

[New data index helps identify needs of state's youngest children](#)

SPECIAL TO THE ENTERPRISE

The First 5 Association of California and Children's Data Network have launched a new tool to help First 5 commissions, service providers, policymakers and other public agencies support children and families most effectively, and direct resources to those in greatest need.

The California Strong Start Index, funded by a grant from Heising-Simons Foundation, uses information collected at birth to understand the conditions into which California's babies are born in a given neighborhood, county or region. The index focuses on assets that promote resilience, and shows the wide variability in access to these resources among the half a million babies born in California each year.

First 5 Yolo, as the local member of the First 5 Association, is excited to use this tool to more effectively advocate for services and supports that help kids in Yolo County thrive.

"The Strong Start Index provides current and reliable data focused on the health, safety, and early development of our youngest children," said First 5 Yolo executive director Gina Daleiden.

"This data can help us recognize the connections across agencies providing services to children and families as we open a wider conversation about relative need, targeting of services, and more effective programs."

Added Yolo County supervisor and First 5 Yolo Commission chair Jim Provenza: "Ultimately, First 5 Yolo can use this tool to inform the prioritization of our investments and the leveraging of services more equitably and earlier in life to create the most effective impact."

Visit strongstartindex.org to see how babies are faring in Yolo County and how you can use the Strong Start Index to join First 5 in advocating for children and families.