



Champions For Our Children

Monday Morning Report

June 26, 2006

To submit comments or items (3 weeks in advance) for this e-newsletter, please contact **Vivien Hao**, public affairs officer, **First 5 LA** at vhao@first5la.org or (213) 482-7563.

Don't miss the next *Monday Morning Report*. If this was forwarded to you, [sign up now!](#)

Monday Morning Report is on a modified summer schedule, with the next issue set for July 17.

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CALENDAR

July 7 – July 10, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.: *Hands on Health: Helping our Children Grow*, presented by First 5 California and First 5 LA at the National Council de la Raza annual meeting at the LA Convention Center. Contact arosas@rogerspr.com.

July 8, 11 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.: *SummerSizzle*, a free musical production for families with young children. Presented by First Steps Early Literacy Program at the Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza, Sears Court, 3650 W. Martin Luther King Blvd., LA 90008. Call **Dorothy Carter** at (323) 294-0311.

KTTV FOX 11 PREVIEW

Early Identification of Autism is Helping Kids With "Good Beginnings"



An occupational therapist works with Savannah, 2, who is autistic.

Savannah was walking at 8 months and had a 100-word vocabulary at 18 months. But one day, she suddenly stopped talking and started to only grunt, moan, and whine. Her alarmed mother, **Kelly Harrison**, immediately took her to a pediatrician, who directed her to the nearest regional center,

where special needs children are assessed.

"Since I'm trained as a preschool teacher, I knew something was really wrong," said Harrison. "I knew I had to get her help-- and fast." Although it took four months of navigating red tape to get that help, Savannah was diagnosed as autistic in February, and now at 2 years old, she is making good progress with daily occupational and speech therapy at the Pediatric Therapy Network in Torrance.

The need for and benefits of early identification of developmental disorders such as autism are topics of this Thursday's "Good Beginnings" segment on **First 5 LA's** summer-long weekly series on children's health, safety, and early learning.

The segments air 8-9 a.m. and 10-11 p.m. each Thursday on KTTV Fox 11 news. In addition, a live studio interview on Fridays from 8-9 a.m. features a subject matter expert elaborating on that week's topics.

"We want to educate all parents about infants' and toddlers' developmental milestones, so that they can work with their pediatricians and regional centers to identify and address any learning delays as early as possible," said **Mona Delahooke**, a Pasadena child psychologist who specializes in early identification of developmental disorders.

For information, visit www.first5la.org, and to view last week's "Good Beginnings" segment on premature infants, visit www.fox11.com/stories/goodbeginnings.

First 5 LA Supports Health Care Legislation for 800,000 Children

First LA has gone on record in support of SB 437, the legislation that would fund a temporary insurance program for about 10 percent of California's uninsured children under 21.

July 20, 21, 22, 10:30 and 11:30 a.m.: **Pillow Theater** at the Music Center's Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 135 N. Grand Ave., LA 90012. Call **Barnaby Murff** by July 3 at (213) 972-3387 for free reservations for groups of 20 or more.

August 19, 1 p.m.-6 p.m.: **Family Day**, presented by KCET-TV at 4401 Sunset Blvd., LA. Call (323) 953-5202.

EVIE'S DESK

Parents Should Seek Out Developmental Screenings

On **First 5 LA's** KTTV Fox 11 "Good Beginnings" news segment this week, we focus on how children as young as 1 or 2 can benefit from early screening for developmental delays.

We are learning more every day about just how important the early years are. Toddlers like Savannah are able to make great progress toward leading a normal, fulfilling life-- but only if they receive early assessment and help to address their delays.

I encourage parents to talk to their pediatricians about developmental assessment tools that can accurately diagnose a potential problem.

Parent tools on developmental milestones are available at

www.forepath.org and www.floorimefoundation.org, or visit www.lanterman.org find out more.

Let's work together to ensure that every child in LA County gets the best possible start in life and is ready for success in kindergarten and beyond!



Evelyn V. Martinez
Executive Director
First 5 LA

First 5 LA's letter of support was sent recently to the bill's sponsor, State Sen. **Martha Escutia** (D-Los Angeles). Other organizations on record supporting SB 437 include the 100% Campaign, Los Angeles Unified School District, and the California Physician's Alliance. The bill would provide health, dental and vision care for an estimated 800,000 California children.

"**First 5 LA** strongly supports sound, innovative, and fiscally responsible health care policy for children," said **First 5 LA** Executive Director **Evelyn V. Martinez**. "Providing health care access to all children of California will save the state money in the long run by avoiding costly procedures that would not be needed if families have affordable access to quality health care."

First 5 LA provides 8,000 LA County children 5 years and younger with free or low-cost health, dental, and vision insurance. As a member of the Greater Los Angeles Children's Health Initiative, **First 5 LA** works with partner organizations to develop permanent public policy solutions for health care funding for all of LA County's youngsters.

To become law, SB 437 must pass in the state assembly and senate before it will arrive on the governor's desk. California voters are expected to have an opportunity to vote on a statewide health care ballot initiative this November, which would also provide additional funds to insure children.

For information on SB 437, click [here](#) or [here](#). For more on **First 5 LA's** legislative advocacy, contact **Robert Ennis**, **First 5 LA** public affairs officer at rennis@first5la.org or (213) 482-7541.

Culturally Appropriate Outreach Boosts South LA Immunization Rates



A toddler is immunized at a recent immunization fair in South LA.

Why were only 53 percent of African American children and 72 percent of Latino children in California getting needed vaccinations by age 2?

The Immunize LA Kids Coalition started addressing this disparity six years ago in South Los Angeles through a multi-pronged approach that has paid off.

The coalition, with funds from the Centers for Disease

Control and Prevention's REACH 2010 program, targeted underserved communities by providing reminders to 200,000 parents of children missing shots. Physicians were trained in techniques for improving immunization rates and a radio public service announcement campaign was conducted targeting African-American audiences.

The result was that the immunization rate increased from 77 percent to 82 percent among low-income kids.

"We field tested our materials to be sure they were culturally appropriate and easily understood by the parents we were targeting," said **Tamekia Mosley**, project coordinator for the coalition, which is part of South Los Angeles Health Projects, a **First 5 LA** grantee and a unit of the Los Angeles Biomedical Research Institute at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center.

For information, contact Mosley at (323) 757-7244 ext. 281 or tmosley@slahp.org or visit www.izlakids.org.

PHFE-WIC's Little by Little Project Fosters Literacy Among 75,000 Kids



First 5 LA Commissioner Matt Rezvani visits with children at the open house.

To celebrate the impact of the Little by Little project on more than 75,000 young children, PHFE-WIC hosted an open house recently at California Hospital Medical Center, which is affiliated with the Grand Avenue WIC Center.

The event drew 250 parents and children, who received free books from Little by Little and information and gifts from the hospital's prenatal program. Participants also enjoyed craft and learning activity booths, which showed how to make learning activities fun and easily duplicable at home.

Little by Little, funded by **First 5 LA**, provides books and other early learning tools to low-income families who are served by WIC's nutrition program.

First 5 LA Commissioner **Matt Rezvani**, along with representatives of local elected officials, acknowledged the impact that Little by Little has had on underserved communities by empowering parents to be their children's first teachers.

Little by Little increases home literacy practices, with most children in the program demonstrating improved school readiness skills.

For information, visit www.phfewic.org or contact **Judy Gomez** at (626) 856-6650 x205 or Judy@phfewic.org.

Music Center's Pillow Theater Offers Free Shows for Preschools, Families



Youngsters delight at last summer's Pillow Theater show.

Preschools, day care centers and families with young children are invited to free performances of "Jemima Puddle Duck" July 20, 21, and 22 at the LA Music Center's Dorothy Chandler Pavilion.

The popular **Beatrix Potter** tale, part of the Pillow Theater series, will be presented as a half-hour-long full-scale theatrical production with music, masks, costumes, and eight-foot tall puppets from the world-renowned Hudson Vagabond Puppets.

A hands-on arts project follows, and children are encouraged to bring their favorite pillow to sit on.

Pillow Theatre is part of the Music Center's education programming, and is funded in part by the Weingart and Annenberg Foundations to introduce young children to the arts and to develop future art lovers.

Each performance will accommodate 400 individuals, and there are two morning performances for groups only on Thursday and Friday and two public performances on Saturday.

Groups of at least 20 may reserve seats by contacting **Barnaby Murff** at (213) 972-3387 or bmurff@musiccenter.org. Deadline for group reservations is July 3, but the Saturday performance seats are first-come, first-served, with no reservations required.

CHAMPION PROFILE

Barbara Stroud Leads Early Intervention Programs for Children

Champion Profile features individuals who exemplify First 5 LA's tagline: "Champions for Our Children."



Barbara Stroud is a Zero to Three fellow and director of early intervention and community wellness at the Los Angeles Child Guidance Clinic, a **First 5 LA** grantee that provides mental health services to children 5 and younger and their families.

She supervises several early intervention mental health programs, including a home-based infant and toddler project and a therapeutic preschool project.

A frequent presenter on mental health service models at local, state and national conferences, she also teaches graduate courses in child psychopathology and therapeutic interventions for children.

She has a BA from University of Pacific in Stockton and completed her doctoral studies at Nova University in Fort Lauderdale.

Which book has most influenced your life?

The Road Less Traveled by M. Scott Peck.

Which historical figure do you most admire?

Martin Luther King, Jr. because he sought to provide civil right issues for all Americans not just African Americans.

What is your idea of a perfect world?

Where every child has the opportunity for good health, loving and supportive parents, and is free from violence in their communities.

What is the greatest challenge faced by LA County children and families?

Equal opportunities for quality education.

Which living person do you most admire and why?

The parents in South Central LA who face multiple barriers but still strive to do what is best for their children.

Who was your favorite teacher and why?

My parents, who taught me to respect all people, to learn from those who are different, and to love God.

What is your motto?

"If I can make a positive difference in the life of one child, I have done a wonderful thing and the world will be a better place for us all."