



# ANNUAL EVALUATION REPORT 2021-22

Sutter County Children & Families Commission



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# Headline Findings 2021-22

Sutter County Children and Families Commission (SCCFC) has four strategic goals for children and families in Sutter County: *Improved Family Functioning, Improved Child Development, Healthy Children and Families, and Improved Systems of Care*. These four goals support the vision of SCCFC that “All children in Sutter County will have optimal health, be nurtured, and prepared to succeed.” Despite the ongoing challenges post-COVID-19 pandemic, evidence-based and innovative programs supported by SCCFC continued to deliver meaningful and engaging services, supporting families in their journeys, and enriching the lives of many Sutter County children. The highlights from the evaluation of these services’ performance are presented below, organized by the four goals and tied to each goal’s direct outcomes.

## Profile of Families Served

### Reach



- **The SCCFC continued to have broad reach across the county.** Services were provided to 7,450 children and over 7,670 caregivers (duplicated across programs). This is an increase from 6,100 children and 6,250 caregivers served in the prior year (duplicated). One-third (36%) were ages 0-2 years, and the rest were ages 3-5 years.  
The program with the widest reach of children was Ready4K (2,356 children), followed by Dolly Patron Imagination Library (1,735 children), both counts unduplicated.
- **The population served by SCCFC reflected efforts to close current equity gaps.** SCCFC programs participants were overrepresented for Latino families (40% of children), compared to the county’s 32% rate. However, the proportion of multiracial/non-White children, at 10% was below the 45% countywide prevalence. Most children (70%) served by SCCFC programs spoke English, some (20%) spoke Spanish, and a minority (10%) preferred other languages.

## Improved Family Functioning

Protective factors showed a positive trend

- In 2021, 15% of Sutter County children ages 0-5 years lived in **poverty**, which is below the California estimate of 17%, although the prevalence of housing insecurity, at 34%, was above the 2030 Healthy People target of 26%.
- The rates of **child maltreatment**, at seven per 1,000 children, were below the 2030 Healthy People target of eight per 1,000 children. Allegations dropped by nearly 10 per 1,000 children in the 0-1 year age group.

Parents have access to knowledge and resources to meet their child’s health and developmental needs

- **Kits for New Parents** were distributed to 158 new and expecting Sutter County parents.
- **Dolly Patron Imagination Library** increased book access in the home by distributing nearly 22,500 books by mail to 1,735 children ages 0-5 years, representing 22% of all county children in this age group.

Families’ social networks of support and sense of community are strengthened

- **Ready4K** provided text messaging support to parents of 2,356 children ages 0-5 years. Parents received a total of 212,011 trauma-informed care Ready4K Curriculum texts and 140,720 Community Support Stream texts over the past year.

Families of children with behavioral and other special needs are supported

- **Child Development Behavioral Specialist (CDBS)** program provided **assessments** and **early intervention services** to children with difficult behavior and/or special needs and their families, including 32 families who received **case management supports**. CDBS further helped caregivers adjust their parenting approaches through **parent and provider education** by hosting 40 Positive Discipline workshops attended by nearly 100 parents and created 15 library instructional videos that received 8872 views.
- **Family SOUP** provided support services to 109 children with special needs and 197 families, including 29 families receiving case management/system navigation services.

## Improved Child Development

Children have access to high quality early care and education

- Half of SCCFC children had **access to child care and early learning** settings, compared to 48% of children statewide. Similarly, a greater proportion of Sutter County children (46%) showed English Language Arts literacy than statewide (40%).
- **Keys to Quality Program** supported 292 ECE providers in Sutter County. This initiative helped increase the quality of care in local early care and education sites by delivering 972 hours of professional education, with access to advisors, online resources, academic, and stipend supports.

Parents facilitate learning, so children can enter school with skills and resources needed to learn

- **SMART START Summer Bridge Program** improved kindergarten readiness of 107 children across all 14 assessed skills related to early school readiness.

Parents gain knowledge to meet child health and developmental needs, while strengthening social networks and sense of community

- **Families Learning in Play (FLIP) Playzeum Program** attracted 182 parents and 292 children. During the developmental playgroups, families engaged in fun, creative, and developmentally-enriching activities with their children.

## Healthy Children and Families

Babies are born healthy, and mothers are provided perinatal/breastfeeding support

- In 2021, 74% of mothers received **adequate (+) prenatal care**, falling short of the 80.5% Healthy People 2030 target. The prevalence of low-birth weight remained at around 7%, comparable to statewide rates. At the same time, the rates of in-hospital **exclusive breastfeeding** continued to climb, reaching 70% in 2019.
- **Healthy Families Home Visitation Program** conducted 120 screens for maternal depression and child development and distributed safe baby educational materials to 865 new parents through community outreach and direct contact with the birthing center.

Children’s physical and oral health needs are identified and addressed through parent education and access to resources and early intervention services

- Sutter County children were more likely to have the recommended **well-child checks** (73-88%) than statewide (26-63%). Similarly, Sutter County showed better performance on the use of preventive oral health services, with 44% of county children having **annual dental visits**, compared to 34% statewide.

Children’s developmental needs are identified and addressed through early intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Help Me Grow (HMG) Sutter</b> provided 552 children with <b>developmental screenings and referrals</b>. Half of these screens (55%) indicated some developmental concerns. Additionally, 163 children and caregivers received <b>care coordination services</b>.</li> </ul>
Children and families have access to safe, healthy recreational activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mindful Youth Adventures</b> transitioned from educational videos (139 views) to in-person activities, which were enjoyed by 61 parents and 113 children. Families learned about mindfulness, how to control emotions, and how to express feelings constructively while strengthening and expanding their social networks.</li> </ul>
Children are kept safe and injury free	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>South Sutter Recreation Area Swim Safety Program</b> engaged 48 infants and toddlers and their parents in swimming classes. The curriculum promoted wellness, health, and public safety through water safety education for parents. It included practical skills like floating, submerging, and kicking skills for children in preparation for advanced swim lessons.</li> </ul>

## Improved Systems of Care

Families have the information and support they need to access the early childhood system of care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide families with the information and resources needed to support family resilience and child access to services, SCCFC partnered with multiple agencies. They reached 2,450 families and children through eight <b>community events</b> and nearly 11,000 <b>social medial interaction</b> exchanges.</li> <li>• <b>Emergency Supplies Distribution</b> helped 1,280 persons, including foster and Native American families, receive 7,960 units of materials such as diapers, car seats, and other basic needs supplies, worth over \$6,000.</li> </ul>
Early childhood systems are strengthened, integrated, and sustained	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funded by the <b>ACEs Aware grant</b>, a <b>Network of Care</b> was formed by the SCCFC and its partners, which included two Medi-Cal providers and multiple local agencies. These collaborative efforts created additional opportunities for provider training and education on ACEs and trauma-informed care and promotion of universal developmental screens.</li> <li>• <b>An online referral platform</b> called “<b>FindHelp</b>” was launched to improve accessibility of services to local families in need. <b>A community crisis response program</b> called “<b>Handle with Care</b>” was also initiated to help children of parents involved with the justice system.</li> <li>• <b>Home Visiting Systems Coordination grant</b> enabled creation of a <b>Bi-County Home Visitation Collaborative</b>. Among the major achievements were a <b>pamphlet directory of local home-visiting services</b> and a launch of an <b>online Resource Padlet</b>, which served as a single point of access for SCCFC and First 5 Yuba programs, services, and events.</li> </ul>
Early childhood resources, services, and supports are sustained with legislation and policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To invest in local communities, SCCFC awarded 11 <b>community sponsorships</b>, totaling over \$24,000. These monies went to support family and community engagement via seven community events. The goal: to facilitate <b>health and development of children</b> through Arts Camp for children, and to increase <b>opportunities for professional development</b> through three workshops and conferences for providers and staff.</li> </ul>

# Introduction

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## ABOUT SUTTER COUNTY CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMISSION

The Sutter County Children and Families Commission (“SCCFC”) was established in 1999, along with 57 other First 5 County Commissions throughout California by Proposition 10. This voter-approved initiative created infrastructure and funding streams from tobacco tax dollars to support improved health, family functioning, and child development for families with children prenatal to five years old. Since 90% of a child’s brain is developed by age five, the purpose of SCCFC is to invest in the future of the young children and their families that live in Sutter County. For further information, visit our website at <https://sutterkids.org>.

## VISION, MISSION, AND PRINCIPLES

The work of the SCCFC is guided by its Vision, Mission, and Strategic Principles, presented below. SCCFC’s vision statement describes the desired end state or conditions for young children in Sutter County. Its mission statement describes the way in which SCCFC will work toward this vision.

### Vision

All children in Sutter County will have optimal health, be nurtured, and prepared to succeed.

### Mission

In partnership with the community, Sutter County Children & Families Commission coordinates services that support families to ensure that each child enters school healthy and ready to learn.

SCCFC’s strategic principles describe the ways in which SCCFC commits to implementing its work, and include the following:

- All programs and services should be designed to benefit all Sutter County children ages 0-5 and their families.
- The proposed programs and services should avoid duplicating existing community efforts.

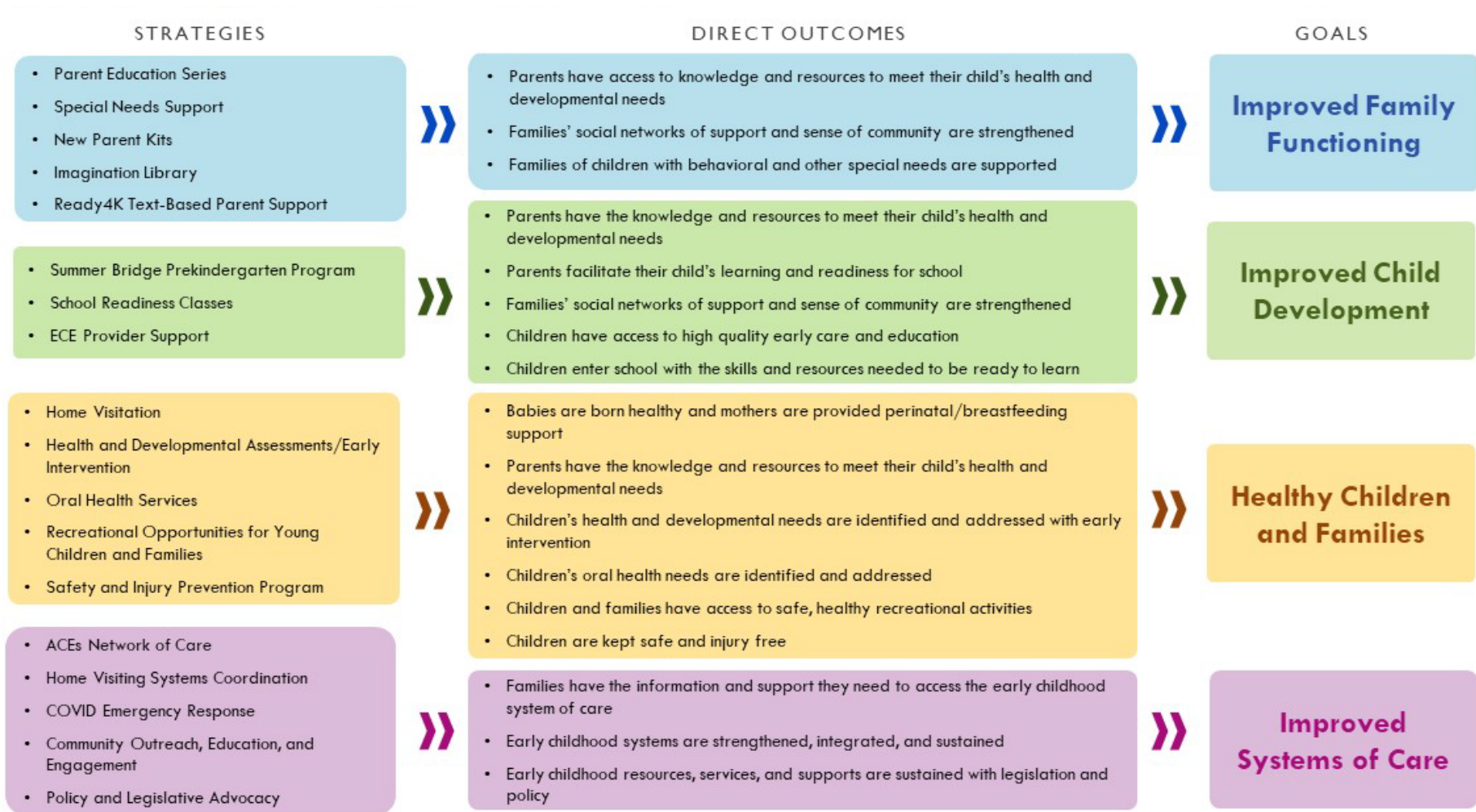
- All services should provide for the maximum amount of integration possible between existing programs and newly-established community services.
- All services should focus on delivery at the earliest possible point of intervention.
- All services should provide a significant impact on the lives of children and families served.
- All services will be rigorously evaluated to measure the outcomes of the services that Sutter County children and families receive.

## STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

The Strategic Framework on the following page illustrates the strategies selected for the 2020-2025 strategic plan and their contribution to the SCCFC's desired results and goals.



# Strategic Framework



# Profile of Children and Families Served

## TOTAL POPULATION SERVED

In FY 2021-22, SCCFC served a total of 7,450 children and approximately 7,671 caregivers<sup>1</sup>, representing a 19% increase in the program’s reach, compared to last year. Additionally, SCCFC programs supported close to 300 providers. Figure 1 displays the number of children, parents/caregivers, and providers served in each of the SCCFC programmatic areas.



FIGURE 1: NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS BY SCCFC PROGRAM

SCCFC Program	Program Area	Children	Caregivers	Providers
<b>FAMILY FUNCTIONING PROGRAMS</b>				
Child Development Behavioral Specialist	Behavioral Specialist/Parent Education	35	120	--
Family SOUP	Special Needs Therapy	119	210	--
Kit for New Parents	Family Literacy and Book Programs	158	158	--
Dolly Parton Imagination Library	Family Literacy and Book Programs	1,735	1,735	--
Ready4K	Family Literacy and Book Programs	2,356	2,356	--
<b>CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS</b>				
YCUSD Smart Start School Readiness	Summer Bridge Program	107	--	--
Playzeum FLIP School Readiness	Developmental Playgroups	167	128	--
United Way — Born Learning <sup>2</sup>	Early Learning Program	--	--	--
Keys to Quality (Child Care Planning Council)	Quality Early Learning Support	--	--	292
<b>HEALTHY CHILDREN &amp; FAMILIES PROGRAMS</b>				
SCCFC Supplies (Life jackets, etc.)	Distribution of Supplies	1,000	1,650	--
Help Me Grow/Bright Futures	Developmental Screenings/Referrals	552	200	--
Healthy Families Sutter County Home Visitation	Perinatal and Early Childhood Home Visiting	895	895	--
SCCFC Oral Health Services	Oral Health Education and Treatment	163	118	--
South Sutter Recreation Area Swim Safety	Summer Swim Lessons	50	40	--
Mindful Youth Adventures	General Health Education and Promotion	113	61	--
<b>Total</b>		<b>7,450</b>	<b>7,671</b>	<b>292</b>

Source: SCCFC Quarterly Progress Reports and workshop logs 2021-22.

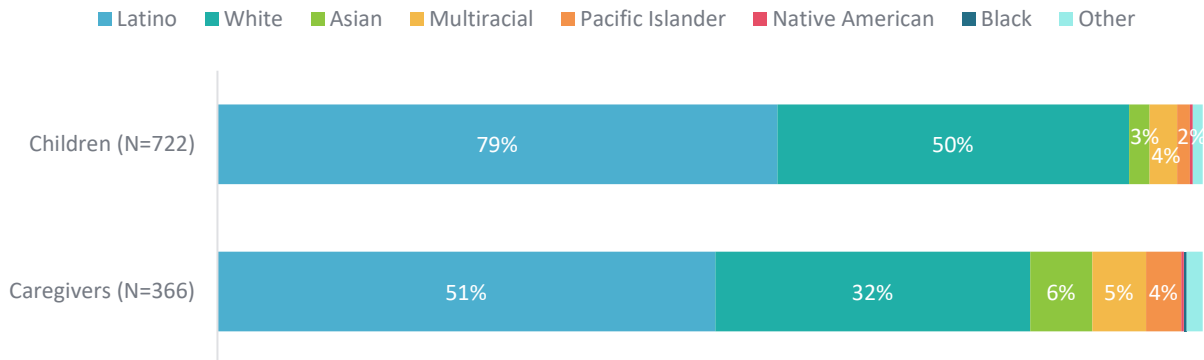
<sup>1</sup> These are duplicated counts.

<sup>2</sup> This program received funding from SCCFC in FY 2021-2022 to plan their program which is scheduled to start this fiscal year (2022-2023). Because services were not provided in FY 2021-2022, this program is not described in this report.

## DEMOGRAPHICS OF PARTICIPATING FAMILIES

To the extent possible, SCCFC grantees collected basic demographic data on their participants. Of the 724 children for whom age was known, 36% were ages 0-2 years and 64% were ages 3-5 years. As far as language preferences, 70% of 951 children and 77% of 607 caregivers for whom language data were available spoke English, whereas 20% of children and parents spoke Spanish. Other languages were preferred by 10% of children and 3% of caregivers. The ethnicity was known for 722 children and 366 parents. As presented in Figure 2, most children and parents identified as Latino (51% parents, 40% children) or White (32% parents, 50% children). These categories were overrepresented in SCCFC programs, compared to the 2021 estimates of census data, showing that the county population was comprised of 32% Latino and 22% White children ages 0-5 years. In contrast, a minority of SCCFC families were Asian (6% parents, 3% children), Multiracial (5% parents, 4% children), Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (4% parents, 2% children), or other (2% parents, 1% children). Additionally, there was one caregiver/parent, and three children, who identified as Native American and one caregiver who identified as Black. These categories were underrepresented, compared to County estimates, which were 15% for Multiracial, 13% for Asian, and 17% for other ethnicities<sup>3</sup>.

FIGURE 2: PERCENT OF CHILDREN AND PARENTS BY ETHNICITY



Source: SCCFC Quarterly Progress Reports and workshop logs 2021-22.

Note: percent Native American, Black, and other ethnicities are not shown due to very small values of 1% or less.

<sup>3</sup> US Census Bureau. American Community Survey (ACS). Tables B01001 B-I. Sex by Age Tables. 2021. One-year estimates.

# Goal 1 — Improved Family Functioning

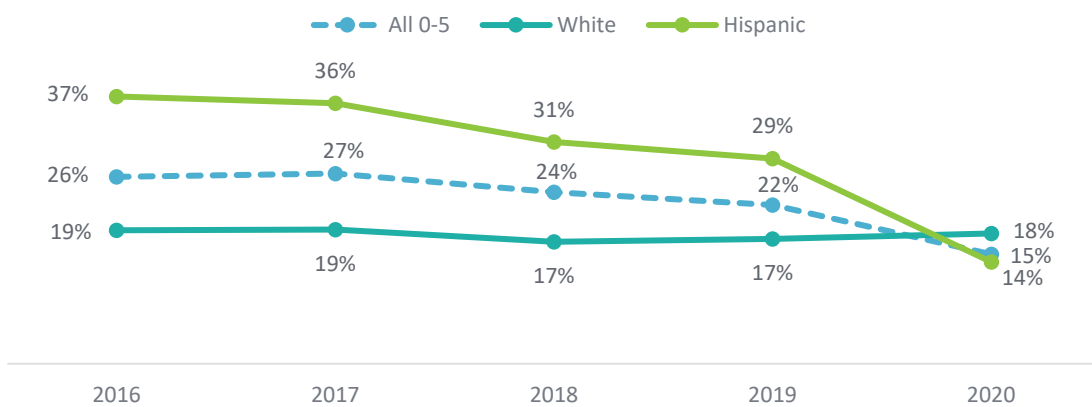
<b>OUTCOMES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Families’ social networks of support and sense of community are strengthened.</li> <li>Families of children with behavioral and other special needs are supported.</li> <li>Parents have access to knowledge and resources to meet their child’s health and developmental needs.</li> </ul>
<b>PROGRAMS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child Development Behavioral Specialist</li> <li>Special Needs Support</li> <li>Kit for New Parents</li> <li>Dolly Parton Imagination Library</li> <li>Ready4K Text Messaging App</li> </ul>

## COMMUNITY-WIDE TRENDS

Data about Sutter County families reflect the generally positive trends in families’ economic security and child safety and well-being, while also highlighting the ways that SCCFC and partners can continue supporting families.

**Childhood Poverty.** As of 2020, one in seven Sutter County children under the age of five years lived below the Federal Poverty level (FPL), which was \$27,479 for a family of two adults and two children (based on Census Data. Poverty Thresholds, 2021). The level of childhood poverty in Sutter County has decreased by more than 10% over the past five years. This progress has been driven by the significant improvement in financial stability of Hispanic children. Historically, Hispanic children were nearly twice as likely to live below the FPL as their White peers. However, rates of poverty among White children remained steady, hovering at or below 20%, whereas the prevalence of poverty in Hispanic children dropped from 37% in 2016 to 14% in 2020. These time trends led to a change in the distribution of poverty between these two population groups. In 2020, the prevalence of poverty in White children for the first time exceeded the rate in Hispanic children, by roughly 4% (see Figure 3). All in all, Sutter County’s poverty rate of 15% for children 0-5 years of age was below the 17% CA prevalence rate<sup>4</sup>.

FIGURE 3. PERCENT OF CHILDREN 0-5 LIVING IN POVERTY IN SUTTER COUNTY

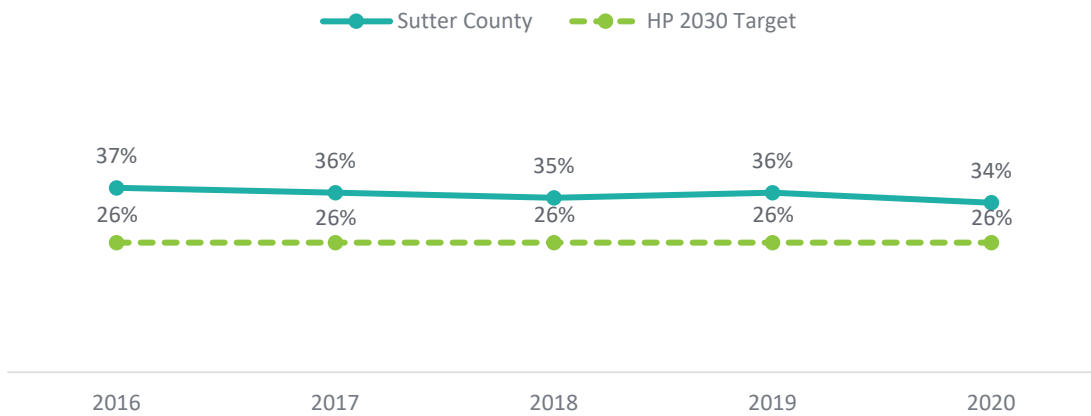


Source: US Census, American Community Survey, five-year estimates.

<sup>4</sup> US Census Bureau. American Community Survey (ACS). Tables B17020. Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months by Age. 2020. Five-year estimates.

**Housing Insecurity.** In FY 2021-22, housing insecurity continued to be an issue. Affordable housing, defined as the cost of mortgage or rent at or below 30% of a monthly household income, was attainable for 66% of Sutter County families. Although a five-year trend showed a 3% decline in housing insecurity, the proportion of families spending more than 30% of their monthly budget on housing remained high. In 2020, 34% of Sutter families were housing-insecure, significantly higher than the 26% Healthy People 2030<sup>5</sup> objective.

**FIGURE 4. PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLDS PAYING MORE THAN 30% FOR HOUSING IN SUTTER COUNTY**



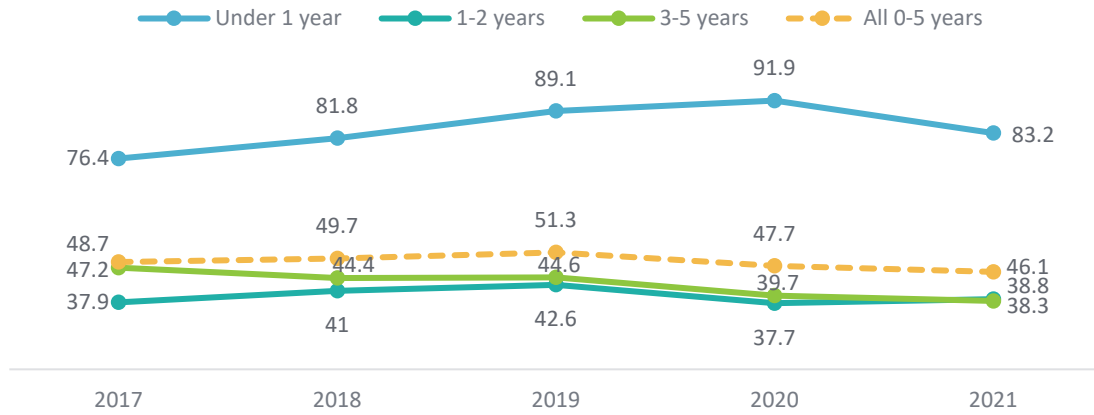
Source: US Census, American Community Survey, five-year estimates.

**Child Maltreatment.** Child Abuse allegations were highest for children under one year. However, this age group also showed the greatest decline in allegations between 2020 and 2021, when allegations dropped by approximately 10%. Other age groups showed little or no change in the rate of allegations over the past year. However, over the five-year period only the 3-5 age group showed improvement, with a 10% drop-in allegation rates, compared to a 7% increase for infants less than one year old and no change for the 1–2-year age group. In 2021, the rate of child abuse allegations for children 0-5 was 46 per 1,000 (359 children), equaling statewide rates.<sup>6</sup> Additionally, between 12 and 17 children<sup>7</sup> ages 0-5 entered foster care in 2020-21<sup>8</sup>.



<sup>5</sup> U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. Secretary’s Advisory Committee on National Health Promotion & Disease Prevention Objectives for 2030.  
<sup>6</sup> California Child Welfare Indicators Project (CCWI). Child Maltreatment Allegation Rates Dashboard. Years: 2017-2021.  
<sup>7</sup> Depending on the inclusion of Jan 2020-Dec 2020 numbers for children ages 1-2 years and 3-5 years, as projections for masked values for Jan 2021-Dec 2021 for foster care entry among these age groups.  
<sup>8</sup> California Child Welfare Indicators Project (CCWI). Entry into Foster Care Rates Dashboard. Years: 2020-2021.

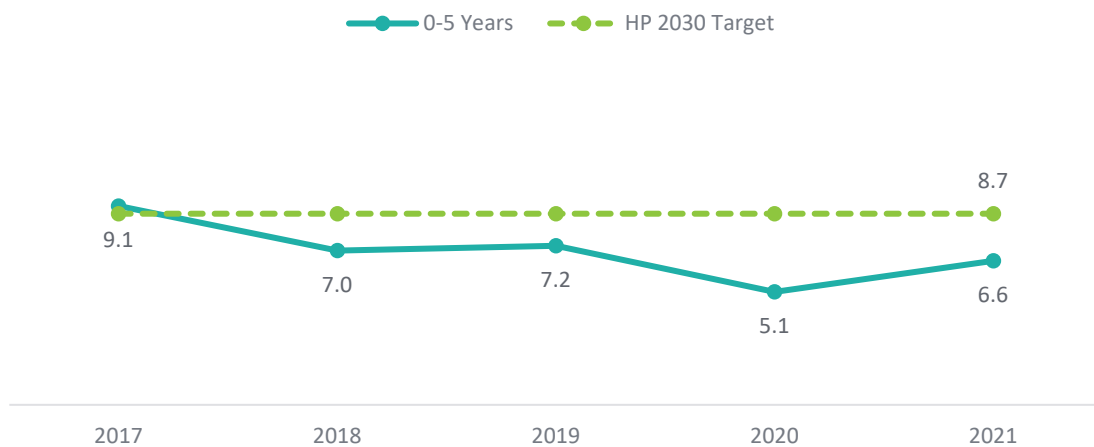
FIGURE 5. INCIDENCE OF CHILD MALTREATMENT ALLEGATIONS IN SUTTER COUNTY (PER 1,000 CHILDREN, AGES 0-5)



Source: California Child Welfare Indicators Project (CCWI). Child Maltreatment Allegation Rates Dashboard. Years: 2017-2021.

The rate of substantiations was somewhat higher in 2021 than 2020, although this may be because of the fewer encounters between Sutter County families and mandated reporters over the pandemic. Nevertheless, the current rate of seven per 1,000 children is below the Healthy People 2030 Objective<sup>9</sup> of nine children per 1,000, as well as the nine per 1,000 county rate registered five years ago. Child maltreatment has many roots, including lack of understanding of child development and lack of effective parenting skills – topics that are covered by the Child Development Behavior Specialist, Ready4K, and other developmental and early literacy programs supported by SCCFC.

FIGURE 6. INCIDENCE OF SUBSTANTIATED ALLEGATIONS IN SUTTER COUNTY (PER 1,000 CHILDREN AGES 0-5 YEARS)



Source: California Child Welfare Indicators Project (CCWI). Child Maltreatment Substantiation Rates Dashboard. Years: 2017-2021.

<sup>9</sup>U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. Secretary’s Advisory Committee on National Health Promotion & Disease Prevention Objectives for 2030.

# IMPACT OF SCCFC

## CHILD DEVELOPMENT BEHAVIORAL SPECIALIST

SCCFC's Child Development Behavioral Specialist reached 32 families in this intensive program during the year. Many parents (N = 98) also participated in virtual Positive discipline classes, with 90% of them showing high level knowledge of the topics covered following their attendance. The Child Development Behavioral Specialist also created a virtual library with 15 educational videos for parents that garnered 8,872 views.

Sutter County's Child Development Behavioral Specialist (CDBS) offers numerous services to support and improve family functioning and to help children successfully transition into the school setting.

One of the main services provided by the child development behavioral specialist was a home-based intervention curriculum for families of children ages 0-5 with complex behavioral issues, inhibiting healthy development. This was a structured service that offered information on healthy development, understanding child behavior as a means of communication, and an array of effective parenting tools. The program relied on an evidence-based assessment and intervention tools, including Newborn Behavioral Observation (NBO), Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ:SE), Fussy Baby (FAN), Feeding Scale NCAST, Neuro-Sequential Model of Therapeutics (NMT) Mobius Tile and Grout, Touch Points, Child and Adult Attachment Theory, Growing Great Kids (GGK), and Sensory Processing to improve child behavior and parent behavior management skills. The COVID-19 pandemic changed the way CDBS provided home visiting services, moving from in-person services to an online modality. Home-visiting was conducted in the new virtual model allowed for parent coaching but limited opportunities for direct engagement with families. Because young children were not able to sustain attention during these virtual visits, the intervention focused on parents or guardians. The specialist was able to develop new ways to engage parents, and participation in these 'home-visiting' services continued to increase, with 32 families participating in this intensive program during the FY 2021-22.

*"I wanted to let you know it was such a joy working with you and taking your classes. "*

*" All of the tips provided were very helpful. I really enjoyed the thorough explanation on providing "visuals" for my child."*

The specialist was able to turn another in-person program, "Nurturing Early Learning Program," into a virtual one, employing the online Padlet platform. The program was structured as a six-week curriculum, covering one topic in each week. After a participant watched that week's video, they checked-in with the specialist in a one-on-one session to discuss the material covered in that video. This method of intervention had been successful and easy-to-use for the 13 parents who participated in the

program over the FY 2021-22, allowing to continue ongoing services for families who needed intensive early intervention. Parents learned how to build a positive attachment with their child, how their child uniquely interacted with the world by understanding their child's temperament type, and learned tools and strategies to support positive discipline. In the process, parents improved their understanding of the ages and stages of child development, the effects of toxic stress on their child's developing brain. Finally, to help their child thrive, parents were familiarized with the resources available to them and their children in Sutter County.

In addition to providing direct services to families, in collaboration with her counterpart in the neighboring Yuba County, the specialist also offered Positive Discipline parenting classes for Sutter County parents, guardians, and other family members or other non-licensed caregivers. During FY 2021-22 a total of 40 Positive Discipline sessions were offered virtually, with a total of 98 parents attending throughout the year (duplicated).

Following each Positive Discipline parenting class, participants completed a short quiz assessing their knowledge of the topic covered. As can be seen in Figure 7, parents consistently showed high knowledge scores, indicating that they had mastered each topic. On average, across all the different classes, parents answered 90% of the questions correctly.

**FIGURE 7: PERCENT OF PARENTS' KNOWLEDGE FOLLOWING POSITIVE DISCIPLINE CLASSES**



Source: Positive Discipline Online Parenting Class Mini Surveys. 2021-22. Numbers represent average % of correct responses; Three quiz questions per survey; number of total (duplicated) responses = 98.

The specialist further updated the library instructional videos (“Wednesday Wisdom With Jen”) with an additional 15 videos. These videos supported parents in learning developmentally appropriate activities to do with their young child, taught effective interventions to promote positive behaviors, and gave knowledge and information about child development. The videos garnered a total of 8,872 views over the past year.

### CDBS SUCCESS STORY

I had the pleasure of working with a parent who was involved in Child Welfare. As we worked together, it was so fulfilling to see them understand the material and value what they were learning. We had many in-depth conversations discussing attachment and bonding, child development, and trauma. This parent let me know that they shared the information they were learning from my class with her group at the WellPath intensive outpatient program, and that their facilitator was very interested in our materials. One night, their group ended up discussing what they've learned in my class for two hours. They asked if I could reach out to the facilitator and share my materials, so I shared all the resources they've found of interest. It was nice to be able to not only support others in their parenting, but to enable them to pass on this information to others.

*"I wanted to share that I just got [child's] first book! Hope you are having an amazing summer – and I wanted to let you know it was such a joy working with you and taking your classes. All the best."*





## SPECIAL NEEDS SUPPORT

Family SOUP provided helpful support services to 109 children with special needs and their families. Twenty-nine families received system navigation support which improved their knowledge, confidence, and family functioning.

SCCFC contracted with 'Family SOUP' to provide services and supports to children with special needs and their families. In 2021-22, Family SOUP offered navigation support services to caregivers, staff-conducted workshops, trainings, support groups, and transportation assistance. They also participated in multidisciplinary meetings with other professionals. This year, Family SOUP continued to offer their services via Zoom, with the exception of a few in-person outdoor programs. Staff were supporting the IEP processes, providing trainings, resources, and attending in-person IEP meetings with the families. Figure 8 shows the number of participants receiving services during the FY 2021-22.

*We participated in sensory play and my daughter loved it. It also gave me ideas on things to do with her.*

FIGURE 8: NUMBER OF CHILDREN AND PARENTS WHO RECEIVED SERVICES FROM FAMILY SOUP

Case Management	 38	 29
Non-Case Management	71	61
Workshops		107
<b>Total</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>197</b>

*"I like their activities. I take my kids to most of them. They also help with my school meetings."*

Twenty-nine caregivers received navigation support during the 2021-22 fiscal year. Each received an average of 16 contacts (i.e., phone calls, video calls, emails, and mailings) from Family SOUP staff during the year. Topics covered included in-home care needs and services, educational options, disability services, self-care, and the child's physical, social, recreational, and emotional health needs.

Several parents (n = 17) receiving navigation support responded to a parent survey, reflecting on the services they received and assessing their level of confidence in their abilities to handle the challenges of raising a child with special needs. Ratings of the items in the survey were high, demonstrating the impact Family SOUP services have on participating families (see Figure 9).

*"They have helped me a lot. They explain things to me in a way I understand. They go to IEP meetings with me and give good advice."*

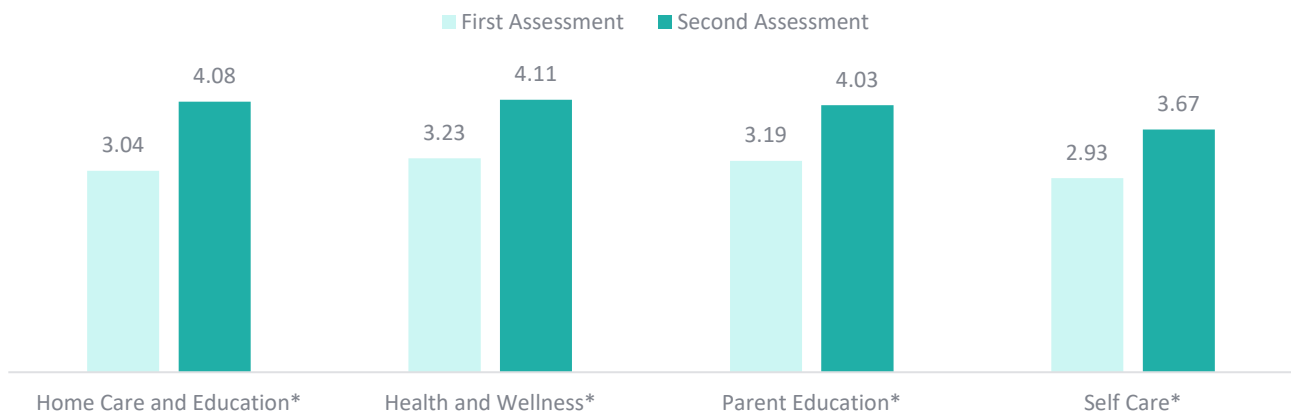
Parents were also very satisfied with the staff and the overall services they provided with almost all the parents who responded to these two survey items (16 out of 17) selecting this top rating.

**FIGURE 9: PARENT SELF-ASSESSMENT OF SKILLS FOLLOWING PARTICIPATION IN FAMILY SOUP**



Source: Family SOUP Parent Self-Assessment Survey. N = 17. Numbers represent average responses on a 10-point scale (10=Absolutely). Staff routinely assessed family functioning, at multiple time points. First, families were assessed at the start of system navigation services, then after six months in services, at the one-year mark, and finally, at program exit (either because the child aged out or because they no longer needed services). The family functioning assessment included 16 items covering four domains: Home Care and Education (e.g., *Provides appropriately for child’s early education needs*), Health and Wellness (e.g., *Accesses known community resources to address child’s needs, Knows how to apply for health insurance*), Parent Education (e.g., *Demonstrates good parenting skills*), Self Care (e.g., *Accesses available respite care when needed*). Each item was rated on a six-point scale where 5=Thriving, 4=Very Good, 3=Good, 2=Minimally Adequate, 1=Inadequate, 0=In Crisis. As can be seen in Figure 10, eight families for whom data were available both at initial assessment and at a follow-up, one showed significant improvements on all four domains.

**FIGURE 10: STAFF’S FAMILY FUNCTIONING ASSESSMENT, PRE- AND POST-NAVIGATION SERVICES**



Source: Family SOUP Staff Client-Assessment. 2021-22. N = 8 Matched pairs. \* Statistically significant at p < 0.05 based on non-parametric test. Numbers represent average responses on a six-point scale (5=Thriving, 4=Very Good, 3=Good, 2=Minimally Adequate, 1=Inadequate, 0=In Crisis).

In addition, Family SOUP participated in the Help Me Grow community events and attended a variety of meetings within the community, collaborating with others. They coordinated a local event, the Yuba-Sutter Walk-N-Roll for Special Needs and Disability Awareness. The event brought together over 200 people who received resource bags and fun giveaways while children enjoyed getting their faces painted, listening to music, chasing a giant beach ball, and interacting with Star Wars characters. The main goal was to make sure that families of children with special needs were connected to resources, support and the Yuba Sutter community, expanding on the Yuba-Sutter-Colusa United Way Community Resource Fair. Family SOUP introduced a Family Hike Day as well to promote and encourage recreation and whole family events. Family members joined in hiking the accessible Buttermilk Bend Trail at South Yuba River State Park. Staff received positive feedback from families and the community about the variety of programs they offer, such as Lego Club, Scrapbooking Support Group, Teem-G and their new Dad's group.

### Family SOUP Success Story

In September of 2021, a Native American parent reached out to Family SOUP. Her daughter, then two, had just been diagnosed with Autism by their doctor who then referred her to Family SOUP. The mother was not connected to any additional services and was hoping to have Family SOUP help guide her. The parent was then connected with a case manager at Family SOUP. The case manager shared with the parent the various resources available in the community and made a facilitated referral to Early Start with Alta. The family started to participate in a variety of services that Family SOUP had to offer as well as community events. PPE and COVID tests were also provided to the family as we were in the midst of the pandemic. Family SOUP provided support and guided the family as they got connected to Alta, reaching out when needed as Alta was experiencing back log at that time. Family SOUP also helped guide and support the family with Early Start, Speech services, OT services, Easter Seals and more. They also encouraged the parent to speak to Alta about respite care services and a Medical Alert bracelet to aid in the child's safety. The case manager also shared information regarding ABA and self-care tips and encouraged the family to continue to work on strengthening their support system. The mom set self-care goals, including utilizing the Headspace meditation app, putting positive affirmations around the house on post-its, and other mindfulness and self-care activities. This seems to really help the mom, as she was not only a mother of a child with special needs but also a student in school and working. The family was struggling financially during the pandemic and so Family SOUP applied on behalf of the family for SCCFC Emergency COVID funding. The family received close to \$500 in needed items, such as a new car seat, clothing, bathing supplies, and educational toys. The family was very appreciative and engaged with their child and the new items when meeting with their case manager via ZOOM. As the child approached their third birthday, Family SOUP helped with connecting the family to the Preschool Intervention Program and educated the family on the IEP process. Today, the family continues to participate in Family SOUP activities, such as the Walk-n-Roll, Sensory Play, Mornings in the Garden and more and has remained very connected with Family SOUP and their case manager. It has been an absolute pleasure to watch this family go from a new diagnosis, to being fully educated and supported by resources, as well as enjoying support from the community.

## KIT FOR NEW PARENTS

In FY 2021-22, Kits for New Parents were provided to 158 families throughout Sutter County to support their journey into parenthood.

The Kit for New Parents is a free, comprehensive resource from First 5 California for new and expectant parents, emphasizing the importance of a child's early years. During FY 2021-22, Kits for New Parents were distributed through home visitation programs and community events to 158 families. Kits were available in multiple languages and were distributed in multiple locations throughout the county, including hospitals, clinics, and FRCs.

## DOLLY PARTON IMAGINATION LIBRARY

In total, 22,497 books have been provided through SCCFC to 1,735 children ages 0-5

The Dolly Parton Imagination Library (DPIL) is a nationwide book distribution and literacy promotion program. Findings from the body of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library national research indicate the program is very popular in the communities where it is implemented and shows promise in promoting: 1) changes in home literacy environments, 2) children's attitudes toward reading, and 3) early literacy skills. The positive impacts for the program were present regardless of the demographic characteristics of the community or its participants, and longer program participation often resulted in more positive academic outcomes.

In partnership with the SCCFC, Dolly Parton's Foundation provided books to children younger than five years of age, mailing them directly to their homes on a monthly basis. In FY 2021-22, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library increased home book access among Sutter County children by distributing 22,497 books to 1,735 participating children. Cumulatively, program participants represented 22% of all children ages 0-5 in Sutter County (see <https://www.kidsdata.org/region/342/sutter-county/summary#6/demographics>).



## READY4K

Ready4K provided trauma-informed care text messaging support to the parents of 2,356 children ages 0-5, with over 352,000 text messages sent during the year. Parents appreciated the supports provided through text messages (e.g., 98% of parents found the messages helpful in solving their parenting problems).

To mitigate the effects of the pandemic and to keep families engaged and educated even though in-person services were not available, SCCFC adopted the innovative Ready4K program. Ready4K is an evidence-based family engagement curriculum delivered via text messages. Each week, parents and caregivers received fun facts and easy tips on how to promote their children's development and resiliency by building on existing family routines. In FY 2021-22, parents of 2,356 children ages 0-5 received 212,011 Ready4K Curriculum texts with the information on parenting, child development, and enriching parent-child activities. Additionally, families received 140,720 Community Support Stream texts, linking families to Sutter County community resources and supports. The total number of Ready4K text exchanges reached 352,731 over the past year.

The Ready4K system conducts its own yearly family engagement survey. In FY 2021-2022, 272 of Sutter County parents who were enrolled in this program responded to the survey. The majority of these parents appreciated the help the text messages provided to them. Specifically:

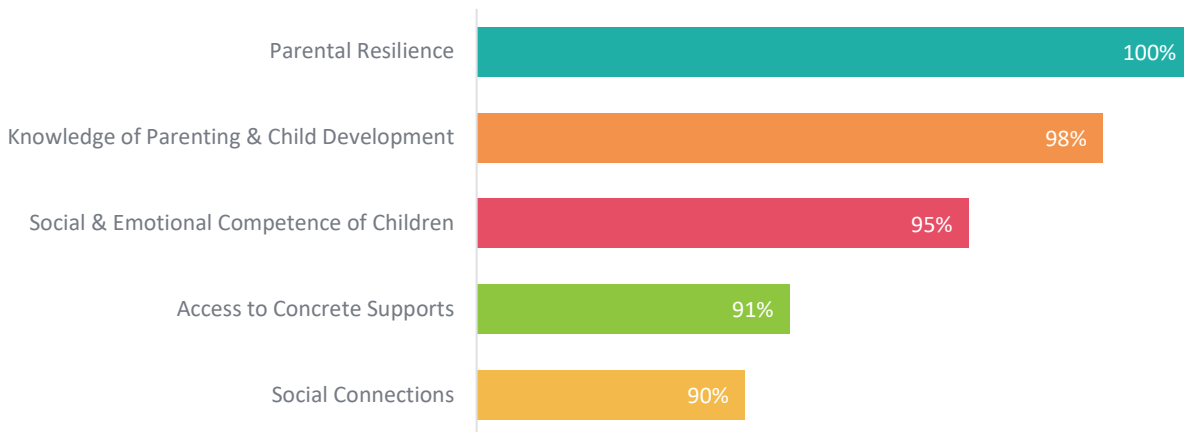
- Between 95% and 98% of parents found the Ready4K messages helpful in better understanding and supporting their children’s growth and learning.
- Over 90% of parents attested that the Community Support messages helped them connect to their communities and learn about local resources.
- 100% of parents experienced an increase in confidence as a result of Ready4K program participation.



The most popular parenting resource accessed by families was the online CONNECT system that linked families with the Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library and its partners. Through this system, parents were able to enroll in a program to receive a free, age-appropriate book for their child each month, as well as to explore online resources on early literacy and getting their children to read.

In terms of community supports, parents’ most accessed resources included a program that delivered free at-home COVID-19 antigen test kits and the information on the local emergency supply distributions.

**FIGURE 11. PERCENT OF PARENTS ENROLLED IN READY4K PROGRAM IN 2021-22, SATISFIED WITH PROGRAM MESSAGES**



Source: Sutter County Children & Families Commission. Ready4K End of Year Survey. 2021-22. N = 272.

*“These activities have given me new ways to explore learning. My daughter truly enjoys the activities that you propose. We are growing and learning in a fun way and that’s the BEST way to learn! Thank you 😊”*

*“These texts help and encourage me to do things I may or may not already be doing with my child to help me grow as a parent.”*

# Goal 2 — Improved Child Development

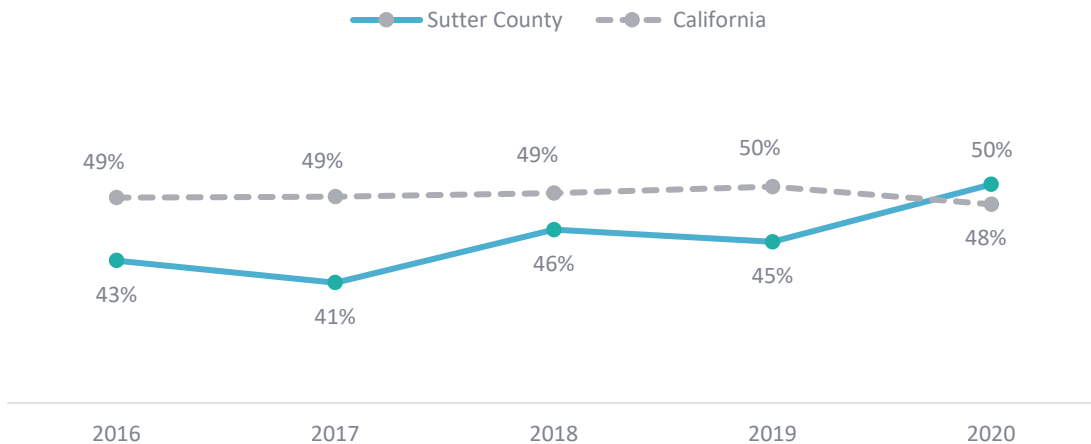
<b>OUTCOMES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents have knowledge and resources to meet their child’s health and developmental needs.</li> <li>• Parents facilitate their child’s learning and readiness for school.</li> <li>• Families’ social networks of support and sense of community are strengthened.</li> <li>• Children have access to high quality early care and education.</li> <li>• Children enter school with the skills and resources needed to be ready to learn.</li> </ul>
<b>PROGRAMS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smart Start Summer School Readiness Bridge Program</li> <li>• Families Learning in Play (FLIP) – School Readiness classes</li> <li>• Local Child Care Planning Council ECE Quality Improvement: Keys to Quality</li> <li>• United Way - Born Learning<sup>10</sup></li> </ul>

## COMMUNITY-WIDE TRENDS

Before providing program specific data in this section, we summarize data on early child care education (ECE) enrollment in Sutter County.

**Utilization of Formal Early Learning.** The five-year trend shows a continuous increase in the rates of preschool enrollment in Sutter County (see Figure 12). In FY 2020-21, half of Sutter County 3-4-year-old children were enrolled in a licensed ECE, for the first time, surpassing statewide enrollment rate of 48%. The proportion of three-year-old children attending a nursery school in Sutter County was comparable to the statewide rate of 6%<sup>11</sup>.

FIGURE 12. PERCENT OF 3-4 -YEAR -OLDS IN PRESCHOOL IN YUBA COUNTY



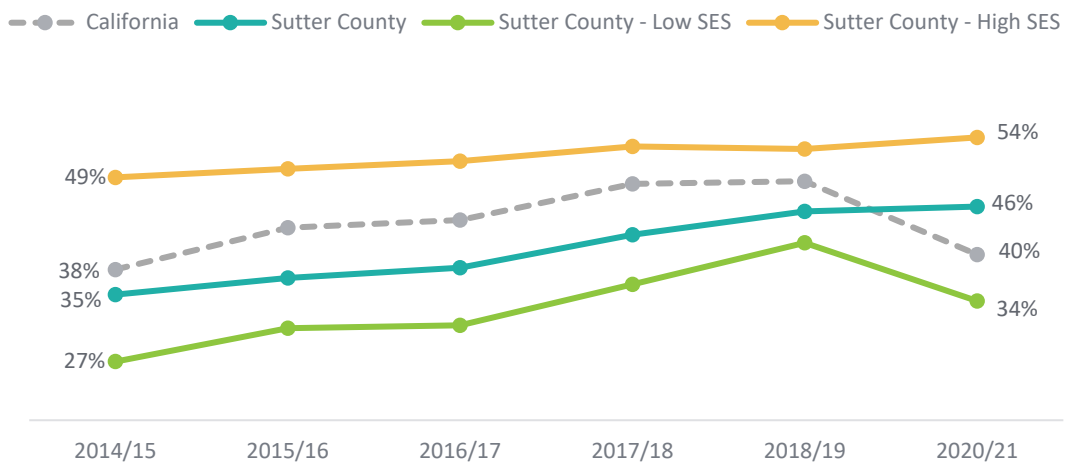
<sup>10</sup> This program received funding from SCCFC in FY 2021-2022 to plan their program which is scheduled to start this fiscal year (2022-2023). Because services were not provided in FY 2021-2022, this program is not described in this report.

<sup>11</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. Table S1401. School Enrollment. Sutter County. 3-to-4-year-olds enrolled in school and population three years and over enrolled in nursery school, preschool. Year 2020, five-year estimates.

Source: US Census, American Community Survey, five-year estimates.

**Mastery of Early Literacy Skills.** In FY 2020-21, standardized testing showed that 46% of Sutter County third grade students met or exceeded standards for English Language Arts (ELA), continuing the positive trend since 2014-15. This is the first year that the rate was higher than the overall California rate of 40%. Statewide there was a significant drop in reading proficiency of children across all levels of socioeconomic status (SES), that is likely due to the school closures during the COVID-19 pandemic. In Sutter County, a similar lag in achievement was restricted only to low-income households. Children from income-secure households continued to show a positive trend in third grade reading proficiency, contributing to the increase in the average county scores over the past year. At the county-level, achievement gaps between low-income students and their higher-income peers persisted over the years<sup>12</sup>. In 2020-2021, 54% of high-SES third graders showed reading proficiency, at rate that was 20% higher than reading proficiency in low-SES students.

**FIGURE 13. PERCENT OF CHILDREN MEETING OR EXCEEDING 3RD GRADE ELA STANDARDS IN SUTTER COUNTY**



Source: California Dept of Education. CAASP English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics Dashboard, by Socioeconomic Status. DataQuest. Note: estimates for 2109/20 were not available due to the suspension of testing during the 2020 pandemic.

<sup>12</sup> Testing was suspended in school year 2019-20 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and resumed in 2020-21. These results are not included in **Error! Reference source not found.** Results reported for 2020-21 should be interpreted with caution due to varied test participation and other impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.





# IMPACT OF SCCFC

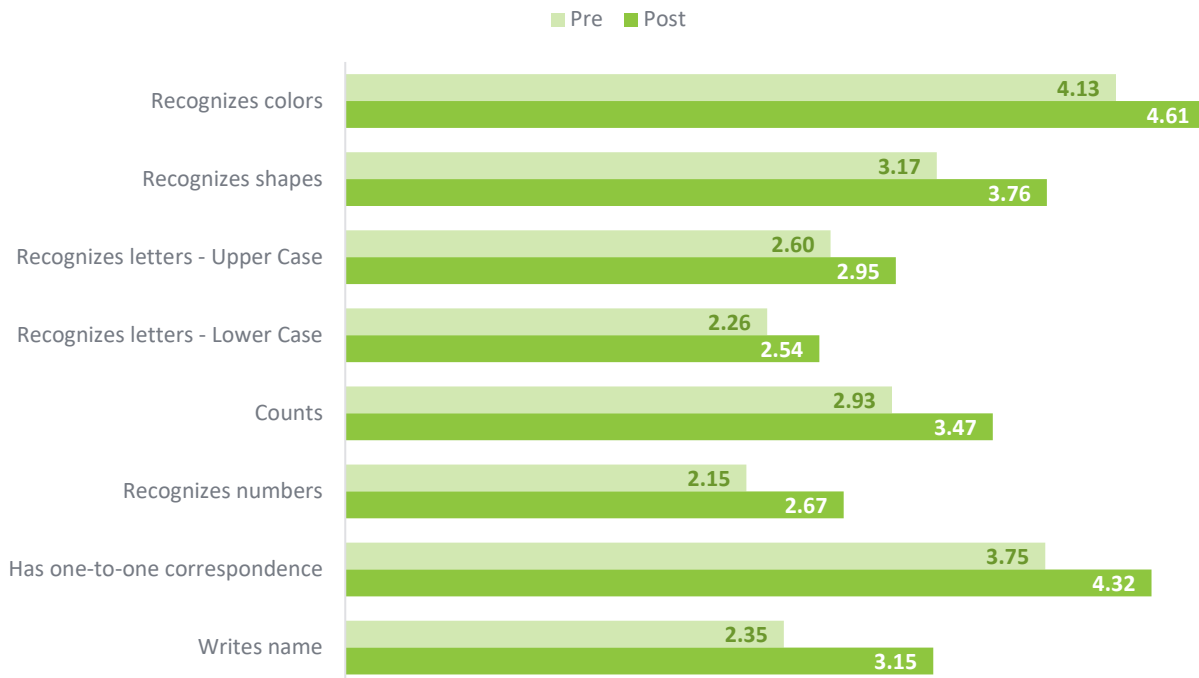
## SMART START SUMMER BRIDGE PROGRAM

Smart Start Summer Bridge program showed remarkable success in improving the skills of participating children (N = 107) and preparing them for kindergarten. Participants showed statistically significant improvement on all of the 14 assessed skills related to school readiness.

Smart Start, a month-long summer school readiness program, provided a preschool experience to children who had little or no preparation for kindergarten. The program exposed pre-kindergarten students to a wide range of activities including academic readiness, socialization, self-help skills, physical development, and enrichment activities. In addition, the program provided other services, such as health and dental assessments, immunizations and referrals. Families were also offered literacy support services, parenting skills classes, and information on community resources. In June 2022, 107 children participated in the program in person.

Children were assessed before the program on the general ASQ3 developmental screen instrument and following that four children were referred for Help Me Grow and seven were referred to speech services. More thorough assessments were also conducted at the beginning and again, at the conclusion of the program. These assessments focused on the general skills that are usually obtained by the end of the preschool years, such as recognizing shapes and writing one’s name. All these skills show statistically significant increases following participation in the program, as can be seen in Figure 14.

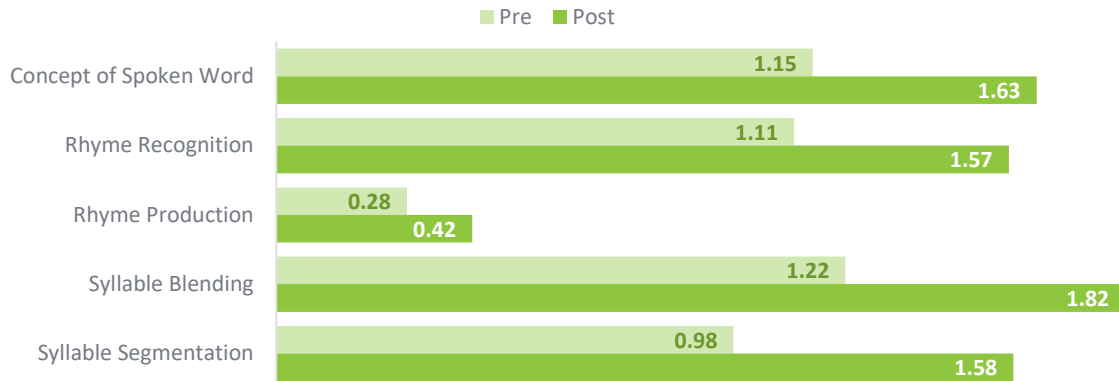
FIGURE 14: PRE-TO-POST AVERAGE CHANGES IN PRESCHOOL SKILLS



Source: Smart Start Pre- and Post-program Assessments. N= 92. Matched pairs. Scores for each item range from 0 to 5; Differences between Pre and Post scores are statistically significant at  $p < 0.01$ .

Six items from the 14-item Phonological Awareness Skills Test (PAST) were also used to assess progress following participation in the four-weeks-long program. As can be seen in Figure 15, children’s phonological awareness increased significantly on all items. These results provide strong evidence that the program improved children’s skills and helped prepare them for kindergarten.

**FIGURE 15: PRE-TO-POST AVERAGE CHANGES IN PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS SKILLS**



Source: Smart Start Pre- and Post-program Assessments. 2021-22. N= 92 Matched pairs. Scores for each item range from 0 to 3. Differences between Pre- and Post-scores are statistically significant at  $p < 0.01$ .

## FAMILIES LEARNING IN PLAY (FLIP)

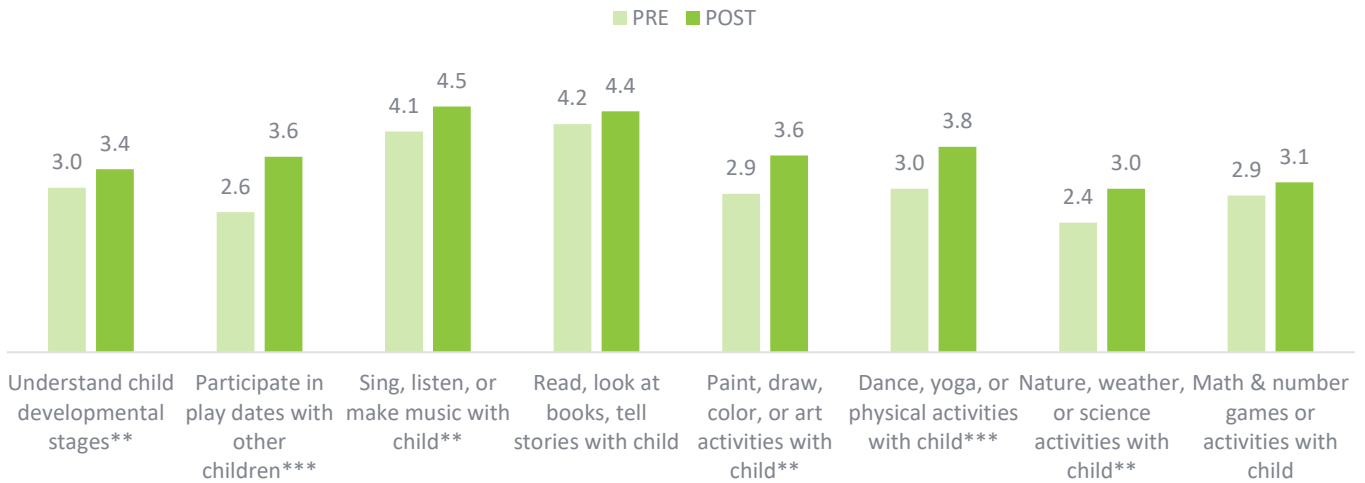
During FY 2021-22 292 children and 182 caregivers participated in FLIP classes. Nearly 85% of the caregivers highly valued the program, would attend additional FLIP classes, and would recommend the program to other families. Parents also showed a slight increase in how often they engaged their child in activities that promote school readiness.

The FLIP program provides a variety of early learning sessions tailored for infant and toddlers and their caregivers. The program engages and educates caregivers about the importance of children learning through play. The emphasis is on playing, exploring, and creating together to build skills in preparation for school. During FY 2021-22, 292 children and 182 caregivers participated in this program.

Parents and caregivers attending the FLIP program completed a survey at intake and again, at program exit. The survey assessed the frequency of engaging in different activities that promote parent-child relationship and school readiness skills. The exit survey also asked about families’ connection to other families they may have met during the sessions, and their general satisfaction with the program. Sixty-eight parents completed the intake survey for 70 children, and 43 caregivers of 44 children also completed the survey at program exit.



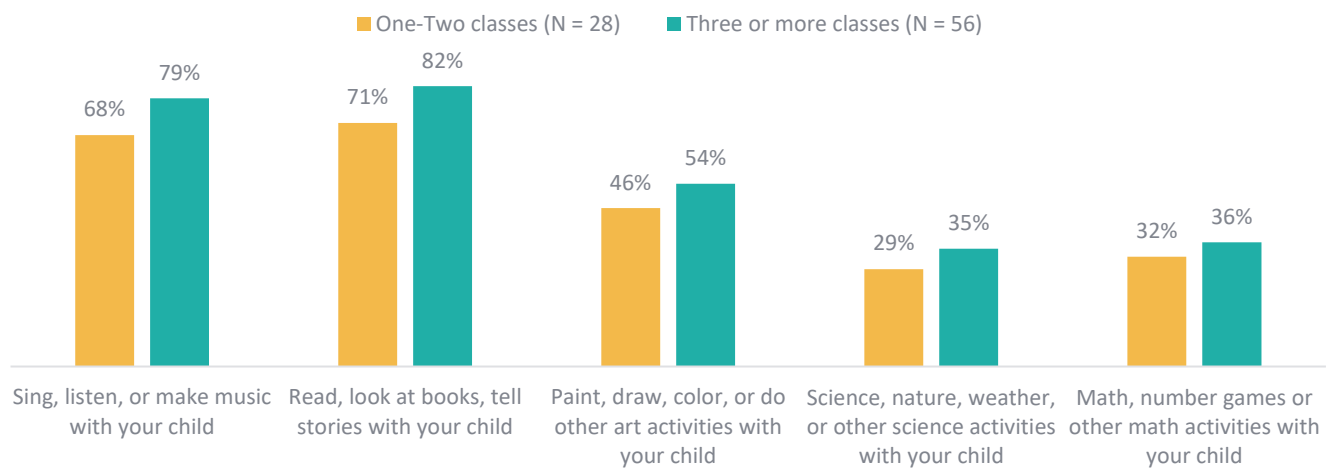
**FIGURE 16: PRE-TO-POST AVERAGE CHANGES IN CHILD DEVELOPMENT, UNDERSTANDING, AND ENGAGEMENT IN SOCIAL ACTIVITIES**



Source: FLIP Post Survey. 2021-22. Items rated on a 1 to 5 scale. N, Matched pairs, = 42-44. Differences significant at \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

As can be seen in Figure 16, the pre-to-post comparisons showed improvement in parental understanding of child development stages and milestones, and a significant increase in frequency of positive socialization activities. More specifically, following the program, parents who participated in FLIP class sessions more often organized playdates for their children, and more frequently engaged their children in positive and enriching parent-child experiences, such as singing, dancing or listening to music, painting, drawing or coloring, and reading books or telling their children stories.

**FIGURE 17: PERCENT OF ENGAGEMENT IN SOCIAL ACTIVITIES BY NUMBER OF CLASSES PARTICIPATED**



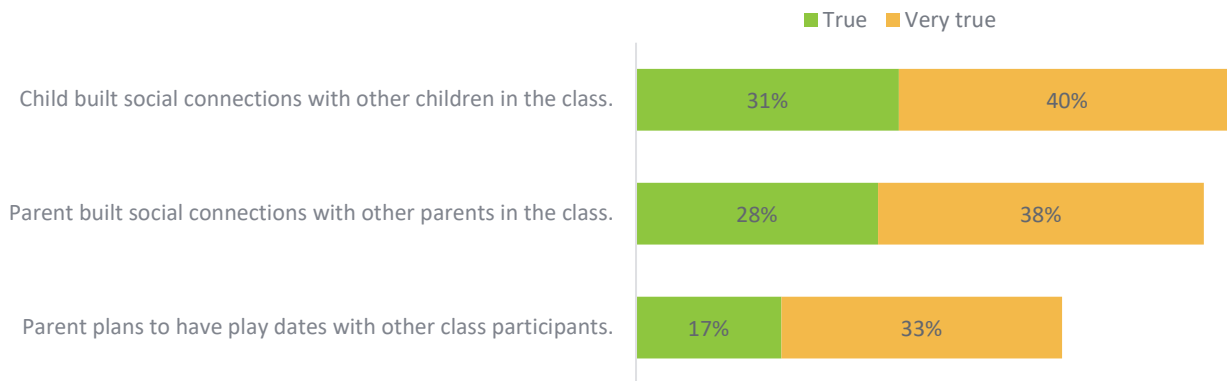
Source: FLIP Post Survey. N = 88. Numbers represent the percent of parent engaged in these activities at least five times a week. Differences not statistically significant.

Moreover, comparisons based on program dosage (i.e., the number of classes that families were enrolled in) showed a somewhat positive trend (see Figure 17). Compared to parents enrolled in one or two FLIP classes, parents enrolled in three or more classes were slightly more likely to involve their child in math and number

games or engaged in joint science and outdoor activities at least once a day. They were also about 10% more likely to facilitate positive shared activities, such as reading books, singing, dancing, and engaging their children in art. Although these differences were not statistically significant, they pointed to another dimension of the program’s potential, in terms of program ability to strengthen parent-child relationship and school readiness skills.

At program exit, over 70% of parents said that their children met other peers and built connections with them, and over half of the parents planned to arrange playdates with the other parents and children in the class (see Figure 18). Additionally, two-thirds of parents said they had met other parents and built social connections with them during a class offered through FLIP.

**FIGURE 18: PERCENT OF PARENT RESPONDING, ‘TRUE’ OR ‘VERY TRUE’ ON BUILDING SOCIAL CONNECTIONS**



Source: FLIP Post Survey, 2021-22. N = 88. Results on a four-point agree/disagree scale.

At the conclusion of the classes, all of the surveyed parents agreed that the FLIP instructors were knowledgeable about the topics and were well-prepared for the sessions. Four out of five parents (84%) indicated that they would recommend the class to other parents and/or were planning to attend other FLIP classes.

*“These programs are amazing. Between them and Miss Patty I honestly feel like I have a better understanding of my child[ren] and how to interact with BOTH of them. The things Patty has taught us make a difference in our everyday lives. Not to mention that staff is just wonderful.”*

*“I am so grateful to have such a wonderful program in our area. Thank you for all that you do. It truly means so much to me, my children, and so many other parents in our community.”*

## KEYS TO QUALITY

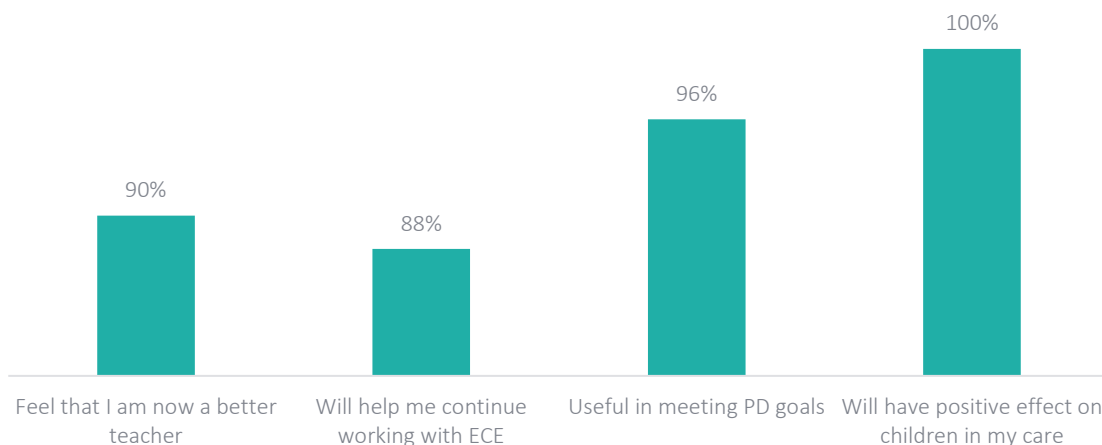
The Keys to Quality program supported 292 ECE providers in Sutter County in 2021-22. Participants greatly appreciated the program support and its benefits to themselves and the children in their care. All surveyed participants felt strongly that the program will have a positive effect on the children in their care. Nine in ten said that the Keys to Quality Stipend program made them a better teacher.

The Child Care Planning Council of Yuba and Sutter Counties offered the Keys to Quality program, which involved professional development and quality improvement support to 292 ECE providers in Sutter County in 2021-22 (representing 44 sites). The Council transitioned trainings and meetings to a virtual setting in response to COVID-19 to allow providers continued access to professional development opportunities. Participants received over 972 hours of professional development and completed 186 units toward an ECE, a child development or related degree, or a higher-level Child-Development Permit.

At the end of the fiscal year, 49 participants of the Keys to Quality professional development and stipend program completed a survey about their experiences. Thirty-nine percent of these providers were affiliated with a state-funded program, nearly 30% worked at a Head Start or Early Head Start program, and close to a quarter represented family childcare settings. A minority of providers worked in private center-based programs (6%) and other settings (3%), including family, friend, and neighbor as well as migrant care providers. Close to 60% worked with preschool-aged children, while the remaining 40% were evenly split between those who worked with toddlers and those caring for infants. About two-thirds of providers (64%) had at least an associate degree.

Responses to the ‘Keys to Quality Stipend Program Survey’ were quite positive. Figure 19 illustrates the percentage of providers who believed that the various aspects of the program benefited them “Very Much.” All the surveyed participants felt strongly that the program would have a positive effect on the children in their care and nine out of ten providers believed that program participation made them a better teacher. Eighty-eight percent felt that the information they learned in the program would help them continue working in the field, and 96% said that it was relevant to meeting their professional development goals.

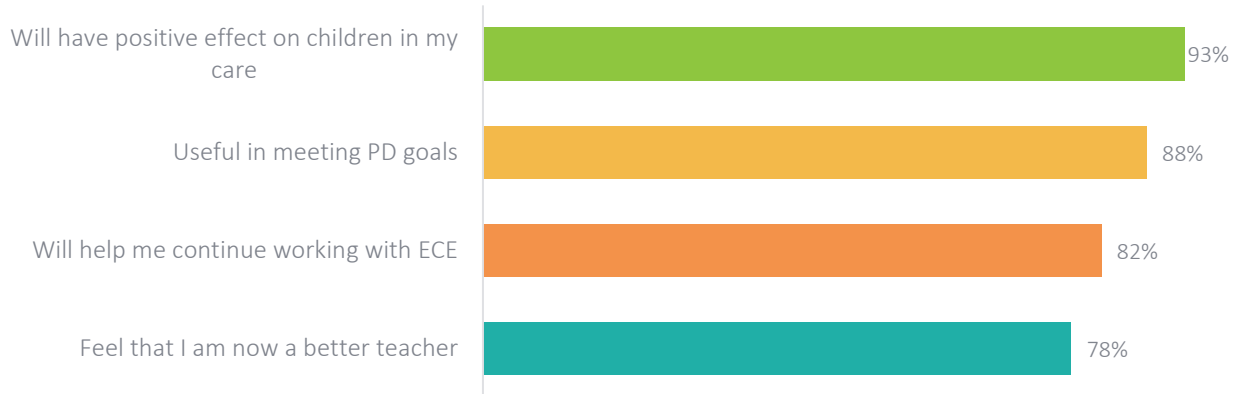
**FIGURE 19: PERCENT OF PARTICIPANTS WHO FELT THE PROGRAM HELPED THEM ‘VERY MUCH’**



Source: Keys to Quality Stipend Program Survey. FY 2021-22. N = 49.

Participants were also asked to indicate which program resources were most beneficial to them. Nearly nine in ten respondents (88%) appreciated access to online training resources, and nearly as many (86%) named the coursework stipend. Access to an advisor was named among most beneficial resources by 76% of providers, followed by the academic coursework support offered to program participants (65%).

**FIGURE 20: PERCENT OF PARTICIPANTS WHO FOUND RESOURCES 'VERY BENEFICIAL', BY TYPE**



Source: Keys to Quality Stipend Program Survey. FY 2021-22. N = 49.



# Goal 3 — Healthy Children and Families

<b>OUTCOMES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Babies are born healthy, and mothers are provided perinatal/breastfeeding support.</li> <li>• Parents have the knowledge and resources to meet their child’s health and developmental needs.</li> <li>• Children’s health and developmental needs are identified and addressed with early intervention.</li> <li>• Children’s oral health needs are identified and addressed.</li> <li>• Children and families have access to safe, healthy recreational activities.</li> <li>• Children are kept safe and injury free.</li> </ul>
<b>PROGRAMS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help Me Grow</li> <li>• Healthy Families Sutter County Home Visitation</li> <li>• South Sutter Swim</li> <li>• Mindful Youth Adventures</li> </ul>

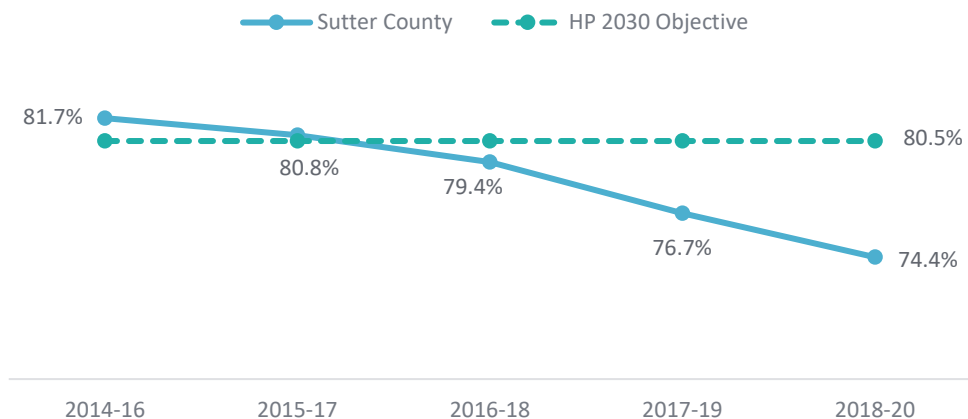
In addition to these key programs, SCCFC sponsored oral health services to children 0-5 by contracting with a dental hygienist to provide oral health assessments for children who attended Help Me Grow community outreach events (see below). SCCFC also promoted safety and injury prevention by placing 148 life jackets throughout Sutter County at four life jacket loaner stations.

## COMMUNITY-WIDE TRENDS

Neonatal outcomes have fluctuated over the past five years.

**Prenatal care.** The proportion of mothers who received adequate prenatal care in Sutter County has continuously declined, reaching a low of 74% in 2018-2020, compared to a high of nearly 82% in 2014-2016. The current access rate to adequate (plus) prenatal care is approximately 5% lower than the Healthy People Objective set for 2030.

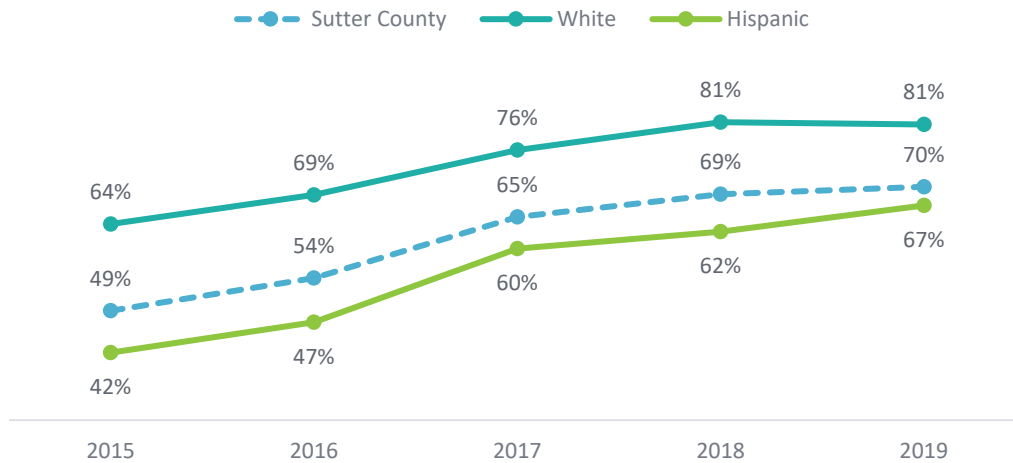
FIGURE 21. PERCENT OF MOTHERS WHO RECEIVED ADEQUATE OR ADEQUATE PLUS PRENATAL CARE IN SUTTER COUNTY



Source: Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Division, three-year averages for years 2014-2020. Note: Adequacy of Prenatal Care Utilization Index categorizes “Adequate” as prenatal care begun by fourth month with 80%-109% of recommended visits received. Adequate Plus is defined as prenatal care begun by the fourth month of pregnancy and 110% or more of recommended visits received.

**Breastfeeding Rates.** Breastfeeding is another protective factor for child health and development. The rates of exclusive breastfeeding have been steadily increasing over the past five years. All in all, between 67% and 81% of mothers exclusively breastfed their babies while in the hospital. Despite the similar rate of increase in exclusive breastfeeding, the comparative rates were consistently higher for White than Hispanic mothers.

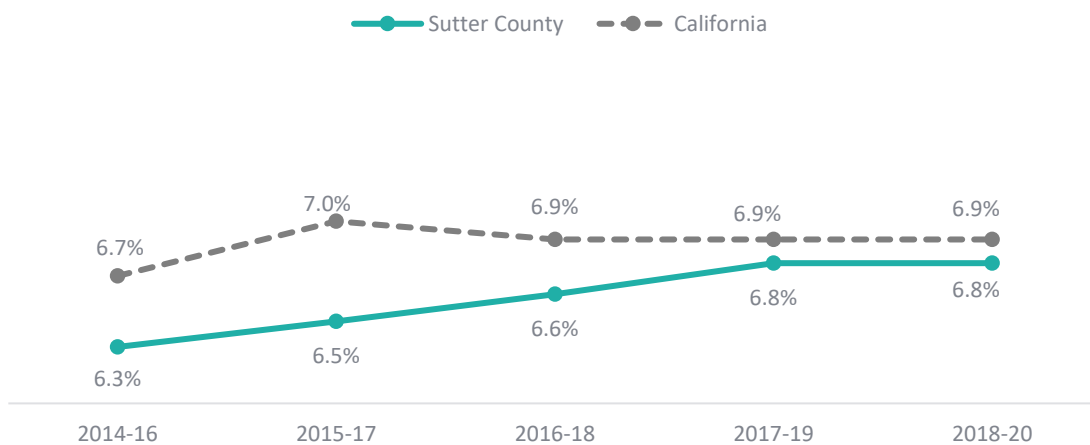
**FIGURE 22. RATES FOR IN-HOSPITAL EXCLUSIVE BREASTFEEDING IN SUTTER COUNTY**



Source: California Department of Public Health. In-Hospital Breastfeeding Initiation Data. Years 2015-2020. KidsData.org. In-Hospital Breastfeeding of Newborns Data Dashboard. Data for American Indian or Alaska Native, Pacific Islander or Hawaiian Native, and other races or ethnicities are not included due to very small estimates.

**Neonatal Health.** Low-birth weight is linked to a host of negative health, cognitive, and behavioral outcomes. Historically, the proportion of Sutter County infants with low-birth weight was slightly below the statewide rates, which held at a steady 6.9% from 2016 to 2020. In comparison, the prevalence rates of newborns with low-birth weight in Sutter County has been increasing, which contributed to the narrowing of the gap between state and county rates. However, this increase could be considered as marginal, at less than 0.5% over the past five years.

**FIGURE 23. PERCENT OF CHILDREN BORN WITH LOW-BIRTH WEIGHT**

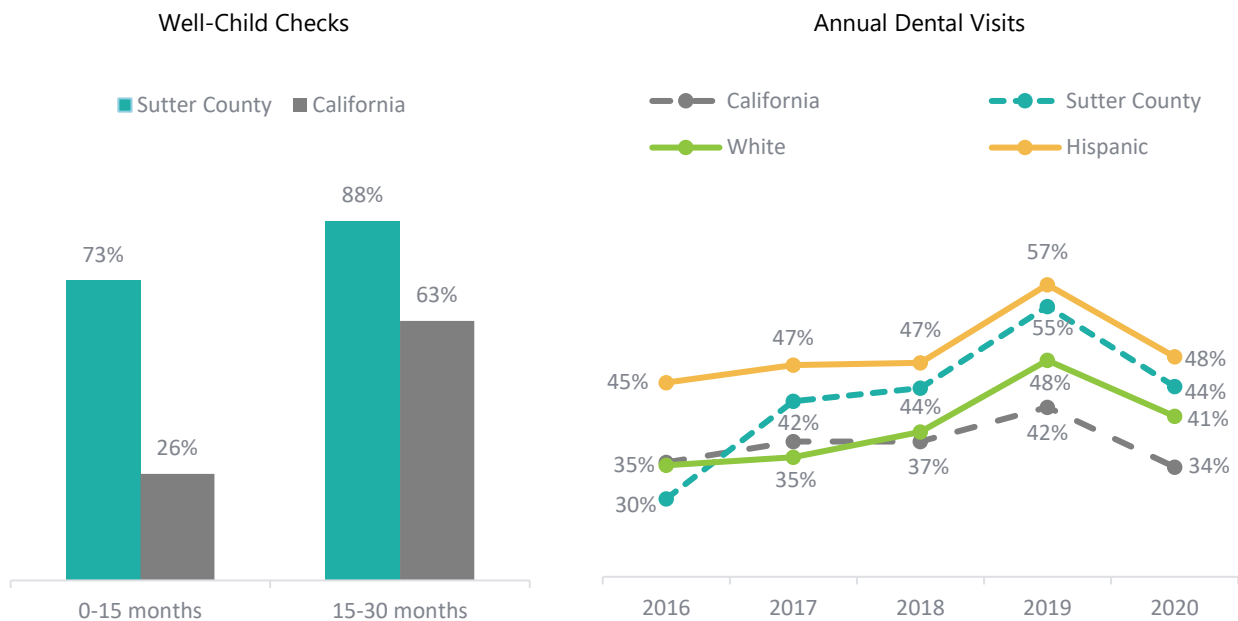


Source: California Dept. of Public Health, County Health Status Profiles. Low-Birth Weight, three-year averages.



**Preventive Health Services Utilization.** Sutter County use of preventive medical and dental services was higher than statewide. Despite the 2020 pandemic, Sutter County was one of just three California counties that reported the rates of preventive services use above the 46.2% national benchmark for children ages 0-15 months<sup>13</sup>. Similarly, Sutter County was one of the 12 counties with the most favorable rates, where the use of preventive services exceeded 44.3%. On average, 73% of infants 15 months of age or younger had all the recommended well-child visits, compared to 26% of California infants. For toddlers under 30 months of age the county rate was 88%<sup>14</sup>, compared to the statewide rate of 63%. The use of preventive dental services in Sutter County children in this age group was somewhat lower than the rates of well-child visits, owing to a 10% decrease in dental visits over the pandemic. Nevertheless, 44% of county children ages 0-5 years had an annual dental visit in 2020, compared to just 34% statewide. Importantly, the proportion of children with dental visits was 7% higher in Hispanic, compared to White children.

**FIGURE 24. PERCENT OF CHILDREN ON MEDI-CAL WITH RECOMMENDED WELL-CHILD CHECKS AND ANNUAL DENTAL VISIT**



Source (well-checks): California Department of Health Care Services. 2021 Preventive Services Report (June 2022). Source (dental visits): California Department of Health Care Services, Medi-Cal Dental Services Division/ Research Analytics Unit, Dental Utilization Measures and Sealant Data by County, Ethnicity, & Age Calendar Year 2016 to 2020.

<sup>13</sup> CA Department of Health Care Services. 2021 Preventive Services Report (June 2022) changed their data collection methodology from reporting on well-child check-ups for ages 0-6 years to reporting the rates for children 0-15 months and 15-30 months of age. Therefore, no time trends are available for the well-child visits. The data are reported for the year 2020.

<sup>14</sup> Sutter was among the eight counties with the proportion of the Asian population of at least 10%. Statewide averages show a 4% higher rate for Asians, compared to aggregate rates. On the county level, all eight states with the greater proportion of the Asian population had most favorable or second most favorable rates in 2020.

# IMPACT OF SCCFC

## HELP ME GROW

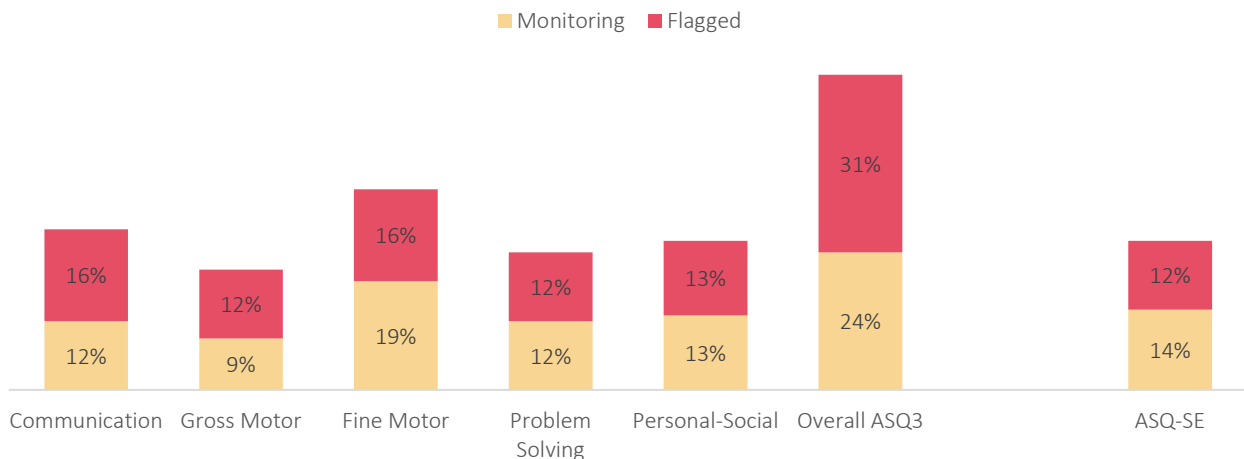
The ASQ-3 developmental screening tool was used to screen 552 children, a 12% increase from the prior year. About a third of the screened children (31%) were flagged for further assessment and follow-up. Help Me Grow also provided care coordination to 163 children whose caregivers contacted the call center.

In 2016, SCCFC became an affiliate of Help Me Grow (HMG). HMG is a national model of screening and early intervention services. The core components of the model include a centralized access point from which families with young children are connected to needed resources and services. SCCFC expanded the HMG model services by providing monthly face-to-face health and developmental screening events in 2021-22. These Help Me Grow events provides developmental screenings for young children and refers them to services if indicated by the screening outcome. The model also involves trainings and outreach to families, communities, caregivers, and health professionals serving young children.

During the 2021-22 fiscal year, the two Sutter County HMG program coordinators organized or took part in 35 community events to increase awareness of developmental and health screenings, reaching 2,080 children and their families. They also conducted targeted outreach to child health care providers through office-based education and provided the health care staff with flyers, referral forms, and iPads so families can complete the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3) and Ages and Stages Questionnaire Social-Emotional (ASQ-SE). Lastly, the HMG staff at SCCFC provided technical assistance to preschool providers to use the ASQ screening tools online.

Compared to last year, this year’s screening efforts increased by 12%, which translated to 552 developmental ASQ-3 screens and 419 social-emotional ASQ-SE screens, conducted and captured in the ASQ Online database. As can be seen in Figure 25, results of the 55% of ASQ-3 screens and 26% of ASQ-SE screens indicated some type of concerns in one or more of the developmental domains. Across the ASQ-3 domains, a higher proportion of children were monitored (19%) or flagged (16%) on fine motor skills development, followed by difficulties in communication (12% monitored, 16% flagged), and social-emotional problems (13% monitored or flagged).

FIGURE 25: PERCENT OF CHILDREN WITH DEVELOPMENTAL CONCERNS ON THE ASQ-3



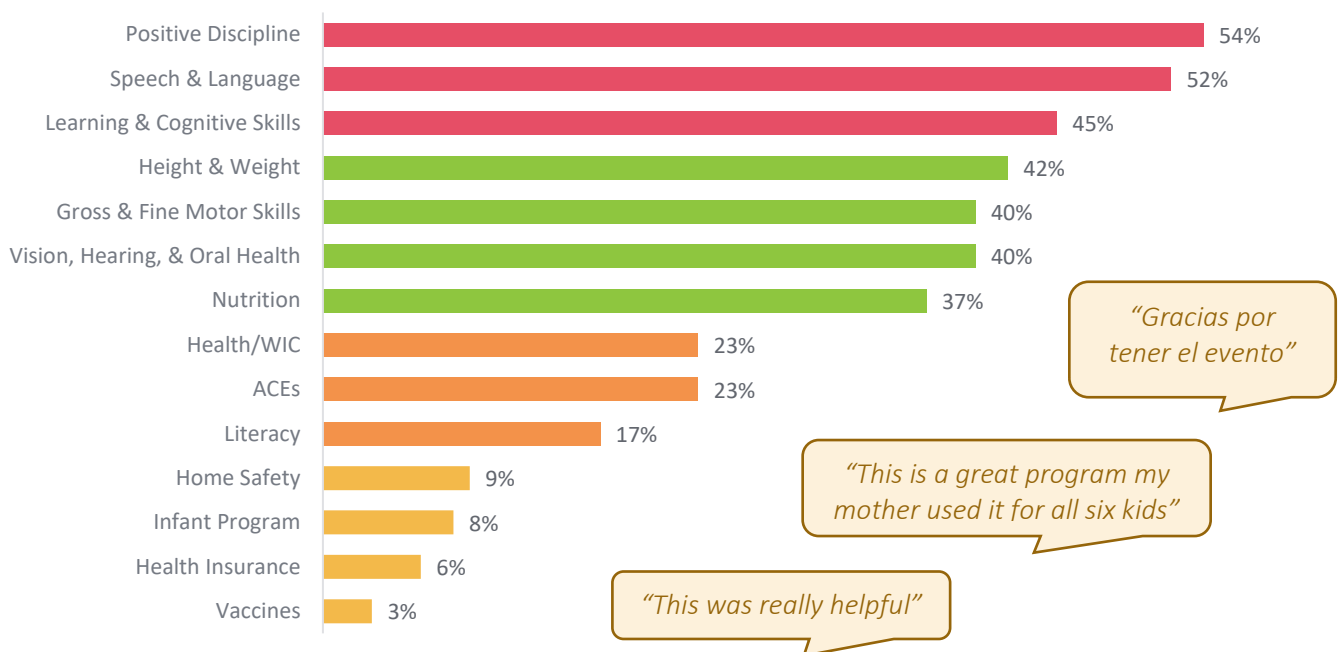
Source: 2020-21 ASQ-3 Online Aggregate Results, by Category. N (ASQ-3) = 552; N (ASQ-SE) = 419.

As part of the follow-up with these families, children received additional assessments and/or were referred to the appropriate services and programs by the HMG staff, with the approval of child caregivers. In FY 2021-22, HMG staff at SCCFC provided this type of care coordination and referral services to 163 children from 118 families. Referrals were initiated for 66 children and 60 families, and included linkage to:

- Emergency supply distributions, financial assistance, nutrition, and housing programs, to help families meet basic needs;
- Family support and mental health services;
- Health care services, to address vision, hearing, oral, and other physical health needs;
- Developmental supports, including speech, motor skills, and other types of child developmental concerns;
- Access to child care and early childhood education and literacy programs; and
- Parenting and positive discipline classes and workshops.

After families received information during the HMG events, they were asked to complete a Parent Survey. Of the 71 respondents to the survey, 86% had attended an HMG event for the first time. Survey results showed that 95% of the respondents found the child screenings to be helpful. Among the three most useful benefits of Help Me Grow screening stations was access to new information about Positive Discipline, Speech and Language, and Learning & Cognitive Skills (see Figure 26). Of the respondents, 86% agreed that HMG staff was able to answer their questions about child development, and 75% strongly agreed that the information they’ve learned from the HMG screening event made them a better parent

**FIGURE 26. PERCENT OF SCREENING OR INFORMATION STATION MOST HELPFUL TO PARENTS**



Source: Help Me Grow Parent Survey. 2021-22. N = 71.

## HEALTHY FAMILIES SUTTER COUNTY HOME VISITATION

Healthy Families Sutter County offers home visiting services to 30 families, providing education and resources to promote parent-child interaction and early literacy. Staff conducted a total of 120 screenings (maternal depression, ASQ, and CHEERs) and distributed safe baby educational materials and cribs to 895 new parents during community outreach events and through direct contact with the birthing center.

Sutter County Public Health is a Health Families America affiliate, providing evidence-based home visiting services to low-income, high-risk Sutter County families. The program focuses on expectant parents and parents to newborns and provides needed education, resources, and materials to promote parent-child attachment, child development, and early literacy. This year, the program went through a certification process and received accreditation from the Healthy Families America (HFA). During this process, the program hosted two Peer Reviewers from the HFA National Office. Over the course of three days, these accreditors reviewed family files, supervision notes, program policies and procedures, conducted interviews with staff, and enrolled families and members of the Advisory Group of the Bi-County Home Visiting Collaborative.

During the 2021-22 fiscal year, Healthy Families Sutter's home visitors continued to conduct most of the home visits virtually through video apps and telephone calls, in accordance with National HFA guidelines. Home visitors offered in-person, outdoor visits when it was deemed safe, appropriate, and aligned with the families' preferences. A total of 30 families received home visiting services during the year; 12 of them were new to these services. In addition to home-visiting services, families enrolled in Healthy Families Sutter County home visiting program received supplies that reinforced the topics and activities covered during the home visits. Most of these families (67%) spoke English in the home, 22% spoke Spanish, and for 11% their home language was Farsi.

Ten parents completed a satisfaction survey following completion of Healthy Families Sutter services. Results of the survey were very positive. Parents' responses indicated they were happy with the services they received:

- Retention and Engagement:** 60% of respondents were engaged in services for more than a year and another 30% for 6-12 months. All parents noted that their home visitor showed respect and understanding of their family background, culture, and parenting style and that program materials and communication were inclusive of their language and race/ethnicity. Most parents (90%) also felt that the information and materials were presented in a way that allowed them to determine what was best for their child. These are positive indicators of program potential for family engagement and retention.
- Program Fidelity:** All parents attested that their home visitor spent enough time with them and that the topics of parenting and child health and development were discussed at most visits. Eight out of ten parents also noted that the home visitor brought parent-child activities to most visits. These indicators point toward fidelity in delivery of the home visiting curriculum.
- Program Effectiveness:** All parents affirmed that they've had an opportunity to discuss family goals with their home visitors and received appropriate referrals. These services aimed to strengthen caregiver

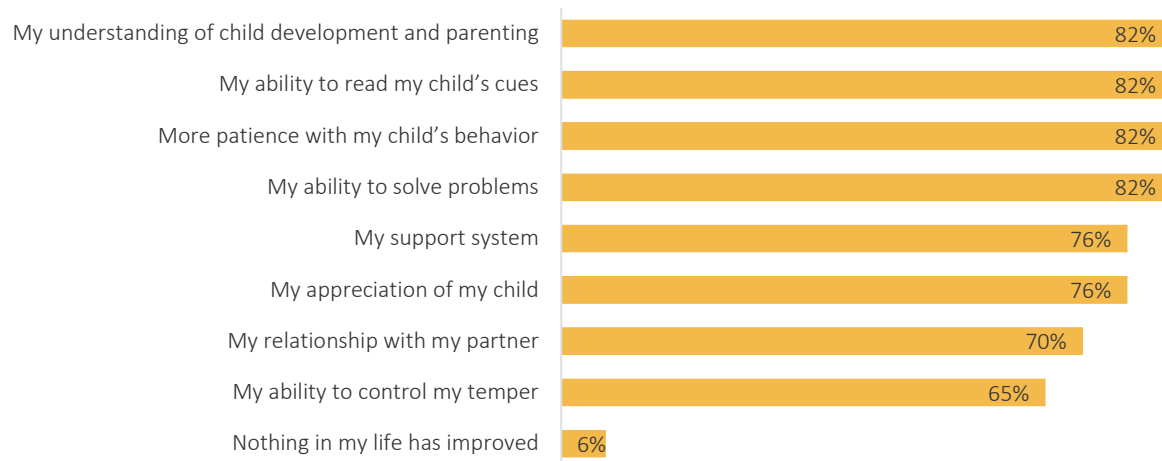
*"I enjoy that they have an interpreter during my visits, who translates documents for me that are not available in Spanish, and who understands our culture as well!"*

resilience through practical supports, such as helping parents learn English, apply for an ID or a job, as well as to nurture child development and learning through setting up home routines and sharing activities and strategies to help children meet developmental milestones.

*“I really learned so much from Kim and her advice. We are thankful for her.”*

Figure 27 shows that the program improved many aspects of family life. All caregivers felt that they gained parenting skills and ability to understand and connect with their child, which equipped them to better support their child’s growth and development. Family resilience also improved, as caregivers reported better control of their emotions and stronger relationship with their partners. Cumulatively, these changes increased caregivers’ confidence in their ability to raise their child, following program participation.

**FIGURE 27: PERCENT OF IMPROVED LIFE AREAS AS A RESULT OF HEALTHY FAMILIES SUTTER HOME VISITING PROGRAM**



Source: Healthy Families Sutter Home Visiting Satisfaction Survey. 2021-22. N = 10. Percent of responses to the question: “Which areas of your life have improved since beginning with Healthy Families (please check all that apply)?”

In addition to the home visiting services, the public health department also conducted four community outreach events to increase new parents’ awareness of SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome), educate on safe sleep practices to reduce instances of SIDS, and promote use of infant cribs by advertising SCCFC’s free crib program (a total of 20 cribs were distributed). During these outreach events, staff also provided screening services to families, including 35 ASQ-3 screenings, 27 ASQ-SE screenings, 35 Depression screenings, and 23 CHEERS assessments. They also distributed 74 "Sleep Baby Safe and Snug" books during the Public Health Week event and United Way Community Resource Fair. In the month of October, SIDS Awareness Month, public health staff collaborated with SCCFC to conduct a Safe Sleep awareness social media



campaign. A gift bag with materials to promote maternal mental health, breastfeeding, and safe sleep was raffled off at the Summer Stroll.

Because of the ongoing pandemic, the opportunities for outreach were much more limited than the staff initially anticipated. Nevertheless, they continued to receive referrals from the local birthing center and conducted outreach over the phone, providing safe sleep education materials to new parents and offering safe sleep supplies when the need was identified.

## SOUTH SUTTER SWIM

**Swim Lessons for infants and toddlers were hugely successful this summer with 48 participants and an overflow of interest from parents; the majority of parents (~75%) noted improvement following participation.**

Another program sponsored by SCCFC to support healthy children and families was the Learn to Swim program at South Sutter Swim. The program promoted wellness, health, and public safety for all in South Sutter County through water safety education. Two programs were specifically targeted to families with children ages 0-5 years. The Parent-and-Tot program was designed for infants and toddlers between the ages of six months and three years and one of their parents/guardians. It introduced children to safe water activities and built their confidence in being submerged under water and floating on water. Older children, ages 3-5, participated in the Tiny Tot

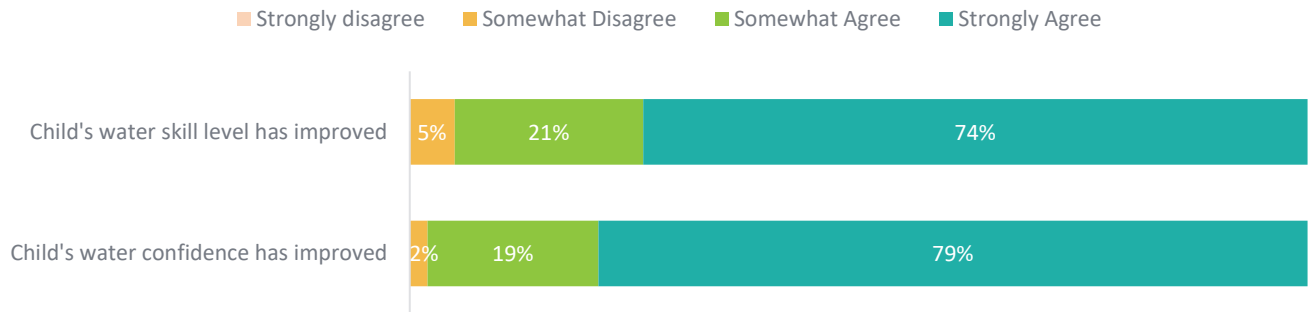


program. They were taught without their parent present, to further build their floating, submerging, rhythmic breathing, and kicking skills, and prepare them for more advanced swim lessons.

In the summer of 2022, 16 children ages six months to three years participated in the Parent-and-Tot program, and 32 children 3-5 years participated in the Tiny Tots program. Responses to a follow-up survey (n= 43) indicated that parents were generally happy with the program with 79% “Strongly Agree” that the ratio of teacher/lifeguard to student was satisfactory. All in all, 84% of parents said they were extremely likely to sign up for swim classes

next summer. The plurality of parents (44%) noted that their child had been practicing the skills once or twice outside of class, 40% noted more frequent practicing (three or more times), and a minority (16%) noted that their child did not practice skills outside of class. Figure 28 shows the outcomes of the lessons with the majority of parents strongly agreeing that their child had improved in confidence in the water (79%) and that their child’s water skill level had improved (74%).

**FIGURE 28: PERCENT OF OUTCOMES FOLLOWING PARTICIPATION IN 'LEARN TO SWIM'**



Source: Sutter Swim Post Program Survey Summer 2022. N= 43.

## MINDFUL YOUTH ADVENTURES

In FY 2021-22, this program shifted from providing online short videos (139 views) to in-person, enthusiastic participation of 61 parents and 113 children. Families learned about mindfulness—especially about how to control emotions, to express feelings productively, and to create social connections.

Mindful Youth Adventures (MYA) is a program designed to engage parents and their young children in the practice of mindfulness. Through a multitude of kid-friendly activities that include yoga, play, story time, dance, and craft, parents and children learned to control emotional outbursts, verbally express their feelings, and listen to others. The program enhanced parental resilience and positive social connections and enabled children to learn and practice social and emotional competence.



The program was originally envisioned as weekly, year-round yoga and mindfulness class provided in three Sutter County library locations. MYA also partnered with Sutter County Library to provide a free keep or swap rotating lending library. As the pandemic hit, the program provider shifted gears and created a new virtual approach. She produced and distributed free digital online “mindful moments”, short, easy to follow, monthly classes created to assist children to cope with the new reality and to continue working on mindfulness and mental health. Classes were distributed through SCCFC media as well as Mindful Youth Adventures social media pages and on a YouTube channel. The videos garnered 139 views.

During FY 2021-2022, the program director aimed to move the class back to an in-person modality. Yet, challenges with the closure of the library led to a pause in the program during the second and third quarters. This pause brought opportunities to test out a hybrid in-person/live online class, which seemed promising. With the reopening of the library, classes commenced in their original location and families were back, seizing the opportunity to learn new strategies to help their children (and themselves) regulate their emotion. In total, the program served 61 parents and 113 children.

Parents attending these classes with their children completed a follow up-survey and reported noticeable changes in their children as a result. Specifically, all respondents noticed that their children started utilizing

movement as a method to refocus, were good at recognizing emotions, and had formed positive social connections.

*“This class has been overwhelmingly well received, and parents are truly seeing notable changes within their children. Moreover, I’m seeing wonderful new connections being formed between community members, and friendships blossoming between kiddos.”*  
- MYA instructor

*“Learned new techniques to control emotions. Everything was perfect. Would like more classes”*  
- MYA participant

## Goal 4 — Improved Systems of Care

OUTCOMES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Families have the information and support they need to access the early childhood system of care.</li> <li>Early childhood systems are strengthened, integrated, and sustained.</li> <li>Early childhood resources, services, and supports are sustained with legislation and policy.</li> </ul>
PROGRAMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCCFC Community Outreach</li> <li>Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Aware Network of Care Grant</li> <li>Home Visiting Systems Coordination Grant</li> <li>Emergency Supplies Distribution</li> <li>Community Sponsorships</li> </ul>

SCCFC strives to improve and strengthen local systems of care, in an effort to meet the needs of all children and families in a coordinated, high quality, sustainable manner. To that end, SCCFC engaged in community outreach and social media campaigns, to promote awareness of the negative impact of traumatization on health and well-being and the local resources available to families in need. SCCFC also secured the following grants, to improve local systems of care:

- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Aware Network of Care Grant
- Home Visitation Systems Coordination Grant
- COVID-19 Relief, Vaccine Equity, & Child Tax Credit Grant

Moreover, the SCCFC had awarded community sponsorship grants to local partners to support family and community involvement, health and development of children, and professional development of local providers. The summary of these efforts is presented below.

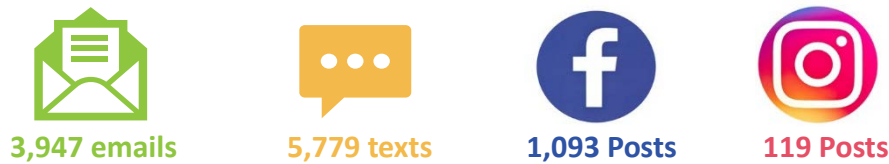


## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Throughout the year, SCCFC expanded and strengthened its partnerships with multiple agencies in Sutter and Yuba Counties, through Network of Care, community outreach, and social media campaigns aimed to raise awareness of the SCCFC goals, strategies, and services.

In FY 2021-22, SCCFC sponsored a multitude of community events, reaching a total of 2,450 families with children.

At the same time, SCCFC engaged in a total of 10,938 interactions such as questions, replies, and reactions related to social media posts and emails, as part of their social media education efforts. The outreach campaigns were held in English and Spanish, to maximize information reach.



## ACES AWARE NETWORK OF CARE

*As part of County efforts to prevent and/or to counter the effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), SCCFC collaborated with multiple agencies to create a Network of Care (NoC). Partnered with two Medi-Cal providers to facilitate provider training and education on ACEs, they built “FindHelp,” an online resource and referral platform, and initiated development of a community crisis response program, “Handle with Care”.*

In 2020, Sutter County Children and Families Commission (SCCFC) was one of several counties to secure the ‘ACEs Aware Initiative’ grant funding. This grant was designed to fund efforts toward building a system of care, comprised of local providers and communities, to counter the effects of toxic stress on families and children. To this end, the **Network of Care (NoC)** initiative pursued strengthening the leadership and accountability structure, expanding partnerships and inter-agency collaboration, promoting community and health care integration, striving to meet financial and technological needs, and evaluating and improving trauma-informed services. The NoC partners represented multiple agencies, including Peach Tree Health, Feather River Tribal Health, Sutter-Yuba Behavioral Health, Domestic Violence Council & Child Abuse Prevention Council, Women’s Shelter, and other community-based organizations, like the school district and the local law enforcement.

Despite the challenges imposed by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, in particular, the difficulty in forming strong in-person relationships between members of the Network of Care, SCCFC was able to push through and showed great progress and success in several ways. In March 2021, the NoC partners completed a readiness assessment, using the **ACEs Aware assessment tool**, to identify priorities, barriers, and opportunities related to addressing ACEs in local communities. Based on the results of the assessment, the NoC partners identified the need for a unified referral system.

In collaboration with Applied Survey Research (ASR), the identified need for a unified referral system was addressed by reviewing the two established referral data systems – FindHelp (formerly ‘Aunt Bertha’) and Unite Us. Following the selection of FindHelp as the model that best matched County needs, in March 2022, NoC launched a **Sutter County FindHelp** (<https://sutterkids.findhelp.com/>). This online system featured a bidirectional community screening, a referral portal, and an internal SCCFC site for analytics and staff training. The site launch was successful: 700 users conducted 1,950 searches, had 850 interactions, made 60 connections, 15 referrals and 70 follow-ups. Yuba (11%), Sutter (82%), and Butte (7%) families sought food (20%), housing (18%), care (16%), health (12%) and financial (10%) assistance.



### To increase capacity for ACEs screening and response, SCCFC worked with two Medi-Cal

providers, Peach Tree Behavioral Health and Feather River Tribal Health, to provide ACEs screening. The two health care providers invested in educational materials and therapeutic books on trauma-informed care. They trained case managers and interns how to administer the ACEs/PEARLs screening and to explain screener results, linked to the impact of toxic stress to patients. Peach Tree Health established a HIPAA secure dashboard with a text messaging capability to send out ACEs/PEARLs assessments to patients, collect and store their responses, and connect with therapists for follow-up appointments and referrals. NoC has taken some formal steps to create policies for trauma-informed care by working with providers to standardize screening protocols and post-screening referral procedures through bi-directional agreements with partners.

Finally, in FY 21-22 the SCCFC partnered with law enforcement, educators, and mental health providers to lay the groundwork for a trauma-informed community crisis response initiative **“Handle with Care.”** The program supports children exposed to traumatic events requiring police involvement. It aims to ensure cross-context continuity of care through real-time police-school communication and staff training. This initiative supports the NoC goal of building upon the knowledge of principles and strategies for trauma-informed care in local communities. The first virtual trauma-Informed workshop was held in the summer, garnering much interest from over 100 attendees, and generated follow-up inquiries from community partners on the process of joining NoC.

In sum, Sutter County Children and Families Commission and its Network of Care partners have made substantial progress in the implementation of a system of care that will decrease the intergenerational cycle of ACEs traumatization, increase families’ resilience, and help Sutter County children to learn and thrive.

## HOME VISITING SYSTEMS COORDINATION GRANT

**This year, the grant continued to fund the Bi-County Home Visiting Collaborative, which helped create an Online Directory of home visiting services and an Online Resource Padlet, listing all SCCFC programs in the area. As part of Professional Learning Communities, the collaborative hosted five professional development sessions, and a two-day workshop with four follow-up coaching sessions.**

The Home Visitation Systems Coordination grant was initiated by First 5 California to help counties create a sustainable, unified system of family supports through home visiting (HV) services, while maximizing funding to serve more families. In 2021, the grant funded the establishment of the **Bi-County Home Visiting Collaborative**

(HVC) between First 5 Yuba and the Sutter County Children and Families Commission (SCCFC). The Collaborative works to increase coordination of services through systems change activities, including:

- Increased cross-agency understanding of local population needs and readiness to collaborate on local home visiting services.
- Efficient, coordinated, and sustainable local home visiting that serves more families more effectively.
- Interconnected local early childhood systems with home visiting embedded as a vital component, leading to strong family outcomes.
- Networks of cross-county coordination and collaboration that promote shared learning and capacity-building, resource sharing, and expertise to strengthen local systems change efforts.

Last fiscal year (2020-21), the Home Visiting Collaborative (HVC) conducted a community needs environmental scan/assessment via a parent survey, completed by 149 families, and a collaborative member survey, completed by 37 providers. The data provided insights on a) families' needs and experiences, as well as participation and feedback related to HV services; b) providers' perspectives on screening and referral processes and staff capacity; and c) participation barriers and service gaps. Families sought to strengthen family cohesion, improve parent-child interactions, gain access to basic necessities (such as child care) and secure help navigating assistance programs. Providers similarly acknowledged the gaps between families' needs and availability of housing and financial supports, as well as the shortage of specialists, such as behavioral therapists and bilingual providers. Home visitors and other Collaborative members stressed the need for a more efficient way to access local networks of care including programs, locations, schedules, eligibility, and other information critical to their ability to connect families to services in the community in a timely manner.

To address these concerns, last year SCCFC and First 5 Yuba HVC created a **pamphlet directory of local home visiting services**. This easy-to-navigate resource listed all HV programs across the two counties, their contact information, location, families served, and eligibility requirements needed to qualify for services. The pamphlet was available to constituents in multiple outreach events, as well as online. Providers were invited to add their services to the home visiting matrix, available online.

Although the HVC primary goal is to support and coordinate HV services, Family Support programs are also encouraged to join the collaborative, as they constitute an essential part of the network of care. To foster collaboration between a wide range of HV and family support programs, and to promote families' engagement in programs and services, the grant funds were used for provider education and training. This year, **Professional Learning Communities (PLC)** facilitated five professional development workshops, which totaled 40 sessions, accessible to all Collaborative members. Moreover, the PLC coordinated a two-day professional development—the Laurie Ellington Conference. The first day was dedicated to the topic of the “Neuroscience of Engagement with Families”, attended by 85 providers and staff. The second day hosted four “Brain-Based Coaching Sessions,” aimed at supporting the implementation of skills learned during the conference. The sessions were attended by 11 participants from a cross sector of providers, educators, and family-serving agencies.

At the end of the event, 64 providers completed a post-conference survey, half of which came from Yuba County, and the other half from Sutter County. Based on the responses of 47 providers who attended “From Protection to

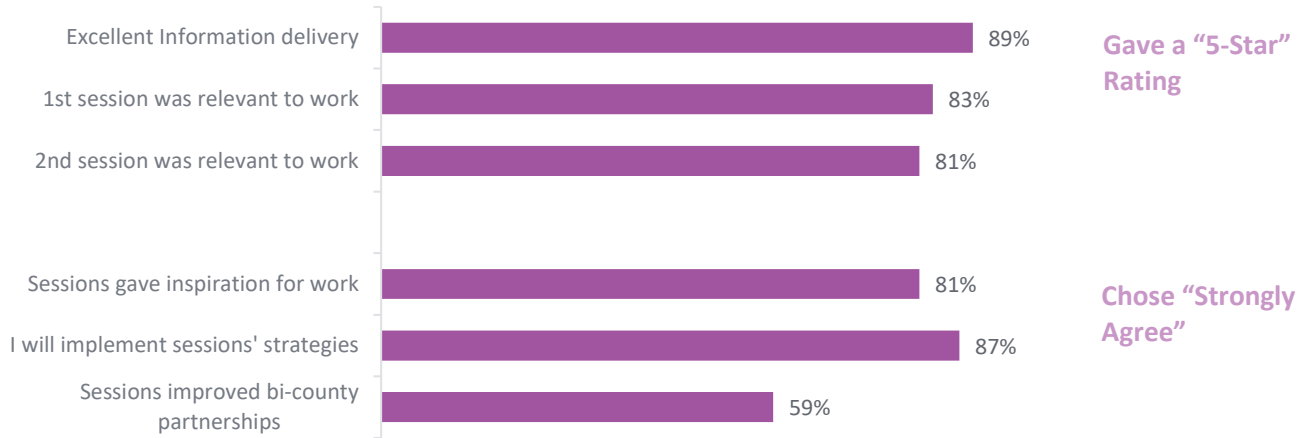
Connection” session, and 33 providers who attended “The Vagus Nerve and the Mind-Body-Brain Connection” sessions, both received four- or five-star ratings. Over 80% of participants agreed that the sessions’ content was relevant, and nearly 90% noted excellent information delivery. Between 80% and 90% of participants stated that the sessions inspired them to make improvements at work by implementing the new strategies they learned. Close to 60% felt that the conference improved connections between the Bi-County Collaborative partners. Finally, over 80% of participants said they are “Very Likely” to attend future PLC trainings.

*“Facilitator was extremely knowledgeable, spoke in laymen and relevant terms, and provided good examples relating to my work, engaged with audience, and was overall, nice.”*

*“...this was the best training I have ever attended. The information I learned has changed my life.”*

*“It was important to learn about utilizing the skills to acknowledge the neurological pathways with our clients.”*

**FIGURE 29: PERCENT OF PARTICIPANTS HIGHLY SATISFIED WITH THE LAURIE ELLINGTON CONFERENCE**



Source: Laurie Ellington Conference Post-Survey. 2021-22. N = 64.

The overall feedback was very positive. Participants enjoyed the presenters’ style, organization of information, audience engagement, and interactive activities. Participants stressed the importance of learning about the role of the nervous system in shaping health and relationships, as well as strategies to utilize the mind-body connection to improve families’ outcomes.

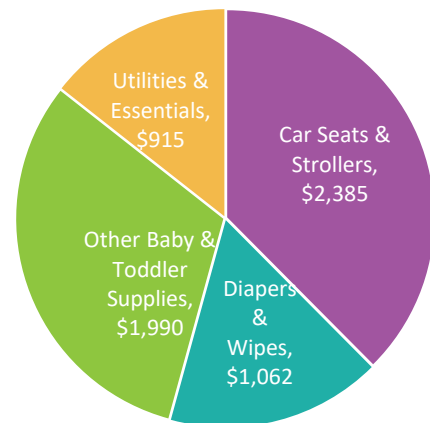
## EMERGENCY SUPPLIES DISTRIBUTION

Emergency supplies distribution services were funded with the COVID Relief, Vaccine Equity & Child Tax Credit grants, awarded through the California Family Resource Association. In FY 2021-22, the SCCFC COVID-19 Emergency Funding provided over \$6,000 to cover emergency supplies to help families overcome the effects of the pandemic.

In total, SCCFC served 1,280 persons and families, including 124 Foster Families and 90 Tribal Native American families. All in all, 1,242 persons received 7,960 units of material goods, such as diapers and wipes, car seats and strollers, highchairs and walkers, books, and sensory-activity kits. Families were also provided with assistance to cover utilities and daily living necessities, as well as COVID-19 supplies. (See Figure 30).

Additionally, 420 parents received parenting resources, such as information about child behavioral services, parenting classes, and children's health and development programs.

**FIGURE 30: SUPPLIES DISTRIBUTED TO SUTTER COUNTY FAMILIES IN NEED**



*“It’s been really hard to buy diapers and clothes. This program helped us get the clothes and diapers for the baby. I am so grateful!”*

## COMMUNITY SPONSORSHIPS

Over the FY 2021-22, SCCFC had awarded 11 community sponsorships, totaling over \$24,000 in investments in local communities.

In support of **family and community involvement**, SCCFC sponsored:

- Gold Sox weekly admission for children 0-5 years of age;
- Touch-a-Truck event, for children to learn about transportation;
- Yuba City Downtown Summer Stroll;
- Yuba City Downtown Christmas Stroll, for families to enjoy play activities;
- United Way Spooktacular Run, for a family-fun Halloween event; and
- Walk-n-Roll event, to elevate children with special needs;
- Yuba-Sutter Fair

To facilitate **health and development of children**, SCCFC sponsored:

- Rising Stars Performing Arts Camp designed for young learners; and

Finally, to enhance access to **opportunities for professional development**, SCCFC sponsored:

- Lactation Training, for county Public Health Nurses to become a certified Lactation Consultant;
- Childcare Planning Council Fall Conference, offering professional development trainings for providers; and
- RIE Parent-Infant & Parent-Toddler training for parents

All in all, SCCFC's **Community Sponsorships** promoted community involvement in Sutter County events, programs, and services, provided additional enrichment opportunities for children, and sponsored much-needed workshops and events. These programs helped strengthen the professional expertise of county staff and providers working with families and children.



# Programmatic Challenges In FY 2021-22

Following the stay-at-home orders in spring 2020, SCCFC program providers had to rethink their engagement strategies and program delivery methods in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. More specifically, providers began to offer their services online, supplemented with delivery or pick-up of program materials, and innovative activity kits made available to participants. The uncertainty of the pandemic and the frequent changes to state and county regulations have continued to affect program delivery throughout the 2021-2022 fiscal year.

## TRANSITIONING FROM VIRTUAL TO IN-PERSON OR HYBRID SERVICES

As COVID-19 restrictions were gradually eased, providers faced a choice between continuing to offer their services virtually or transitioning to hybrid and/or in-person services. Among the SCCFC programs, few depended on in-person attendance due to the nature of their services. Learn to Swim was one such program. During the first half of the FY 2021-22, the pool remained closed for all program activities other than open swim. Closer to the last quarter of the year, the pool re-opened for swim lessons, with some modifications, including following COVID safety protocols (i.e., offering sanitizers) and reduction in class capacity. Some programs, like the YCUSD Smart Start program, were able to switch to in-person services, with no reduction in capacity. The program did implement COVID protocols, which included masking inside classrooms, using hand sanitizer, and wiping class materials with Oxivir spray and wipes. The Smart Start program also followed the COVID protocols for isolation, quarantine, class closure, and contact-tracing provided by YCUSD.

Others, like Family SOUP or Home Visiting programs, working with vulnerable populations, transitioned to a hybrid model. To keep their families safe, providers offered classes and workshops for parents, home visiting sessions, playgroups, and training sessions virtually via Zoom and/or in combination with hand-held Wi-Fi-capable devices, like Owl Pro. When deemed safe and appropriate, providers met with families in-person, in outdoor spaces. Similarly, many outdoor programs took place in-person. Program coordinators strived to creatively reach and maintain contact with families by answering calls in real time, delivering activity bags to family's homes, or offering information binders for pick-up prior to sessions. Home Visiting programs mailed out safe sleep information in place of in-person education at the hospital, while families receiving a crib and a sleep sack still received in-person education in compliance with COVID-19 prevention protocols, including social distancing and masking.

*" We are hopeful that the pandemic will eventually pass, or at least this increased positivity rate will see a decrease, making it possible for us to safely reopen to the public by appointment only first and then for walk-ins."*

- Family SOUP Coordinator

## CONTINUING CHALLENGES WITH ATTENDANCE

Virtual services enhanced families' safety from COVID-19, and, for some families, alleviated attendance barriers related to transportation and childcare. At the same time, this format made it more difficult for other families to engage. For instance, some of the families surveyed by Family SOUP expressed their hope for in-person services. Consequently, attendance of in-person classes was in high demand. For example, the Family SOUP's Sensory Play groups experienced a significant increase in attendance. Some programs, like FLIP, handled the increased interest by offering families an option to join a waitlist and/or by modifying their schedules. This year, FLIP was able to offer an additional week of Creative Arts classes by shortening class duration. In response to parental requests, these additional classes were scheduled during the evenings, yet evening class attendance rates were just half of daytime rates. Other programs, like Learn to Swim, had attendance rates exceeding class capacity, resulting in families being turned away. Programs also struggled with loss of instruction days due to staff being sick or in quarantine due to exposure to, or positive testing for, COVID-19. As a consequence, programs strived to offer make-up classes. However, in some cases, such as with SmartStart classes, attendance after the quarantine decreased as families elected not to complete the program.

## CONTINUING STAFFING AND SUPPLIES CHALLENGES

Despite the easing of the COVID-19 restrictions, programs continued to experience staffing shortages. For some programs, like Learn to Swim, the demand for in-person instruction exceeded the program capacity of three lifeguards and one program coordinator. To solve this issue going forward, program staff plans to recruit another volunteer to help families sign up for classes and answer questions about their aquatics program. FLIP had to modify schedules of RIE, Parent-Infant and Parent-Toddler sessions, as well as School Ready and Creative Arts classes, due to subcontractors being ill or testing positive for COVID-19, which added to the long waitlists. Parents were offered opportunities to make up cancelled classes and/or use at-home learning kits. Family SOUP also experienced changes in staffing. Following the resignation of the Program Director/Resource Parent, the program's Executive Director and other resource parents took on additional responsibilities until the program was able to hire and train a new Bilingual Spanish Resource Parent and a new Program Director.





## FINANCIAL CONCERNS

Uncertainties surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic required additional resources to accommodate adjustments to the changing health regulations, virtual and hybrid formats of service delivery, and efforts to compensate for staff who was sick or quarantining.

Program staff and families that utilize various SCCFC services are very appreciative of the SCCFC funding. One such recipient of the SCCFC monies, the Learn-to-Swim program, stated that the funding support allowed them to spread out program expenses, so that they could offer safer amenities at their pools. These included new kickboards and learning tools to help instructors with lessons, as well as to add third sessions of swim lessons during the summer. These additional sessions filled up to capacity, as water safety classes are in high demand among Sutter County parents of young children. Moreover, SCCFC allocated over \$6,300 in COVID-19 response and recovery funding, which was used to distribute emergency supplies among the families with unmet basic needs. Finally, the SCCFC disbursed nearly \$25,000 in community sponsorships to sustain outreach and involvement of families in services, and to improve educational and training opportunities for professionals and for children in families in Sutter County.

All in all, this insight into service barriers that SCCFC providers encountered over the past year shows that despite the ongoing challenges, the SCCFC grantees persevered. With the ongoing support of SCCFC, they were able to continue delivery of programs and services in virtual and hybrid formats, engage children, and provide effective support to parents.

