Public Policy and Communications

**First 5 Express** – Michelle has scheduled the First 5 Express to visit Marin County in April, for the Month of the Young Child. The Express, with a variety of “Talk-Read-Sing” activities for young children monitored by bilingual staff, will visit the Marin Community Clinics’ “Health Hubs” on **Wednesday, April 15th in the Canal** (2:30 to 5:30 pm) and **Thursday, April 16th in Novato** (3:30 to 5:30 pm). The First 5 Express will be making a third stop on Friday, April 17th; the location and times are being finalized. We are working with the Marin Child Care Council to create a “children’s fair” by scheduling additional activities, including The Learning Bus.

The Express will distribute New Parent Kits and other parenting information, plus give away (bilingual) Potter the Otter books, stickers and other handouts.

**Marin Communications Forum** – Our February forum included a discussion of the many programs that are funded based on census data, a presentation of the messaging guide from the First 5 Association, distribution of bilingual outreach materials, and a specific focus on Spanish-language outreach in Marin. This event was planned in partnership with Canal Alliance and Community Action Marin. About 75 people attended. *(Census materials are still available!)*

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**SAVE THE DATES for the next forums in 2020:**

Executive Director/Staff Report
- **March 18 – Social-Emotional Learning & Development** – We have scheduled four knowledgeable panelists to discuss the ages and stages of social-emotional learning early childhood development: Susanne Kreuzer from Help Me Grow Marin; Dr. Judy Radiloff from Sonoma State University; Maritza Barahona from CAM Head Start & Help Me Grow Marin and Dr. Robyn Matlon from Jewish Family & Children's Services. This forum will include presentations, small group sharing, and an interactive question/answer session.

- **April 22 – Child Abuse Prevention Month** – This forum will feature a keynote presentation and a training component. The keynote will be delivered by Taquelia Washington, LCSW: "Letting your Light Shine: How to Become Beacons of Hope in Times of Inequity and Trauma." The training topic will be: “Vicarious Trauma and Compassion Fatigue: Taking Care of Yourself in the Midst of Pain.”

  This event will be presented in partnership with The Child Parent Institute, Parent Services Project, Seneca, Marin County Health and Human Services and the Marin Child Abuse Prevention Council.

- **June 1 - Kids, Internet Safety, Screen Time & Privacy** – presentation by Common Sense Media

- **July – Supporting the Immigrant Community** – date TBD

- **August 31 - Help Me Grow/Support for Developmental Delays and Disabilities**

- **September 28 – VOTE for the Future**

- **October 30 – Restorative Justice/Youth Justice Action Month** – planning in partnership with the YWCA and Marin County Public Defender.

- **November 30 – special guest! Details coming soon.**

You may SHARE these events on Facebook:

[www.facebook.com/pg/MarinCommunicationsForum/events](https://www.facebook.com/pg/MarinCommunicationsForum/events)

**Oral Health** – Amy and Michelle continue working with Marin County HHS and other community partners on the new oral health initiative. Amy is serving on the Oral Health Advisory Committee; Michelle is on the Communications Work Group and will be creating and compiling outreach materials for pregnant women and young children.

Michelle is managing the Facebook page, Healthy Smiles Marin, which will be sharing oral health messages for all age groups: [www.Facebook.com/HealthySmilesMarin](https://www.Facebook.com/HealthySmilesMarin). (Like & Share!)

**Policy Breakfast** – First 5 Marin’s annual policy breakfast will be on Friday, May 1st at the Embassy Suites Hotel in San Rafael (8:30 to 10 am). The keynote speaker and program are being finalized and will be announced shortly.

**Public Charge** – Amy and Michelle continue working with the “Public Charge Coordinating Committee” on outreach and education. The final rule will only apply to applications submitted on or after February 24, 2020. Medicaid, SNAP (“Food Stamps”), HUD public housing, and “Section 8” housing benefits received before February 24, 2020 will not be considered in the public charge determination.

There are many informational materials available regarding public charge. The website for PIF (Protecting Immigrant Families) has a whole new set of documents regarding personal rights related to public charge: [https://protectingimmigrantfamilies.org/know-your-rights/](https://protectingimmigrantfamilies.org/know-your-rights/) and a
Spanish language version of “Public Charge: Does this apply to me?” at https://protectingimmigrantfamilies.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Public-Charge-Does-This-Apply-To-Me-Updated-January-2020-SPANISH.pdf. There are also special resources for providers and advocates: https://protectingimmigrantfamilies.org/special-resources/

There is also a mini website (managed by Marin HHS) with key resources: https://www.marinhhs.org/public-charge.

Other Key Resources for Public Charge:
- National Immigration Law Center (NILC) - www.nilc.org
- Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC) - www.ilrc.org
- California Immigrant Policy Center - https://caimmigrant.org/
- For more information, please visit the Marin County “Public Charge” page: https://www.marinhhs.org/public-charge

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Census 2020 – In addition to hosting the forum on February 24th, we will be working with community partners to distribute the messaging guides and bilingual outreach materials from the First 5 Association. (Census outreach materials are available to commissioners and their community partners—just let us know!) We are also sharing infographics and other census news on Facebook. There is a great deal of information and lots of resources online:

- Marin County Census info: https://marincensus2020.org/
- First 5 Association census resource: http://first5association.org/census-2020-resources/
Help Me Grow (Updated from February Report)

- Consultation with consumers: we continue to follow up and work with providers, families and community partners who are seeking information/referral/resources
  
  **Families:**

  **Under 6 of age:**
  - We have had 4 new referral to HMG.
    - a parent of a 5.0 child who called to find out how to get an evaluation and help at school for her daughter.
    - The second two referrals were from parents of 2 year old children whose pediatrician suggested they call for screening and referral help. Both families were provided ASQ-3 to complete
    - A parent of a 7 year old boy who is struggling in school. Advice and information on how to request a full assessment from the school district was given

  **Over 6 years of age:**
  - Continued consultation and resources have been given to an immigrant mother whose 15 year old child was assessed for learning disabilities and did not qualify for services with the school district.

  **Child Care Providers:**
  - HMG has consulted with an additional 2 ECE providers on various concerns with policies, partnerships and difficulties working with specific children. Resources and linkages have been shared and strategies regarding inclusion of specific children have been given. Follow-up and check in will take place as needed.
  - Susanne co-lead a training for 45 child care providers on Saturday, February 28 on Including Children with Special Needs in Early Care and Education Programs. The event was sponsored by MCOE, College of Marin, Marin Quality Counts, First 5 Marin and the Marin Child Care Council

- Susanne and Maritza have been working with KJMB Solutions to finish the configurations in the customization of the HMG Marin database. We are nearing launch in a couple of weeks.
- Susanne continues to have get acquainted meeting with various providers and programs in the county. She has also continues conversations with other HMG programs in California to help guide the work.
- We have purchased and set up the ASQ Online. We are linking it to the STAR data system so we will have full access of the data for reports. Maritza and Susanne have had the final training on STAR on the ASQ online features and the API
- On February 5, 2020 the Leadership Team had a planning meeting for Communications and Outreach for HMG Marin’s Communication Objective. The team was facilitated by Jill Casey, Luminare Group, and the focus of conversation kept in mind the messaging/considerations of the target audiences:
  1) Families; 2) Medical/Health Care Providers; 3) Early Care Providers; 4) Community Based Organizations and Partners; 5) Policy Makers

  By end of the meeting a proposed objective was developed: Year 1 objective – Establish the communication of collaboration with providers and partners reframing expectations and building trust.
- Amy has put out a bid for the communication/marketing specialist to consult with HMG Marin.
Maritza has been trained on MAA billing and will begin time study documentation starting in the third quarter.

**OTHER ACTIVITIES**

Staff continues to work on Public Charge and other issues effecting the immigrant community. Shirin Vakharia, Kari Beuerman and Amy are working together to encourage a County leadership meeting to address the impact of changing immigration regulations and enforcement on the county.

The United Way’s Rise Together and BARHII (Bay Area Health Regional Health Inequities Initiative) recently combined under BARHII’s leadership. The priority areas for advocacy and collective action remain the same: housing, early childhood, and financial security (employment and workforce development). The newly combined Early Childhood group met and reaffirmed legislative priorities and local efforts. One such effort is Alameda County’s Measure C, which has surpassed the simple majority it was designed for, but not yet reached the 2/3’s mark. This means that it was successful locally but will probably need to be litigated because it used the 50% threshold that is still in dispute.

Amy has been participating in an effort led by Sausalito/Marin City Superintendent Dr. Itoco Garcia to develop intentional alignment and coordination between the preK classrooms and the K-3 classrooms in Marin City. This alignment will include scheduling and developmentally appropriate curriculum continuity. It will also include regular meetings between teachers from the respective programs and an effort to open a district-run preK classroom at MLK. A broad and inclusive group of participants from ECE, K-12, and, most importantly the diverse community of Marin City (parents, community leaders, the faith community) has been convened to move this work forward. Resources will be sought to support the collaborative efforts and to establish this new PreK classroom.

As COVID-19 spreads and responses are evolving, we have made the prudent decision to cancel our March 27th Forum and will likely be making other changes. For example, we will not be making our conference room available for large meetings for at least the next several weeks. With WHO declaring this a pandemic, more restrictions will likely be coming.

In light of the above, Shirin Vakharia (MCF) and I have begun to discuss the potential need for emergency funding for safety net agencies should schools close, broader quarantines be put in place, etc. Both the Foundation and First 5 have emergency funding policies and procedures and we should be prepared to respond quickly. This may mean increasing for such purposes only the authority of the Executive Director to approve emergency funding beyond the $10,000 limit for doing so without a Commission meeting. That is why this item is included on the March agenda.

Finally, the Women’s Hall of Fame Dinner has been postponed and likely will not be held until September. We need to decide if the Commission would like to hold the two tables for such time as it is rescheduled or request a refund for the tables.

**Meetings**

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<td>BARED’s</td>
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Food Now Task Force