

Board of Supervisors

Meeting Time: 05-20-25 09:00

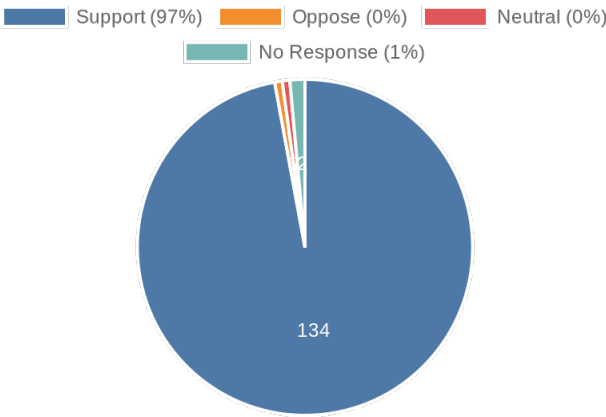
eComments Report

Meetings	Meeting Time	Agenda Items	Comments	Support	Oppose	Neutral
Board of Supervisors	05-20-25 09:00	32	138	134	1	1

Sentiments for All Meetings

The following graphs display sentiments for comments that have location data. Only locations of users who have commented will be shown.

Overall Sentiment

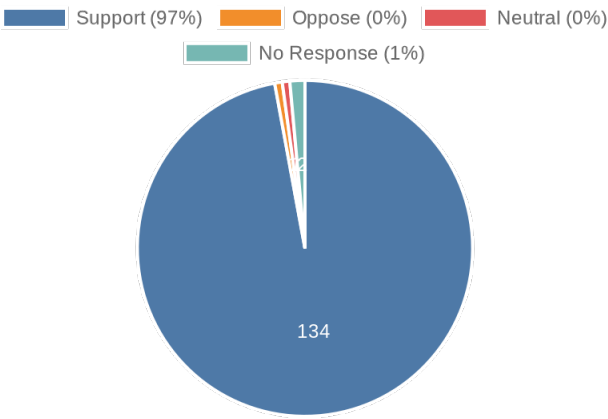


Agenda Name	Comments	Support	Oppose	Neutral
15. SUPPORTING SAN DIEGO CHILDREN AND FAMILIES THROUGH SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING FOR HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES (4 VOTES)	138	134	1	1

Sentiments for All Agenda Items

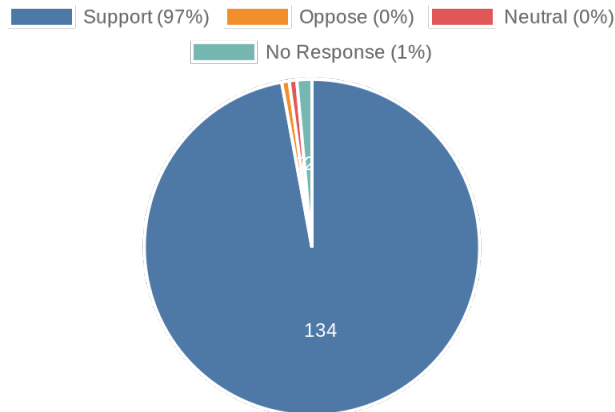
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Overall Sentiment



Agenda Item: eComments for 15. SUPPORTING SAN DIEGO CHILDREN AND FAMILIES THROUGH SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING FOR HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
(4 VOTES)

Overall Sentiment



Hannah Oppenheim

Location: 92109, San Diego
Submitted At: 5:48pm 05-20-25

My name is Hannah Oppenheim and I am a neurodevelopmental neurologist at Rady Children's Hospital. First 5 San Diego's Healthy Developmental Services (HDS) is a lifeline for families, offering free, high-quality developmental and behavioral screenings, treatment, and parent coaching. There are significant impacts on children with 95% of children who complete HDS development treatment making improvements. Personally, I have seen the direct impact of these services with my own patients. These are services that for many families would not be accessible. Their model of a two-generational approach is also unique and equally important to its impact and success. By including parent coaching alongside treatment, HDS not only equips a young child with what they need to be successful, but their caregivers as well. Utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap helps ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services.

Rachel Peterson

Location: 92109, San Diego
Submitted At: 3:35pm 05-20-25

As a first-time parent, I was excited when I heard Healthy Development Services (HDS) was offering free informative child development classes. We are on a tight budget and the ability to learn about my child's development and hear examples of how to address developmental issues causing me stress has been extremely helpful. I have already started applying the lessons I've learned from these classes. They are truthfully invaluable and I am so grateful for them.

Jessica Garfin

Location: 92129, San Diego
Submitted At: 2:16pm 05-20-25

My name is Jessica Garfin, and I am a physical therapist at Rady Children's Hospital. For the last 18 years,

Frist 5 San Diego's Healthy Development Services has been a lifetime for families, offering free, high-quality developmental and behavioral screenings, treatment and parent coaching. In that time, HDS has served over 352,800 San Diego children, as well as their families and caregivers. 95% of children that complete HDS developmental treatment make improvements. The two-generational approach of HDS is equally as important to its impact and success. By including parent coaching alongside treatment, HDS is not only equipping a young child with what they need to be successful, but their caregivers as well. Utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap helps ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services.

Janet Vidal

Location: 91911, Chula Vista
Submitted At: 1:31pm 05-20-25

My name is Janet Vidal, and I serve as Care coordinator for Healthy Development Services (HDS). I have seen firsthand the powerful impact this program has on children and their families through developmental screenings, early intervention, and parent support. These services are often the only resource available to families facing economic, social, or language barriers. Reducing them would have serious long-term consequences—unaddressed developmental delays can lead to more complex and costly interventions later. As an international physician, I can attest to how the lack of early support strains health, education, and social systems. Investing in early childhood development improves lives and prevents greater costs in the future. Cutting these services risks the well-being of vulnerable children and weakens our community as a whole.

Rachel Schlagel

Location: 92117, San Diego
Submitted At: 11:04am 05-20-25

My name is Rachel Schlagel, and I urge the Board of Supervisors to approve supplemental funding for Healthy Development Services. As a resident of District 4, my family has benefitted directly from these services. The program is an essential "entry point" for families to get the support they need in navigating service systems.

Thoma Herman

Location: 92105, San Diego
Submitted At: 11:01am 05-20-25

I am a Research Fellow with the SDSU Research Foundation and have been involved in evaluating the reach, efficiency, and impact of the Healthy Development Services Program since its inception in 2004. I am in strong support of Supervisor Montgomery Steppe's initiative to appropriate funds to sustain this valuable First 5 program. It is one of the wisest and most ethically sound actions the Board of Supervisors is able to take on this day. Sustaining the program is a vitally important effort because the prevention and early intervention services that the program provides to over 3,000 children annually are cost-effective. Connecting with families during the first 5 years of a child's life is shown by research to have returns manifold greater than the cost of services by assuring children arrive to school ready to learn and thrive. The network of community provider created by the HDS Program is an amazing assembly of culturally appropriate and geographically accessible support services.

Samantha Streuli

Location: 92116, San Diego
Submitted At: 10:40am 05-20-25

We have to support First 5 San Diego programs, which have contributed to child and family well-being in important and measurable ways including improved parent relationships with children for 95% of participants and improvements for 95% of children who are served. There really aren't any other programs that can fill the need for mental and behavioral health support for children and families in the same ways that First 5 does - we have a lot of screening programs but then what happens to those kids? They need to be served and supported. It's also really difficult for already marginalized communities to navigate care once they do get their kids screened, and First 5 offers important navigation resources. Using the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge the gap in funding will help ensure kids can continue getting their fair share of County revenue and services. Mental health equity and well-being for kids has payoffs for the future of our entire community - it needs to be a priority.

Cristina Nojara

Location: 92026, Escondido
Submitted At: 10:14am 05-20-25

An investment in our most impacted youth is an investment in our future. Healthy Development Services does just that. Having worked closely with students with exceptional needs and their families, I am a firm believer of early identification and intervention. Early intervention is crucial especially during a time that a child's brain grows at an accelerated rate. HDS is a crucial asset to our local community in providing services, support and resources to families. As a resident of District 5 also serving children and their families within District 5, I strongly support utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap to help ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services.

Pamela Choice

Location: 92102, San Diego
Submitted At: 9:32am 05-20-25

My name is Pamela Choice with Family Health Centers of San Diego and Children First Collective. I urge the Board of Supervisors to approve supplemental funding for Healthy Development services. Utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap helps ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services. I can think of no better or more appropriate use of the Tobacco Special Revenue fund than supporting children's healthy development in San Diego. HDS offers free, high-quality developmental and behavioral screenings and supports children and families with treatment and a coordinated care plan. There are significant health, social, and economic benefits to children, their families, and society when children's developmental needs are met. Thank you for your consideration.

Anabel Martinez

Location:
Submitted At: 9:19am 05-20-25

My name is Anabel, I have been a Patient Service Representative for HDSE for almost three years, and I have seen how our patients meet their milestones little by little. Before they reach the age of five, they get better in their speech delay, behavior, or social anxiety with the help of our development providers and Specialty providers. Parents always let us know how grateful they are for our services, due to some families not being able to pay for insurance, or they have just arrived in the US as refugees. The community we serve, most families are low-income, and they need the support we offer to families by helping them lower the stress of not knowing how to help their children with their developmental needs. It is for these reasons that I support utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap to help ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services. Reducing funding for HDS will have a harsh impact on our community.

Irene Hernandez

Location: 92028, Fallbrook
Submitted At: 9:19am 05-20-25

Hello, my name is Irene Hernandez, I am a Project Coordinator at Healthy Development Services North Coastal Region. During these last 17 years at HDS, I have witnessed the tremendous impact that our services have had in our children. My kids have been part of those 352,800 children that have benefited from the services HDS provides. Given the significant role HDS plays in supporting children, families & caregivers, I strongly support utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge the funding gap and ensure that our children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services.

Louise Tolentino

Location: 92123, San Diego
Submitted At: 9:17am 05-20-25

My name is Louise Tolentino, Project Coordinator at HDS/C3 in the North Central Region. I have seen the profound effect of the families come through our program throughout the 3 years I've been with HDS. Families that come through HDS have been given a sense of hope and guidance on how to support the most essential years of their young children. It's important to continue funding the families in the San Diego region to support them and make sure all families have what they need to thrive by continuing to promote early childhood mental health, behavioral and developmental services.

Chelsey Briggs

Location:

Submitted At: 8:57am 05-20-25

My name is Chelsey Briggs, Associate Director, Grants Administration at Family Health Centers of San Diego. I respectfully urge you to prioritize supporting the well-being of San Diego's children and families through supplemental funding for healthy development services. Strategic investments in early childhood education, mental and behavioral health, and family support programs are essential to fostering long-term resilience, equity, and opportunities across our communities. Your commitment to approving this supplemental funding will ensure that all children have the foundation they need to thrive and reach their full potential.

Samantha Oseguera

Location:

Submitted At: 8:52am 05-20-25

My name is Samantha Oseguera, and I am Child and Family Specialist at HDS/C3 in our North Central region. I manage incoming referrals and have directly encountered many families who feel lost and discouraged after being placed on long waitlists or not being eligible for services elsewhere. It's a rewarding experience to be able to witness families gain hope after joining our program. What's incredible about our program is that we support families through each step of way through care coordination. It's important to continue to fund for our services so we can support the growth and development of families and their children from an early age.

elvia playa

Location: 92081, Vista

Submitted At: 8:22am 05-20-25

I am the mother of a child who currently receives HDS services and reside in District 5.

Im extremely grateful to find free services with HDS they are a safe haven to myself and my family they have helped my daughter with Speech therapy and ive noticed a significant change with her communication . She Loves Ms.Ginnis! She never wants to leave after her Speech therapy i have to bribe her with ice cream.I also recieve BH therapy with Caroline I've never connected with a therapist i always had trouble finding someone i trusted and i feel a strong connection since i met her.With out these free services my family would of not been able to get the support we needed and also for all future families.

Utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge funding gaps ensures that our youngest children receive their fair share of County resources. These funds are vital for sustaining services that directly support our community's youngest generation and ensure a brighter future

Nina Alfonso

Location:

Submitted At: 8:19am 05-20-25

My name is Nina Alfonso, and I am a Developmental Specialist with HDS/C3 in the North Central Region. HDS is truly one of a kind in that we provide high quality early intervention services at no cost to families with children ages 0-5 throughout the community. There have been endless situations of families coming in hoping for services with us due to not being eligible anywhere else. HDS serves as a catch all to families who may not qualify for other programs or afford to pay out of pocket for services. Through the developmental and behavior services HDS provides, children are able to catch up to age level while also guiding parents in feeling more confident and empowered in understanding their child's development and behaviors. This program strengthens relationships between families and supports children through intervention before they reach school age.

Danielle Ward

Location: 92011, Carlsbad

Submitted At: 8:09am 05-20-25

My child received services through healthy development services and it truly changed my family's life. My husband and I learned valuable knowledge about how to help support his development and I don't know what we would have done if these services weren't readily available. Please continue to support other San Diego families.

Kayla Stone

Location:

Submitted At: 7:58am 05-20-25

My name is Kayla Stone with Healthy Development Services (HDS)- East and Children First Collective as a licensed therapist. Families are facing barriers such as not being able to get a service through their insurance and limited access to providers with 0-5 experience/knowledge. One family I served that had these challenges expressed that their son became more confident as we addressed his anxiety through knowledge of one's nervous system and coping skills. The two-generational approach is what makes the biggest difference by navigating messages of parenting and traumatic experiences. I am able to witness parents learn how to play and deepen their parent-child relationship. Utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap to ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services. A funding gap would make access to this essential service even harder and families in San Diego can't afford it.

Lily Valmidiano

Location: 91911, CHULA VISTA
Submitted At: 11:25pm 05-19-25

HDS has been transformational and the lives of children and families in San Diego County. It was developed almost 20 years ago to ensure that children with mild/moderate developmental and behavioral concerns received treatment so that their delays didn't get worse over time. This has been one of the best investments for children and families ever made locally. According to American Economist, Dr. James Heckman, early intervention programs like HDS yield as much as a 13% return on investment. Programs like HDS can result in significant savings in education, healthcare, juvenile justice, the welfare system, and many other sectors just by treating children early rather than later in life. The resources put towards HDS helps to put children on a trajectory that leads to lifelong success. I urge you to continue our community's investment in children and families and support the use of the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge the funding gap that HDS is facing.

Cindy Linder

Location: 92027, Escondido
Submitted At: 11:05pm 05-19-25

My name is Cindy Linder, recently retired provider of Healthy Development Services in the North Inland from the very beginning and with Children First Collective. Each of the comments provided here to the San Diego County Board of Supervisors is testament to the incredible responsibility First 5 Healthy Development Services holds across the entire county; bringing together and collaborating with pediatricians, early interventionist, early childhood educators, public health, school districts and so much more to ensure children and their families receive quality care during the most critical early years when it matters most. Please, do not let this system of care falter and cripple our most vulnerable. Now, more than ever, is time for the County of San Diego to step up and support HDS by utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap and ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services.

Glynnis Hubbard

Location: 92131, San Diego
Submitted At: 10:49pm 05-19-25

Item #15 District 5.

When I started my career as an SLP 13 years ago, I started with HDS. My supervisor told me during my first few days of training, "you'll never work anywhere that's like HDS". I've never forgotten. Over the years, I've repeatedly come realize it's truth. I've seen hundreds of families walk through our doors with the common denominator being concerns for a child 6, & usually frustration of the inability of that family to find help.

We've been filling in gaps of unidentified need in SD, & to support other existing community partners in EI.

The proposed budget cut will result in decreased HDS intervention services, and an increased strain on our already-spread-thin partners in EI.

HDS has played a huge role for almost the past 2 decades to mitigate this ever growing population of need for EI, and we have evolved to do it well.

There truly is no place I'll ever work that is like HDS

Allison Jenney

Location: 92064, Poway
Submitted At: 10:37pm 05-19-25

As a Poway family within District 2, we support using the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap to help ensure young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services. We had the opportunity to take our son in for a Developmental Assessment with Healthy Development Services (HDS) at Palomar Health, and as first-time parents we were grateful for the care, attention, and resources provided by HDS leading up to, during, and after the assessment. The recommendations provided allowed us to implement better practices at home and continue monitoring for developmental milestones, behavioral changes, and overall growth. These resources benefited both our son and us as parents. For our greater community, I believe continuing programs and ENHANCING resources such as those offered by HDS is critical for our present and our future. We need to protect opportunities for access to educational resources and safe environments for children to learn and grow.

Victor Guzman

Location: 92129, San Diego

Submitted At: 9:08pm 05-19-25

My Name Is Victor, my family and I reside in District 2. I support utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap and ensure young children receive their fair share of County resources. I am a father to 1 child that has benefited from the services provided at Healthy Development Services North Inland. My child received Occupational Therapy at HDS. Not only did HDS help my child with their sensory input needs, but also helped my wife and I by providing educational information and tools to help us be better parents and advocates for our child at home and at school. The OT sessions provided us with information on the internal sensory systems and resources to help improve the quality of life for our child. The HDS services, provided free to our family, have also improved the behavioral health of our daughter as we've learned to support her better. Having resources and programs like HDS is crucial to families in our community.

Nicolette Johnson

Location: 92117, San diego

Submitted At: 8:32pm 05-19-25

The services I received for my child's developmental and behavioral issues went above and beyond, both in knowledge and guidance, at a time that I felt lost and unsupported. We need these people to have secure jobs and the ability to make appointments to help parents like me, a single mother who is just trying to give my daughter the best chance at life. Intervention at a young age is so important and most of us can't afford therapy or behavioral specialists, so our children would have to go without. Cutting funding for programs such as this one only causes more issues down the road, not just for the families suffering but the entire community, once our children become adults and members of society. Intervention with a team of EXPERTS WHO CARE can make ALL of the difference in the world for a child and for parents. Our children are our future. We need to invest in them before it's too late.

Sharon Sternfeld

Location: 92011, Carlsbad

Submitted At: 8:30pm 05-19-25

My name is Dr. Sharon Sternfeld, pediatrician practicing with Children's Primary Care Group in Escondido. I have referred many children to First Five HDS Developmental Services including my own son. He received speech therapy and occupational therapy 18 years ago through North County Inland PPH developmental services. Eventually he was diagnosed with high functioning autism. He graduated from Cal Poly Pomona last week and is one of many success stories with the crucial interventions needed in early childhood. First 5 San Diego's Healthy Development Services (HDS) has been a lifeline for families, offering free, high-quality developmental and behavioral screenings, treatment, and parent coaching.

There are significant health, social, and economic benefits to children, their families and society when children's developmental needs are met.

Help our children benefit by utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap.

Maya Kumar

Location: 91941, La Mesa

Submitted At: 8:28pm 05-19-25

As a member of the board for First 5 San Diego, I have witnessed the immense positive impact of HDS on vulnerable children and families. They are data driven, family centered, and have served over 350,000 San Diego

children since their inception 18 years ago. A staggering 95% of children who receive developmental services from HDS demonstrate improvement and their developmental trajectory, while 99% of parents report increased confidence in their parenting. These services are absolutely irreplaceable and must be supported. Utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap helps ensure that young at-risk children are getting their needs met. This is an investment in the future of our community. It's a no-brainer.

Judith Granados

Location: 92254, MECCA

Submitted At: 8:03pm 05-19-25

I am a recently graduated speech-language pathologist graduate student and completed my training at HDS – North Inland. Throughout my training, I learned the importance of early intervention in supporting child development. However, parents are often unaware of the early signs their child might benefit from additional support, especially in underrepresented and marginalized communities. As a first-generation college graduate living in a rural community, I have seen first-hand the impact programs like HDS have on children, families, and communities. As a now bilingual speech pathologist I understand how education empowers professionals and parents to advocate for a child's developmental needs. It is for these reasons why I support utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap to help ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services. Reducing funding for HDS will have lasting negative consequences for years to come.

Randall Marks

Location: 28711, Black Mountain

Submitted At: 7:32pm 05-19-25

As the original First 5 of San Diego Contract Manager for Healthy Development Services (HDS) in 2005 I have seen this vital program provide help to thousands of children and their families over the past 20 years. The importance of early intervention for developmental issues has not diminished since the inception of HDS. Since HDS began through FY 2023-24:

- 117,952 children received developmental screening
- 64,952 children received developmental treatment
- 69,481 children received behavior screening
- 40,849 children received behavioral treatment

The children provided early intervention in the early years of HDS are now having children of their own. Having seen the long term results of HDS since its inception I can only be impressed by how these services have met, and exceeded, the goals originally identified by the Commission. Please consider the importance of continuing to fund these vital and necessary services to the future of San Diego.

Raquel Locsin

Location: 92123

Submitted At: 7:02pm 05-19-25

Hello, my name is Raquel Locsin, and I am a Behavior Specialist at Healthy Development Services at Rady Children's Hospital. Over the past decade, I have had the privilege of witnessing caregivers grow more confident in their parenting skills and strengthen their relationships with their children. During times of stress and change, we provide essential support to help caregivers gain a deeper understanding of their child. Our services empower caregivers to build more resilient families. Please support our program and help us continue making a positive impact on families in our community. Together, we can foster healthier development and stronger bonds between caregivers and children.

Jennifer Chavez

Location: 92028

Submitted At: 5:51pm 05-19-25

My Name Is Jennifer, my family and I reside in District 5. I am a parent to 3 children that have benefited from the services provided at Healthy Development Services. My children received speech therapy and Occupational therapy at HDS. Not only did HDS help my children with their needs, but also helped my husband and I by providing educational information and tools to help our children at home. We joined the parent education classes at HDS. Our children attended the pre-school preparedness classes that HDS provides. We have learned and benefited from all these services that HDS provided for FREE to our family. Having resources and programs like

HDS is crucial to families in our community and that is why I support utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap to help ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services.

Breanna Gabriel

Location: 92029

Submitted At: 5:29pm 05-19-25

I am the occupational therapist at Healthy Development Services North Inland Region serving families in districts 2 and 5. I am speaking in support of approval for the supplemental funding for HDS (item #15). We know early identification and early intervention are crucial and affective in changing a child's developmental path, helping them achieve their full potential, and improving life outcomes in not only the child but their families and communities as well. Through my professional and clinical experiences, I have unfortunately seen many cases where children are delayed or denied services due to long waitlists, insurance denials for evaluations and treatment, lack of locations to receive direct services, etc. That is why Healthy Development Services (HDS) is extremely special and essential in filling this gap to assure that children are receiving these high quality developmental and behavioral services during a crucial period of their development!

Steven Brown

Location: 92120, San Diego

Submitted At: 5:05pm 05-19-25

I'm writing regarding Family Health Centers of San Diego to urge continued support for First 5 San Diego's Healthy Development Services. Please use the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge the funding gap and put the future of our children first. There are significant health, social, and economic benefits to children, their families and society when children's developmental needs are met. Thank you for your time.

Erik Chavez

Location: 92101, San Diego

Submitted At: 5:04pm 05-19-25

I want to express my strong support for Healthy Development Services (HDS) and to urge the continued support in this program. HDS provides developmental and behavioral services for children ages 0-5 years that are foundational to lifelong health, learning, and wellbeing. By offering early screenings, assessments, and behavioral support HDS ensures that families can access the help they need at the right time. These early interventions are proven to improve outcomes for children and create stronger and more resilient communities. The investment is not only an investment on early childhood but an investment in the future of our regions. Please help ensure that every child has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Monica Corrales

Location: 91910, Chula Vista

Submitted At: 4:56pm 05-19-25

I work with a company that provides Healthy Development Services (HDS) in San Diego County, and we see firsthand the profound benefits and lasting impact these programs have on young children and their families. HDS plays a crucial role in supporting early childhood development, behavioral health, and school readiness—foundations that shape a child's future success. However, as the need for these services continues to grow, additional funding is essential to sustain and expand access. Utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap helps ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services, reinforcing the County's commitment to investing in its youngest residents where it matters most.

Kelsey Vera

Location: 92102, San Diego

Submitted At: 4:52pm 05-19-25

My name is Kelsey Vera and I am a patient of HDS with Family Health Centers of San Diego. Following my newborn screening with HDS I joined their Baby Steps program. Initially, I considered declining to allow space for another mom, but after my first session, I realized it was exactly what I needed during that stage of my postpartum journey. One lesson from the program that will stay with me is the way I communicate with my child. I noticed that I would instinctively say, "You're okay" whenever she became fussy. Through HDS, I learned to replace with positive validating phrases, such as, "I hear you are upset right now, I am here for you." Thankfully, I

did not experience postpartum depression, and I attribute a part of my mental well-being to the continuous encouragement I received from the Developmental Specialist and other moms in the group. Baby Steps became a safe space where I could openly express my thoughts. I truly don't know if I would be as mentally healthy today without HDS.

Bryanna Becerra

Location:

Submitted At: 4:39pm 05-19-25

Hello, all. I am a Development Specialist working for HDS/C3 in the North Central Region. I witness firsthand the amazing impact that HDS has on families and communities. HDS bridges a gap for those looking to access services and exemplifies why early intervention is the best intervention. By providing parent education and catching children who benefit from the support of our clinicians, we are supporting them through their school age years and into adulthood. We work with families who are not able to access services elsewhere, because they might not qualify, or have the financial capacity, or because the system has labeled them as "not bad enough." HDS makes sure that it does not have to get "bad enough." The medical system is a broken system, but HDS is part of the solution towards rebuilding a system that truly has families' best interest in mind.

Natalie Elms

Location: 92116, San Diego

Submitted At: 4:17pm 05-19-25

My name is Natalie Elms with Rady Children's Hospital of San Diego and urge the Board of Supervisors to approve utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge the funding gap for Healthy Development Services to ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services. I have both worked at HDS and utilized services for my family. HDS provides a critical safety net for families in San Diego County to access free, high quality developmental and behavioral screenings, services, coordinated care and closed loop referrals. HDS holds the caregiver and child to support the success of the family through parent coaching and classes to support healthy social-emotional development. Please strongly consider approving funding for this critical program to be able to continue.

Mary HeidelHaight

Location: 92064, Poway

Submitted At: 3:59pm 05-19-25

Early childhood development services are essential in laying the foundation for a child's future growth and success. These services support the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development of young children, and can identify and address developmental delays or challenges early on, allowing for timely interventions that can significantly improve outcomes. Investing in early childhood development not only benefits individual children and their families but also contributes to the overall well-being and prosperity of society. I support utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap to help ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services.

Chanelle Calhoun

Location: 92054, Oceanside

Submitted At: 3:59pm 05-19-25

I am a pediatrician and I have witnessed how HDS has greatly impacted all areas of development in my patients. Loosing this support will be detrimental to my vulnerable patients.

Sara Blake

Location: 92127, San Diego

Submitted At: 3:46pm 05-19-25

HDS represents years of collaborations between hospitals, community clinics, community organizations, schools, parents, care givers and families all passionately dedicated to the health and wellbeing of children in San Diego. It would be a shame to see almost two decades of partnership lost. First 5 San Diego created an incredible network of experts in child development to help the kids of San Diego receive the services they need so they can enter school ready to learn. Investing in high-quality early childhood development programs yields significant returns, both financially and socially. Let's keep it going! Utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap will help ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services.

The BOS established E-14 guidelines for these funds and HDS qualifies for these funds, hands down! This is a perfect match. Let's do this for the kids!

Delia Y

Location:

Submitted At: 3:46pm 05-19-25

Per a supervisor's IG post on 5/19/2025: "We owe our children better."

From a moral standpoint, which children specifically?

The preborn facing murder by abortion?

Minor children vulnerable to the fetishes of sick adults in the name of the trans agenda?

Girls forced to accept boys-pretending-to-be-girls into their bathrooms or face being punished and called names?

Children in county facilities?

The 3,200 accompanied minors trafficked across the southern border into our county to be housed in the convention center only to be disappeared a couple months later without explanation from this board?

It seems not every child is included in the quote.

Amanda Carlson

Location: 92069, San Marcos

Submitted At: 3:43pm 05-19-25

I am a concerned community partner and am sending this comment to strongly advocate for the continued and robust funding of Healthy Developmental Services (HDS) for children who, for various reasons, do not qualify for services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or whose insurance limitations prevent them from accessing crucial early intervention.

Investing in HDS is not merely an expenditure; it is a proactive and fiscally responsible investment in the future well-being of our children and our community. By providing timely support to children who might otherwise slip through the cracks, we are directly addressing potential developmental delays before they escalate, ultimately preventing the need for far more costly interventions and special education services down the line. Please continue to fund HDS services for the children of our community.

Lance Leininger

Location: 92064, Poway

Submitted At: 3:14pm 05-19-25

I support using Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to help bridge the funding gap for Healthy Development Services. As a father of four and a grandparent of two I am a firm believer of early intervention to help our youth with speech impediments, aspergers and autism. My own granddaughter has been diagnosed with autism at age 4 and I can see firsthand the benefits of early detection and intervention to help her with her learning process and hopefully avoid or minimize future social disorders and/or needs. Lance Leininger, District 2

Sue Leininger

Location: 92064, Poway

Submitted At: 3:07pm 05-19-25

HDS is a perfect example of how early childhood intervention makes enormous differences in a child's and family's lives. I am a former special needs educator, mother of 4, and grandmother of 2, one who has recently been diagnosed with autism. Without this early intervention, my granddaughter and her parents could easily have gone years dealing with misunderstood behaviors and not knowing how to help their child. Because of HDS's proven success, the HDS staff has early access to assess families' needs and offer treatment and resources well before they begin school. The earlier this occurs, the more chance of success the child has of reaching their full potential. That is why I strongly encourage this board to utilize the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge the funding gap to ensure these children get the imperative early intervention they deserve and the parents receive the resources they desperately seek. Sue Leininger, District 5

Kelly Randich

Location: 92123, San Diego

Submitted At: 2:55pm 05-19-25

Bridge funding is critical for the Healthy Development Services to continue to meet the needs of the children in our community. Without this many families will experience delays in receiving critical services that could reduce the need for greater care later. Please consider supporting this request.

Mary CushingInman

Location: 92064, Poway

Submitted At: 2:54pm 05-19-25

Hi, My name is Mary Cushing-Inman. My now grown son was identified as needing speech therapy in 2nd grade at our local elementary school. How much better his early schooling would have been had HDS been available for him. There are so many discrepancies across the county in levels of opportunities for our children. HDS has helped close the gaps in early childhood needs. I highly support supplemental funding for HDS, assisting children in these developing years. Please vote in favor of this supplemental funding for the critical early years of our county's children. Thank you.

Berenice Salas

Location: 91911, Chula Vista

Submitted At: 2:23pm 05-19-25

Hello, my name is Berenice Salas, and I have been providing behavioral services at HDS for 15 years. Not only are HDS services essential in identifying, treating and supporting children and families during the most critical and vital years of a child's growth and brain development, but HDS services change the child's trajectory that in the long run can result in overall success and improved quality of life, thus, reducing the need for future services. HDS services provide a safe environment for families and their children where protective factors such as parental resilience, social and emotional competence, knowledge of parenting and child development are being strengthened which reduces the likelihood of child abuse and neglect. Now more than ever, our community needs the stability of this program, please vote yes on utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap helps ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services.

Karen Hernandez

Location: 91911, Chula Vista

Submitted At: 1:15pm 05-19-25

As a Care coordinator with Health Development Services (HDS) at SBCS in the South Region. I have personally experienced the amazing impact HDS has on families. As a Care Coordinator, I am the parents personal advocate and guide them through multiple challenging systems. We are not only supporting the child, but the entire family unit. Parents are constantly voicing how they are overwhelmed, exhausted, scared, and don't know where to begin with services. HDS equips families to have a care coordinator in their corner helping them step by step. Many parents often express how they wish they had these kinds of services for their older children! Working with HDS for over 10 years, I have seen how great an asset this program is to the community, especially after the pandemic as we have seen greater delays in children. As a mother, community member and a Care Coordinator with HDS I strongly support the proposed supplemental funding for Healthy Development Services (HDS) program.

Ana Carrillo

Location: 92027, Escondido

Submitted At: 1:05pm 05-19-25

I am the mother of a child who currently receives HDS services and reside in District 5. My son's doctor always talked about this program that was available for him but I, at first, did not take the opportunities. Finally, two years later, I decided to accept the help and, my only regret, is not having started sooner. Besides the speech and occupational therapy sessions my son receives, I have also been offered other resources from my case manager within the facility that have helped my family greatly. I would have not known about my son's unique needs and about his development if it wasn't for me coming here. HDS is not just for children, it's for the whole family. I support utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap to help ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services.

Ruth Newton

Location: 92116, San Diego

Submitted At: 12:52pm 05-19-25

For the past 18 years, First 5's Healthy Development Services (HDS) has been an indispensable resource for families—providing high-quality developmental screenings, therapeutic services, and parent coaching. By prioritizing the developmental health and well-being of children under the age of five, HDS lays the critical foundation for lifelong success. At the Newton Center for Affect Regulation (NCAR), we've had the privilege of partnering with this essential initiative through Family Health Centers of San Diego and have witnessed firsthand the profound and lasting impact these services have on families, especially those facing complex challenges. Utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to close this funding gap is both a fiscally responsible and morally sound investment ensuring that our youngest children receive their fair share of County resources and services at the time in their lives when it matters most.

Justine Sitterly

Location: 92064, Poway

Submitted At: 12:11pm 05-19-25

My daughter, Hannah, showed signs of a speech and sound delay from a young age. When she turned 2 years old I started looking for speech therapy opportunities in Poway. My first step was discussing my concerns about Hannah's speech with her pediatrician and I was told that Hannah's speech development was fine, however I decided to pursue therapy anyway. A friend suggested I reach out to First Five California as my insurance was not accepted at any local speech therapy practices in Rancho Bernardo or Poway. It was then that I was put in touch with Healthy Development Services. HDS guided Hannah and I through the process in a caring and professional way and Hannah greatly benefited from her weekly sessions. During Hannah's time at HDS she progressed in her speech development and I'm forever grateful for the support of HDS!

Nina Caballero

Location: 92109, San Diego

Submitted At: 11:56am 05-19-25

My name is Niña. I've worked with HDS both on the ground through Rady Children's Hospital and in systems-level management with Family Health Centers in East County. I am now the Director of Education & Family Support at Includ(Ed), in partnership with the Children First Collective. I've seen the life-changing impact of HDS & the difference it makes when families receive coordinated care, parent coaching, and real partnership. The HDS model works — across settings, cultures, & communities. From a toddler taking their first confident steps thanks to early intervention, to a parent who finally feels seen, heard, and equipped to support their child — these moments define why HDS is indispensable. With more than 352,000 children served over 18 years, the impact is undeniable. I urge the Board to utilize the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge the current funding gap. Our youngest children deserve a system that sees them early, supports them fully, and sets them up for success.

Mary Kennedy

Location: 92129, San diego

Submitted At: 11:56am 05-19-25

As a native San Diegan, retired academic librarian and mother of 7, I have seen discrepancies across the county in levels of opportunities for our children. HDS has helped close the gaps in early childhood needs. I highly support supplemental funding for HDS, assisting children in these developing years. Please vote in favor of this supplemental funding for the critical early years of our county's children. Thank you.

Eileen Calderon

Location: 91902, Bonita

Submitted At: 11:34am 05-19-25

My name is Eileen Calderon, Communications Manager at CDA. I'm writing in strong support of the proposed supplemental funding for Healthy Development Services (HDS), a vital program supporting thousands of young children and families across San Diego County. HDS provides developmental screenings, therapies, and parent education for families with children from birth to age five. Families rely on HDS to ensure their children are healthy, engaged, and ready to learn. The demand for these services is growing, without additional funding, too many children will miss critical early support—putting them at risk of falling behind. I urge the Board to approve this essential funding and uphold San Diego's commitment to early childhood development. Investing in our youngest residents is both the right and the smart thing to do. Thank you for your leadership.

Maidel Torres

Location: 92025, Escondido
Submitted At: 11:32am 05-19-25

I am writing to express my support for Healthy Development Services (HDS) in San Diego County. These services play a vital role in identifying developmental delays early and helping children reach their full potential. Early childhood is a critical period for brain development, and any delay or reduction in support now will lead to higher costs and more challenges in the future. Investing in HDS is a smart and cost-effective investment in our communities' future. Thank you for your leadership and for prioritizing our youngest residents.

ShariAllyson Edquid

Location: 91915, Chula Vista
Submitted At: 11:25am 05-19-25

For 18 years, Healthy Development Services (HDS) has been an invaluable support system for families, offering free, top-notch developmental and behavioral screenings, along with early intervention services. This aid is crucial for young children and their families. Without HDS there would be a disservice to San Diego families, as it would strip away vital resources that support children's development and family dynamics, leaving many without the support they need to thrive.

Emely Gutierrez

Location: 92056, Oceanside
Submitted At: 11:20am 05-19-25

Hi, I'm Emely Gutierrez, and for three years I have provided services in the HDS Oceanside region. I have seen firsthand how all of our services have supported families. Our program is unique in the way that we can support children who have mild to moderate needs that may not qualify for services elsewhere. Additionally, we bridge the gap by helping these families and children access other supports if needed. We help by informing them of what the next best step may be and support them until they reach that next step in their journey. Some children will only need the supports we provide, short term care, and then they avoid needing other more costly long-term services. I have heard from many families (prenatal to kindergarten start) that they are so thankful they can access these services because their child would not be able to get care anywhere else and they feel less alone in their parenting journey. So special! I ask that you please continue to support funding for these services.

Alicia Ortega

Location: 91254
Submitted At: 11:08am 05-19-25

Hi, my Name is Alicia Ortega. I am a Project Coordinator working for HDS/C3 in the South region. As a provider with over 15 years of experience working with HDS/C3, I have witnessed firsthand the profound impact that targeted support can have on young lives. I experienced the HDS/C3 services when our daughter was 18 months old and took her for a developmental screening because we had speech concerns. She was referred to a vision and hearing screening and speech consult. After a few speech consults, her speech developed. I then took her to a vision and hearing screening (Shiley Eye Mobile), where I found out my daughter had hyperopia and a high prescription (-9.70). My daughter started wearing glasses ever since, and because of that HDS referral, we would've never found out. She would've developed lazy eye and required surgery years later. Vote YES!

Vanessa Forsythe

Location: 92009, Carlsbad
Submitted At: 11:05am 05-19-25

As a school nurse for 20 years I saw the difference the First 5 San Diego's Healthy Development Services (HDS) brought to the lives of children and parents in this program. While so much is being cutback by an uncaring and not data driven federal government the First 5 Programs must be maintained. The HDS free, high-quality developmental and behavioral screenings, is essential for children prior to entering school so they have the necessary support children and families need enabling these children to get early intervention and a better chance of being successful students and adults. Including parent coaching alongside treatment, HDS is not only equipping a young child with what they need to be successful, but their caregivers as well. "Utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap helps ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services." Vanessa Forsythe RN MSN District 3

Artitaya Homkrajae

Location: 92069, San Marcos
Submitted At: 10:52am 05-19-25

I am thankful and appreciated for the HDS and the First 5 San Diego program. HDS has been a great resource for families that need help and guidelines for child developments. My son received speech therapy and a behavior consultation through HDS. He was diagnosed with speech delay when he was almost 2 years old. Through the time of weekly speech therapy sessions I have received informative suggestions, and my son was significantly improved. The behavior consultation was a wonderful service that provided useful information to support parents to handle kids' behavior appropriately in both mental and physical. HDS is essential to our community. The staff at HDS have a great service mindset, thoughtful and enthusiastic to serve and grow our community strongly. Utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge the funding gap helps ensure kids and families receive necessary resources to support the kids' developments and long-term success.

Pradeep Gidwani

Location: 92115, San Diego
Submitted At: 10:41am 05-19-25

As a pediatrician, I implore the Board of Supervisors to find funding to continue Healthy Development Services (HDS). With First 5 San Diego's investment, over 362,000 children and their families have received vital services through HDS over the last 19 years. At this time, when families with young children are under stress, HDS services are supportive and help ensure our children's developmental and behavioral needs are met early in life. These services have a lifelong impact and support our future workforce. San Diego County has been at the forefront of offering services that will help us remain a strong and vibrant community.

Ivonne Sotelo

Location: 92084, vista
Submitted At: 10:33am 05-19-25

I am a developmental specialist with HDS and Children first collective. I am writing with urgency to request the Board of Supervisors to consider allocating funds from the Tobacco Securitization Fund (TSF) revenue to bridge this funding gap and help ensure that young children continue getting support. I want to draw attention to the profound support offered by HDS for more than 52,000 children, parents, caregivers and providers throughout the County of San Diego in one year. It is concerning, and an immense worry to know that we have a lack of resources and to see that the decrease in funding will disrupt valuable developmental and behavioral services that support children in the most critical developmental years. HDS early intervention services serve as a critical safety net ensuring that no child in our county with developmental and behavioral areas of concern falls through. Please vote-YES to help children of San Diego County.

Natasha Maxwell

Location: 92131, San Diego
Submitted At: 10:26am 05-19-25

As a RCHSD Speech-Language Pathologist with HDS, I observe firsthand how our program impacts children and their families' lives. Countless times, I have seen children make significant progress in communication, gaining the skills and confidence reach their full potential in kindergarten. Over the past 18 years, the early intervention that HDS provides has reached over 352,800 children, families, and caregivers. These services provide critical early detection, high-quality treatment, and a coordinated care plan for both children and their families with a two-generational approach. As a result, 95% of children have made improvements, 95% of families report an improved relationship with their child, and 99% of families report improved confidence in parenting. Utilize the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge the funding gap to ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services. HDS provides critical early intervention benefits that last a lifetime.

Lynda Watts

Location: 92027, Escondido
Submitted At: 10:22am 05-19-25

I live in district 2. My son has a speech delay and this program was instrumental to catching it early and getting the help he needed. It CANNOT be cut. I support utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap to help ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services.

Wendy Pavlovich

Location:

Submitted At: 10:15am 05-19-25

I am Wendy Pavlovich, a pediatrician at Family Health Centers and a current board member of the local chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. HDS is critical to my practice because it provides, not just screening, but treatment and two generation support to families. I was seeing a 6 months old last week who receives HDS services and her mother shared that HDS services were so important to her because they connected her with other parents, prevented her from feeling isolated and gave her confidence and skills to be a good parent. As a doctor, I can screen for development needs, but HDS provides the support that matters for healthy development. Utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap helps ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services. Please support this critical investment in our future.

Megan Caldwell

Location: 92117, San Diego

Submitted At: 9:53am 05-19-25

Healthy Development Services are vital to our community. Please vote to ensure these critical services can continue.

JULIE HERBST

Location: 91910, Chula Vista

Submitted At: 9:47am 05-19-25

Utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge HDS funding gaps helps ensure that young children and their caregivers will receive necessary support for developmental concerns. For the past 18 years, First 5 San Diego's Healthy Development Services (HDS) has been a vital resource for families—providing free, high-quality developmental and behavioral screenings, early intervention services, and parent coaching. This support is essential for giving young children the strongest possible start in life.

Kerilyn Howell

Location: 92128, San Diego

Submitted At: 9:41am 05-19-25

I am so thankful for the first 5 San Diego program & the Healthy Development Services. My 2 year old son attends speech & occupational therapy. His speech has really taken off since attending the weekly sessions & the fact that is a complimentary service is incredible. I would not be able to afford this otherwise. I am so appreciative that this program exists & my son is finally excelling at expanding his vocabulary as a direct result. I know the occupational therapy is going to help us learn more about how we as parents can help him self-regulate through constant movement. I am in County District #2 & I support utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap to help ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services.

Laura Ruiz

Location: 92081, Vista

Submitted At: 8:46am 05-19-25

I support this program because it is important to families with children 0 to 5 years old, helping parents to learn and practice new skills to be a better parent specially leaning about socio emotional part in their children life's. This program includes all kind of families no matter their social economic income, that sometimes is a barrier for some families.

Erin Davis

Location: 92027-4739, Escondido

Submitted At: 8:20am 05-19-25

HDS is a wonderful community resource that helps so many families get their children services and early interventions that are critical to their development and long term future. Getting referrals through pediatricians and insurance is far too often an uphill battle for many families. My son was born 8 weeks early in 2022 and although he is now a thriving almost 3 year old, we were faced with the very real possibility that he could have developmental delays as a result to his prematurity. We went to HDS when he was about 18 months old for an assessment to give us peace of mind and to see if there were any services suggested to him that could be helpful. The 18 month checkup at the pediatrician is about 10 minutes max versus the 1.5 hours in depth

assessment he received at HDS. I reside in District 5 and I support utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap to help ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services.

Gina Allyn

Location: 92123, San Diego
Submitted At: 7:38am 05-19-25

My name is Gina Allyn, MD, I am a pediatrician in BOS district 2. Many of my patients utilize First 5 services. For the last 18 years, First 5 San Diego's Healthy Development Services (HDS) has been a lifeline for families, offering free, high-quality developmental and behavioral screenings, treatment, and parent coaching. 95% of children that complete HDS developmental treatment make improvements. 99% of families report that Healthy Development Services improved their confidence in parenting. There are significant health, social, and economic benefits to children, their families and society when children's developmental needs are met. Utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap helps ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services. Please ensure adequate funding for this important service!!

Zongyang Mou

Location: 92124, San Diego
Submitted At: 10:47pm 05-18-25

Our children are our future, and deserve every resource we as a community and society can afford them. HDS fulfills that mission with their portfolio of services that serve those who are most in need. Bridge funding would help support this HDS continue their work as and survive the significant financial headwinds.

Heidi Leininger

Location: 92069, San Marcos
Submitted At: 5:28pm 05-18-25

My name is Heidi Leininger and I am Speech Language Pathologist at Healthy Development Services North Inland serving families in Districts 2 & 5, and currently live in District 2 myself. HDS is crucial in supporting children & families who are unable to access care for various reasons including, but not limited to, high co-pays, insurance denial for evaluation or treatment, lack of insurance, etc. In the last 18 years, HDS has served over 352,800 San Diego children, families & caregivers. Given the critical role HDS plays in supporting these children who would otherwise go without necessary care, I urge decision-makers to consider the significant impact of this program. Utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap helps ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services. Investing in early intervention through HDS is an investment in the long-term success and well-being of these children and, ultimately, our community.

Caroline Loretan

Location: 92029, Escondido
Submitted At: 4:03pm 05-18-25

My name is Caroline Loretan, I've had the privilege of serving over 10 years as a Licensed Mental Health Clinician and Behavioral Specialist with Healthy Development Services, North Inland, supporting families in Districts 2 and 5. HDS provides vital early intervention for young children with developmental and behavioral challenges, giving families the tools to support their child's development and emotional well-being. In my role, I work closely with families providing mental health support and strengthen parent-child bond and foster secure attachment relationships that are fundamental for the healthy development of the child. Utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge funding gaps ensures that our youngest children receive their fair share of County resources. These funds are vital for sustaining services that directly support our community's future generations. Please vote YES—for our children, families, and future. Many young lives depend on this support.

Marsha Spitzer

Location: 92110, San Diego
Submitted At: 2:21pm 05-18-25

I am Dr Marsha Spitzer and I'm a pediatrician who resides in BOS District 4. As a pediatrician at Family Health Centers of San Diego for the last 23 years and as a Past President of the local chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, I have the privilege of seeing the difference that Healthy Development Services makes in the lives of children and their families. I work in Logan Heights where daily I see patients 0-5 years struggling with behavioral

concerns, family stressors, and atypical development. HDS is a lifeline to family centered care that ensures our youngest San Diegans are set up for success and that their families have the tools to help them thrive. Any cuts to HDS funding will mean fewer of my at risk patients can access vital services and the services they receive may not be as robust. Utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap helps ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services.

Natalie Goins

Location: 92116, San Diego
Submitted At: 2:04pm 05-18-25

My name is Natalie Goins and I am a speech language pathologist in San Diego Unified School District. Many of the students and families that we serve in the school district through special education are greatly impacted by early intervention services provided by HDS. Very often we see students who have received early intervention that require less support and discharge from services early in part due to their strong supports in the early years. The services that HDS provides are essential to children gaining access to opportunities for support that they might not otherwise have access to. Utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge the funding gap helps ensure that young children are getting critical services, and it will change child and family outcomes and set children up for success as they continue to grow and develop as students in the school system.

Melissa Giffen

Location: 92131, San Diego
Submitted At: 5:09pm 05-17-25

I'm Melissa Barbour in BOS District 2 writing in support of Healthy Development Services. For the last 18 years, First 5 San Diego's Healthy Development Services (HDS) has been a lifeline for families, offering free, high-quality developmental and behavioral screenings, treatment, and parent coaching. As a Youth Services Librarian working with youth and families, I've seen how important these services are to the community. HDS is on the front lines of providing services to families, many of which rely on their services and do not have other options available. The cost of providing for this service is of exponential benefit. Utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap helps ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services.

Naveen Jayakumar

Location: 92129, San Diego
Submitted At: 3:38pm 05-17-25

My name is Naveen Jayakumar and my family lives in Poway district. As a parent whose child receives services through HDS North Inland, I want to express my strong support for continuing and protecting funding for this essential program. These services have made a meaningful difference in our family's life, especially in supporting our child's speech development and social growth. Through the guidance and care we've received, we've felt empowered and better equipped to support our child's unique needs.

I respectfully urge the Board to prioritize funding for First 5 San Diego and the HDS program by utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge the funding gap. Thank you for considering the voices of families like mine who deeply rely on these services.

Kristin Gist

Location: 92014, DEL MAR
Submitted At: 9:24am 05-17-25

I'm Kristin Gist in BOS district 3 writing in support of Healthy Development Services. Across 48 years at Rady Children's, I was most proud of our part in early implementation of HDS, ensuring children 0-5 and their caregivers were supported to optimize development, learning and mental health. HDS is a program where closed loop referrals happen every time, no matter how long it takes to help a family accept services. One mom took a year of HDS intervention before she would pursue dx and treatment of autism in her 3 year old at risk. Her 2nd child got help at 15 months, because mom saw the impact and knew the early signs, thanks to HDS support. At Rady, docs have an order in EPIC EHR, that is as easy as ordering an x-ray, to send a child to the HDS program in their own region (even if it's outside Rady's). Utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge the funding gap helps ensure that young children are getting critical services, and it will change child and family outcomes.

Marc Durocher

Location: 92117, San Diego
Submitted At: 8:20am 05-17-25

Hi. My name is Marc Durocher in BOS district 4 with Children First Collective writing in support of Healthy Developmental Services. As a resident physician working in FQHC's in San Diego I have seen the importance of having such a resource available for families and the sheer deficit of supporting services if HDS is cut. Families already struggling to find care for their children are the ones who will be most impacted and if we cannot give families and their children the support they need to grow, they will stagnate and lose out on so many opportunities in life and their careers. HDS provides free, high-quality developmental and behavioral screenings, treatment, and parent coaching focusing on family-centered services to promote parent skill-building to both equip a child and their caregivers with what they need to be successful. Using the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this gap ensures that children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services.

Michelle VanAken

Location: 91913, Chula Vista
Submitted At: 4:29am 05-17-25

Please support continued funding to assist San Diego's most vulnerable, young children, and their families. I am a child therapist. Supporting children through their early development gives the best long term outcomes for psych-social-emotional and physical development.

Mary Mou

Location: 92124, San Diego
Submitted At: 8:37pm 05-16-25

I am a child therapist and I am gravely concerned about the impact of HDS losing funding will have on early intervention services for the youngest of children. Research shows that early intervention has the best outcomes by promoting healthy development while the brain has greatest neuroplasticity, thus reducing the amount of individuals in the system later in life. Please provide funding for HDS to continue. So many children depend on this for healthy development. Thank you!

Khawla Suleiman

Location: 92102, San Diego
Submitted At: 5:02pm 05-16-25

As the Chief of Pediatrics for Strategy and Program Development at Family Health Centers of SD (FHCS) & the Pediatric Development Services Medical Director I have witnessed over 18 year the great support and wrap around services that First 5 Healthy Developmental Services (HDS) had to offer to our pediatric patients and their families and the long-term impact on children's lives. HDS not only addresses early detection of developmental and behavioral health needs but also ensures families receive needed treatment and coordinated care. Its two-generational approach empowers both children and their caregivers, creating lasting positive change. As funding challenges persist, utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund can help bridge the gap and ensure young children receive needed County resources and services. HDS provides a true continuum of care, and nurtures both young children and the adults who care for them for a healthier future generation mentally and physically.

Catherine Puntenney

Location: 91913, Chula Vista
Submitted At: 4:59pm 05-16-25

Healthy Development Services (HDS) is essential to the community of San Diego! The need for early intervention has only increased after the pandemic, and families need support now more than ever.

Paul Henkin

Location: 91902, Bonita
Submitted At: 4:50pm 05-16-25

This is actually a funds transfer, not an appropriation. From where? From the Tobacco Securitization Special Revenue Fund. Is it an allowed use?

One of the allowed uses of money from this fund is childrens' mental health; also healthy lifestyles in general.

From last year's First 5 report (4/9 item 8): Number of children who improved their behavioral health is about 80%. However, about 20% of the children they serve are over 5.

So I would reject until it is explained why they serve so many children over 5.

Laurae Soriano

Location: 91910, Chula Vista
Submitted At: 4:22pm 05-16-25

I am a Dev. Specialist in our South region, and over the last 3 years I have also had the opportunity to work in N. Central as a Dev. Services Aide. In both roles, I have been told countless stories not qualifying for services, were waiting months on end for the next steps, or were on a waiting list and never heard back. This creates more challenges, stress, and isolation for the entire family. Through our services at HDS we help bridge these families or offer early supports so they never need higher level. HDS is powerful in that we offer parent-education with our developmental services so parents can feel more confident when they exit our program regarding their child. From prenatal to kinder prep, my team works together to create a strong, approachable, and flexible program that reflects the needs of our communities. Please consider supporting our program and our families by in future funding opportunities. We look forward to many more years of providing our services to the community.

Alondra Ochoa

Location: 92101, San Diego
Submitted At: 4:20pm 05-16-25

Hello, my name is Alondra Ochoa, and I am a Care Coordinator for Healthy Development Services (HDS) in the Central Region. The HDS program has been offering high-quality, family-centered, and strength-based services to families with children ages 0-5 at no cost for the past several years. Families that I have connected with have expressed the positive impact our services have had on their family unit. New parents feel validated on their experiences with a newborn and are motivated to keep learning about their baby's development. Families with busy schedules will make time to come in for services because they are able to see progress in their child's behavior and development. I am in full support of utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to fund services for HDS. All children and their families should be able to benefit from the services provided by this program regardless of their socioeconomic background.

Daniela Sanchez

Location: 91910, chula vista
Submitted At: 4:18pm 05-16-25

As a Child and Family Specialist with HDS at Rady Children's Hospital in the Chula Vista Region, I strongly support the proposed supplemental funding for Healthy Development Services (HDS) Programs. HDS is a preventative service not a reactive service like others in the community. HDS addresses concerns early and ensures children get the support that they need. We maximize the developmental potential, improve long-term outcomes, and support families with children in their most delicate years. We assist families to navigate the difficult and unfair systems in place when needing a higher level of service. We are the safety net for the kids that do not qualify in other services elsewhere or families that don't know where else to get services. HDS helps many children and families with diverse backgrounds & economic status. Fund a program for our most vulnerable population and invest in our youngest San Diegans future!

Sandra Hernalva

Location: 91910, Chula Vista
Submitted At: 4:17pm 05-16-25

As a Developmental Specialist with HDS at Rady Children Hospital in the Chula Vista Region, I am seeing firsthand the impact that First 5 has on the community that I serve. Further HDS funding means that underrepresented communities can continue to have access to services that otherwise might not be available to them. During a follow-up appointment with one of our military families, they mentioned a big improvement after attending our classes. They noted their child to be more sociable around other children, increase in speech clarity, and his confidence to say more. There are countless comments noting that through the information provided, parents were able to better understand and support their child's development. Further funding for HDS programs supports children's present wellbeing, but ensures their future has a better opportunity because of the

services they had access to when they were young.

Jonathan Rojas

Location: 92101, San Diego

Submitted At: 4:17pm 05-16-25

It is imperative to secure funding for Healthy Development Services(HDS)! The importance of developmental and behavioral services to babies and children in their first five years of life cannot be overstated. As care coordinator at HDS Central, I have witnessed families become empowered through their engagement with our providers and services. From evaluations and treatments to referrals and follow ups, families are given the opportunity to get critical services regardless of their socioeconomic status or background. Healthy Development Services offers parents and children entry to a network of supporting services that is foundational to early intervention. Monumental to community vitality, we need to preserve HDS for its role in helping the most vulnerable. Utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund will ensure that children and families are not excluded from their fair share of county revenue and services!

Leticia Balderas

Location: 92026, Escondido

Submitted At: 3:48pm 05-16-25

My name is Leticia Balderas, and I am a Care Coordinator with Healthy Development Services and a proud resident of Escondido District 5. I have been with the organization for 17 years. Throughout my time with Healthy Development Services, I have witnessed firsthand the critical importance of providing developmental, behavioral, care coordination, and maternal/paternal mental health services to children ages 0–5 and their families. This program is a vital resource for our community. Early intervention services are essential for children's academic success and help them build the foundational skills necessary to thrive in all areas of life. I strongly support utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge the funding gap and ensure that our youngest children receive their fair share of County resources and services. Thank you.

Sarah Nolan

Location: 92123, San Diego

Submitted At: 3:46pm 05-16-25

First 5 San Diego's Healthy Development Services (HDS) is a vital community resource for our community's youngest families. At a time when children are at their most vulnerable, HDS is there to support all families regardless of their ability to pay. HDS provides a safety net to children who would not otherwise qualify for support and prevents small concerns from growing into big ones. This investment in San Diego's youngest citizens is a low-cost investment in San Diego's future. We can choose to support a little now or much more down the road.

ISABEL DELRIO

Location: 92071, EL Cajon

Submitted At: 3:11pm 05-16-25

Hello, my name is Isabel Delrio, and I am the Administrative Assistant for our (HDS) East County Region. I strongly agree and am in full support of our proposed supplemental funding for Healthy Development Services (HDS) Programs for San Diego County. Every child is not born the same and parenting does not come with instructions, but I am a strong believer that (HDS) programs help all parents to broadening their perspectives, acquire new knowledge, and enhance their ability to analyze and problem solve their children's developmental and emotional growth, while showing children how important they are to us and their future. It's a topic that requires all hands-on deck and should not be taken lightly to those who want a better future for our children, families and communities. Utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap helps ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services.

Eva Zapien

Location: 92114, San Diego

Submitted At: 3:08pm 05-16-25

I strongly support continued funding for Healthy Development Services (HDS). As a San Diego resident, I've seen how early developmental support can change a child's life trajectory. Cutting \$4.3 million would result in over 3,000 children and families losing access to services they desperately need.

These services are not covered by Medi-Cal and are not otherwise accessible.

HDS has proven results: 95% of children improve, and nearly every family recommends the program.

These are not optional services. They are essential early interventions that prevent long-term challenges and reduce future costs in education, healthcare, and social services.

Please protect this vital resource for our region's most vulnerable families and preserve the progress we've made in equitable, preventative child development.

Jorge Carbajal

Location: 92116, san diego

Submitted At: 2:54pm 05-16-25

As the Supervisor of Case Management for Pediatric Developmental Services and Healthy Development Services—and having served as a Care Coordinator for five years—I've seen firsthand the impact our services have on the community. Families who have felt left behind, unseen, or marginalized due to cultural, economic, or other differences have been able to receive our support without discrimination.

Beyond providing developmental services for children in need at no cost, HDS offers something even more meaningful: a sense of direction and reassurance. For families and parents who feel lost or overwhelmed, HDS provides guidance and support. With the help of the amazing teams within HDS, parents learn to advocate for themselves and their children, gaining tools and information to support their families well beyond our services.

Utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap helps ensure that young children receive their fair share of County revenue and services.

Briana Mendoza

Location:

Submitted At: 2:49pm 05-16-25

As an Infant Mental Health associate therapist at Healthy Development Services (HDS), I can assert that services play a vital role in the community, ensuring children and their families have access to the support they need for a healthy development. These services are often the first point of contact for identifying developmental/behavioral concerns during a child's most critical years of growth. HDS helps set the foundation for lifelong learning and well-being, meeting families where they are. HDS ensures equitable access to developmental/behavioral services across SD County, empowering caregivers and providing them with tools and knowledge to support each child's unique journey. Reductions in funding would significantly delay early identification and intervention, especially for the most vulnerable children and families. Utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap helps ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services.

Jen Goins

Location: 92084, Vista

Submitted At: 2:48pm 05-16-25

As the Lead Developmental Specialist with HDS at Rady Children's Hospital, I have seen first-hand the benefits of HDS services in families with children ages 0-5 throughout San Diego County. HDS programs provide children and their caregivers valuable interventions for developmental delays and behavior challenges that aren't supported elsewhere, but that still need to be addressed for children to enter school healthy and ready to learn. Receiving early intervention with HDS reduces the burden on school districts and other services by preventing the need for intervention further along the line, keeping valuable space for children who have more extensive support needs. The reduction of funding for HDS removes this valuable protective factor for so many of the youngest in our community. Please support utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap and help ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services.

Nadia Marquez

Location: 92021, EL Cajon

Submitted At: 2:43pm 05-16-25

As a Developmental Specialist, I see firsthand how vital Healthy Development Services (HDS) are for young children and their families. These services give kids the support they need early—whether it's help with speech, behavior, or social-emotional development.

San Diego and First 5 have built a strong, trusted system that allows us to provide consistent, high-quality care. If HDS services are moved or changed, families may lose access or face delays, which can impact a child's progress during critical early years.

Keeping HDS with San Diego and First 5 helps us continue giving families the support they need—right when they need it most.

Gustavo Garcia

Location: 92122, San Diego

Submitted At: 2:30pm 05-16-25

My name is Gustavo Garcia Gomez and I'm a case manager for pediatric developmental services at Family Health Centers of San Diego.

Healthy development services is what I consider an invaluable program for many families in San Diego. As a case manager I've talked with many families that were initially connected to HDS to receive support for their children and all of them are very grateful to the providers, the care coordinators, the managers and the rest of the staff who work nonstop to ensure all kids get connected to the appropriate services for a better development.

I believe Utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap helps ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services.

Tara Hodgens

Location: 92008, Carlsbad

Submitted At: 2:10pm 05-16-25

Early developmental screenings for children are essential and give us a rare opportunity to make real improvements in children's health. I work with young adults (18-24) that were not given these opportunities and now have greater needs that are more costly. With no access to these early screenings many of their symptoms increased and became more complex and difficult to treat. The impact of healthy development is clear. 95% of children that complete developmental treatment make improvements and improve relationships with their child. Using the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge funding gaps helps ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services.

Diana Parmar

Location: 92123, San diego

Submitted At: 1:53pm 05-16-25

Healthy Development Services are one of a kind, being the place that can catch those kids who do not qualify for services elsewhere. Without this program, many children would fall through the cracks or have to wait excessive amounts of time which will only increase the delay. I have worked at HDS in the North Central Region for over 8 years. Words cannot begin to explain how much of an impact this program has on our community and these families. Helping provide early intervention services has supported so many children to catch up to age level, so that more severe delays do not occur. The care coordination piece of our program is truly unique, helping families get connected to the best place for their children, which can be very confusing and overwhelming to navigate through all the systems we have here in San Diego. Please consider additional funding for this program so that we can continue supporting those families and children who have no where else to turn to for help.

Michelle Dytan

Location:

Submitted At: 1:52pm 05-16-25

As a pediatric occupational therapist with Family Health Centers, I have witnessed the firsthand benefits and amazing supports that HDS has made in the community and with the families we work with. Families and children, who are often in need of these services and education, are empowered through the services and connection to community resources provided. HDS provides client-centered care that help families and children in our community flourish and grow. Utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap helps ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services. There are significant

health, social, and economic benefits to children, their families and society when children's developmental needs are met. Please continue to support!

Kirstie Pfeifer

Location: 92127, San Diego
Submitted At: 1:50pm 05-16-25

Investing in children always pays off! Let's also invest in our provider network and HDS jobs in San Diego. There are significant health, social, and economic benefits to children, their families and society when children's developmental needs are met. When considering mental health equity and well-being in San Diego, we have to choose to care for a true continuum - from young children to the adults who care for them. Utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap helps ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services.

Miriah deMatos

Location: 92106, San Diego
Submitted At: 1:45pm 05-16-25

I used HDS for both of my children. My oldest son has significant learning disabilities. I tried to get him help at the pediatrician, at his preschool, but because he was not disruptive everyone dismissed my concerns. I can still remember my appointment with the Developmental Specialist at HDS, who looked me in the eyes and said, "I see what you see. We can help him." When I brought him to service and he experienced a sensory meltdown, the Care Coordinator, who helped carry my 9 month old baby, while I supported him to transition to occupational therapy.

For my son and I it was the beginning of an ongoing battle to get him help. That said HDS got us started, gave me confidence to advocate, and offered him the initial support services he needed before kindergarten. Our children and families depend on this help and understanding that programs like HDS provide.

Richard Richardson

Location: 91914, Chula Vista
Submitted At: 1:34pm 05-16-25

My name is Rick Richardson, the President and CEO of CDA and a Commissioner for First 5 San Diego. I'm writing in strong support of the proposed supplemental funding for Healthy Development Services (HDS), a vital program supporting thousands of young children and families across San Diego County. HDS provides developmental screenings, therapies, and parent education for families with children from birth to age five. As a First 5 San Diego Commissioner, I've seen the transformative impact of these services firsthand. Families rely on HDS to ensure their children are healthy, engaged, and ready to learn. The demand for these services is growing, without additional funding, too many children will miss critical early support—putting them at risk of falling behind. I urge the Board to approve this essential funding and uphold San Diego's commitment to early childhood development. Investing in our youngest residents is both the right and the smart thing to do. Thank you for your leadership.

Kristina Halmai

Location: 92009, Carlsbad
Submitted At: 1:34pm 05-16-25

I've seen the challenges that adolescents, young adults, and adults face without early developmental screening. Early screening and intervention services for children ages 0–5 and their caregivers are essential to lifelong wellbeing. When young children's developmental and behavioral needs are identified early and met with responsive, family-centered treatment—like that provided by HDS—outcomes improve significantly: 95% of children show developmental gains, and 95% of families report stronger parent-child relationships. These early investments have lasting social, health, and economic benefits that extend well into adulthood. HDS's whole-child, interdisciplinary approach builds parent capacity, strengthens family bonds, and supports providers and community partners alike. While many services focus on screening, few offer the high-quality, evidence-based treatment needed to close the gap—making programs like HDS a critical part of our region's care continuum.

Jonathan Camitan

Location: 91915, Chula Vista
Submitted At: 1:18pm 05-16-25

For the last 18 years, First 5 San Diego's Healthy Development Services (HDS) has been a lifeline for families, offering free, high-quality developmental and behavioral screenings, treatment, and parent coaching. In that time, HDS has served over 352,800 San Diego children, as well as their families and caregivers. 95% of children that complete HDS developmental treatment make improvements. 95% of families report that HDS services improved their relationship with their child. 99% of families report that Healthy Development Services improved their confidence in parenting.

Utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap helps ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services.

Lucilia Portela

Location: 92113, San Diego
Submitted At: 1:14pm 05-16-25

My name is Lucilia Portela with Family Health Centers of San Diego and Children First Collective. As a seasoned clinician and new parent who accessed HDS services, I've witnessed the profound impact these services offer children and families. As a clinician, the program creates the opportunity to integrate family education and guidance, so they are confident in supporting their children's developmental, social, and emotional needs. As a new parent, HDS program provided me and my partner with the skills to attune to our daughter's needs; we learned how to read her early cues for when she was hungry before she would start to cry, attune to her eye gaze to alert us she needs a break or is over stimulated, and so much more. Having these skills gave us confidence as a parent and ensure we were addressing her needs before it resulted in crying. I strongly support utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap to support children and families in San Diego.

Flavia Gastelum

Location: 92113, San Diego
Submitted At: 1:02pm 05-16-25

Healthy Development Services offers support to parents and their children, meeting them where they are at in their lives and offering state-of-the-art services with well-trained staff. Often times HDS is the first system of care to identify developmental/behavioral concerns very early in the life of the child and via a variety of supports (from play groups to parent coaching and specialty services) the caregiver learns how to support the child no matter where the child is in their development. Parents are also empowered and reminded of the importance of their role as teachers and nurturers. Some families need a few services while others benefit from more intensive and targeted support which HDS can provide via their multiple levels of service. Cuts to this service will impact most severely the most vulnerable of clients. Utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap helps ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services.

Viridiana Herrera

Location:
Submitted At: 12:54pm 05-16-25

My name is Viridiana Herrera with Family Health Centers of San Diego and Children First Collective. Healthy Development Services (HDS) program is such a valuable and needed system of care in our San Diego community. This wonderful program not only supports children but their families. Utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap helps ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services. I want to draw attention to the profound support offered for more than 52,000 children, parents, caregivers, and providers from 2023-2024 alone. This is impressive and it must continue!!!

Courtney Baltiyskyy

Location: 92116, San Diego
Submitted At: 12:16pm 05-16-25

My name is Courtney Baltiyskyy with the YMCA and Children First Collective. For years, our Y has partnered with First 5 San Diego on a number of services supporting kids, working families, and child care providers. As a part of this work, for nearly twenty years we've helped refer families into the amazing regional partner team of organizations and physicians who make up the "home grown" quality program Healthy Development Services (HDS). HDS is a real achievement for San Diego, our state, and country. As a behavior health provider for kids,

teens, and transition age youth, our organization knows that HDS is a critical part of San Diego's continuum of care, resulting in significant cost reductions when kids receive these services early. County of San Diego leaders have a great responsibility to consider sustainability, efficiency, and quality services. We believe this one-time funding proposal aligns with these values and will have a tremendous impact next fiscal year. Thank you.

Claudia Ruvalcaba

Location: 91902, Bonita
Submitted At: 12:07pm 05-16-25

I have witnessed the positive impact of HDS as a provider, mother, and community member. The current budget cuts have affected our staffing, the amount and quality of services provided, and the emotional support provided to the families in our community. We serve families that range from prenatal up to 6 years old and receive behavior parent coaching, speech, physical therapy, and occupational services through our program. Children are supported in umm milestones rather than needing to receive other higher level developmental service through impacted programs such as CAES or school districts and potentially receiving a diagnosis. I worry about the ease of registering and connecting to services in a timely manner. Current cuts further affect our retention of invaluable staff who have exceptional one-of-a-kind training in Infant and early childhood mental health, that make an impact in our children and family's lives. I hope this shed some light on what we're fighting for.

Karina Iribe

Location: 91910, San Diego
Submitted At: 11:39am 05-16-25

My name is Karina Iribe, Administrative Assistant of Healthy Development Services Central Region at Family Health Centers of San Diego
Healthy Development Services is an invaluable asset to the San Diego community. These services provide the additional support that children need for their mental and emotional development.

Griselda Leal

Location: 92113, San Diego
Submitted At: 11:35am 05-16-25

Hello, my name is Griselda Leal. I work with the Family Health Centers of San Diego as a Care Coordinator. Investing in Healthy Development Services for children and families in San Diego is a critical step toward ensuring long-term public health and economic stability. Research consistently shows that the first five years of life are crucial for brain development, emotional regulation, and the formation of secure relationships. HDS provides developmental screenings, behavioral supports, parent education, and therapy services that catch and address delays and concerns early, when intervention is most effective and least costly. Children who receive timely support are more likely to succeed in school, avoid chronic health issues, and develop into productive, self-sufficient adults. HDS helps decrease the barriers many families in San Diego face by offering no-cost, culturally responsive services, particularly in underserved neighborhoods.

Regan Poling

Location: 92124, San Diego
Submitted At: 11:33am 05-16-25

Great program to help with children with communicating and teaching them with emotional regulation

Christopher Chan

Location: 92111, San Diego
Submitted At: 11:10am 05-16-25

This program has helped my daughter with her social issues. All of the instructors are so patient with each child. My daughter was jumping out of my arms to run to class as soon as she got off the elevator. Thank you to all the staff!!

Zeevny Lares

Location:
Submitted At: 11:04am 05-16-25

Hello, my name is Zeevny, and I work as a Behavioral Specialist at a preschool. I have sent many referrals to

Healthy Development Services (HDS) North Inland. The HDS team has worked with our families, and I have seen the progress the children make when services are provided. HDS works with our families providing them mental health support and educate our families about their child developmental needs. HDS is really beneficial to provide early intervention services at an earlier age then later when children have more of a difficult time improving during preschool or elementary school age. These services are essential to support our community and child development please continue to support HDS and our San Diego Families!

Rosa Sandoval

Location: 92101, San Diego
Submitted At: 10:40am 05-16-25

Hello, my name is Rosa Sandoval, and I manage the Healthy Development Services (HDS) department, Central location at Family Health Centers of San Diego. In my role I have the opportunity to witness firsthand the profound impact HDS has on the families we serve. One key highlight is 95% of children who complete developmental treatment through our program show measurable improvements. The First 5 data is transparent and accessible, as it speaks to the effectiveness and value of early intervention services. Utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap helps ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services. Please continue to support San Diego children and families. The work we do today shapes a stronger healthier tomorrow for San Diego.

Angeles flores

Location: 92027, Escondido
Submitted At: 10:14am 05-16-25

Hello, my name is Angeles, and I work as a Developmental Services Specialist at Healthy Development Services (HDS) North Inland. I have witnessed the positive impact HDS has on San Diego families. The HDS team not only addresses children's developmental issues but also works with parents' mental health, equipping them with tools to foster positive relationships and secure attachments. All children need to feel protected and safe to learn and develop their full potential. Children are the future. Your support is invaluable. It's an investments in our children, our community, and a better future for all. I believe there is no nobler task than providing and advocating for the benefits of those who cannot do so for themselves. Children cannot advocate for their right to receive the developmental services they need that will allow them to live full lives, but we can, and that is why I am inviting you to continue supporting HDS.

Stephanie Ostrow

Location: 92057, Oceanside
Submitted At: 9:58am 05-16-25

Healthy Development Services (HDS) provides critical developmental support to our children. Services provided by HDS set up our youngest community members for lifelong success. Early intervention has a demonstrated impact of getting children's development back on track when developmental delays are detected or parents have concerns about their child's development. Additionally, HDS provides invaluable services for those families who need this support most and may not be able to access it elsewhere due to barriers (e.g. financial barriers). These programs have demonstrated their effectiveness by enabling children receiving services to reach their fullest potential. Early intervention services are not an empty investment; they have a proven return on investment for the community. Please support the development of our youngest San Diegans by approving supplemental funding for HDS.

Mayra Lopez

Location: 92029, Escondido
Submitted At: 9:35am 05-16-25

Healthy Development Services has been a lifeline to countless of families, providing critical developmental, educational and emotional support during the most important years of a child's life. Healthy Development has consistently demonstrated measurable outcomes in preparing children for school readiness, improving family engagement and in addressing developmental delays through early intervention. Services that are proven to yield long term benefits in education, health and social outcomes. Unfortunately, recent funding cuts have placed this program and the children it serves at serious risk, without immediate support, many families will lose access to services that not only help their children thrive but also prevent more costly interventions. These services are not

luxuries; they are necessities for a healthy childhood development and community wellbeing.

Jose Vizcaino

Location: 92113, San Diego
Submitted At: 9:09am 05-16-25

I am full support for HD to receive funding to be able to support children and families in need! As someone who actually works alongside the FHCSH HDS facility, I see exactly how important it is to the SD communities! It provides a service for those who may be less fortunate, or those put in a difficult position on health care that gives piece of mind that their child will improve in development, and become essential for the community!

Romelia Valdez

Location: 92116, San Diego
Submitted At: 9:06am 05-16-25

Hello, my name is Romelia Valdez. I have worked at HDS for six years as a Care Coordinator. HDS allows families of different backgrounds and socioeconomic statuses to start their children's developmental journey. First Five connects families and assists children with early intervention services and treatment. Uninsured children can receive early intervention treatment, and by providing parent-group classes, families can connect and create a community. HDS also provides support to parents going through challenging times such as trauma; these are parents who need extra support in their well-being. HDS delivers the tools to parents and children for a well-rounded and nurturing environment. To improve long-term outcomes, children who receive early support often do better in school and have higher self-esteem. HDS can reduce long-term education, healthcare, and social services costs by addressing issues before they escalate.

Julian Nguyen

Location: 92101, San Diego
Submitted At: 8:51am 05-16-25

Healthy Development Services is an invaluable asset to the community and plays a pivotal role in helping families navigate the important growth period as their infant grows into preschoolers. This is especially important to families who don't have the resources or financial means to obtain that support. Limiting this resource would be a detriment especially as they say, the children are the future. Please use the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge the funding gap and put the future of our children first. With this additional funding, Healthy Development Services can continue to provide these essential services to our San Diego families.

Ofrey Barsheshet

Location: 92021, El Cajon
Submitted At: 8:48am 05-16-25

Healthy Development Services serves as the cornerstone of developmental and behavioral support for families by offering free, high-quality services to the community. Through sustained funding from the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund and strategic efforts to bridge financial gaps, HDS can continue delivering these essential services while minimizing wait times for families in need.

Ana Hernandez

Location: 92102, San Diego
Submitted At: 8:47am 05-16-25

Hi, my name is Ana Hernandez, and I provide services to families as a behavioral specialist in the Healthy Development Services East and Central regiones and therapy services in the Maternal Service Project. I believe that continuing to bridge funding for this program is crucial for the San Diego community as there are hundreds of low income families that continue to benefit from it in many ways including to improve their overall development and create more positive relationships that benefit the community as a whole.

Maggie Kershaw

Location:
Submitted At: 8:41am 05-16-25

I have been working at HDS as a Behavior Specialist for nearly 13 years. Through no-cost early intervention services to young children and their families in San Diego County, we are able to build resilience in families starting prenatally! It is rare to find a program that provides these high-quality supports for free in San Diego. The

populations that access our support is vast- from low-income families to double-income families that STILL can't afford important supports for their child due to the high cost of living. We are building safer communities for our youngest people, one family at a time. One of the families that sticks out the most to me is of a Veteran father who was able to attend our parent-education class series while incarcerated at Vista Detention Center. When he was released and regained custody of his child, he reconnected to our program to continue learning about how to be a better father. What an honor it was to support this father with breaking cycles in his family.

Audrey Pham

Location: 92116, San Diego

Submitted At: 5:44pm 05-15-25

Hello, my name is Audrey Pham and I'm a pediatric resident physician working and living in BOS District #4. HDS provides extremely valuable services to young children in the San Diego area. Providing support services to children when they are in crucial periods of development better equips them to be healthy, happy adults. Our entire community benefits from having these services available to the children of San Diego.

Claudia Gastelum

Location: 92021, El Cajon

Submitted At: 5:22pm 05-15-25

My name is Claudia Gastelum, Director of Pediatric Developmental Services at Family Health Centers of San Diego. Please help prioritize the needs of young children in San Diego. We urge you to approve utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge the HDS funding gap. HDS offers free, high-quality developmental and behavioral treatment services, parent support and care coordination. Families rely on HDS; it is a staple in the community.

Melissa Campbell

Location: 92065

Submitted At: 5:16pm 05-15-25

It is crucial to bridge funding for Healthy Development Services in our community. These services provide the additional support that children need for their mental and emotional development. Investing in children's health leads to a stronger and more successful community.

Iliana Giudici

Location: 92056, oceanside

Submitted At: 4:46pm 05-15-25

I cannot stress enough how important Healthy Development Services is to our community. For the last 8 years I have been providing mental health treatment to children under 6yr old and their caregivers as part of HDS. I have seen parents come into their first session tearfully admitting that they do not enjoy time with their child, feel overwhelmed and hopeless in their parenting of their child, and have nowhere else to turn. These families cannot find providers who specialize in early childhood mental health or parenting of a young child through their insurance. With HDS intervention their relationships with their children are transformed, significantly improving the quality of their child's mental health and preventing more serious conditions in the future. Prevention and early intervention are vital to the reduction of chronic mental health conditions. San Diego needs HDS. Please use the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge the funding gap and put the future of our children first.

Elva Vera

Location: 91910, Chula vista

Submitted At: 4:15pm 05-15-25

HDS has been crucial in supporting parents of children 0-5 strengthen their relationships, providing effective intervention in all areas of development and covering the gap in services for our youngest population. Currently parents are highly stressed and isolated in their task of raising healthy individuals while working, managing housing and childcare rising costs as well as dealing with their own mental health needs. HDS has been a lifeline for many families over the years, I ask you to please keep this valuable resource available. Preventative care can change the trajectory of many children that are currently identified with behavioral issues, resulting in a decrease cost later on in substance use recovery, mental health treatment, homelessness and so much more. Please vote

yes on utilizing funds from the Tobacco Securitization Fund revenue to bridge this funding gap and help to ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services.

Shelby Gomez

Location: 92111, San Diego
Submitted At: 11:51am 05-15-25

My name is Shelby Gomez, Executive Director of Childcare at YMCA Childcare Resource Service and member of the Children First Collective.

HDS is a critical part of our infrastructure for developing healthy, brilliant San Diegans. It addresses delays and concerns early to save our community money in the long-term and save families the heartache and stress of trying to overcome challenges that only become more entrenched the longer they are left unaddressed. It helps children get onto their optimal developmental pathway, giving them the best chance to thrive and be ready for Kindergarten and beyond.

San Diego has been on the cutting edge of this work for the last 18 years, and I implore you to keep that momentum going by utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge the current funding gap caused by the reduction in First 5 revenues. Please help to ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services.

Jason VanDyke

Location: 92103, San Diego
Submitted At: 11:02am 05-15-25

I'm commenting on behalf of Family Health Centers of San Diego to urge continued support for First 5 San Diego's Healthy Development Services.

For 18 years, HDS has been a lifeline—providing free, high-quality developmental and behavioral services to over 350,000 children and families. And it works:

95% of children improve, 95% of families report stronger relationships, and 99% feel more confident as parents. But right now, families face long waitlists and reduced access. With state funding expected to decline, this safety net is at risk.

Using the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge the gap ensures our youngest children receive their fair share of County support.

If we care about mental health equity and long-term well-being, we must fund the full continuum—from children to the adults who care for them.

Kyle Fitzpatrick

Location: 91901, Alpine
Submitted At: 10:18am 05-15-25

Healthy Development Services (HDS) is a one-of-a-kind system of care that provides critical support to children with developmental concerns and their families. Since 2018, HDS has provided preventive services and intervention to over 352,800 kids across the County. As a social worker and father of a toddler (with a 2nd baby on the way), I'm proud to live in a community that provides services such as HDS. If either of my kids were to show signs of a developmental delay - whether it's speech, gross motor, or social-emotional challenges - I'm comforted knowing HDS is available to me. HDS is a linchpin in our early childhood system of care. Utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge HDS funding gaps helps ensure that young children, like my own, are getting their fair share of County revenue and services.

Megan moore

Location: 91911-1903, Chula Vista
Submitted At: 9:23am 05-15-25

Hello, my name is Megan Moore, and I support the continued and full investment in children and families through Healthy Development Services. The experience of being a new mother can be overwhelming and lonely. When I became a mother, I had no family around to lend me a hand or show me the way, my husband was deployed, and I was living in Texas, in a city foreign to me and my San Diego roots. Those first critical years were stressful. To

read the testimonies and hear the experiences of the families in San Diego, who received services from First5, I WISH I had that support. Why would we abandon young families in need of parenting classes, healthy development screenings, and treatments? Why would San Diego NOT choose care when it comes to our children... to our infants? We fund what we value, right? Well let's show that we value our children and family's health and wellbeing here in San Diego. We ALL deserve to thrive, and it starts within those first 5 years.

Lucia Garay

Location: 91910, Chula Vista
Submitted At: 9:11am 05-15-25

Utilizing the Tobacco Special Revenue Fund to bridge this funding gap helps ensure that young children are getting their fair share of County revenue and services. There are significant health, social, and economic benefits to children, their families and society when children's developmental needs are met. For the last 18 years, First 5 San Diego's Healthy Development Services (HDS) has been a lifeline for families, offering free, high-quality developmental and behavioral screenings, treatment, and parent coaching. HDS not only offers free, high-quality developmental and behavioral screenings, but is able to support children and families with treatment and a coordinated care plan. The two-generational approach of HDS is equally as important to its impact and success. By including parent coaching alongside treatment, HDS is not only equipping a young child with what they need to be successful, but their caregivers as well.

Rachel Villarespe

Location:
Submitted At: 9:07am 05-15-25

For the past 18 years, First 5 San Diego's Healthy Development Services (HDS) has been a vital resource for families—providing free, high-quality developmental and behavioral screenings, early intervention services, and parent coaching. These supports are essential for giving young children the strongest possible start in life.

Bridging the funding gap by utilizing the Tobacco Settlement Special Revenue Fund is a strategic and equitable solution. It ensures that young children receive their fair share of County resources and that critical early intervention services remain accessible to the families who need them most.

Investing in early childhood development is not just a moral imperative—it's a smart, long-term strategy for building a healthier, more resilient community.