

AGENDA

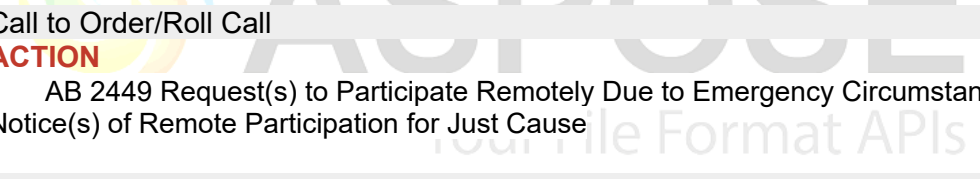
SPECIAL JOINT MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS AND PROGRAM & PLANNING COMMITTEE

Chair: Carol Sigala

Thursday, April 24, 2025
1:30 PM – 4:30 PM

Meeting Location:

First 5 LA, 750 N.
Alameda Street, Los
Angeles, CA 90012

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1. Call to Order/Roll Call
 2. **ACTION**
AB 2449 Request(s) to Participate Remotely Due to Emergency Circumstances and Notice(s) of Remote Participation for Just Cause
 3. **INFORMATION**
Review Program and Planning Committee Meeting Notes from September 26, 2024 Meeting
 4. **INFORMATION**
Establish a Strategic Partnership with Catalyst California in the Amount of \$900,000 to Support the Development and Implementation of the Equity Index for a Period of Four (4) Years through June 30, 2029 (**Written Only**)
 5. **INFORMATION**
Early Identification and Intervention: Learnings and Approach for FY 25-26

Presenters: John Wagner, Executive Vice President of Family Supports & Human Resources; Tara Ficek, Director, Health Systems; Ann Isbell, Program Officer, Health Systems; Cathy Mechsner, Manager of Practice Transformation Programs, L.A. Care Health Plan; Crystal Smith, FRC Program Manager, South Central Los

COMMISSIONERS

Los Angeles County Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell <i>Chair</i>	Robert Byrd, Psy.D Alma Cortes, Ed.D Barbara Ferrer Ph.D., M.P.H., M.Ed.	Abigail Marquez Brandon Nichols Carol Sigala, Ph.D
Summer McBride <i>Vice Chair</i>	Astrid Heger, M.D	

EX OFFICIO MEMBERS

Deanne Tilton Durfee
Jacquelyn McCroskey, DSW
Alejandra Albarran Moses
Maricela Ramirez, Ed. D.

PRESIDENT & CEO

Karla Pleitez Howell

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

John A. Wagner

A PUBLIC ENTITY

Angeles Regional Center and Katy Nagy, Director of Systems Design and Impact Measurement, VIVA Social Impact Partners

There will be a 5- minute break built into this item.

6. Public Comment (for items not on the agenda)
7. Adjournment



**FIRST 5 LA
SUMMARY MEETING NOTES
Special Meeting of the Board/Program & Planning Committee
September 26, 2024
1:30 pm – 4:30 pm**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mary Barraza (Alternate)
Deanne Tilton Durfee
Astrid Heger (Vice-Chair)
Jacquelyn McCroskey
Alejandra Albarran Moses

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT:

Barbara Ferrer
Abigail Marquez
Maricela Ramirez
Summer McBride
Julie Taren (Alternate)
Carol Sigala

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Robert Byrd (Committee Chair)

STAFF PRESENT:

Karla Pleitez Howell, President & CEO
JR Nino, VP, Operations and Sustainability
Linda Vo, Board Relations Manager
John Wagner, Executive Vice President

LEGAL COUNSEL:

Serita Young, Attorney-at-Law

OPEN SESSION

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

The Special Meeting of the Board/Program & Planning Committee was called to order by Committee Vice Chair Heger at 1:34 pm. Roll call completed.

2. AB 2449 Request(s) to Participate Remotely Due to Emergency Circumstances and Notice(s) of Remote Participation for Just Cause

No Commissioners joined the meeting under AB 2449.

3. Review Meeting Minutes from Special Meeting of the Board/Program & Planning Committee on April 25, 2024

Notes were received and filed without any deletions, additions, or changes.

4. Review of First 5 LA Annual Report to First 5 CA

Ms. Han presented First 5 LA's annual data report to First 5 CA, which included background context, three core sections, and the sources of information used for each. Preliminary findings highlighted the distribution of grants across First 5 California's Result Areas, as well as the populations reached through event-based investments. The majority of grants were aligned with the Systems of Care area, with a significant focus on advancing systems change.

Direct service investments primarily reached caregivers, followed by children and providers, with a higher proportion of children served being under the age of three. Most children reached were children

of color, with a majority identifying as Latino or Hispanic. English was the most commonly spoken language in the homes of children reached.

Key takeaways included:

- A strong emphasis on systems change in the overall investment strategy.
- Caregivers as the primary group served through direct services.
- A focus on supporting very young children, particularly those under age three.

Next steps for the annual report include finalizing the content, conducting a public hearing, and submitting the report through First 5 California's data system.

There is no further discussion on this item.

5. Biennial Review of First 5 LA Conflict-of-Interest Code

First 5 LA's legal counsel, Serita Young, provided a brief overview of the biennial review of First 5 LA's Conflict of Interest Code, as required by Los Angeles County. For context, Ms. Young explained that the review is mandated by the Political Reform Act and statutes implementing Proposition 10. The code outlines rules that prohibit public officials and employees from using their positions to improperly influence decisions.

Proposed updates to the code are shown in track changes in Exhibit B of the attached document. This item was presented for informational purposes and will return to the Board in October for approval.

There is no further discussion on this item.

6. 2024 Advocacy Review

Ms. Medina and Mr. Bamberg from the Public Policy and Early Care & Education team shared an overview of First 5 LA's 2024 policy and advocacy efforts at the state and federal levels.

State-Level Highlights:

- Focused on protecting early childhood systems amid the state budget deficit.
- Advocated for child care spaces, rate reform, and continuous Medi-Cal eligibility for children.
- Supported and monitored key legislation, including AB 2268, AB 2319, and SB 1396.
- Engaged in administrative advocacy with State departments and monitored the implementation of the Behavioral Health Services Act.
- Emphasized the importance of home visiting programs and addressed temporary funding reductions planned for 2024–2026.

Federal-Level Highlights:

- Advocated for sustained funding for child care, Head Start, WIC, and related programs.

- Supported the Child Care Stabilization Act, Tax Relief for American Families and Workers Act, and MIECHV reauthorization.
- Monitored and shared implementation updates across the First 5 network.

Advocacy Activities:

- Participated in multiple advocacy days, including First 5 Association Advocacy Day and First 5 LA Day in Sacramento.
- Coordinated a child care site visit with Assemblymember Blanca Pacheco.
- Engaged in candidate education, hearings, and policymaker events at all levels of government.

Looking Ahead:

- Ms. Medina shared that the 2025 Policy Agenda is in development and will be finalized in November.
- She stressed the urgency of rate reform, noting the potential impact on LA if not addressed.
- There was interest in organizing a First 5 LA Day in Los Angeles.
- The team also reflected on their federal work, particularly related to teacher pay and funding needs, and acknowledged that priorities may shift following the November election.

There is no further discussion on this item.

7. Break

8. Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for the Year Ended June 30, 2024

Mr. Ortega and First 5 LA's auditor presented on the annual audit process and the results of the Independent Auditor's Report on the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report. First 5 LA received a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association for FY 2022–2023.

The auditor issued a clean audit opinion, with one minor finding that was promptly corrected. The Finance team reaffirmed its commitment to maintaining high standards and enhancing financial reporting practices.

For FY 2023–2024, the budget increased by approximately \$2 million, with total revenue of \$82.4 million and expenditures of \$86.8 million. The year-end fund balance was \$268.7 million, continuing a trend of expenditures exceeding revenues over the past three fiscal years.

Administrative costs remained within the Board-approved cap, and total program expenditures amounted to \$75.5 million.

This item will be brought for formal action at the October Board meeting.

There is no further discussion on this item.

9. Recommendation on the Long-Term Financial Plan to Align with the Strategic Plan for 2024-2029

The team reviewed the current Long-Term Financial Plan, created five years ago to support the previous strategic plan. The plan aimed to align expenditures with revenue by FY 2027–2028, but did not account for revenue impacts from Proposition 31 (flavored tobacco ban), potentially leading to a fiscal cliff.

Key principles guiding the updated LTFP include maximizing resources, ensuring contract stability, aligning with the new strategic plan, and maintaining a six-month reserve (50% of the total budget).

Two funding scenarios were considered for FY 2027–2028:

- **\$55M annual commitment** → ~\$84M available fund balance by FY 2034–2035
- **\$60M annual commitment** → ~\$33M fund balance by the same period

Each scenario requires gradual budget reductions:

- **\$55M option:** 15.6% cuts in the first two years, 17% in the third
- **\$60M option:** 13.3% annual reductions over three years

Projections were based on the May 2024 First 5 California revenue forecast, showing a 4.2–5% annual decline through FY 2034–2035. The team emphasized the importance of sustainability, flexibility, and stakeholder consultation. A final recommendation—whether to land at \$55M or \$60M—will be brought forward as an action item in October.

There is no further discussion on this item.

10. Public Comments (for items not on the agenda)

There were no public comments.

ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting adjourned at 4:16 pm

NEXT MEETING:

The next Special Meeting of the Board/Program & Planning Committee will take place on Thursday, April 24, 2025, at 1:30 pm.

Meeting details will be posted per Brown Act Requirements

Meeting minutes were recorded by Linda Vo, Board Relations Manager

FIRST 5 LA

SUBJECT:

Establish a Strategic Partnership with Catalyst California in the Amount of up to \$900,000 to Support the Development and Implementation of the Equity Index for a period of four (4) years through June 30, 2029.

RECOMMENDATION (PROVIDED AS INFORMATION):

This memo is provided as information for the Board's consideration at the April 24, 2025, Program and Planning Committee Meeting. First 5 LA staff recommends that at the June 12, 2025, meeting of the Board of Commissioners, the Board approve the establishment of a Strategic Partnership with Catalyst California for an amount not to exceed \$900,000 for the period of 48 months. Funds for FY 25-26 will be included within the FY 25-26 First 5 LA Programmatic Budget under Equity Index, which will be brought to the Board of Commissioners on June 12, 2025. Beyond FY 25-26, funds will be pulled from the assigned fund balance which will be brought to the Board of Commissioners for consideration and approval in June of the corresponding fiscal year. At the time of budget approval, requested resources will shift from the Assigned resource category of the fund balance, dedicated for broad Strategic Plan purposes, to the Committed category, amounts dedicated for a more specified purpose via resolution.

BACKGROUND:

First 5 LA's 2024–2029 Strategic Plan commits to centering equity, inclusive of addressing racial justice, poverty and geographic disparities to improve outcomes for young children and their families. We know significant disparities persist across L.A. County, rooted in structural racism and disinvestment. First 5 LA needs a more comprehensive, equity-centered tool to identify where needs are greatest and guide resource allocation, systems change, and advocacy efforts. The Building Brighter Futures Equity Index aims to meet this need by measuring early childhood well-being across multiple domains, illuminating racial, poverty and geographic disparities, and helping to ensure that investments and strategies are informed by data and grounded in equity.

First 5 LA seeks to establish a Strategic Partnership with Catalyst California to support the continued development and implementation of the Building Brighter Futures Equity Index (Index). This collaboration aligns with First 5 LA's strategic focus on addressing racial, poverty and geographic disparities in early childhood well-being and directing resources to communities most in need. The Index is intended to provide a comprehensive measure of well-being across multiple domains for young children and families in L.A. County. Given First 5 LA's declining revenue, the Index will highlight disparities and inform decision-making to ensure limited resources are directed where they are most needed.

Catalyst California is currently partnering with First 5 LA to develop an initial draft of the Index (referred to as Equity Index 1.0). This foundational work involves identifying indicators aligned with the nine strategic plan objectives and organizing them into a draft version of the Index. Board feedback on the data and indicators will be solicited in spring 2025. A final draft of the Equity Index 1.0 will be presented to the Board in October 2025.

The proposed strategic partnership will build upon this foundational work by advancing the development, implementation, and dissemination of the Index beyond internal use for First 5 LA funding allocation. The partnership will ensure that stakeholder engagement continues to inform the evolution of the Index and that the final product is accessible and actionable for a wide range of users serving children and families.

Pursuant to the Procurement Policy, Strategic Partners greater than \$150,000 must be presented to the Board for approval. Staff is requesting the establishment of a Strategic Partnership for four years in an amount not to exceed \$900,000 to comply with this policy.

GOVERNANCE GUIDELINES #5 AND #6 (SUSTAINABILITY AND LEVERAGING):

First 5 LA's partnership with Catalyst California to create the Building Brighter Futures Equity Index leverages Catalyst California's existing expertise, stakeholder relationships, and prior work in developing data-driven equity tools. Throughout the life of the partnership, First 5 LA will work to build internal capacity to assume responsibility for the work led by Catalyst California. At the conclusion of the strategic partnership, First 5 LA will transition the Equity Index work in-house to ensure sustainability and integration within the organization, with the likely exception of maintaining a dynamic, web-based platform for the Index, which may require an external IT vendor.

JUSTIFICATION:

A strategic partner is defined as having an existing infrastructure or substantial investment in a program or project that either cannot be duplicated or would be duplicated at the expense of First 5 LA, and has the demonstrated resources, ability, program reach, or level of expertise to support First 5 LA's systems change work. Strategic Partnerships also include entities that administer jointly funded programs or entities with key relationships when these are critical to advancing First 5 LA's Strategic Plan.

Catalyst California is uniquely positioned to support the development and implementation of the Equity Index due to their extensive expertise in equity-focused data analysis, stakeholder engagement, and systems change. Their deep understanding of First 5 LA's equity-driven, place-based work and the organization's nuanced data needs enhances their ability to deliver outcomes that align with First 5 LA's strategic objectives.

Additionally, Catalyst California has developed and maintained key infrastructure that cannot be easily duplicated—or would be duplicated at significant cost—such as:

- **Proprietary Data Processing Code:** Automates the retrieval and structuring of Census and ACS data aligned with First 5 LA's needs, streamlining analysis and reducing costs. This code has been used for past analyses, including the Best Start analysis, the landscape analysis for the 2024-29 strategic plan, and data supporting our strategic plan objectives. Integrating this code into the equity index increases efficiency and reduces costs associated with manual data pulls and restructuring.
- **Established Data Repository:** Maintains open-source and purchased datasets previously acquired by First 5 LA, including childcare data. Rebuilding this repository independently would require significant additional investment and effort.
- **Data Hub & Visualization Platform:** An interactive tool that can serve as a model or foundation for the Equity Index's web platform, minimizing new infrastructure investments.

Beyond technical infrastructure, Catalyst California's existing relationships with system stakeholders, data stewards, and community partners accelerate the work and improve quality by ensuring timely access to relevant data and trusted input. These connections can reduce delays and enhance the quality of the deliverables by incorporating trusted data sources and collaborative input.

Their ability to synthesize equity data into actionable insights supports First 5 LA's commitment to directing resources where they are most needed. This partnership maximizes value while avoiding unnecessary duplication of effort and expense.

Catalyst California's familiarity with the data indicators, community priorities, and external partners that are critical to advancing First 5 LA's mission ensures a seamless integration of this project into First 5 LA's broader strategic plan. Their ability to navigate the complexity of equity issues and synthesize data into actionable insights allows First 5 LA to maximize the impact of limited resources and address systemic inequities affecting young children and families in Los Angeles County.

Proposed Work and Objectives:

Objective 1: Index Enhancement & Refinement – Further develop and refine the Index as a composite measure of early childhood well-being guided by the conditions in First 5 LA’s Strategic Plan objectives, to inform equity-focused investments and advocacy.

Objective 2: Stakeholder Engagement & Utilization – Engage internal and external stakeholders to inform the Index’s ongoing development and promote its effective utilization to advance equity for young children and their families.

Objective 3: Data Updates – Regularly incorporate new data releases into the Index to maintain up-to-date information on early childhood well-being.

Objective 4: Web-Based Platform Development – Create and sustain an interactive, web-based platform to ensure broad accessibility and engagement with the Index.

Objective 5: Training and Capacity Building – Equip First 5 LA staff and partners with the skills to utilize the Index for decision-making and advocacy, enabling effective and equity-focused resource allocation.

Objective 6: Data Narratives & Equity Insights – Craft data-driven narratives that highlight disparities in early childhood well-being, to inform equity-focused policy and investment decisions.

Objective 7: Sustainability & Knowledge Transfer – Ensure the Index's long-term sustainability and impact by fostering internal capacity at First 5 LA and facilitating the transition of responsibilities from Catalyst California.

Market Research

Market research involved examining historical costs for similar initiatives and conducting a landscape analysis focused on other equity indices to determine whether any existing indices could meet First 5 LA’s needs and the developers of those indices. We did not find an existing index that fully met First 5 LA’s requirements. Through this process, First 5 LA has determined that Catalyst California was the best fit for a strategic partnership due to their expertise and alignment with First 5 LA’s goals and experience working with other public agencies in Los Angeles County.

Project Costs

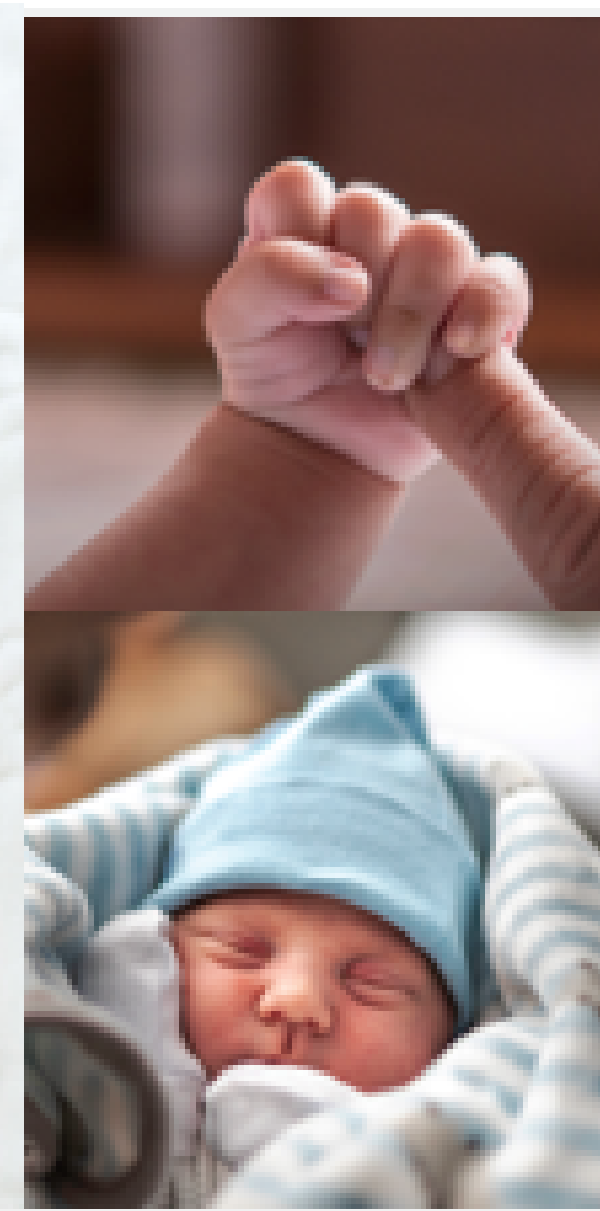
The total project cost of \$900,000 was determined based on the work required to develop, refine, implement, and sustain the Equity Index over four years. Funds will support Index development, web platform creation and maintenance, training, stakeholder engagement, data narratives, and project management to ensure long-term usability and impact. Year 1 represents the heaviest lift with the development and launch of the Index and web platform, while Years 2-4 focus on updates, training, stakeholder engagement, and sustainability efforts. Project costs were estimated based on the scope of work, expected staff and vendor time, and historical costs for similar initiatives.

Strategic Plan Alignment

The Equity Index aligns with First 5 LA’s commitment to equity by providing data-driven insights to guide resource allocation and advocacy efforts, ensuring that investments prioritize the communities experiencing the greatest disparities.

NEXT STEPS

Staff anticipates returning to the Board for action at the June Board meeting to approve this Strategic Partnership in the amount of up to \$900,000 and execute a contract with Catalyst California for an anticipated amount of \$250,000 for the period of July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026.



Early Identification and Intervention Learnings and Approach for FY 25-26

April 24, 2025

John Wagner, Executive Vice President
First 5 LA

Tara Ficek, Director
Health Systems, First 5 LA

Ann Isbell, Program Officer
Health Systems, First 5 LA

Cathy Mechsner, Practice Transformation Programs Manager
Quality Improvement Department, L.A. Care Health Plan

Crystal Smith, FRC Program Manager
South Central Los Angeles Regional Center

Katy Nagy, Director of Systems Design and Impact Measurement
VIVA Social Impact Partners



Vision: We envision a future where every child is born healthy and thrives in a nurturing, safe and loving community.

Mission: We advocate for children and their families, amplify community voice and partner for collective impact so that every child in Los Angeles County reaches their full developmental potential throughout the critical years of prenatal to age 5.



Our 2025 work will include the following areas of action, among others, to support maternal health and child well-being:

Engagement and Communications Narrative Transformations Through the African American Infant and Maternal Mortality (AAIMM) Prevention Initiative:

As a core member of the AAIMM Coalition, we partner with county departments, community members, and organizations and funders to address the unacceptably high rates of Black infant and maternal deaths and to ensure healthy and joyous births for Black families in L.A. County. Our continued contribution to this collective effort will focus on communications narrative transformations, seeking to foster awareness and promote the importance of healthy and joyous births for Black mothers and birthing people, strengthen knowledge of available resources for Black families, as well as spread awareness of how systemic racism has impacted Black families and the systems of supports. This investment includes engagement of parents and stakeholders through support of the AAIMM Community Action Teams, which are regionally based collaboratives that develop locally based initiatives to address birth equity. Emerging work going forward will focus on advocacy in local, state and federal spaces that work to prioritize maternal health and child health.

Access, Coordination and Workforce through Home Visiting:

Through our investment in maternal and child well-being, we will continue our efforts to improve maternal health and increase access to early intervention services for children with developmental delays. Specifically, through our partnership with the Welcome Baby program in participating hospitals and Select Home Visiting partners, families participate in regular screenings that help identify needs, including mental health, anxiety and age-appropriate developmental screenings. Throughout families' participation in the program, the home visiting program staff facilitate access to needed services, including early intervention, mental health and basic needs, as appropriate. This includes communications efforts around recognizing the early signs and symptoms of perinatal mood

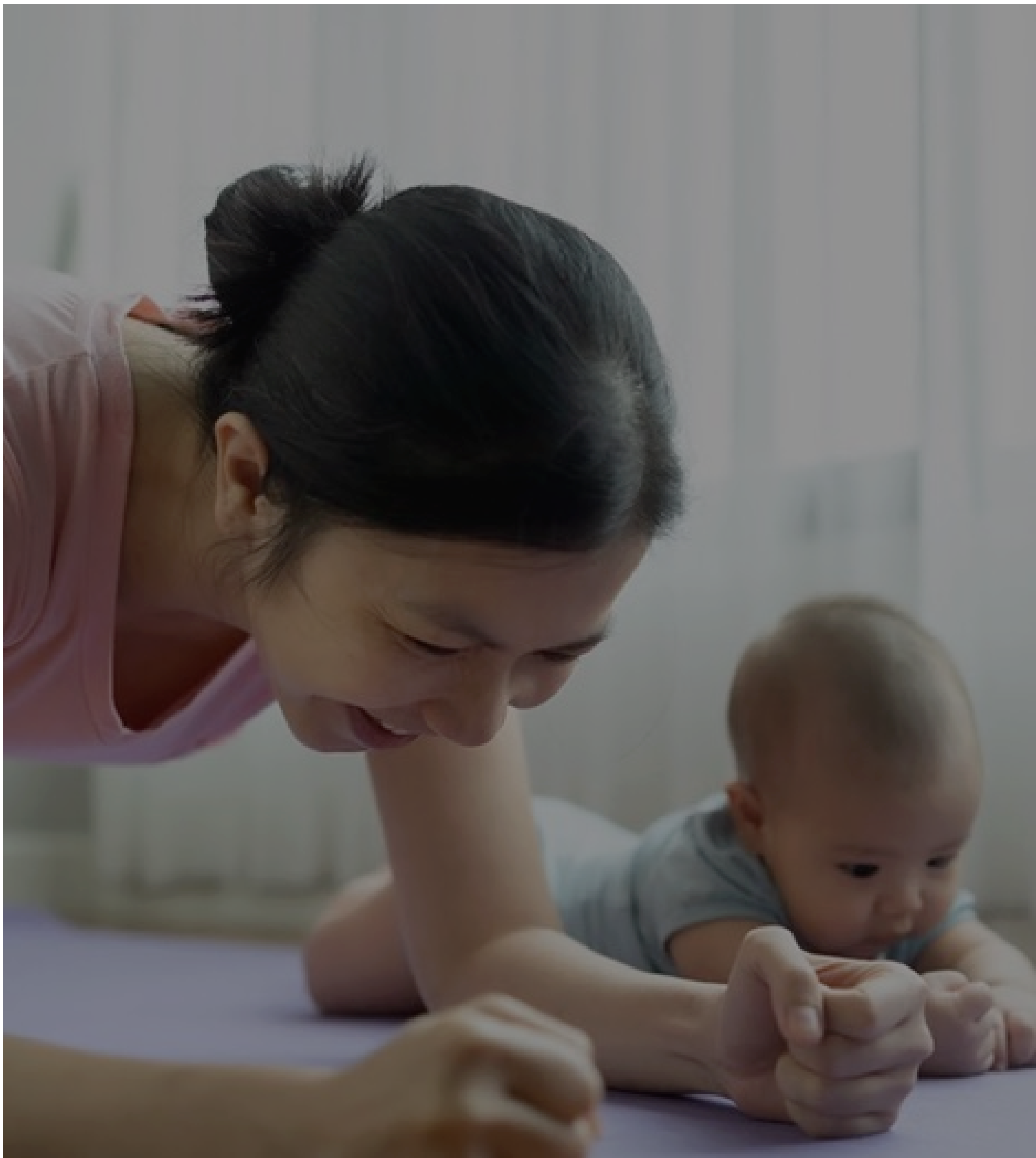


Discussion Overview



Panel Presentation

- **Ann Isbell**, Program Officer
Health Systems, First 5 LA
- **Cathy Mechsner**, Practice Transformation
Programs Manager, Quality Improvement
Department, L.A. Care Health Plan
- **Crystal Smith**, Family Resource
Center Program Manager, South Central Los
Angeles Regional Center
- **Katy Nagy**, Director of Systems Design and
Impact Measurement, VIVA Social Impact
Partners



Current Landscape

Setting The Stage

Strategic Plan Objective 3.2: Increase annual percent of children prenatal to age 5 in Los Angeles County **with a developmental delay receiving early intervention services** by the end of 2029.

- There is not an Early Identification and Intervention System, but an unconnected continuum of systems.
- Two key systems are **healthcare** and **regional centers**.
- A multi-pronged approach is needed to improve coordination, access, and quality and to reduce disparities.

Medi-Cal Enrollment in Los Angeles County

Medi-Cal has a key role in ensuring children have developmental screenings

- 78% of 0-4 children in LA County are enrolled in Medi-Cal
- 10 well-baby/child visits in first 24 months of life
- 95% are enrolled in a Managed Care Plan (MCP)



Sources: [ITUP-2024-LA-County-FINAL.pdf](#); Children's Data Network (CDN) Characterizing the Cross-Program Involvement of Young CalHHS Clients in Los Angeles County; and https://downloads.aap.org/AAP/PDF/periodicity_schedule.pdf?_gl=1*1ffv3fg*_ga*MTQ5MjZMTA2Ny4xNzQzNzE4NDEz*_ga_FD9D3XZVQQ*MTc0MzcxODQxMi4xLjEuMTc0MzcxODQ1My4wLjAuMA..*_ga_GMZCQS1K47*MTc0MzcxODQxMi4xLjEuMTc0MzcxODQ1My4wLjAuMA.

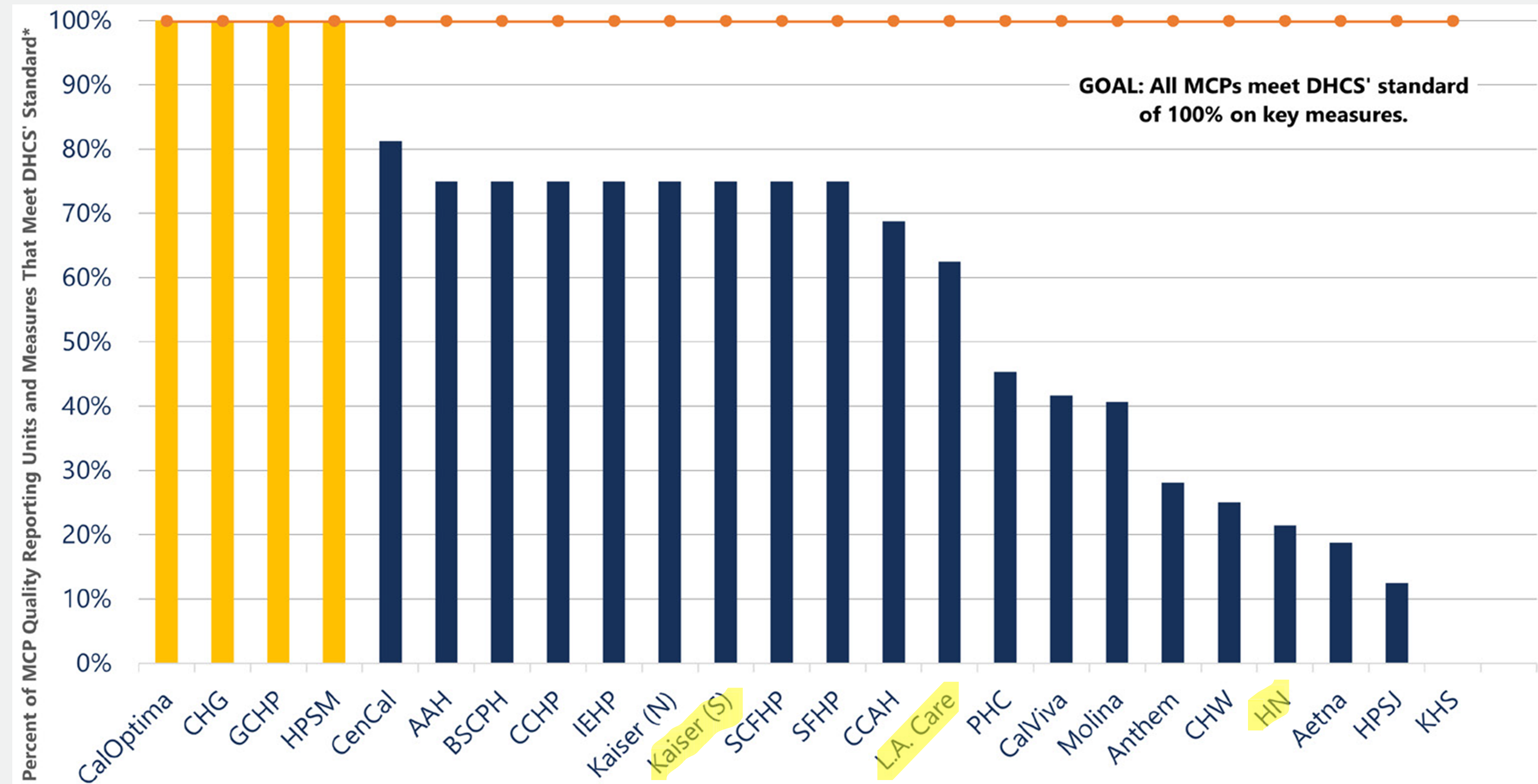
Medi-Cal Initiatives and Other Changes

Medi-Cal is undergoing a transformation to improve health access, quality and outcomes, particularly for children, through multiple strategies focused on equity, comprehensive preventive care, enhanced partnership and coordination.

- **California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM)** is a five-year initiative by DHCS that promotes broad delivery system, program, and payment reform.
- **Closed Loop Referral** requirement under CalAIM obliges health plans to connect members with community resources, such as early intervention, and follow up to ensure services were received.
- **Memoranda of Understanding (MOU)** between Managed Care Plans (MCPs) and third-party entities must be established or attempted by July 2025, formalizing partnerships and outlining responsibilities for referrals, care coordination, quality improvement, and data sharing.

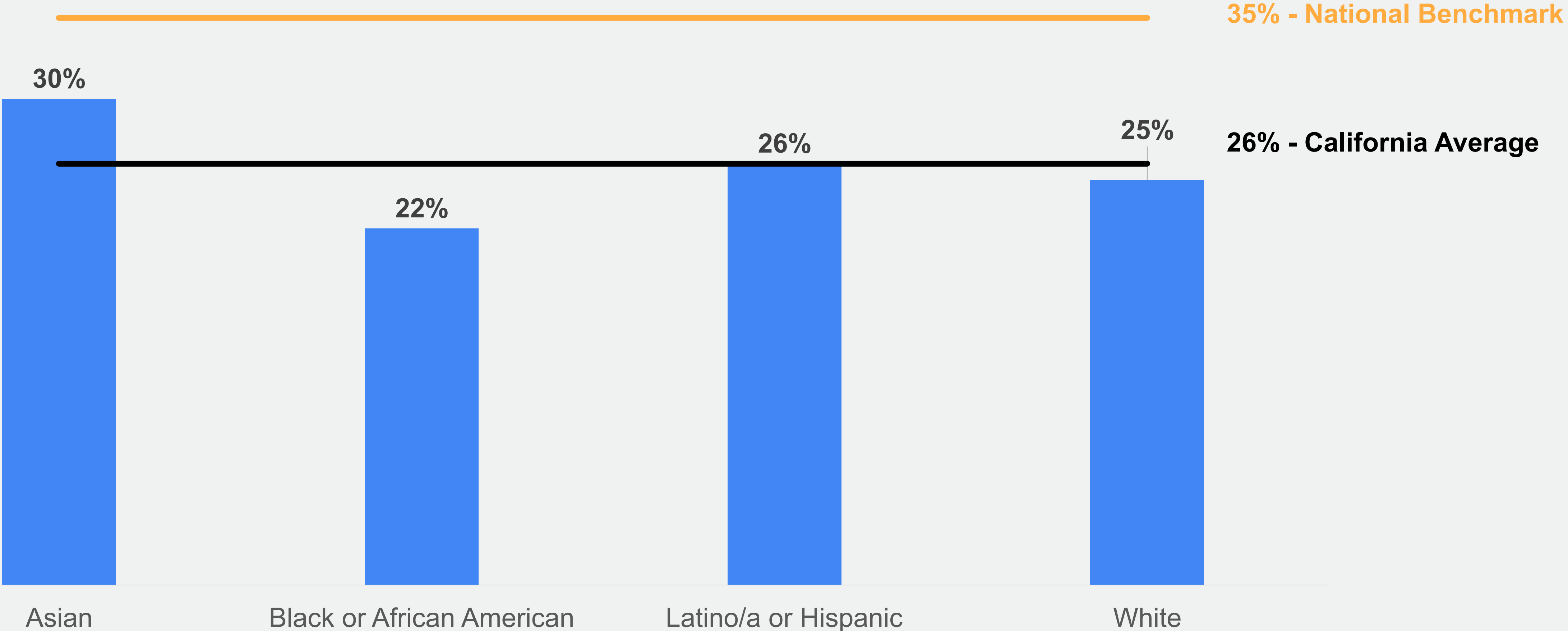
Medi-Cal Children's Health Quality Scores by MCP

- Fewer than one-third of plans meet state standards for children's measures.
- When MCPs don't meet standards, they may face penalties or other corrective actions.



Sources: <https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/Documents/QPHM-MCAS-Factsheet-MY-2023-1024.pdf>;
<https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/Documents/Enhancing-Quality-Accountability-and-Enforcement-for-MY23.pdf>.

Medi-Cal Developmental Screening Rates



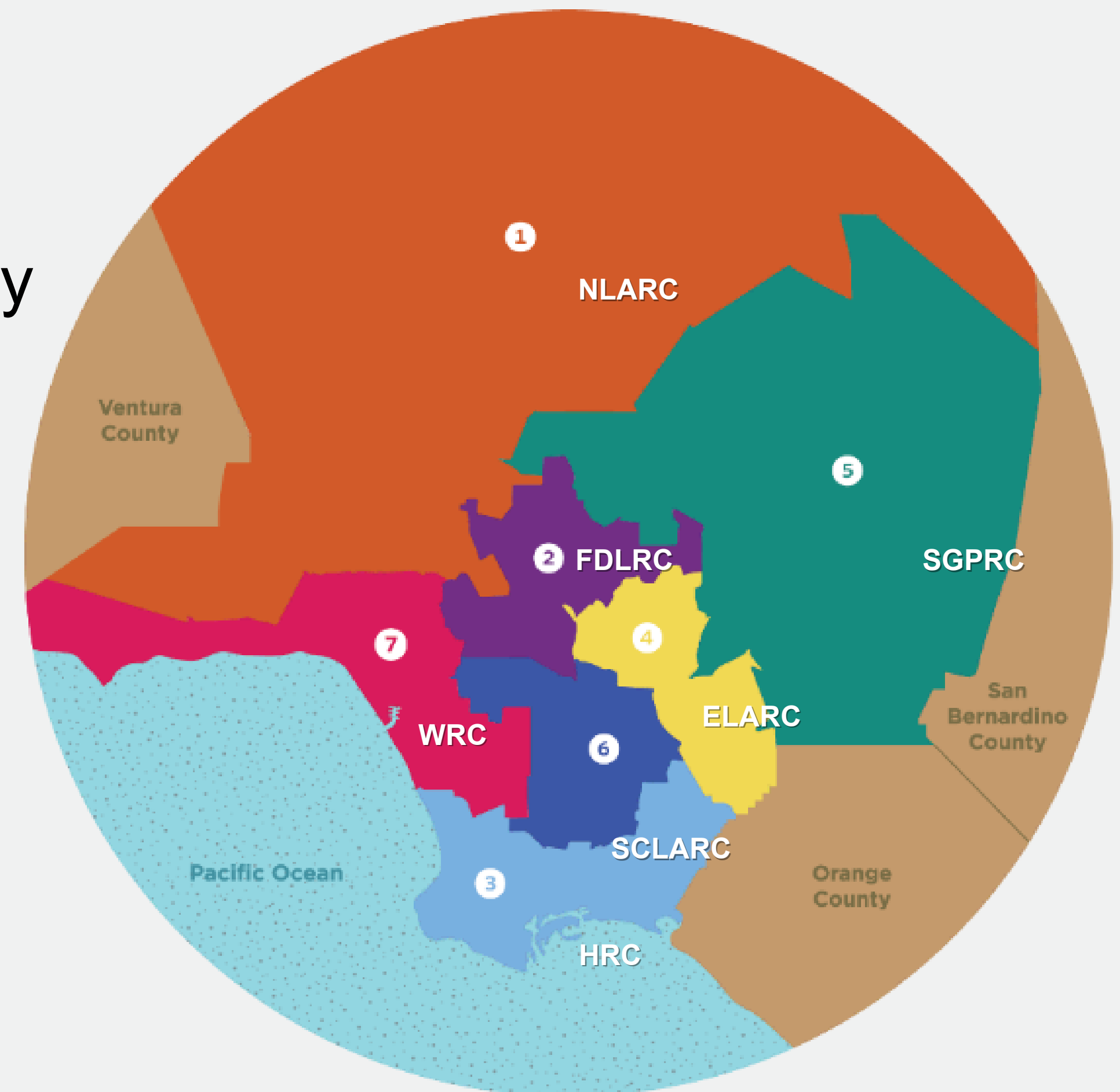
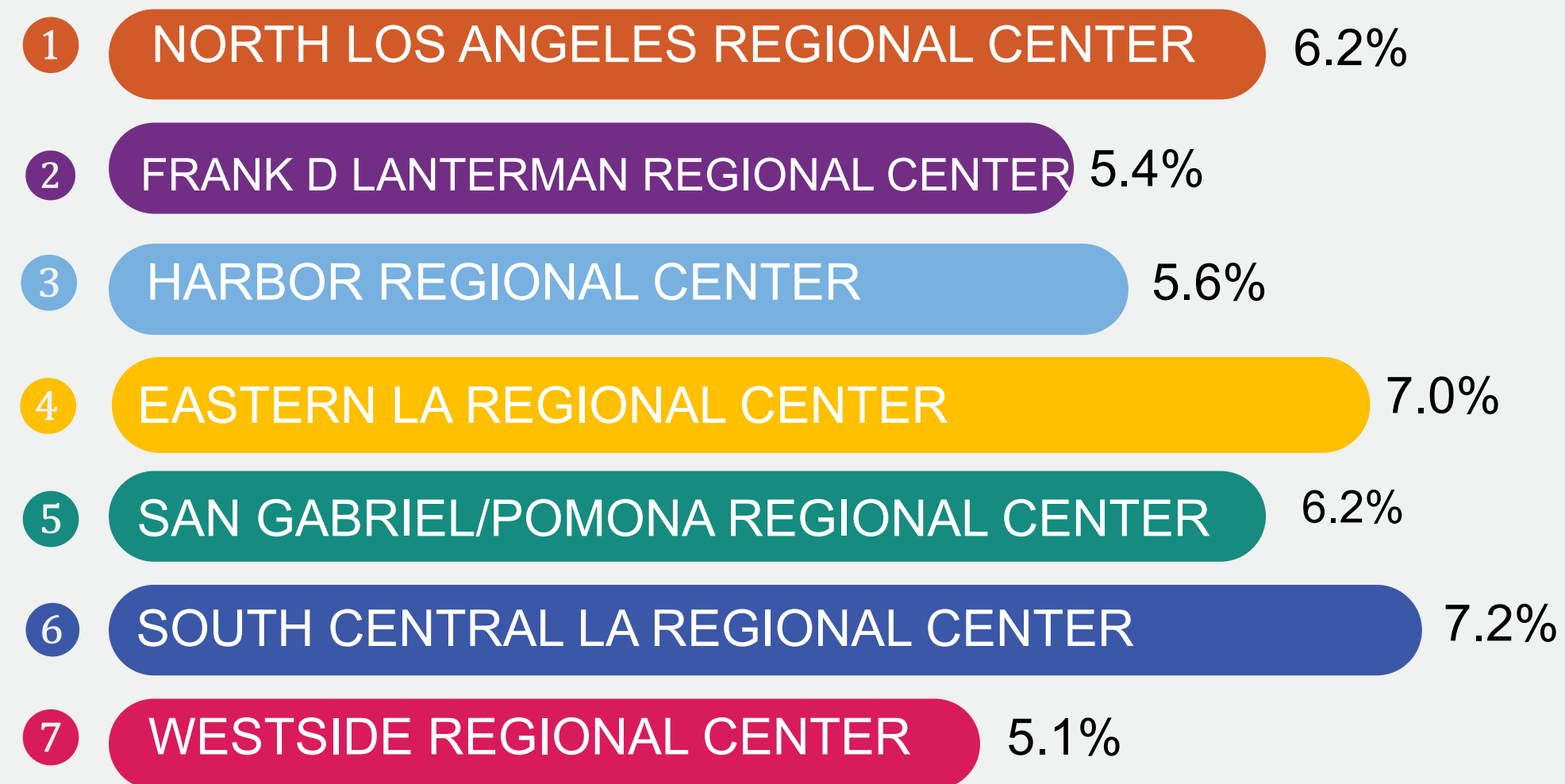
Source: go.childrenow.org/2024-california-childrens-report-card (California 2021-2022 data)

Regional Center Structure in Los Angeles County

Regional Centers are an essential early intervention provider through their Early Start program

- 5-7% of children 0-3 served by the Early Start program through 7 regional centers in LA County

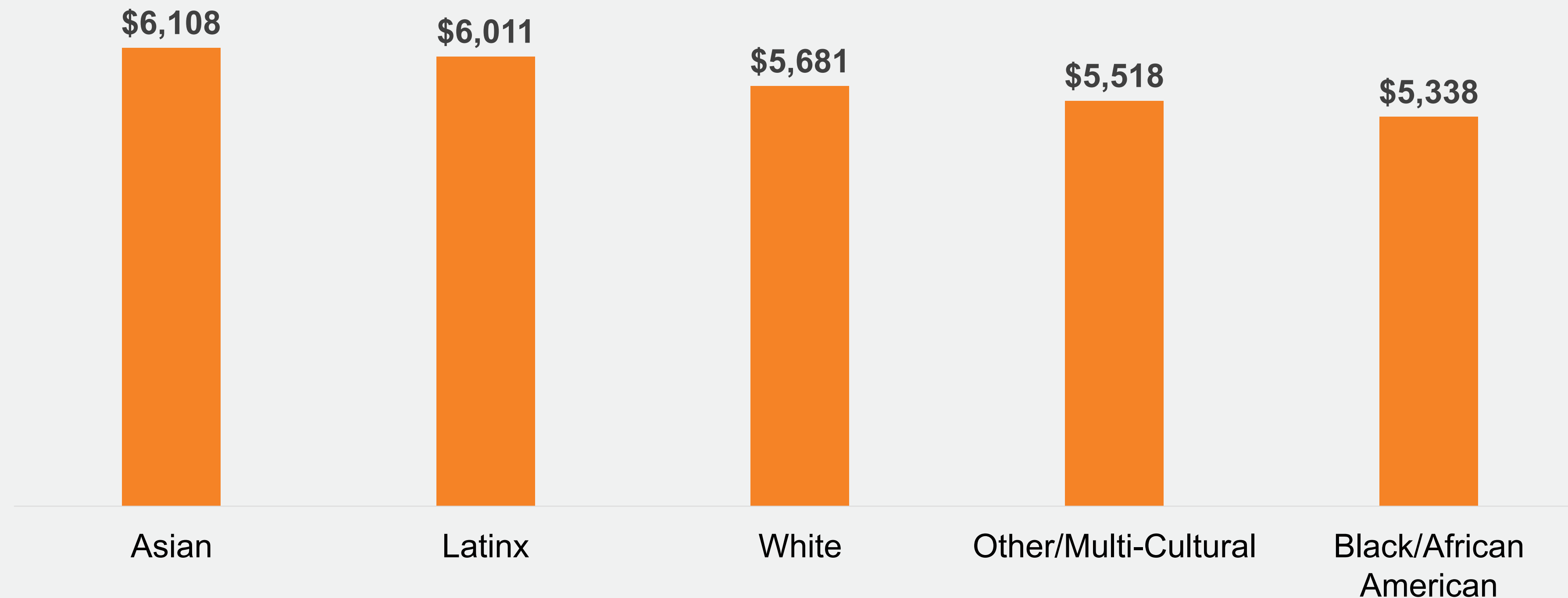
EARLY START: % of children ages 0-3 served*
by Regional Center



Source: California Department of Developmental Services, Early Start Local Performance Materials, Indicator 6. Available at <https://www.dds.ca.gov/services/early-start/early-start-local-performance-materials/>.

* Note: The number of children ages 0-3 served is based on children who have an Individualized Family Service Plan.

Regional Centers Per Capita Expenditures on Early Start



Data presents approximate non-weighted averages across the 7 Los Angeles County regional centers for FY22-23. Sources:

- ELARC: <https://www.elarc.org/about-us/pos-data>
- FDL: https://lanterman.org/transparency_accountability/documents/2023-disparity-data-on-purchased-services-report
- HRC: <https://www.harborrc.org/transparency/reporting/purchaseofservicesdata>
- NLACRC: <https://www.nlacrc.org/governance/purchase-of-service>
- SGPRC: <https://www.sgprc.org/governance/transparency-access-to-public-information/annual-pos-expenditure-reports>
- SCLARC: <https://sclarc.org/about-us/transparency-portal.php>
- WRC: <https://westsiderc.org/who-we-are/transparency/>

Regional Center Campaign

The **Master Plan for Developmental Services** aims to strengthen connections between the Regional Center system to other critical systems across CalHHS, and other systems and services including education, housing, employment, transportation, and safety.

Recommendation themes:

- Equity
- Making Own Life Choices
- Living in Inclusive Communities with the Resources Needed to Thrive
- Services Needed and Chosen
- Part of and Served by a Strong Workforce
- Accountability and Transparency

Federal Shifts

Budget

- Senate passed first budget resolution on February 21, 2025.
- House passed budget resolution on February 25, 2025 - **\$880 billion in cuts to Medicaid over the next ten years.**
- Continuing resolution (CR) passed on March 15, 2025 - **\$13 billion cut in domestic nondefense spending.**

Department of Education

- On March 20th, President Trump signed an executive order to close the Department of Education.
- Statement released that functions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act will move to the Department of Health and Human Services.
- **Only Congress has the authority** to move functions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act to another agency.

Learnings from First 5 LA Investments

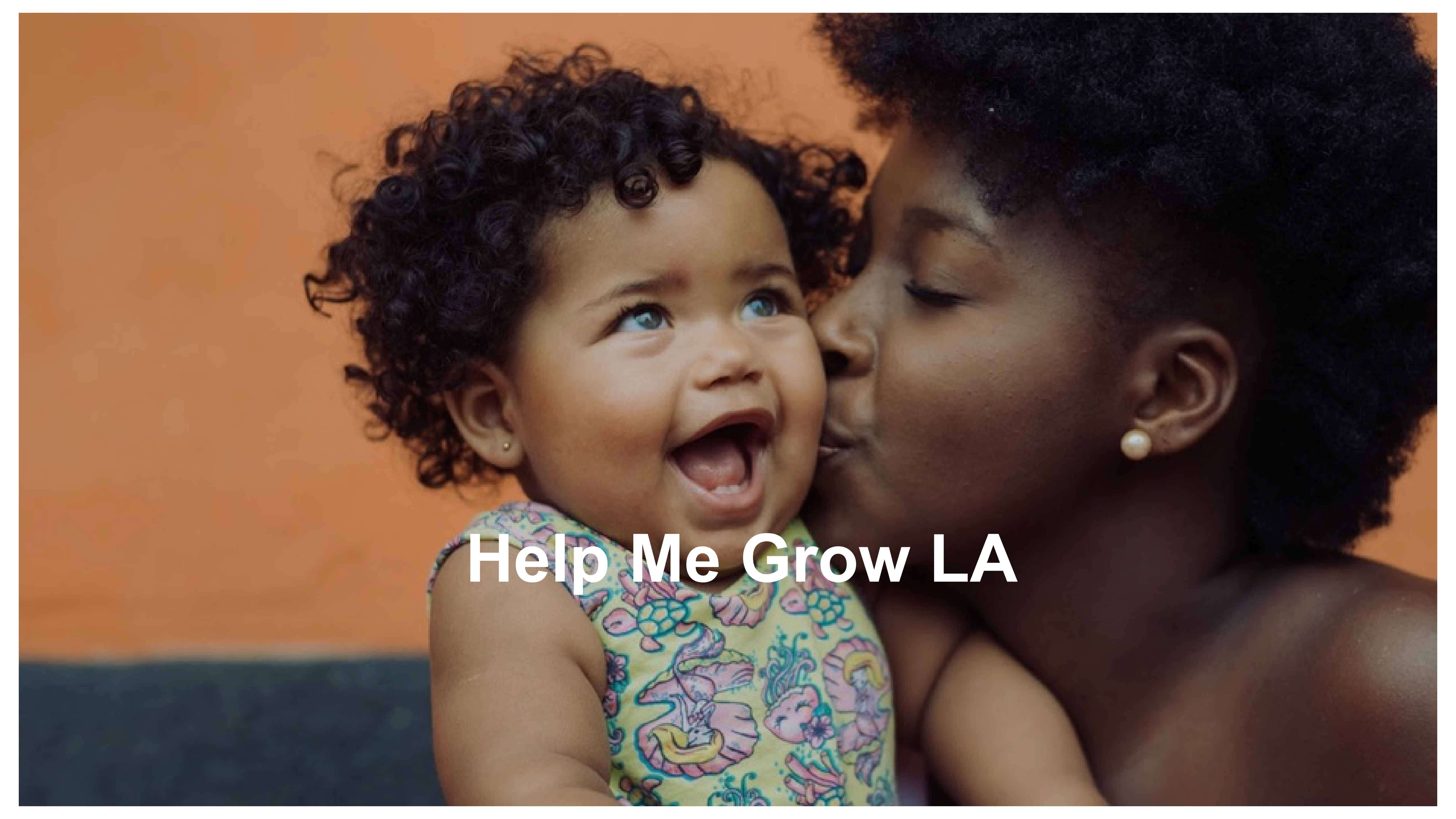
- Home Visiting
- Help Me Grow
 - L.A. Care Partnership
 - Pathways



Home Visiting

Home Visiting

- Home visitors conduct developmental screenings (Ages and Stages Questionnaire) for all infants at the appropriate age intervals
- Families identified with potential concerns are referred to regional centers or other appropriate services
- Challenges regarding referral and linkage:
 - Length of time to obtain appointment and lengthy application
 - Families unsure about need for referral / want more time to work with child
 - Lack of trust and familiarity with potential services and benefits
 - Access challenges – language, transportation, availability of services



Help Me Grow LA

Learnings from Help Me Grow LA (HMG LA)

About HMG LA: Promotes local cross-sector collaboration to implement and strengthen early screening of developmental delays for young children and connect them to the appropriate intervention services and supports.

LACDPH continues to implement HMG LA

First 5 LA's Final HMG LA Investments in FY24-25:

1. L.A. Care Partnership
2. Pathways
3. Overarching Evaluation Learnings





HMG LA – L.A. Care Partnership

- 1. Integrate** early identification and intervention **protocols** into practice workflow
- 2. Increase awareness and education** on the importance of developmental screening and monitoring across levels (e.g., health providers, clinics, families, and community)



Child development classes:

- Total of **60 classes**
- **98%** reported increased knowledge of child development and greater confidence in advocating for their children

Printed Education Materials:

- *Learn the Signs, Act Early* tools translated in **12 languages**

Member Communications:

- Health education newsletters to LAC members (**3.7 million+ distribution reach**)
- Social media posts (**5,690 engagements**)
- Messaging on the LAC member education pages on www.lacare.org

Provider Classes:

- 3 Children's Health Conferences/CME events (**729 attendees**)
 - **83%** of attendees indicated that they plan to make improvements or changes after attending the CME event

Provider Communications:

- Health education news articles in newsletters (**8,642 downloads**)
- Messaging on provider education pages on www.lacare.org and community educational materials available to order on provider portal

There is not a “one size fits all” approach to practice coaching as practices were at varying stages of readiness in these areas:



Standard Workflows



IT/EHR



Culture of QI/Team Accountability

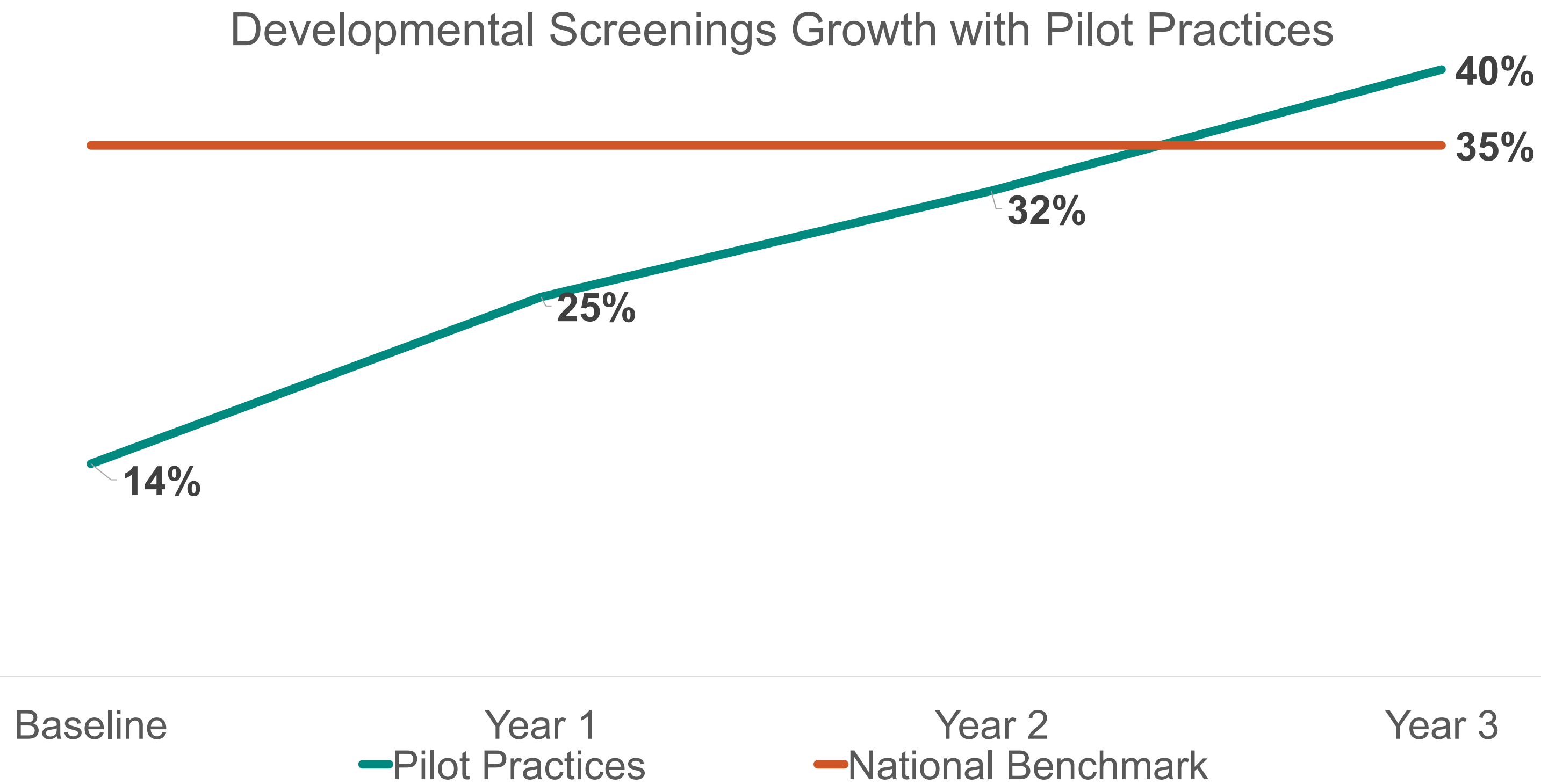


Community Partnerships/Linkages

Most common challenges:

- Lack of standardized data collection methods across practices
- Lack of EMR reporting functionality.
- Lack of referral pathways for Regional Centers
- Lack of communication between the practices and Regional Centers

Improvement rate of 30.3% over the baseline data.



As part of the Medi-Cal Managed Care Accountability Set (MCAS), Developmental Screening in the First Three Years of Life (DEV-CH) is an L.A. Care priority.

- Follow participating practices on ability to sustain developmental screening rates.
- Take lessons learned from the partnership to inform curriculum for improving children's health MCAS.
- Continue Child Health Conferences.
- Explore capacity for community child development classes.



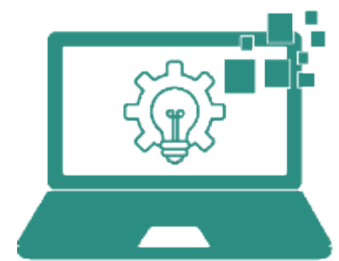


Break



HMG LA Pathways

- **Goal:** Strengthen regional referral pathways and provider networks through innovative technology, infrastructure, and practice change strategies
- **Reach:** 5 regional grantees finished in Dec 2023; 2 grantees continue to June 2025
- **Structure:** Community collaborative of partners
- **Approaches:**



Leverage and embed technology into referral workflows to improve access & system connectivity



Strengthen partnerships, community engagement, and capacity in their communities



PATHWAY PARTNERS:

- 1 Child Care Resource Center
- 2 Children's Bureau
- 3 City of Long Beach Dept Health & Human Services
- 4 Eastern Los Angeles Family Resource Center
- 5 San Gabriel/Pomona Regional Center
- 6 South Central Los Angeles Regional Center
- 7 Westside Regional Center

Pathways Spotlight: South Central Los Angeles Regional Center



South Central Los Angeles
Regional Center

for persons with developmental disabilities, inc.

Early Start Services: Ages 0-3

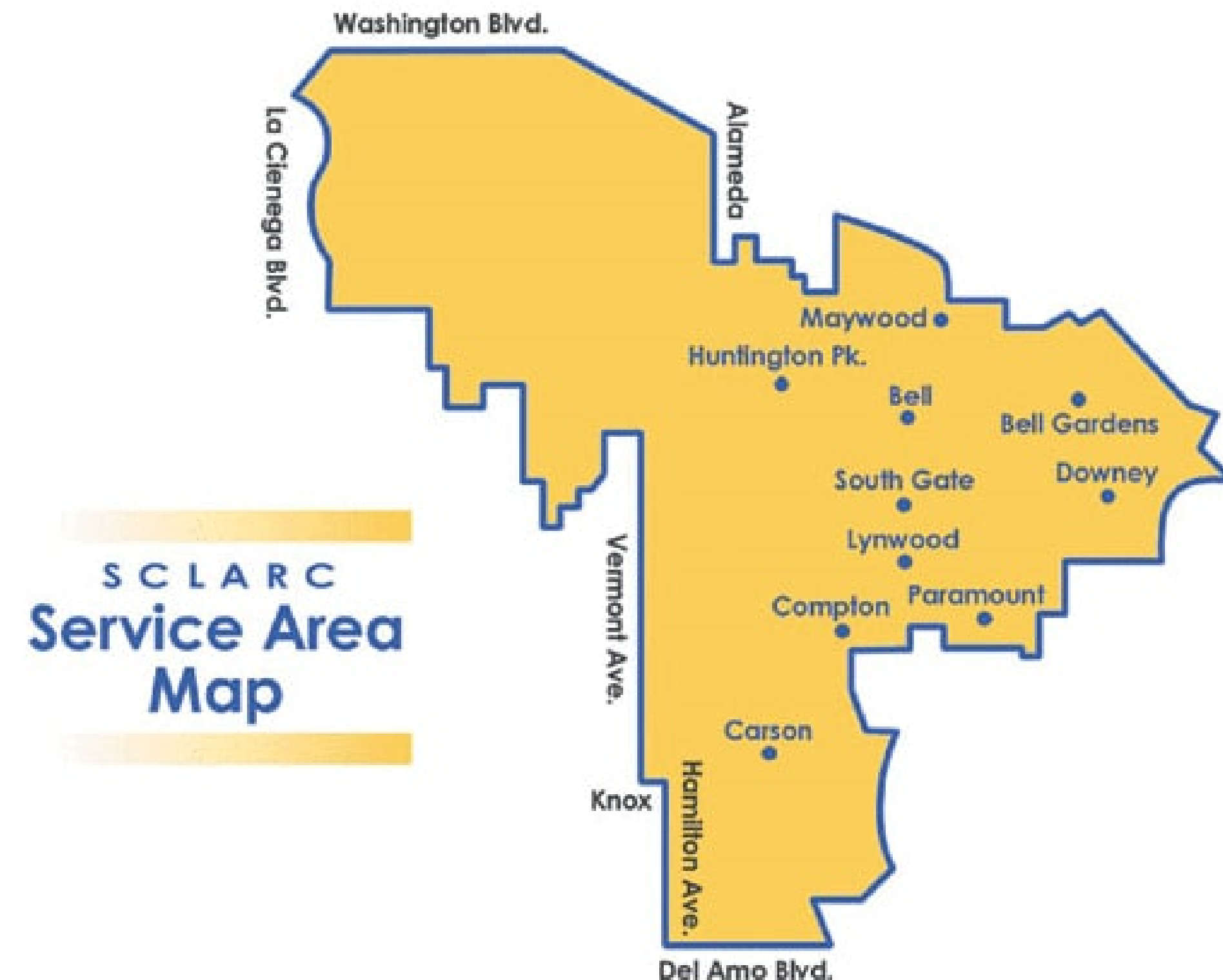
- Person-Centered Service Coordination
- Therapeutic Interventions
- Natural Environment Service Delivery
- Transition to Part-B Services

Lanterman Services: Ages 3+

- Person-Centered Service Coordination
- Behavior Management & Social Skills Training
- Respite and Personal Assistance Services
- Social recreational services

SCLARC serves five LA County Districts including:

South Los Angeles, Watts, Leimert Park, Florence/Firestone, West Adams, and the cities of Bell, Bell Gardens, Compton, Cudahy, Downey, Huntington Park, Lynwood, Maywood, Vernon, South Gate, North Carson, Gardena, and Paramount.



Approach: Develop a web-based intake portal accessible to families, caregivers and providers with children who may qualify for Regional Center services to improve navigation experience.

Implementation Highlights:

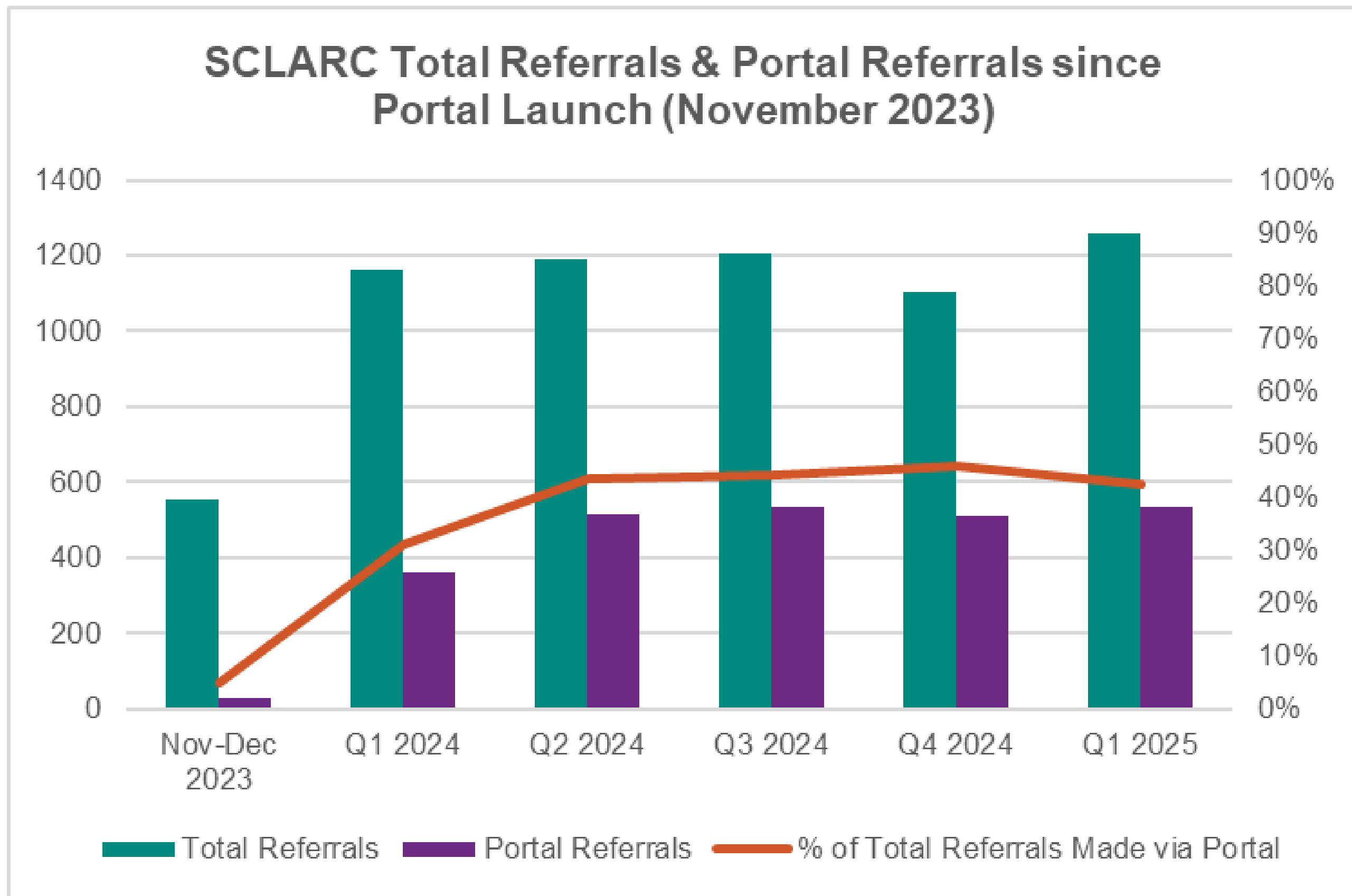
- ✓ **Improved access** to regional center services through new electronic application portal vs only paper/fax/phone
- ✓ Portal was developed & tested with **input from parents**, staff, and providers
- ✓ Since launching, SCLARC's portal has attracted **statewide interest** from other Regional Centers

Keys to Success:

- ✓ Early leadership buy-in
- ✓ Clear communication
- ✓ Defined implementation plan
- ✓ Integrating portal with existing database (reducing duplicate data entry & saving staff time)
- ✓ Understanding local community needs and integrating their input into testing

Intake Data

Early Start – Birth to Three



Keys Takeaways:

- ✓ Total referrals have increased since launching the portal (baseline not shown)
- ✓ Portal usage has increased since launch and now typically accounts for 40-45% of referrals
- ✓ The portal is used by both providers and families (self-referral)
- ✓ Offering a variety of referral methods remains important for accessibility



Evaluation Learnings

HMG LA Pathways and L.A. Care Partnership Evaluation Learnings

- 1 Racial disparities in access to EII persist.
- 2 Collaboration with regional centers and medical providers is necessary and requires support and education.
- 3 Technology is a powerful tool but not a standalone solution.
- 4 Data infrastructure and quality must be strengthened to support learning and equitable outcomes.
- 5 Systems change requires commitment in resources.



Efforts to improve developmental screening & referrals for services alone does not address racial disparities, particularly for Black or African American children and their families.

- HMG LA Pathways: Parents of Black or African American children reported that they were able to access the assistance they were seeking for their child at the lowest rate, compared to other racial groups
- HMG LA Care Partnership: Preliminary observations of race data show White children being screened at the highest rate compared to Black or African American, Other, and children whose race is unknown



Pathways grantees noted that the medical community is critical to local EII Systems. There is a need to strengthen understanding of early childhood development, resources and screening protocols, and partnerships with local medical providers and clinics.



L.A. Care found success in hands on coaching and Continuous Medical Education events

Both investments faced the following challenges making referrals to and closing referral loops with regional centers:

- ✘ Different processes for intake, consent, and follow up at each regional center
- ✘ Receiving timely updates regarding referrals and intake completion
- ✘ Contacting regional center staff for updates on referral status

Pathways grantees and L.A. Care medical practices found success working with regional centers by:

- ✓ Investing in relationship building
- ✓ Maintaining up to date contact information
- ✓ Educating families about the referral process

Pathways grantees adopted new technology to support data sharing and referrals:

- Involving diverse stakeholders in referral technology design boosts effectiveness and usability
- Agencies report improved efficiency and standardized referrals, but with interest in a countywide system in Los Angeles
- Successful adoption requires technical assistance, change management, and updated workflows
- New users of referral technology face challenges like staff turnover, technical issues, and lack of initial buy-in.

L.A. Care and participating medical practices saw a need for:

- Robust data infrastructure to automate and simplify data collection for developmental screenings and referrals. This requires training and, in some cases, funding in appropriate technology that integrates with electronic health/medical records.

Data quality is an equity issue:

- Across investments, data capacity and infrastructure needed strengthening
- Ensuring consistent and standardized data collection, including demographic data, across partners is key to assessing equity and improving outcomes
- Investments in technology, including automated tools, and capacity building are essential to track progress and identify disparities

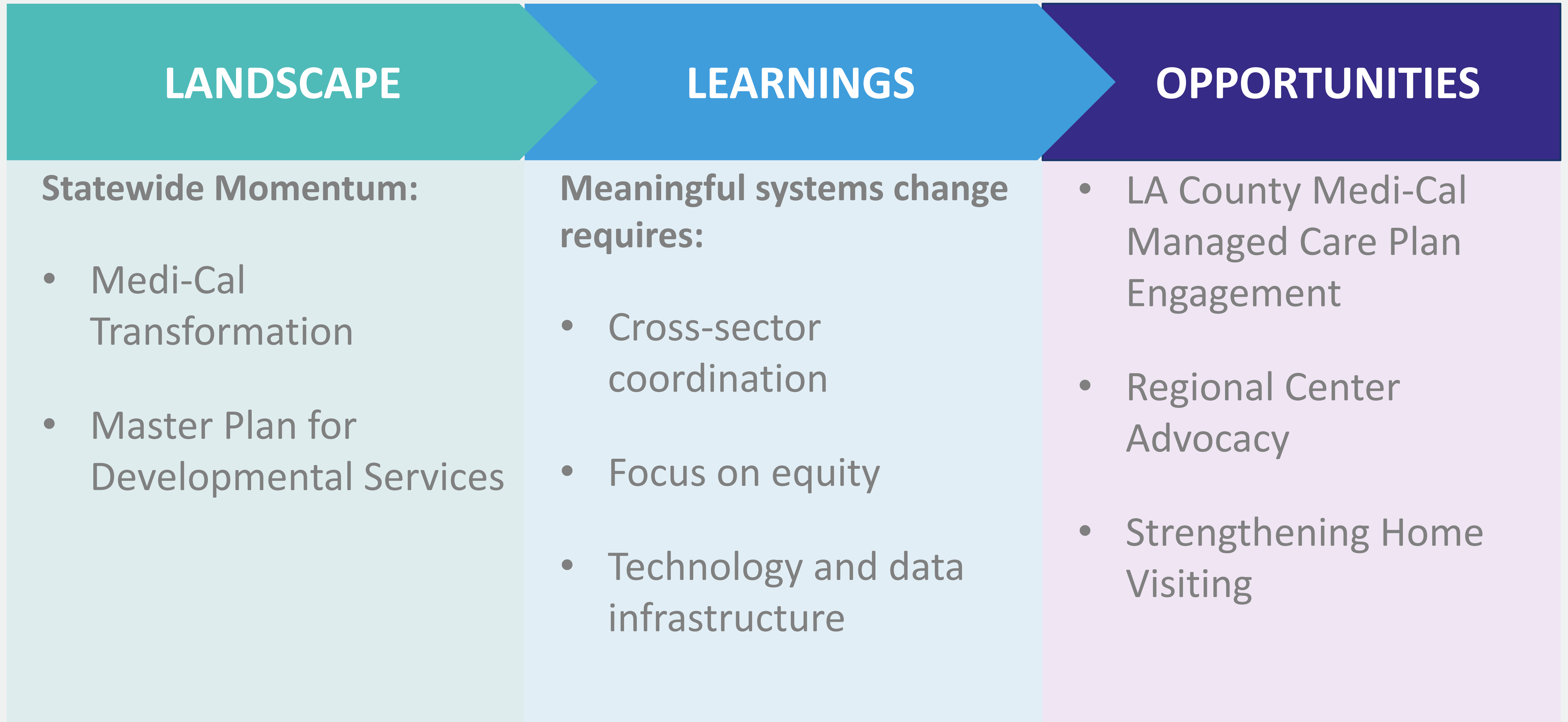
Building strong partnerships and sustainable practice change requires initial resources in:

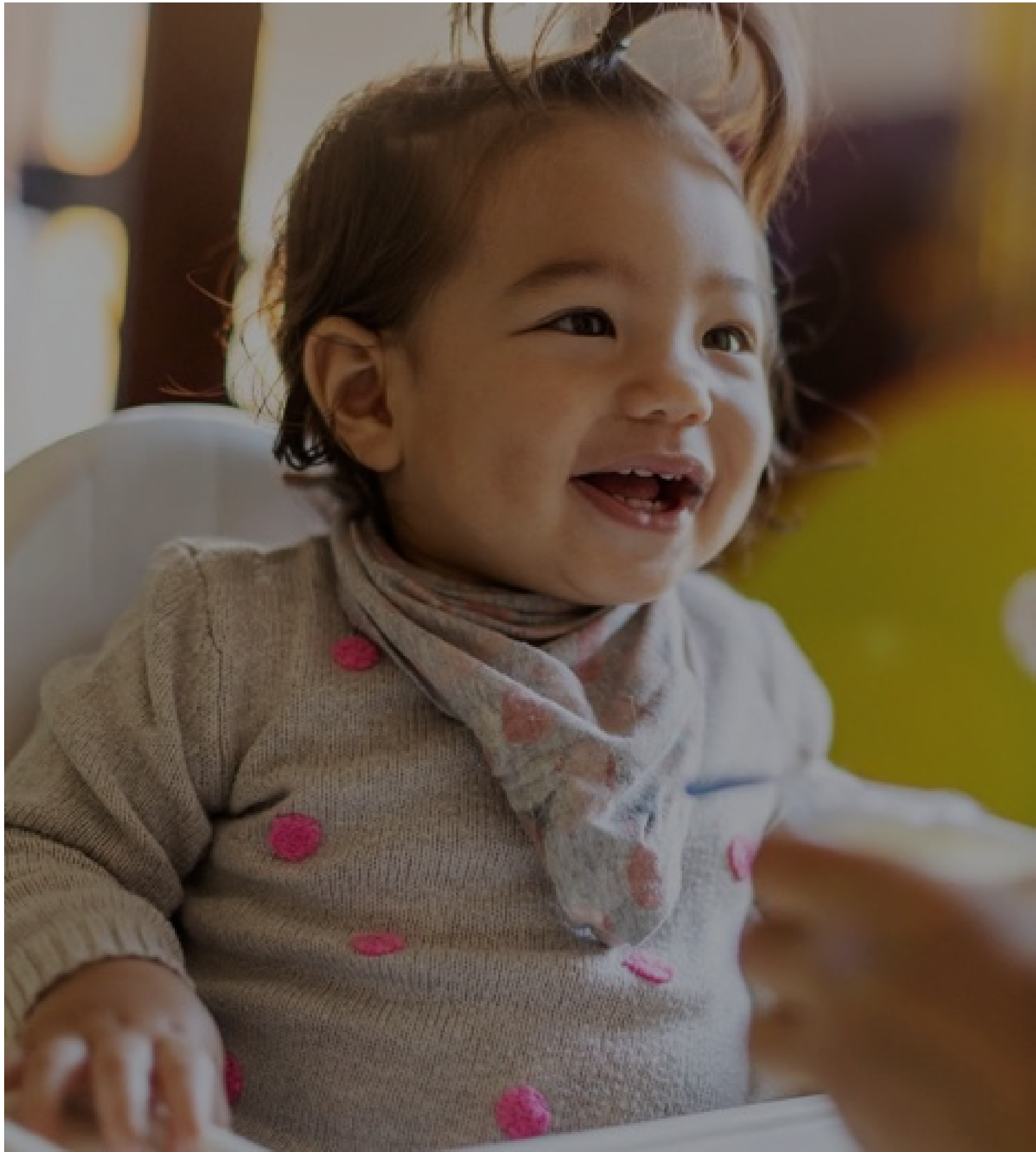
- **Coaching** and **technical assistance** to helping lead agencies identify and sustain partnerships and modify workflows
- **Funding** partners to execute activities supports commitment and buy-in
- **Time** for learning, troubleshooting, and building buy-in



Opportunities for First 5 LA

Opportunities to improve identification of developmental delays and linkage to early intervention for prenatal to 5 within key systems:





Questions