



STRATEGIC PLAN



July 2014 –June 2019

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First 5 Lake Commission

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Introduction

The First 5 Lake Commission was established by the Lake County Board of Supervisors in 1998, via Ordinance 2452. The ordinance sets forth four critical points:

- It provides the Commission with full authority to accept, plan for, and allocate funds.
- Assigns to the Commission all of the legal requirements and responsibilities codified in the State of California’s Health and Safety Code.
- Creates a 9-member Commission of which four members are mandated positions and five are considered “members-at-large.”
- Allows the Commission to contract with the County of Lake for support services including without limit, fiscal, personnel and legal.

The Commission became operational in 2000. Its first task was to create a strategic plan that reflected the needs of families with children, 0 – 5 years of age. The steps undertaken to complete this task included: conducting a needs assessment and taking comments from the public and county-based service providers. The Commission adopted its first strategic plan in 2001. Since that time the Commission has held regular reviews of its plan and has made only occasional minor changes. In May 2012, the Commission began its most current review. This commenced with a planning retreat in which an analysis of its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) was completed. This was followed by a needs assessment (the third conducted since its inception) in April, 2013. This assessment affirmed that the Commission’s efforts and goals continued to address unmet needs. In June, 2014, the Commission again met in a planning workshop. It reviewed and confirmed its Core Values; and, amended its SWOT analysis based upon funding changes made by the First 5 California Commission and other factors relative to changes in the local economy. Additionally, the Commission recognized that it could improve its understanding and measurement of programmatic outcomes by integrating the Center for the Study of Social Policy’ Protective Factors Model into its Evaluation Process. In 2016, Ordinances 3042 and 3054 changed the Commission status from “an agency of the County” to “an agency of the County within the Health Services Department,” and designated the Health Services Director to appoint the executive director and authorize the E.D.’s recommendations for any additional staff.

In Summary, this Five-Year Strategic Plan herein presented is the culmination of the Commission’s latest review process. The plan has been vetted by the public via a public hearing held by the Commission at its regular meeting on September 24, 2014 and fully adopted by the Commission at its regular meeting held on October 22, 2014, and reviewed publicly each year.

Core Shared Values

Commissioners have agreed that its work shall be based on the following shared values.

- Collaboration
- Commitment to improving the lives of children & families
- Effective use of funding that results in positive change
- Prevention/Intervention that results in positive change
- Open communication with a willingness to discuss difficult issues
- Honesty and fairness manifested in the way that we behave and function
- Commitment to lay self-interest aside
- Belief that we can make a difference

Strategic Principles

In addition to its Core Values, the Commission recognizes key principles that govern its funding and its attendant grantees.

- First 5 Lake will fund a range of support, prevention, early intervention and treatment services that are integrated into a consumer-oriented, easily accessible service network.
- Some funded services will be available to all families and their children 0-5 years of age; and some funded services will be targeted to families and their children 0-5 most in need because of the limited availability of funds.
- First 5 Lake's partners will be encouraged to foster and support an integrated service network versus limiting their perspective to their area of specialization.
- A consumer-oriented, integrated service network is not limited to public and private agencies, but will include parent networks and faith-based organizations.
- Partner strategies and outcomes will build on existing financial and human resources, and will strive to create culturally-appropriate and sustainable collaborative efforts.
- First 5 Lake will promote the leveraging of existing and new resources while continuing to integrate the lessons learned and accomplishments achieved from over a decade of multi-agency collaboration.
- Evaluation will be regarded as a continuous learning opportunity that improves services, discovers new approaches and supports the sustainability of child, family and community outcomes.

VISION STATEMENT

The First 5 Lake Commission recognizes that it is part of a larger statewide effort to improve the quality of life for all children, prenatal to five years of age and their families. Accordingly, the Commission has restated its Vision Statement to align with First 5 California Commission's statement:

Lake County's children receive the best possible start in life and thrive.

It is understood that its vision is not short-lived. Rather, it may take a generation or more to create a new mindset throughout the county - a mindset that universalizes the commitment to

support and sustain a comprehensive service network that addresses the needs - physical, intellectual, social and emotional - of all children.

MISSION STATEMENT

First 5 Lake will inspire and promote healthy, safe, happy and family-centered experiences for children 0-5 through partnerships with local families and service providers.

This mission statement is a revision of the former strategic plan's statement. It is an outcome of the Commission's latest strategic plan review process and was developed via an ad hoc committee. The Commission adopted this statement at its regular meeting held in March, 2014.

The Commission views its mission statement as its overall guiding principle, providing the short-term substantive means to achieving its vision. Additionally, it embodies the Commission's core values and strategic principles.

Protective Factors

First 5 Lake has adopted a family and community strengthening protective factor framework as the basis for its current strategic planning. Protective factors are the conditions in families and communities that, when present, increase the health and well-being of children and families. Focusing on protective factors helps develop circumstances that promote healthy behaviors and decrease the chance children will engage in risky behaviors as they grow up.

Protective factors are based on the premise that:

- Children, families and community form a dynamic collective support system.
- External factors, coming from neighborhood, community, school, family, caregivers and/or peers are primary causes for most of children's learning, behavioral and emotional challenges. Protective factors act as buffers to these risks by helping to build families that are strong and connected and communities that are caring and responsive.
- The child is at the center of the framework. Healthy development of children is not only accomplished by direct services to children but also through strengthening families and building communities.

The Protective Factors to be used as the framework for First 5 Lake include both family and community strengthening, and can be outlined as follows:

Protective Factors for Strengthening Families

- 1. Enhanced Development of Children:** To be successful in school and life, children need support for healthy development across physical, social-emotional, and intellectual domains. A child's relationship with consistent, caring adults in the early years is later associated with better academic grades, healthier behaviors, additional positive peer interactions, and an increased ability to cope with stress.
- 2. Increased Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development:** Parents with knowledge about parenting and their own child's development have more appropriate expectations

and use more developmentally-appropriate and positive guidance with their children. Information can be shared with parents through an informal conversation, peer-to-peer discussions, in a class, through home visits or intensive counseling, or by sharing written tips with parents.

- 3. Increased Individual and Family Social Connections:** Whenever a parent/caregiver is isolated from peers, family or community, children are more at risk. Many parents naturally develop friendships with other parents they meet during the course of their daily lives, but others need help establishing those social connections. Building trusting relationships between families, and helping isolated families to connect with a network of support, strengthens parent skills and resilience and supports children and community.
- 4. Enhanced Parental Resilience:** Resilience is the ability to bounce back from difficulties. Parents need to be able to recognize and acknowledge difficulties and the feelings that go along with challenging events and situations. They need the skills to maintain a positive attitude, to hope, to problem-solve, and to take action in the midst of difficult events and feelings.
- 5. Concrete Support in Times of Need:** When families are in crisis, children are more protected from trauma and stress if families feel supported and have access to the resources they need quickly. Appropriate information, provision of or referral to needed services, and follow-up with families is critical to providing this concrete support when needed.

Protective Factors for Building Communities

- 1. Healthy Community Beliefs and Clear Standards:** Supportive and caring communities communicate healthy beliefs and clear standards for behavior at home, at school, and in the community, as well provide access to information and services. Communities that actively/visibly appreciate children and youth, rather than viewing them as problems, tend to have lower rates of child abuse or neglect. For example, communities that teach appropriate behaviors related to drugs, alcohol and smoking tend to have fewer problems with the abuse of these substances.
- 2. Caring and Supportive Community Connections and Networks:** Social networks within a community can promote and sustain children and families, and are a source of protection, support and advocacy. Examples include organized playgroups, moms/dads groups, neighborhood associations, and parent/teacher organizations. This also includes building linkages between families, childcare/schools, and communities to reduce fragmentation and encourage integrated services and supports. Examples include children's health insurance initiatives, breastfeeding coalitions, Early Childhood Educator (ECE) training and workforce development, or collaborative networks.
- 3. Community-based Opportunities for Participation:** Individuals and families need opportunities to take part in activities in the community that will benefit children or help to solve community problems. This sets and communicates high expectations for children

and youth, and creates opportunities for people to be contributing members of their community and school. Examples include AmeriCorps programs.

Goals, Objectives & Programs

After much thought and deliberation, during its two-year review process, the Commission concluded that its Strategic Plan goals, as presented in its previous strategic plan, should be continued. It found that the needs of its families and young children have not changed significantly since the beginning of its work in 2000. Accordingly, the goals, as presented, provide the direction to continue services as currently delivered and/or to support new ways to address identified needs.

There are four major goals. These goals are also aligned with First 5 California’s Result Areas as presented in its Annual Report. Each major goal has one or more objectives. The goals, objectives and programs follow.

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| Child Care and Early Education |
| Increased access to quality, developmentally-appropriate child care and early education which meets the economic, cultural and developmental needs of all children and families in Lake County. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To increase pre-k experiences that meet children’s school readiness needs, including care for special needs children. ○ To provide a training and incentives plan for child care providers, including those caring for children with special needs that improve the providers’ ability to deliver quality care. |

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| Health Care |
| Improved access to health and therapeutic services for the children and families of Lake County. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To develop greater access to community-based prenatal and perinatal services to increase bonding attachment between caregiver and child. ○ To develop greater access to dental care and services for young children in order to improve oral health. ○ To develop in-county and out-of-county family transportation to available health services for children as a means to improving health access. ○ To develop greater access to developmental behavioral health services for young children and their families through early screening, short-term intervention and referrals. |

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| Parent Support & Education |
| Increased access to parent education and support services to meet diverse needs of Lake County parents. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To develop parent education and support opportunities in coordination with existing programs that assist parents in increasing their competency and understanding of positive parenting and child development, and integrated with family issues around substance abuse, housing, child safety, and literacy. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To develop programs and services that provide nutrition and recreation to increase overall good child health and reduce obesity. |

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| Systems Integration |
| Improved access to a consumer-oriented system of care which increase for parents, their opportunities to sustain and support the full and healthy growth and development of their children. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To support and develop a system of programs and services for children age prenatal-5 years old, their parents, and family members, and increase access, efficiency and effectiveness through coordination and collaboration. |

Under this Strategic Plan, collaboration among First 5 Lake and its grantees will be key to successfully achieving an even more integrated consumer-oriented service system than currently exists

It must be noted that Lake County is well known for the high level of coordination among its agencies, public and private, and easy consumer access has been a goal among service providers.

Strategies that Align with Protective Factors

Strategies refer to the specific activities and approaches implemented to achieve goals and outcomes as previously discussed in the Strategic Plan. Strategies that align with the adopted protective factor framework are outlined below.

1. Examples of Family-Based Strategies:

- Facilitating friendships and mutual support.
- Strengthening parenting capacity and literacy skills.
- Valuing and providing support for parents.
- Responding to families in crisis.
- Linking families to service and opportunities.
- Facilitating children’s physical, cognitive, language, social and emotional development.

- Observing and responding to early warning signs or precursors of developmental delays, child abuse or neglect

2. Examples of Community-Based Strategies:

- Creating strong, community bonds within and between families, schools and communities.
- Communicating healthy beliefs and clear standards of behavior at home, at school, or in the community.
- Developing community competence in systems and networks.
- Creating collaborative, productive connections between service segments or community.
- Providing developmentally-appropriate and meaningful opportunities to be involved in families, schools and communities.
- Providing recognition and rewards for participation and contributions.

Evaluation Process

First 5 Lake has employed an evaluation process since its first funded programs. This process starts with the Commission's Logic Models, one for each of its three major programmatic goals (See Attachments A-C for a full presentation of each logic model):

- Child Care and Education
- Parent Education and Support
- Health Care

Each funded program is required to develop its own logic model that in turn is reviewed by First 5 Lake's staff and Evaluator. A Scope of Work and attendant Budget reflect more specific activities to be implemented to achieve the proposed programmatic goals and client outcomes. First 5 staff conducts regular monitoring of each program's work toward accomplishing stated goals. This monitoring is in the form of site visits and quarterly reports. At the conclusion of the fiscal year, an Evaluation Report is prepared by the Evaluator and presented to the Commission for its review and approval. The purpose of this report is to examine the extent to which programmatic goals are met. The evaluation process is not intended to be punitive in nature. Rather it is intended to be a learning experience to determine what methods, techniques and activities have been the most and least effective in creating positive client outcomes and what is effective. This in turn allows for iterations of existing approaches or evolution to completely new approaches.

First 5 Lake's EVALUATION is designed to:

- a. Inform learning and decision-making.
- b. Guide program development, implementation and continuous improvement.
- c. Document funded partner and Commission impact and effectiveness.
- c. Support accountability to the community regarding the use of First 5 funds.

In incorporating the family and community protective factor framework, the evaluation process will address three main questions:

1. What outcomes is each of the funded programs achieving?
2. What outcomes are being achieved through the family-based and community-based protective factors approach?
3. What outcomes are being achieved overall in the community?

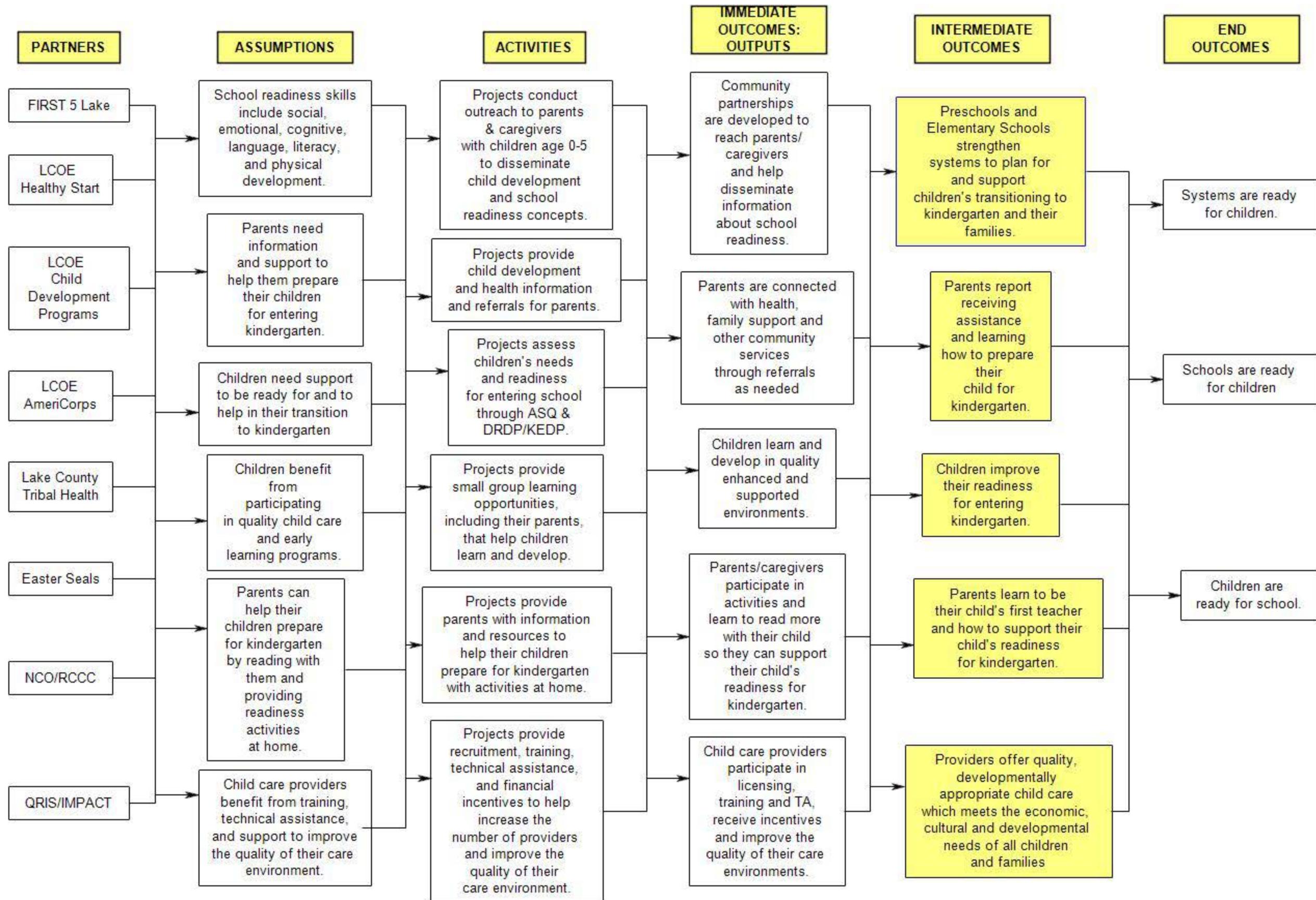
An alignment between the First 5 Lake protective factors approach and the First 5 California Strategic Results Areas (Improved Child Development, Family Functioning, Child Health and Safety, and Systems of Care) will be performed to meet state reporting requirements based on specific programs funded and outcomes achieved in support of this Strategic Plan.

Financial Planning

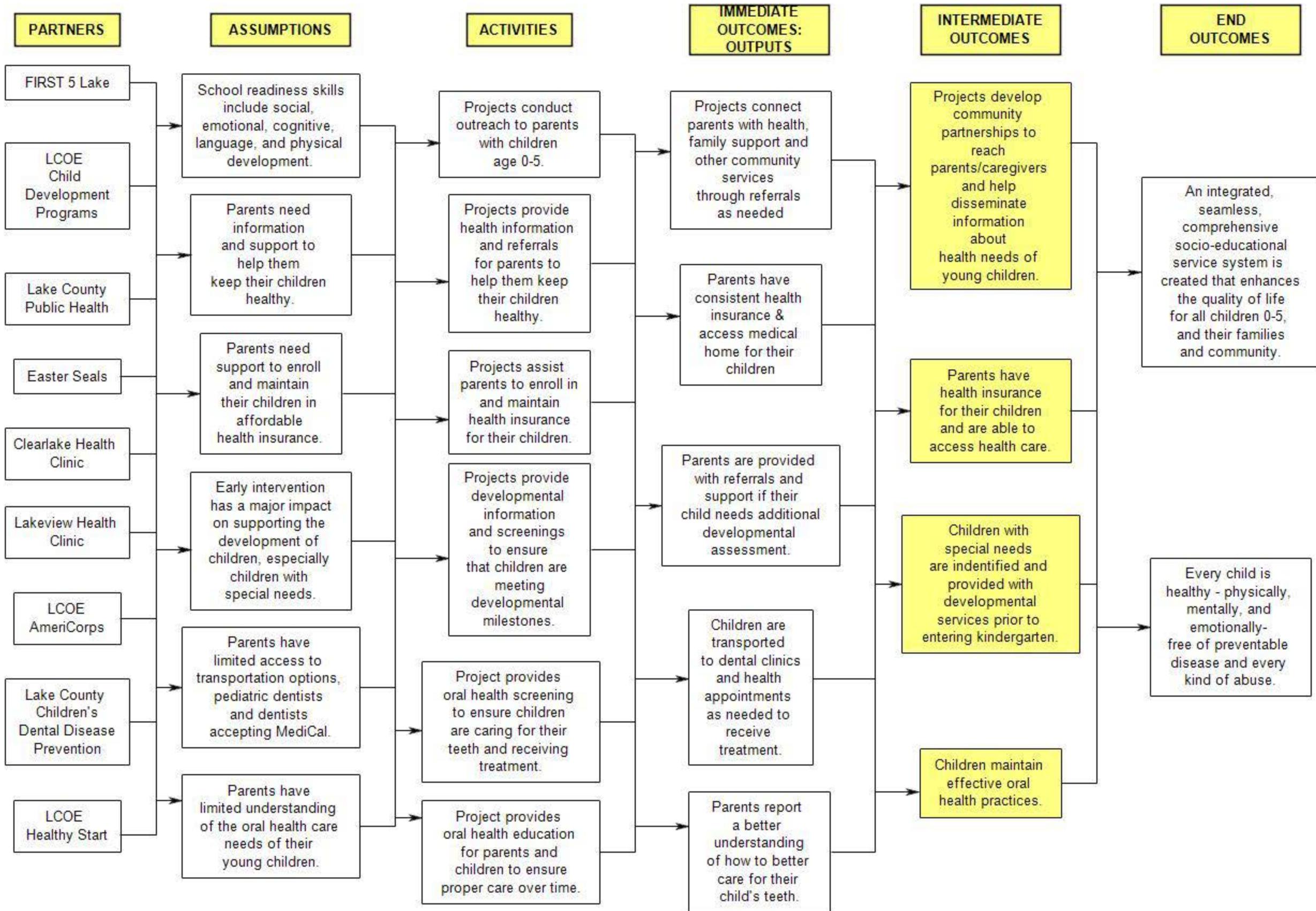
In order to affect its core values and strategic principles while achieving its vision, mission, and goals, First 5 Lake needs to understand its resources. Resources can be categorized as human and capital. First 5 Lake's human resources are primarily, its Commissioners, staff and evaluator consultant. Commissioners are charged with the responsibility to establish policy, provide oversight to program operations and to promote its vision and mission statements. Staff is responsible for the day-to-day administration and to promote the community protective factors, specifically strengthening client-oriented networks. The Commission's evaluator is primarily responsible for assessing programmatic effectiveness as related to the Commission's desired goals.

The Commission's available capital resources are limited to its monetary funds. Effective July, 1, 2014, First 5 California has included First 5 Lake in its Small Population County Funding Augmentation policy. Accordingly, First 5 Lake is guaranteed an annual base allocation of \$625,000 for the next three fiscal years. However, this is not First 5 Lake's sole source of income. Sound financial planning requires a long range perspective, or a window of time that encompasses between 3 and 5 years. This "look into the future" provides the Commission with a greater sense of assurance and understanding that it has the capital resources to support its efforts to achieve its desired goals. Attachment D presents First 5 Lake's Long-Range Financial plan as aligned to its Strategic Plan. The financial plan was reviewed and adopted by the Commission at its regular October, 2014 meeting following the requisite public hearing.

Result Area: Child Care and Education Logic Model Updated 2016-2017



Result Area: Health Logic Model Updated 2016-2017



Result Area: Parent Education and Support Logic Model Updated 2016-2017

