



CONTACT:
Victoria Cuevas
559.558-4907
vcuevas@first5fresno.org

COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS TO SHINE LIGHT ON PREMATURETY AWARENESS MONTH AND CELEBRATE MILESTONES IN ADDRESSING PRETERM BIRTH

Fresno, CA (November 10, 2017) – November is Prematurity Awareness Month, which aims to draw national attention to preterm birth – the leading cause of death in children under the age of five. Fresno County ranks #1 in the state, with the highest preterm birth rate in California. Our county’s infant mortality rate is double the state average and Black infants are dying at three times the rate of other babies. In 2015, First 5 Fresno County commissioned an African American Infant Mortality (AAIM) Needs Assessment to understand the underlying causes of infant deaths. Since then, a collaborative effort emerged in our community to carry out the recommendations from the report.

On November 14, 2017, a group of elected officials, researchers, doctors and professionals in the medical field will gather at the Lighthouse for Children (LFC) to celebrate key benchmarks in their work aimed at reversing prematurity and infant mortality rates in Fresno County. Glow! – a pilot group prenatal care program, launched in October 2017 at the Lighthouse for Children, is one benchmark to be highlighted.

Glow! is designed to improve birth outcomes for pregnant women by providing access to high-quality prenatal care, social support and wrap-around services together in a group setting. Through a cross-sector partnership between UCSF San Francisco, Fresno State – Central Valley Health Policy Institute and other community partners, Glow! aims to serve 300 women in this pilot phase. The project includes research and evaluation to assess its effectiveness. If the Glow! model meets Fresno County’s needs, partners hope that this pilot will transform the quality and culture of prenatal care.

For First 5 Fresno County (F5FC), the event is a pledge to identifying and investing in solutions and partnerships with the medical community, to better support the health of young children and families. “This joint effort has combined community input with pioneering models to deliver on the promise of a brighter future for all of Fresno County,” said Reyes. “We know that collaboration strengthens our collective work, and we’re committed to building new partnerships that support children and families in meaningful ways.”

###

First 5 Fresno County works tirelessly to lift up young children to their full potential and deliver on the promise of a brighter future for all of Fresno County. We educate our community about the incredible window of opportunity for all children in their first 5 years of life and fund programs that fill gaps in our early childhood system of care. First 5 Fresno County was created in 1998 when California voters passed Proposition 10.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Emilia Reyes

COMMISSIONERS

Brian Pacheco, *Chair*
Kari Gilbert
Shannon Koontz

Hugo Morales
Dawan Utecht



2405 Tulare Street, Suite 200
Fresno, CA 93721



(559) 558-4900