



# EVALUATION NEWSLETTER

## January 2010

### *2008/09 Evaluation Findings*

We previewed some of the highlights from the fiscal year 2008/09 evaluation report at the January 21 Quarterly Contractor Forum. For this edition of the Evaluation Newsletter, we would like to again review some important outcomes from the evaluation. The findings presented here do not include those found for Community Building Initiative (CBI) events because we reviewed these results in our October 2009 Newsletter.

*Dental Care by 1 Year of Age:* It is now recommended that children see a dentist by 12 months of age. The rate of children seeing a dentist by their first birthday significantly increased from 3% to 13% over a year's time. These analyses were conducted only for families who received services from Cover the Kids because this is a First 5 Sacramento Commission indicator applicable only to the *Health Access* Result Area.

*Immunizations:* Among families receiving services through Cover the Kids, immunization rates increased to levels above the state and national averages.

*Breastfeeding:* The time points of six months and one year from birth have been identified by the First 5 Sacramento Commission as the criteria for evaluating the impact of breastfeeding services. Among mothers receiving lactation support services through the *Nutrition* Result Area, our Parent Interview found six- and 12-month rates to surpass those reported across the nation. Among all First 5 Sacramento mothers, 12-month breastfeeding rates went from 14% at baseline to 22% a year later. This was found to be a significant increase.

*Knowledge of Infant Development:* One of the many strategies used by *Effective Parenting* providers to improve parenting skills is by offering educational information on children's development. The *Effective Parenting* services of parenting classes and case management were found to significantly correlate with increased knowledge of infant development. These findings underscore the importance of recording service information into Persimmony. Persimmony service data are linked with Parent Interview responses to investigate which services are related to outcomes of interest to the First 5 Sacramento Commission.

*Parent Stress:* A number of factors can influence levels of stress, and high stress can in turn lead to parent behaviors that are unhealthy for children. The Elk Grove Unified School District, Power of Parenting (POP) program offers Father Engagement events that, among other positive outcomes, are designed to address fathers' stress. These events include Pizza for Papa, Read to Me Daddy, Dad's Career Day, and Dad and Me at School. Our analyses found that the more fathers attended these events, the more levels of reported stress decreased. Interestingly, since most of the Parent Interview participants were mothers, this finding suggests that Father Engagement services reduce levels of stress initially among **fathers, which translate** into lower levels of stress within the family

*Preschool Attendance:* We found that children receiving *School Readiness* services had higher rates of preschool attendance than the rate reported across Sacramento County. This was not a complete surprise since this is a central focus of *School Readiness* services. However, we were pleased to see preschool rates for all First 5 Sacramento children to exceed the County rate.

#### THE EVALUATION TEAM:

*The evaluators of First 5 Sacramento represent a team from Walter R. McDonald & Associates, Inc. (Sacramento) and Harder+Company Community Research (Davis). The evaluation team is dedicated to assessing the impact of First 5 Sacramento services on families throughout Sacramento, while minimizing the amount of time that contractors have to spend on evaluation activities. Please call us if you have any questions about the evaluation of First 5 Sacramento services: WRMA 916.239.4020; H+Co 530.757.8420.*