



## PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Yolo County Families and Children Benefit from Community-Based Programs** *First 5 Yolo Awards \$1.3 Million in Grants for Integrated Family Support Services*

**Woodland, CA** — The First 5 Yolo Children and Families Commission announced today its funding allocations for fiscal year 2008-2009 as part of its new Integrated Family Support Initiative, which is a visionary concept recognizing family support as integral to the success of young children.

“First 5 Yolo’s Integrated Family Support Initiative was identified after comprehensive research and a strategic planning process that looks ahead through the year 2015,” said Helen Thomson, Chair of First 5 Yolo and a member of the Yolo County Board of Supervisors. “Our plan includes a commitment to providing our community partners \$9.1 million in funds over the next seven years, which will greatly benefit Yolo County’s youngest residents and their families.”

Beginning July 1, 2008, the following community-based organizations will participate in a coordinated collaborative to provide comprehensive programs and services to Yolo County families and children ages 0-5:

- **City of Davis, Child Care Services (Resource & Referral Agency)** will increase the quality of childcare by working directly with childcare and preschool providers as well as address issues of affordable childcare for the county’s poorest children.
- **CommuniCare Health Centers** will increase access to dental screenings, preventive services and treatment for children ages 0-5 as well as pregnant women countywide.
- **Rural Innovations in Social Economics (RISE), Inc.** will provide kindergarten readiness programs, build family literacy and increase affordable childcare in the Capay Valley region.
- **Yolo County Library** will offer bilingual story time for children ages 0-5, bilingual family literacy workshops and referrals to adult family literacy programs.
- **Yolo County Children’s Alliance (YCCA) — Foster Care** will recruit and retain foster families through a provision of incentives, respite childcare hours, mentoring programs and parent-child therapy sessions.
- **Yolo County Children’s Alliance (YCCA) — Step by Step** will provide countywide, home-visitation, using the Healthy Families America model, for families referred by child protective services’ call center.
- **Yolo County Health Department** will provide home visits by nurses to families identified by home visitors under the Healthy Families America program.
- **Yolo Family Service Agency** will provide capacity building services to Yolo County mental health providers by coordinating training and certification in early child mental health, instituting a case consultation model and conducting provider outreach services.

All providers participating in the Integrated Family Support Initiative embrace a family-centered approach and a philosophy based on the following principles:

- Every family needs and deserves support and access to resources;
- Building upon family assets is essential to build self-sufficiency;
- Strengthening communities enables families to benefit from “belonging”;
- Success is dependent on families being solid partners at the table with access to information and resources; and
- Activities and services must be provided in a way that best meets family needs.

First 5 Yolo has established four priority areas for this new initiative, including physical health, social/emotional health, childcare and ready to learn. Julie Gallelo, executive director of First 5 Yolo, offers an example of why childcare is one of four top priorities. “After conducting comprehensive research countywide, we found that access to high-quality and affordable childcare is a primary concern for Yolo County parents,” said Gallelo. “First 5 Yolo is addressing these concerns by funding programs and activities, such as the Resource and Referral Agency to build the capacity of childcare and preschool teachers so that quality programs are the norm. Enhancing learning environments to support the healthy development of young children is an important goal for First 5 Yolo.”

First 5 Yolo allocates funds for grants based on a regularly updated strategic plan for the benefit of children ages 0-5. The contract provided under the Integrated Family Support Initiative provides funding of up to \$1,310,000 per year for a period of seven years (July 1, 2008 - June 30, 2015). Contracts will be renewed annually contingent upon community need, availability of funds and satisfactory contractor performance.

In addition, First 5 Yolo awarded \$160,000 through its Special Projects funding stream for fiscal year 2008-2009. Special projects meet a specific community need for children ages 0-5. A sampling of this year’s projects include prenatal care services, counseling services for families and children, nutrition and exercise education and support for families struggling with substance abuse.

### **About First 5 Yolo**

*Research shows that a child’s brain develops most dramatically in the first five years and what parents and caregivers do during these years to support their child’s growth will have a meaningful impact throughout life. In November 1998, California voters passed a statewide ballot initiative to add a 50-cent-per-pack tax on cigarettes. The funds collected are utilized to fund education, health, and childcare programs that promote early childhood development from prenatal through age 5. For more information about First 5 Yolo, please visit [www.First5Yolo.org](http://www.First5Yolo.org).*