



**PRESS RELEASE  
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**First 5 Yolo Releases Results of Kindergarten Readiness Survey**  
*2010 findings reflect economic downturn and increased child and family stress*

**Woodland, CA** — Reflecting increased child and family stress, the 2010 Yolo County kindergarten readiness survey documented that, compared to 2009, fewer parents are getting their kids to the dentist, parents are reading less to their young children and a significant number of families say their children have difficulty moving from one activity to the next, such as from playtime to mealtime.

“Parents are more stressed, more families are enrolling in Medi-Cal and fewer parents are taking their children to the dentist,” noted Supervisor Don Saylor, chair of First 5 Yolo. “The need continues to be great and First 5 Yolo and our funded partners are facing a future of trying to provide the vitally needed services with less money.”

“First 5 Yolo has worked hard to improve the availability of dental services for young children, and increase awareness about the benefits of early dental care,” said Julie Gallelo, executive director First 5 Yolo. “Even though in 2010 fewer children entering kindergarten had been to the dentist, we are seeing an increase in dental visits for children 0 to 3 years. This is a good sign.”

Other results showed more Yolo County families and children are qualifying this year for low-income programs, and feeling socially isolated when it comes to having trusted family and friends on which they can call upon for help or support in times of need. More than seven percent of the survey respondents indicated they rarely or never have anyone they can turn to in times of need. This is up from the 4.5 percent who reported the lack of a support system in 2009.

However, there was also some good news. More parents, 1394, returned the survey for a county-wide return rate of 65.1 percent. Fully 97.3 percent of families reported their child has health insurance. Less than three percent reported having no insurance, which is lower than the state average of 4.1 percent.

Regarding where the children are insured, a seven percent growth in children enrolled in Medi-Cal was recorded in 2010. This represents a shift in coverage to Medi-Cal from Healthy Families, employer-based and privately purchased insurance.

Another positive indicator is that seventy percent of the children entering kindergarten in Yolo County have attended a preschool program. Preschool is often viewed as an important step toward school readiness.

“We can conclude from this year’s study that access to health insurance for children and preschool participation in Yolo County are higher than the norm in California,” noted Saylor. “. “I am proud that we provide these services for our most vulnerable citizens, children aged 5 and under. However, some of the indicators in the study point to the fact that parents have increasing needs for support. I hope we can continue to provide a safety net. ”

To see responses by school district or to see the complete results of the 2010 First 5 Yolo Kindergarten Enrollment Survey, go to [www.first5yolo.org](http://www.first5yolo.org).

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### **About First 5 Yolo**

*Research shows 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).*