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**First 5 Fresno County Commission Establishes Scholarship Program
For Families at Its Lighthouse for Children Child Development Center**

Unprecedented Move Puts High Quality Childcare within Reach for More Families

Fresno, CA – At its meeting today, Nov. 18, the First 5 Fresno County Commission took a step toward making childcare more affordable and accessible for families at the Lighthouse for Children Child Development Center.

The First 5 Fresno County Scholarship Program will offset on a sliding scale up to 60 percent of tuition costs for those earning between 30 and 50 percent over California's state preschool program's maximum income guidelines.

"Simply put, these scholarships will help families who make too much money to qualify for state subsidized care but also can't afford high-quality care," said Henry Perea, First 5 Fresno County Commission Chairman.

The Lighthouse for Children Child Development Center will be a unique space where children from all socioeconomic backgrounds and abilities will learn alongside each other. Thirty percent of enrollment slots will be dedicated to children who qualify for the California State Preschool Program, 30 percent to private pay tuition, 30 percent to those who qualify for the First 5 Fresno County Scholarship Program, and the remaining 10 percent will be dedicated to children with special needs.

"This childcare model presents an opportunity to offer inclusive care to children from different walks of life and experiences," said Emilia Reyes, First 5 Fresno County Executive Director.

Currently in the licensing phase, the Lighthouse for Children Child Development Center is scheduled to open early 2016 and will be operated by Fresno County Office of Education. Families interested in enrollment in the Center should contact First 5 Fresno County for details at 558.4900 or info@first5fresno.org.

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At First 5 Fresno County, we focus on the first 5 years of life. We want all children to have a strong foundation so they can reach their full potential. We fund programs and invest in efforts that improve the lives of children ages 0-5 and their families. First 5 Fresno County was created in 1998 when California voters passed Proposition 10.

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