



October 19, 2023

INFORMATION ACTION

SUBJECT: MEDIA CAMPAIGN

Strategic Plan Priority Area 3: Build public engagement in, investment in, and support of the optimal well-being and development of children prenatal through age 5, their families, and communities.

Goal 3.1: Communications: Build public will in investing in early childhood by communicating the potential for positive outcomes for children and families, and the importance of prevention and early intervention.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Commission approve up to \$57 million from the Mass Media account for a 3-year mass media contract designed to reach California's diverse populations and educate all California parents and caregivers about the healthy development of children ages 0 to 5.

SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

As stated in California Health and Safety Code section 130105(d)(1)(A), “Six percent [of F5CA’s total 20 percent] shall be deposited in a Mass Media Communications Account for expenditures for communications to the general public utilizing television, radio, newspapers, and other mass media on subjects relating to and furthering the goals and purposes of this act, including, but not limited to, methods of nurturing and parenting that encourage proper childhood development, the informed selection of child care, information regarding health and social services, the prevention and cessation of tobacco, alcohol, and drug use by pregnant women, the detrimental effects of secondhand smoke on early childhood development, and to ensure that children are ready to enter school.”

When the Commission adopted its [2019-2024 Strategic Plan](#), it listed under Priority Area 1: Child Health, the following supportive strategy: “Collaborate in public education and outreach efforts to parents and families regarding access to a range of health resources and programs, including trauma-informed services, for young children.” (See page 9.)

The current media campaign, Strong Starts, fosters awareness for parents and caregivers around toxic stress response and the long-term effects it can have on their children. The campaign provides resources and information to help their families buffer against the effects of toxic stress caused by adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). When parents/caregivers establish these safeguards, they create safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments (SSNREs) for their children and the effects of ACEs can be minimized.

The RFP will require applicants to create a minimum of two media campaigns to create awareness around children's issues with extra focus on reaching California's persistently poor and those who are difficult to access, contact, or engage due to various factors, such as low literacy, low internet access, or rural locations.

The new contract will expand on the current message around toxic stress and ACEs through paid media efforts. Additional messaging for other vital points, such as early literacy, home visiting, child health and nutrition, and multilanguage learners, will be included through supportive outreach portals such as social media feeds and website content. The goal is to develop media campaigns that focus on reaching a large, general market audience as well as developing communication methods that dive deeper into communities where general marketing messaging may not be fully penetrating.

Using the contractor's expertise in reaching culturally diverse populations, thorough market analysis reports, and community partner engagement and partnerships, the campaigns will find new ways of connecting with populations throughout each region in California. These may include the following communities: Black, Native American, Hispanic, Asian Pacific Islander, additional needs (children with physical disabilities, developmentally delayed, or neurodiverse) Communities, persistently poor, homeless, rural, farm worker, immigrant, foster family, and others who may not have daily or reliable access to mail, internet, or television.

The winning bid will direct its advertising methodology, research, creative design strategy, and implementation efforts toward supporting and aligning with the advertising campaign and education program goals.

Although the contract would contain many other requirements, the core obligation of the contractor would be to conduct research to identify target populations, and then design, produce, and implement advertising campaign activities that reach our target audiences throughout the state. Once each campaign is concluded, the contractor will be required to engage an outside evaluation firm to determine the effectiveness and impact of the campaign messages.

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND ACTION

In 2014, the Commission approved \$68 million for a parent education and outreach media contract for 3 years.

In 2018, the Commission approved a contract extension for another three years using contract language allowing for a single contract extension in the amount of \$60,235,763.40.

In 2020, the Commission approved \$67 million combining media and public relations efforts focused on parent education and outreach as well as advocacy, policy, and First 5 California branding.

In June 2023, First 5 California staff presented to the commission an update on recent accomplishments of the media campaign as well as the process for the development of a new RFP for a new 3-year media contract to begin in June 2024.

In August 2023, staff updated the Commission on the efforts of the current media campaign and community outreach programs. Additionally, staff discussed the process for the development of a new RFP with the Public Education and Outreach Advisory Committee for a 3-year media contract. Feedback, suggestions, and considerations for the contract include:

- Public awareness on equity – focus on messaging and reaching populations who are underserved and hard to reach
- Providing and reinforcing messaging through a variety of formats and multiple channels, and in multiple languages catering to the diversity of California families
- Align goals of the campaign to the goals of the Strategic Plan
- Make use of in-depth research to ensure we are reaching low-income, hard-to-reach and other underserved populations in California
- Bidders will exhibit extensive experience creating campaigns to reach underserved populations
- Single-topic focused media campaigns (2) over term of contract (3 years) – maintain steady drumbeat over time, given changing population and stages, steady output over time with support on specific topics (family benefits, home visiting, early literacy, child health and wellness, smoking cessation, parent engagement, etc.)
- Uplifting other partners who serve as experts and resources – using experts as a conduit for reliable information
- Market research – identify current, reputable, existing sources of information
- Experience and outcome-based outreach – providing a method of evaluating outcomes of campaigns

- Elevate awareness – trusted messengers, elevating the importance of child well-being and investment in 0 to 5
- Overall tone, brand consistency, elevating reputation, and expertise of First 5 California
- Build in flexibility/room for adjustment in RFP for circumstances like COVID-19 and other health disparities
- Incorporate findings from research reports, evaluations, and focus groups to inform on the message awareness, behavior changes, and to help guide the direction of the outreach plan
- Build on the First 5 California brand
- Develop and enhance communications tools for internal and external use and support First 5 California staff

FISCAL ANALYSIS

Staff is requesting the Commission approve up to \$57 million from the Mass Media account for a 3-year mass media contract. The cost of the proposed contract is significant; however, the above-described use of television and technologies will be used in the most cost-effective way possible to achieve the greatest impact for California families with young children.

ATTACHMENTS

None.