

When it comes to early identification and intervention, California is failing its children.

The most robust brain development happens before a child turns three. By age three we should also know whether or not a child is emotionally and cognitively on track to succeed in kindergarten. Ideally, all pediatricians use consistent screening practices to paint an overall picture of a child's developmental and behavioral progress, ensuring delays are identified early and linking them to intervention. With this developmental information over time, parents are empowered to make the best choices about what their child needs to thrive.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends all children be screened three times before age three, yet only one-third of California's young children are screened appropriately. This is a missed opportunity to maximize the benefits of early intervention, which is often less expensive, more effective, and yields greater long-term outcomes compared to intervention received later in life.

But timely identification is not the only problem that our families face. Even when delays are identified early, California's system of care is complex to navigate, for families and providers alike. Incomplete lists of resources, long wait times to access services, and the "wait and see" approach often leave our children without the support they need.

First 5's Help Me Grow is leading the effort to solve these problems and improve California's early identification and intervention system. By partnering with early childhood organizations across the state, we are creating a bridge across services to ensure every child with a delay is identified and receives early intervention.



85%

of a child's brain development happens before age 3



CALIFORNIA RANKS
43rd
for screening infants and toddlers



1 in 4 children ages 0-5 are at risk for delay



70% of children with delays go undetected until Kindergarten

First 5's HMG supports success for all children by:

Ensuring ALL children with developmental delays are **identified** and **linked** to appropriate resources



Helping families and professionals **navigate** resources and referrals through a **centralized** system



Providing **outreach** and **education** about available community resources



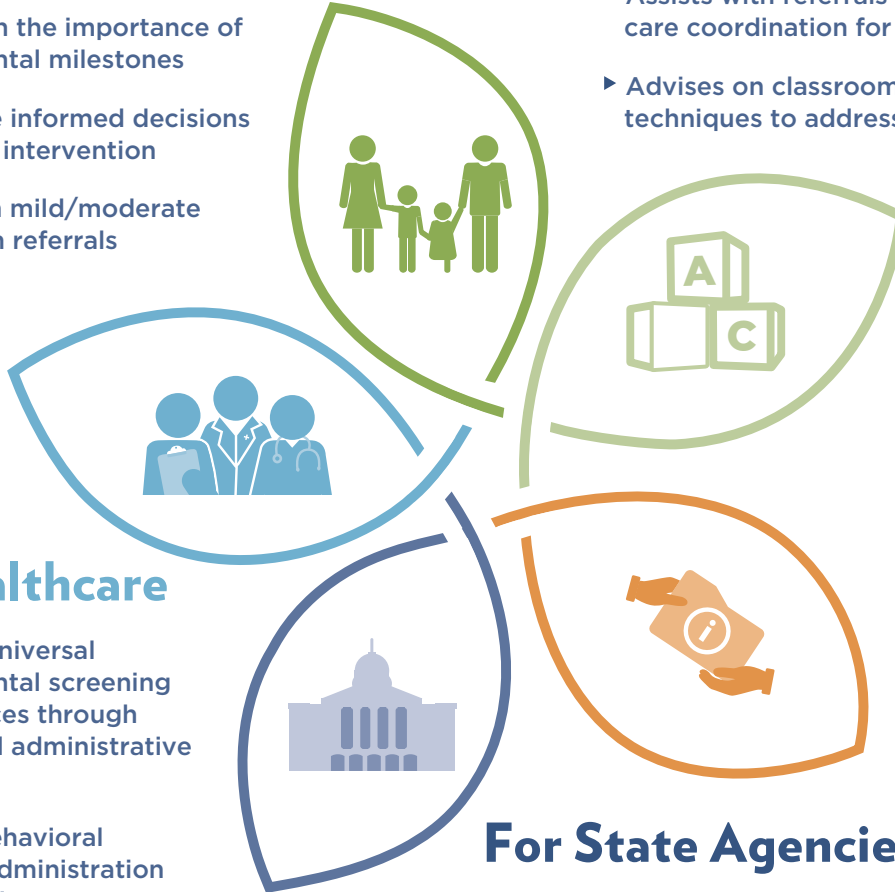
Collecting and evaluating data to improve systems that support young children and their families



HELP ME GROW: How First 5 is Simplifying Early Identification and Intervention

For Families

- ▶ Facilitates family access to early childhood information, resources, and services
- ▶ Ensures hard-to-reach communities are connected to resources
- ▶ Educates on the importance of developmental milestones
- ▶ Helps guide informed decisions about early intervention
- ▶ Assists with mild/moderate intervention referrals



For Healthcare

- ▶ Promotes universal developmental screening best practices through training and administrative assistance
- ▶ Provides behavioral screening administration and evaluation
- ▶ Assists providers with referrals and care coordination for families
- ▶ Collects outcome information and facilitates the feedback loop between healthcare and service providers

For Early Care and Education

- ▶ Builds capacity in developing screening administration and evaluation expertise
- ▶ Trains on family engagement strategies
- ▶ Assists with referrals and care coordination for families
- ▶ Advises on classroom intervention techniques to address identified delays

For State-Funded Early Intervention

- ▶ Provides quality, early referrals to California's Early Start and special education systems
- ▶ Connects families to resources when children do not qualify for state-funded services

For State Agencies

- ▶ Bridges communication across local and state systems that impact early childhood
- ▶ Engages in data-driven, solution-oriented planning to improve child outcomes
- ▶ Advises on policies and procedures that will promote universal early identification and intervention best practices
- ▶ Provides opportunities to test innovations through local implementation