Public Policy and Communications

Healthy Family Fun Fair – We celebrated First 5 Marin’s 20th anniversary with a “Healthy Family Fun Fair” on Saturday, October 27th—with lots of free activities (thanks to community partners), healthy treats... and oral health screenings. About 100 families enjoyed the sunny day at McNears Beach Park. Thanks to Commissioner Kristen Seatavakin for joining us!
Annual Report – Amy and Michelle completed First 5 Marin’s annual report to the State of California. Michelle is working on our annual report to the community; the printed document will be presented to the commission in January.

CA Economic Summit – Michelle attended the California Economic Summit in Santa Rosa on November 15/16th. She spoke about the Strong Start initiative at a pre-session about early childhood investments. Moira Kenney, executive director of the First 5 Association, was interviewed in a great discussion about First 5 and the connection between early investments and our economic future.

Marin Communications Forum – the monthly forums continue with strong attendance and a very positive response from the community. The most recent forum was:

- **Health Equity in Marin** – This forum began with a greeting from the Consul General of Guatemala and also from the Vice Consul of Mexico. There was an excellent presentation of the report, “Healthy Mind, Healthy Future: Promoting the Mental Health and Wellbeing of Children in Immigrant Families,” by The Children’s Partnership and The California Immigrant Policy Center. Dr. Matt Willis, Marin County Public Health Officer presented on health disparities in Marin, and we showcased ten organizations in Marin County that are working to improve health outcomes for all. There was a great deal of audience participation and public comments. Approximately 175 people attended this event for BiNational Health Week. Special thanks to Supervisor Dennis Rodoni for offering the closing remarks!

The next forum will be:

- **December 14th: Legislative Updates with Assemblyman Marc Levine and State Senator Mike McGuire** - Marin’s state representatives will address the Marin Communications Forum with a report on the last legislative session and a preview bills they plan to introduce in 2019. They will also cover high priority public policy issues in Sacramento. This will be an interactive forum—we hope you can join us! RSVP to Michelle@First5Marin.org. (We already have 150 RSVPs, and are expecting a full house.)

Coming in 2019—specific dates TBA.

- **Oral Health** – Michelle is working with Marin County Health and Human Services and will be pre-planning this forum to promote “Children’s Dental Health Month” in February.
- **Child Care** – Michelle and Amy are working with the Marin Child Care Council to plan a comprehensive program about child care and the importance of quality, affordability and availability.
- **Toxic Stress** – This May 20th forum will focus on toxic stress, prevention and intervention for “Mental Health Awareness Month.”
- **Education Equity** will be the topic in August.

Public Charge – Amy and Michelle continue working with community partners on the “public charge” issue. The proposed changes were posted to the Federal Register on October 10th, triggering a 60 day public comment period. The working group is focused on public information and outreach, and support for the public comment process.

[Public charge is a phrase used in immigration law that allows federal authorities to deny legal status changes (entry to the United States or issuance of a “green card” for permanent residency) to people receiving certain types of financial benefits (cash assistance or long-term institutionalized medical care). The Trump administration is proposing significant changes to the “public charge question” that could]
impact many more people receiving many more types of public benefits (such as CalFresh, MediCare/MediCal, and Section 8 housing).

Amy has been collaborating with leaders from Marin County Health and Human Services, Marin Community Foundation and other community partners to develop strategy and coordinate a community response. Michelle is heading the Communications Subcommittee, which has developed an informational flyer, FAQs and talking points; she also designed a website/landing page where information is shared and documents are posted. For more information, see: https://www.marinhhs.org/public-charge.

***PUBLIC COMMENTS about the proposed changed to the public charge rule are due by Monday, December 10\textsuperscript{th}. This is a critical effort! Individuals may post via www.ProtectingImmigrantFamilies.org (with instructions and guidance); organizations are encouraged to post directly to the Federal Register at: www.regulations.gov. ***

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Much of the month was spent on Public Charge work (see report above). Amy attended a presentation by Migration Policy Institute at the Silicon Valley Community Foundation on Public Charge history and potential impact. The information and data were particularly helpful as we work on understanding the potential and longer-term impact in Marin.

Planning is underway for the issuing of an Invivtation to Bid for the Help Me Grow central access line. A draft Invitation will be shared with and discussed by the funding committee of the Help Me Grow effort on December 12\textsuperscript{th}. The committee will also discuss the potential funding sources, beyond First 5 Marin, that we can access going forward. The Invitation will be issued before the end of the year to three or four organizations which have expressed interest and have some experience in providing information and resource referrals similar to HMG’s comprehensive approach. It is understood that any organization that takes on this effort will need some substantial start-up capacity building.

Meetings

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