission receives a minimum allocation of \$200,000 per year. This amount is greater than what would be generated based on birth statistics calculations alone. The Commission receives an additional \$115,000 per year to offset administrative and overhead; program support to grantees (technical assistance); and evaluation costs. Additionally, the Commission seeks to maximize funds by leveraging Proposition 10 funds with other funding streams and grants. To this end, the Commission has applied for matching funds from First Five California through its School Readiness and CARES Initiatives. The Commission received \$25,000 to coordinate the School Readiness Initiative, and should receive an additional \$475,000 over 4 years to implement the School Readiness Initiative in Trinity County.

The CARES Initiative will receive \$27,296.68, this year to support the education and retention of child care providers throughout Trinity County. The current CARES contract ends June 30, 2009.

The Commission is committed to ensuring that the greatest possible benefit is realized for young children and their families through the use of resources from the Children and Families Trust Fund. In keeping with the directive of the Children and Families Act, the funds will be used for projects that meet the goals and objectives outlined in this Strategic Plan, and pursue outcomes that are linked to the result areas established by First Five California.

Background

In November 1998, the California electorate voted in favor of Proposition 10, the "Children and Families First" initiative, which then became effective on January 1, 1999. The initiative levies a tax on cigarettes and other tobacco products in order to provide funding for local early childhood development programs. The ultimate goal is to enhance the early growth experiences

of children, enabling them to be more successful in school, and give them an equal opportunity to succeed in life. Revenues generated from the tobacco tax will be used for the following:

- To create a comprehensive and integrated delivery system of information and services to promote early childhood development
- To Provide funds that focus on parenting education, child health and wellness, early child care and education, and family support services
- To Educate Californians via a statewide multimedia campaign on the importance of early childhood development and smoking cessation.

Since January 1999, tobacco tax revenues have been accumulated into a designated trust fund to meet the needs of children ages prenatal to kindergarten entrance throughout the state. Almost \$600 million per year is being placed in this trust fund. 80% of these funds are then allocated to the 58 counties of the state according to the live birth rate of each county. The remaining 20% of the money is directed to statewide programs, research, and media campaigns.

Since the implementation of the first strategic plan, The Trinity County Children and Families First Commission invested in 168 funded projects, and 48 mini grants totaling more than \$2,134,946. The majority of the funded projects addressed either health issues, or took an educational focus toward school readiness and early care. The Commission made a commitment to provide services that included the most outlying areas as well as the population centers. To this end, it funded a number of small childcare providers and some countywide programs such as the home visiting program and breast-feeding promotion project. Several of the county's geographically isolated communities were served through a series of pre-school and early care programs. Several funded programs addressed, among their other objectives, early identification and intervention for children with special needs. Additionally, in response to concerns about nutrition and hunger as a result of the widespread poverty in the county, some programs provided nutritional meals and snacks, and educated parents about the nutritional needs of families.

Initially, the Commission funded Trinity Kids First, the countywide children's collaborative. The collaborative develops strategies and activities that promote the health and well being of children. .

The Trinity County Children and Families Commission is committed to being responsive to community needs. The Commission offered quarterly funding for the first five years of funding, and eventually switched over to annual funding. At the Commission meeting, applications are reviewed and oral presentations are provided by the applicants. Funding decisions are made on a "real time" basis, at the meeting. In this way the Commission engages the community in its decision making process, rather than behind closed doors, and also is responsive to immediate needs.

Trinity County Profile

Trinity County is located in the mountains of northern California, midway between Shasta County and the Northern Coastline of Humboldt County. The county spans 3,200 square miles, which is greater than the size of the state of Delaware and Rhode Island. The elevation ranges from its lowest point of 600 feet near Salyer to 9,038 feet at Mt. Eddy in the northeast corner of

the County. There are few highways and roadways that connect rural communities and service areas, making access to medical, dental and social service facilities difficult due to rugged mountainous terrain, geographic isolation and limited public transportation. Trinity County is accessed from Sacramento by way of Interstate 5 (North) to Redding, which connects to California State Route 299 (West). During favorable weather it takes about an hour and fifteen minutes to reach the county seat of Weaverville from Redding.

Based on the 2006 census estimate, the current population of Trinity County is 14,313. Due to its vast size and small population (there are 4.1 persons per square mile) Trinity County has been classified by the Federal Government as Frontier.

Almost half of the population is centered in two locations, Weaverville and Hayfork. These two communities are separated from each other by a 45-minute drive along 32 miles of mountain roads. The remainder of the population is widely dispersed in small communities throughout the county.

The largest ethnic minority group is Native American Indian at 4.8% of the population. There are two communities in Trinity County with more than 10% Native American Indian children: Burnt Ranch and Hayfork. Trinity Kids First, a Commission funded children's collaborative helped these communities to obtain AIECE (American Indian Early Childhood Education) funding. The Burnt Ranch Playgroup is school-linked and meets at the Burnt Ranch Indian Hall. There is also a growing Hispanic/Latino population creating a need for services for people who speak Spanish as their primary language.

The major challenges for Trinity County children are geographic isolation, poverty, and lack of transportation. Much of Trinity County lacks the basic infrastructure to integrate services to its outlying areas. Employment is often seasonal and dominated by government (local, state and federal) and timber related jobs. Historically, communities in the county have been economically dependent on timber, seasonal recreation and tourism. In recent years, employment in timber related jobs has declined due to a number of factors, including loss of timber from environmental protection actions and the closure of several mills.

The median family income in Trinity County is \$27,711, and way below the State median family income of \$47,493. Trinity County's unemployment rate is currently 19% almost twice the overall California unemployment rate of 8.2%. Trinity County seasonal unemployment rates can exceed 20%. Children are clearly impacted by these conditions, as evidenced by more than 59% of school-aged children consistently being eligible for subsidized meals and 14.1% of families living below poverty.

The Importance of Early Childhood Development

Parents are their child's first teacher, and young children learn and develop because of the key role their parents play in their development. Although a wide range of individuals and institutions impact the health and well being of young children, the role of parents is paramount. Parenting is much more important during the ages of birth to five than we once believed. By

providing children with safe, nurturing and stimulating environments, parents and caregivers influence long-term growth and development during these important early years.

During the first three years of a child's life, the early physical architecture of a child's brain is established. Research has proven a number of important points:

At birth, the brain is remarkably unfinished. The parts of the brain that handle thinking and remembering as well as emotional and social behavior are very underdeveloped.

- In the early years, a child develops basic brain and physiological structures upon which later growth and learning are dependent.
- The brain operates on a "use it or lose it" principle. Emotionally and socially as well, the child develops many of the abilities upon which later social functioning is based.
- The brain matures in the world, rather than in the womb; thus young children are deeply affected by their experiences.
- Their relationships with parents and other important caregivers; the sights, sounds, smells, and feelings they encounter; and the challenges they meet, affect the way a child's brain develops.

The early years of a child's life form the foundation for later development. Attention to young children is a powerful means of preventing later difficulties such as developmental delays and disturbances. Physical, mental, social, and emotional development and learning are interrelated. Thus, promoting child development is not limited to the academic arena of numbers and letters. The following dimensions of child development are considered important:

- Social-emotional development - Meeting children's basic human needs for affection, security, social participation and interaction with others, as well as educational needs through intellectual stimulation, exploration, imitation, trial and error, discovery and active involvement in learning and experimentation within a safe and stimulating environment.
- Cognitive development – The identification of shapes and sizes, colors, numbers, and other educational needs.
- Physical development: Meeting children's basic needs for protection, nutrition and health care.

These early childhood development needs are the basis for Proposition 10, the California Children and Families Initiative.

The Trinity County Children and Families First Commission

Pursuant to the requirements of Proposition 10, the Trinity County Board of Supervisors adopted Ordinance 1223 in December 1998 establishing the county's Children and Families First Commission, comprised of 7 members appointed by the Board of Supervisors. According to state statutes, the Commission must include at least one member of the Board of Supervisors and two other County managers involved in children and family services. The remaining

members of the Commission are drawn from community-based organizations and the public at large, with the requirement that such members are either recipients of services included in the strategic plan or representatives of organizations providing designated services (child care, health, family support, education, and other related services) to children and families. Following its first year of operation, the Commission increased its membership to nine to ensure that at least two positions be filled by community members at large.

The duties of the Commission include evaluating the current and projected needs of young children and their families, developing a strategic plan that promotes a comprehensive and integrated system of early childhood development services that addresses community needs, determining how to expend local monies available from the state Children and Families Trust Fund, and evaluating the effectiveness of programs and activities funded in accordance with the strategic plan. A requirement of the state laws governing the Commission is to ensure that money from the Children and Families Trust Fund is not used to replace existing local funding for programs and services. In other words, Proposition 10 funds must be used to increase the level of services available, and not supplant existing services.

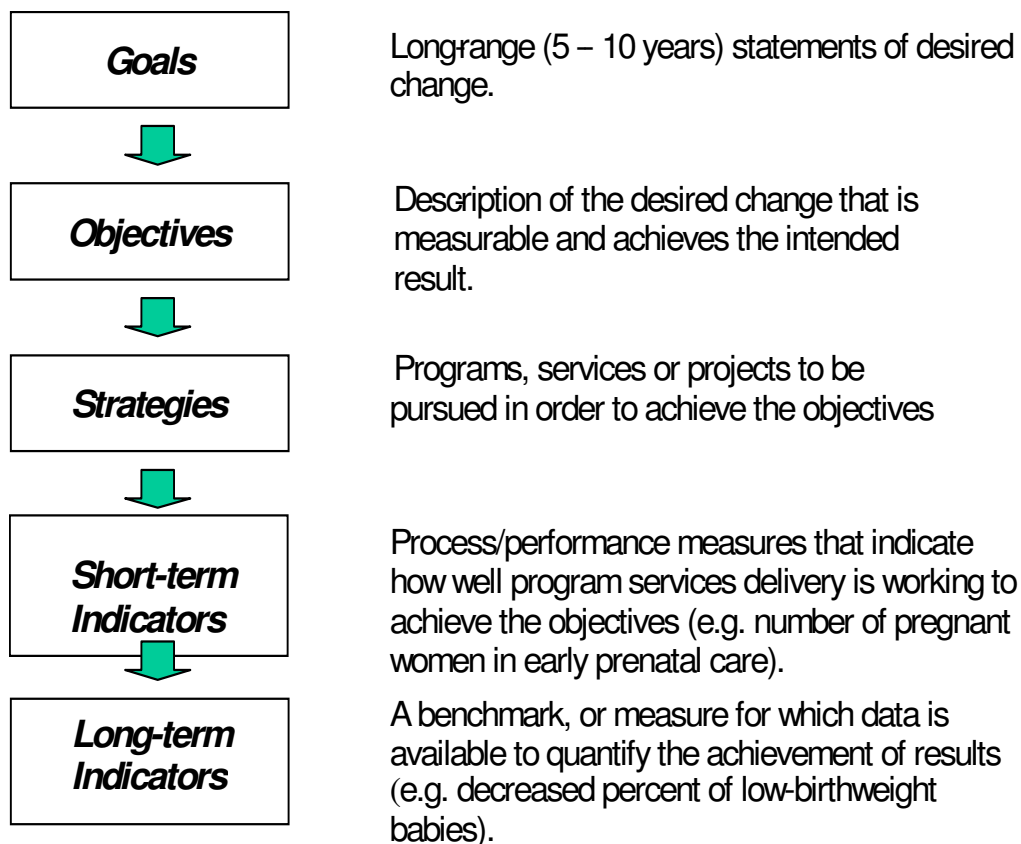
Activities sponsored with Proposition 10 funds are expected to focus specifically on children prenatal up to kindergarten entrance, and their families. Further, according to state level guidelines that have been established, funding should be directed to achieving three strategic results:

1. **Improved Child Health: Healthy Children.** Children who are healthy in mind, body and spirit grow up confident on their ability to live a fulfilling, productive life. Healthy children have sufficient nutrition, health care, nurturing and guidance, and mental stimulation, and they live in families and communities that value them. The research on child development and the impact of the early years emphasizes the importance of children and their mothers beginning life with healthy nutrition and healthy and safe environments.
2. **Improved Child Development: Children Learning and Ready for School.** The importance of preparing children to succeed in school is critical. The role of education in a child's later ability to create a healthy, fulfilling life has been well documented. Skills that allow one to problem solve and think creatively are developed in early childhood education settings and nurtured through community and parental reinforcement. The National Association of Elementary School Principals has stated that "better childhoods" would be the single greatest contributor to improvement in school achievement.
3. **Improved Family Functioning: Strong Families.** Successful and strong families are those who are able to provide for the physical, mental and emotional development of their children. Young children are entirely dependent upon caregivers for survival and nurturing. It is the interaction of the parent or primary caregiver with the child that shapes the child's view of himself or herself as an individual capable of interacting with the world and achieving desired outcomes from that interaction. Parents and caregivers provide the foundation for a child's ability to create successful relationships, solve problems and carry out responsibilities. Children who are encouraged to develop a strong self-concept from an early age are more likely to achieve a productive and fulfilling life.

These three strategic result areas served as the initial basis for Trinity County's strategic planning efforts. The 2009-2014 revision added Improved Systems of Care as another important focus area.

4. **Improved Systems of Care.** Ensure that services for families will be of quality, comprehensive and accessible. The importance of children and families connectedness to community and resources is fundamental to success. Programs will support the development of quality early education, child ready school environments and increase level of collaboration amongst partners to improve service delivery.

The components of the Trinity County Strategic Plan are shown in the diagram below, with a definition of each term and how these concepts related to the statutory requirements.



It is important to note that the Commission’s intent is to affect positive outcomes for Trinity County children prenatal up to kindergarten entrance, and their families. The Commission recognizes there are many strategies that lead to the desired results. Therefore, the strategies listed are samples of what might be, and are not necessarily the *only* methods the Commission would consider supporting.

Clearly, many of the strategies are interrelated, as are the indicators of success. For example, a program that provides parent education relevant to reducing child abuse incidence, would likely address other objectives such as healthy births and the importance of early education.

Integration of services should also be interwoven into the fabric of programs to the greatest degree possible. In an environment of scarce resources, this becomes an overarching principle for decisions under the terms of the Commission’s funding priorities.

It is also essential to understand that the resources are not available within the County to fund all of the strategies, at least not at this time. Through its process of soliciting grant applications, the Commission expects local service providers to submit proposals that clearly address the stated objectives with proven or promising practices that can be linked, through evaluation, to the intended outcomes and indicators. The grants that will be considered for funding may be for the direct provision of services, the enhancement of existing programs and/or for planning grants to research and develop promising strategies.



Goals & Objectives

The strategic plan is a long-range plan, containing goals and strategies to be pursued over the course of many years. Each year, the Children and Families First Commission will evaluate progress toward the goals and objectives. This process will be conducted collaboratively with the Advisory Committee, and seek input from other agencies, organizations and individuals with an interest in determining successful outcomes for Children and Families in our community.

The following section contains the updated goals and objectives adopted by the Commission on June 30, 2009. These goals and objectives should be used as a guide for grantees to develop their grant application.

1: Improved Family Functioning:

Pre-kindergarten development begins with strong and healthy families that have support services available when needed. Effective community outreach and education is dependent on meaningful relationships with parents, caregivers and service agencies.

Goal 1: Home environments support the physical, emotional and cognitive development of children.

Strategy	Outcome	Indicators
1.1 Provide effective programs for families with children ages 0-5.	Increase percentage of families who report a change in general knowledge and understanding of early childhood related issues and services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Percentage of families who report a change in general knowledge and understanding of early childhood related issues as indicated by parent surveys and interviews. ▪ Number of participants in First 5 sponsored programs.
1.2 Support early intervention strategies for expecting and new parents.	Increase percentage of families who report a change in general knowledge and understanding of early childhood related issues and services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Track number of Welcome Baby Kits distributed. ▪ Develop assessment ▪ Existing tool: HRN's In home services assessment.

Potential Strategies:

- Family centered educational programs advocating for healthy lifestyles, including breastfeeding; tobacco use prevention, second hand smoke prevention, drug and alcohol awareness; child abuse prevention; child health and oral health indicators
 - Recreational activities that include health messages
 - Healthy lifestyle messages at community events
 - Awareness of supplemental food programs such as food stamps and WIC
 - Family literacy programs that include healthy lifestyle education
 - Parent education about how to make healthy food choices
 - Parent support groups

- Home visiting and home based services for prenatal up to kindergarten entrance that include alcohol and other drug information.

Possible Indicators:

- Number of parents receiving education on child abuse and neglect.
- Number of parents receiving education on healthy diets for young children.
- Increased awareness of existing Alcohol and Other Drugs (AODS) programs and services.
- Number of parents of young children participating in prevention and treatment programs.
- Number of prevention programs and opportunities to educate parents provided in a culturally and linguistically appropriate way.

Possible Long-term Indicators:

- Decreased rate of substantiated child abuse cases.
- Decreased rate of foster care placements.

2: Improved Child Development

The early years of a child's life are crucial for cognitive, social and emotional development. Therefore, it is important that we take every step necessary to ensure that children grow up in environments where their social, emotional and educational needs are met.

Goal 2: Children will be ready to experience success in school and achieve their greatest potential.

Strategy	Outcome	Indicator
2.1 Support school readiness through quality early care and education programs, including family child care homes, preschools,	Early care and education programs are available in Trinity County communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of early care and education programs available in Trinity County communities.

and playgroups.		
2.2 Support availability of child development programs.	Increase/maintain availability of early care, education and child development programs enrollments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of children enrolled in funded early care and education program as indicated by the grantee reports.
2.3 Children receive comprehensive screening and assessments through implementation of a system of developmental screening and assessments within the funded program (including mini-grants).	All children are screened within funded programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of children who are screened with comprehensive developmental assessments as indicated by grantee reports. ▪ Tool: DRDP-R or other norm-referenced developmental profile.

Potential Strategies:

- Education programs for licensed and license exempt providers that increase childcare provider skills, including infant care, child health and safety, early detection of learning disabilities, and caring for children with special needs.
- Childcare facility (home) visiting programs for education and outreach to providers Programs, such as playgroups, that encourage parent involvement. Child Care/Preschool Programs for children with special needs.
- Technical assistance and other support to bring childcare and early childhood settings up to the highest health and safety standards.
- Programs directed to grandparents, foster parents and other significant caregivers.
- School-site based health and dental screenings
- Parent education programs that assist parents to be their child’s first teachers.
- Parental/community awareness of the importance of the early years of child development.
- Educate parents about child abuse and existing resources
- Health screening, child abuse education and nutrition/physical activity education linked with home visiting programs

Possible Indicators:

- Number of providers/parents/caregivers participating in ongoing educational programs.
- Number of child care providers receiving home visitor services.
- Number of pediatric health and dental screening services available locally.
- Number of children entering Kindergarten in Trinity County who have received comprehensive. screenings.
- Number of playgroups.
- Number of children enrolled in child care/preschool programs.
- Increased kindergarten readiness and kindergarten success.
- Increased quality of childcare and early education in Trinity County.

3: Improved Child Health

Children’s ability to learn is directly linked to how they feel emotionally and physically. Programs that focus on prevention, education and wellness are extremely important to their future success.

Goal 3: Children will be healthy, safe and well nourished.

Strategy	Outcome	Indicator
3.1 Support programs for children and families that may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical activity; • Nutrition education; • Healthy lifestyles and wellness; or • Child safety and injury prevention. • Oral health 	All children ages 0-5 will have an opportunity to participate in healthy activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of funded programs. ▪ Pre and post surveys
	Funded programs will improve the health of children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pre and post surveys
3.2 Collaborate with local agencies to implement tobacco education and cessation programs in Trinity County.	Reduced exposure of young children of secondhand tobacco smoke.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of families 0-5 who report that they have either quit smoking or are not smoking indoors or in the car. ▪ Number of cessation classes ▪ Tools: Welcome Baby questionnaire (add tobacco question).

Potential Strategies:

- Community gardens that include programs for preschool aged children and their families
- Nutrition education and adequate physical activity included in curricula of early childhood education programs
- Tobacco cessation programs
- Access to early prenatal care
- Pregnancy testing offering concurrent HIV testing and linking women successfully to preconception and early prenatal care
- Media campaign to educate women on preconception and prenatal health issues and services available in and outside of Trinity County
- Nutritional and breastfeeding education services and outreach
- Outreach education services that include information about drug, alcohol and tobacco exposure during pregnancy

- Home visiting and home-based services for prenatal up to kindergarten entrance that include alcohol and other drug information
- Tobacco cessation programs.
- Prenatal recovery programs.
- Parent support groups that include preconception/prenatal health education
- Link pregnant women with existing programs and services
- Advocate to increase local pediatric dental services
- Outreach/education and enrollment to Healthy Families or Medi-Cal for children
- Awareness campaign for community and providers concerning need for early dental care.
- Access to community based health exams
- Access to comprehensive well-baby screenings
- C.H.D.P. awareness and access throughout the community
- Transportation access for pediatric dental services outside of the County

Possible Indicators:

- Number of women reporting that they can access quality prenatal care.
- Number of women entering prenatal care.
- Number of women receiving preconception health education prior to decision to conceive.
- Number of women enrolled in W.I.C. program or other nutritional and breastfeeding education services.
- Number of women smoking or experiencing second hand smoke during pregnancy.
- Number of women using drugs/alcohol and tobacco during pregnancy.
- Decreased percentages of low-birth weight babies.
- Infant survival rate.
- Decreased percentage of babies with prenatal exposure to alcohol, drugs and tobacco.
- Increased percentage of women breastfeeding their babies through six months.
- Decreased number of children entering school with excessive dental caries.
- Increased number of children receiving annual well child check-ups.

4: Improved Systems of Care

Systems of care support a seamless infrastructure that encourages collaboration and ongoing communication to address gaps in services and eliminating access barriers.

Goal 4: Ensure that services for families will be quality, comprehensive and accessible.

Strategy	Outcome	Indicator
4.1 Maintain Trinity County Resource Directory to serve as a resource to families of children ages 0-5.	Updated with current information	▪ Number of copies distributed.
4.2 Entities working with	Three collaborative meetings	▪ Number of activities and

<p>children will participate in Week of the Young Child planning and activities.</p>	<p>prior to week of the young child.</p> <p>Exploration of concept of Children’s Summit, and convene planning group.</p>	<p>agency participants.</p>
<p>4.3 Provide support for professional growth development opportunities for early childhood professionals that work or live in Trinity County.</p>	<p>Increase the percentage of professional who have participated in trainings.</p>	<p>▪ Number of professionals who have participated in early education related trainings as indicated by grantee reports.</p>

Potential Strategies:

- Advisory Committee composed of representatives involved in children and families programs to meet quarterly, and as needed and coordinate services, and provide periodic reports to the Commission
- Coordination of planning and program evaluation activities between agencies
- Maximize coordination and collaboration across organizations
- Programs and services that demonstrate the use of leveraged funding sources and maximize the use of resources
- Resource Directory that lists all available programs, services and other resources within Trinity County that may be used to assist children and families
- Use of newsletters, media resources, surveys and other means to increase information flow between the public and providers
- Systems that improve family resource access and referral methods, such as family resource centers, home visiting, co-location of services
- Transportation to service providers using such things as vans, bus vouchers, car-pooling, etc.
- Programs and services that are ethnically and culturally reflective of the communities they serve
- Media outreach that is culturally and linguistically competent and appropriate
- Presence of an active Advisory Committee that is meeting at least quarterly for information sharing and coordination of services
- Number of organizations actively collaborating to coordinate service delivery
- Number of reports, assessment results, other forms of information shared between agencies
- Number of newsletters, press releases and other informational and educational activities intended to promote awareness of available services
- Number of families reporting increased access to programs and services
- Sustainable family resource and referral programs and services throughout Trinity County
- Children and families linked with appropriate services

Possible Indicators:

- Number of families reporting increased access to programs and services.
- Number of organizations actively collaborating to coordinate service delivery.
- Presence of an active

- Advisory Committee that is meeting at least quarterly for information sharing and coordination of services.
- Number of newsletters, press releases and other informational and education activities intended to promote awareness of available services.

Evaluation of Results

In the context of this strategic plan, **evaluation** refers to the process and methods by which the Trinity County Children and Families First Commission and community stakeholders can assess the degree of progress made toward achieving the goals, objectives and desired outcomes described in this plan as well as assess the effectiveness of funding allocation decisions. The foundation of the evaluation process are indicators described in the previous section; and represent the data that will be used for the evaluation.

A formal evaluation process and written report must be completed at least once each year in compliance with California Health and Safety Code Section 130150, which states:

“On or before November 1 of each year, the state commission and each county commission shall conduct an audit of, and issue a written report on the implementation and performance of, their respective functions during the preceding fiscal year, including, at a minimum, the manner in which funds were expended, the progress toward, and the achievement of, program goals and objectives, and the measurement of specific outcomes through appropriate reliable indicators.”

The Commission has begun working with evaluation consultants that are affiliated with statewide evaluation of Proposition 10. With the state evaluators the Commission will:

- ✓ Collect data for all of the appropriate performance indicators contained in this plan. For example, service providers that are funded through the Commission’s grant-making process will collect and report on indicators that are relevant to their program deliverables.
- ✓ Evaluate the performance of individual funded programs and verifying the appropriate utilization of funds from the Children and Families Trust Fund.
- ✓ Provide technical assistance to funded agencies to build their capacity to participate in the evaluation process.
- ✓ Develop formats to be used for reporting and analysis of indicators and outcomes.
- ✓ Develop a means of using evaluation results to improve future versions of the strategic plan and future funding decisions.
- ✓ Coordinate evaluation efforts with other public and private children and families’ system evaluation efforts within Trinity County. Coordinate with, and leverage, successful evaluation models, tools and systems developed by the State Commission and other County Commissions.

Resource Allocation

The allocation plan contained in this section describes the overall approach that will be used to allocate funds from the Children and Families Trust Fund to specific programs, projects and services in Trinity County. A budget covering the period from July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010 is also provided.

The Commission is committed to ensuring that the greatest possible benefit is realized for young children and their families through the use of resources from the Children and Families Trust Fund. In order to meet this overall goal, the following guidelines have been established related to the allocation and investment of Trust Fund monies.

1. Funds will only be allocated to activities that are in direct furtherance of the elements of this strategic plan or that are necessary for the operation of the Commission, consistent with the purposes expressed in the California Children and Families Act.
2. The Commission will actively seek to coordinate with other funding sources so that Proposition 10 resources are used wherever practical to: (a) attract funding from other sources so that the total monies available for early childhood development are increased, (b) fill gaps where no other sources of funding can be identified to provide high-priority programs and services called for in this plan.
3. The Commission encourages projects, programs and services that can address multiple goals and objectives.
4. In compliance with California Revenue and Taxation Code section 30131.4, Trust Fund monies will be used only to supplement existing levels of service and/or create new services, and not to fund existing levels of service. No monies from the Children and Families Trust Fund will be used to supplant state or local General Fund money for any purpose.
5. The Commission is committed to funding service providers that are able to objectively demonstrate the cost-effectiveness and overall efficacy of their services and that comply with other requirements of the Commission to ensure accountability of funds.
6. Since the number and magnitude of needs in Trinity County far exceed the amount of funding available to the county each year from the Trust Fund, the Commission *may* opt to use a multi-year investment strategy. This means that funding *may* be targeted toward specific objectives over multiple years (two, three, five or more years) in order to achieve a long-range impact. However, in recognition of the continuous changes that occur within the community and other funding sources, the Commission will make funding decisions one year at a time. There can be no guarantee of sustained support for programs funded in prior years.
7. Creative strategies will be pursued to achieve fiscal independence for funded programs wherever possible. This may include the ability of programs to generate their own

revenues in the future and/or the ability to transition funding from the Commission to other sustainable sources so that Trust Fund resources are freed up for other purposes.

8. Funds may be allocated on a sole source basis according to the current Contracting and Procurement Policy, or to a targeted group of providers at the discretion of the Commission.

Allocation Process

Funds will be allocated to various strategies and service providers through a grant-making process. Due to the limited amount of funding available and the presence of relatively few service providers in the county, the Commission may also elect to forgo a formal competitive bid or Request For Proposal (RFP) process and work collaboratively with the various service providers in the County to match funds, coordinate budget decisions, and ultimately use Proposition 10 funding to fill gaps where no other sources of funding are available to support a high priority service or project. In keeping with the directive of the Children and Families Act, the funds will be reflective of the objectives outlined in the Strategic Plan and will address the priority areas of Health and Wellness, Child Care and Early Education, Parent Education and Family Support Services, and Coordinated Access to Services

Through the wise investment of Proposition 10 funds and dedicated partnership between the Commission, service providers, parents and other community stakeholders, we can create an environment where all children in Trinity County are healthy, happy, and able to spend their early childhood years in positive surroundings that help them to reach their full potential.

Budget FY 2009-10 will be updated after Commission approval

This budget reflects revenues received from the state Children and Families Trust Fund, minus total expenditures anticipated in the 2009-2010 fiscal year.

Budget For Fiscal Year 2009-2010

Revenue:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------|
| • Base Allocation | 200,000 |
| • School Readiness | 125,000 |
| • Administrative Augmentation | 115,000 |
| • Interest + SMIF | |
| • .Encumbered/Obligated | |
| • Encumbered/Unobligated | |

Total Revenues

Expenditures:

- | | |
|--------------------|---------|
| • Operating Costs | |
| • School Readiness | 225,000 |
| • CARES | |
| • Reserve | 5,000 |
| • Grants | |

Total Expenditures

Balance

\$0

It is important to recognize that there is no assurance of future funding levels from the Trust Fund. Trinity County is currently receiving \$200,000 base allocation, \$118,787 administrative augmentation annually, due to actions by the State Commission to establish a minimum funding level for each county, but there is no absolute guarantee that the State Commission will maintain this policy. Trinity County would receive considerably less if its share of the state trust fund were determined solely by the county's birth rate. State level revenues are also projected to decline by 4% per year as the higher costs of smoking produced by the tobacco tax serves to reduce the number of smokers. This decline in state level resources may have an impact on the amount of funding allocated to Trinity County.

Long Range Financial Plan

First Five Trinity County Commission has a base allocation of \$200,000, making it one of the eight minimum allocated Counties. As a result of the small allocation, building a large endowment or setting aside a large sum of money would not be practical or feasible.

Although funds are limited, First 5 Trinity County Commission is dedicated to providing the County with highest quality of services possible, and will continue to do so as long as funding remains at or near the current level.

Since financial resources are very limited, the Commission has prepared a long range plan to set aside \$5,000, in order to close the First Five office, and notify all stakeholders if funds are substantially reduced. This plan would only go into affect if the augmentation funding was significantly reduced or eliminated.

The Commission relies heavily on the augmentation funding to sustain their staffing and provide an office in order to have a real presence in the County. The First 5 office has been able to provide resources to the target population, offer technical assistance to the grantees, produce educational articles for the local paper, carry out the work of the Commission, and provide a positive presence in the County.

Conclusion

Early childhood development lays the foundation for adult life, serving as the basis for children to become well-adjusted, productive citizens. Clearly there is a compelling need in Trinity County to create and implement a comprehensive, collaborative, and integrated system of information and services to promote, support, and optimize early childhood development from the prenatal stage till kindergarten entrance. This strategic plan represents preliminary steps toward a long-range effort to establish such a system so that one day all children in Trinity County will be healthy, happy, and able to spend their early childhood years in positive surroundings that helps them to reach their full potential.