

# Child and Family Data for Action

First 5 Alameda County is committed to advocating for and achieving equity, with a focus on racial and economic justice, to ensure that all children in Alameda County are born healthy and can achieve their full potential. Given the triple pandemics of COVID-19, racism, and poverty, we have a unique opportunity to remedy historic, structural racism with investments that recognize and correct injustice and exploitation of low-income people and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.

## ALAMEDA COUNTY FAMILY DEMOGRAPHICS

**1,656,591**

Total population (2021)<sup>1</sup>:

**18,197**

Babies born (2019)<sup>2</sup>:

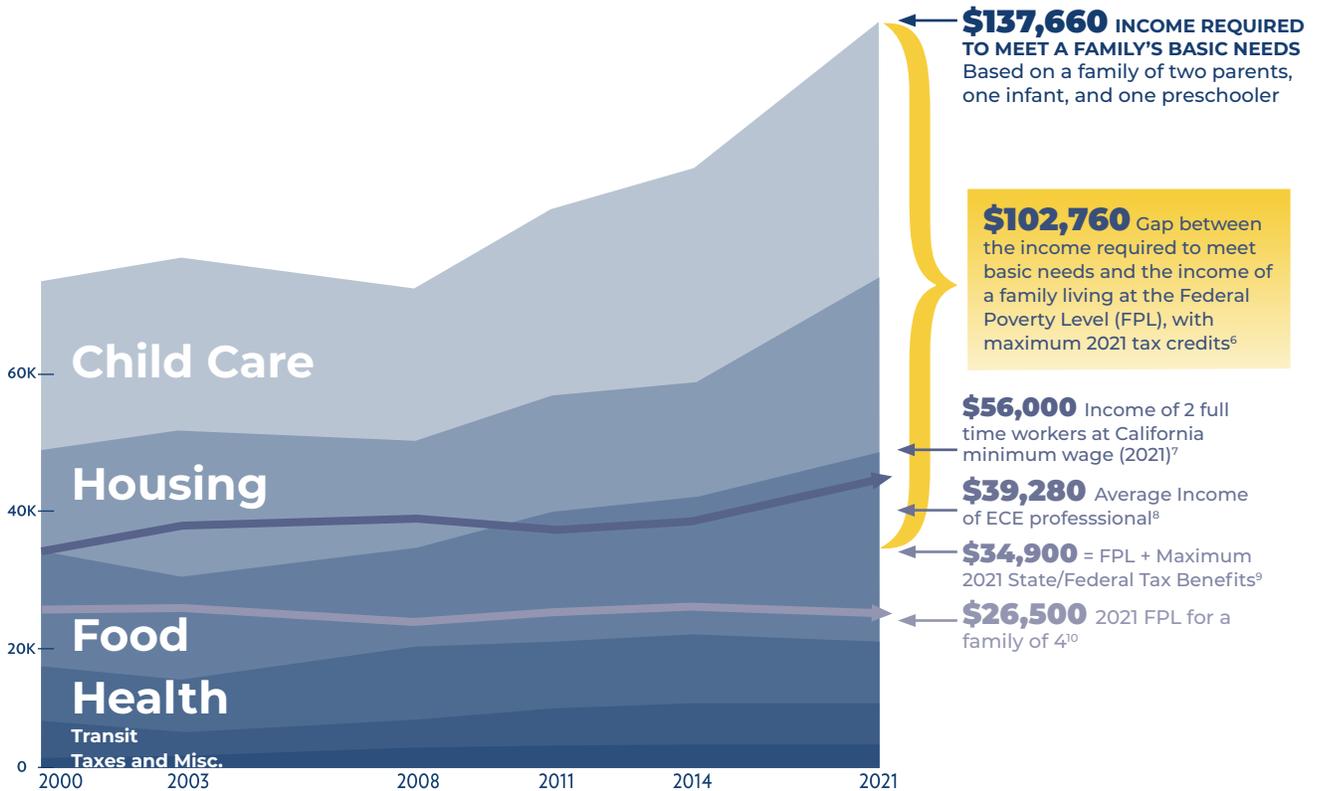
**113,701**

Children under age 6 (2021)<sup>3</sup>:  
6.8% of the total population

**~71,000**

Households with children under age 6 (2019)<sup>4</sup>:

## FINANCIAL REALITIES FOR FAMILIES IN ALAMEDA COUNTY<sup>5</sup>



**1/3 of a family's income is going towards child care** based on a family of two parents, one infant, and one preschooler.<sup>5</sup>

## IN ALAMEDA COUNTY...

Approximately  
**1 in 10**

children under 6 lives below the Federal Poverty Level (2019)<sup>11</sup>

**59%**

of family child care providers reported earning less than \$15 per hour<sup>8</sup>

**+68%**

increase in child care cost 2014 - 2021<sup>12</sup>

**34%**

increase in median family income 2000-2019<sup>13</sup>

**50%**

of renters pay more than 1/3 of their income for rent<sup>14</sup>

# Addressing Racial Disparities and Family Economic Security

We center equity in our research, advocacy, and policy to create conditions and systems where children can reach their full potential. Alameda is a wealthy county, but high in racial disparity.

**Alameda ranks as the 4th most racially disparate county in California.<sup>15</sup>**

**1st**

most racially disparate county for food security

**2nd**

most racially disparate county for access to early childhood education

**4th**

most racially disparate county for preventable hospitalizations

**4th**

most racially disparate county for utilization of subprime mortgage loans by homeowners

**Black households take home roughly 1/3 the income of white households after rent.<sup>15</sup>**

## Child Poverty 0-5 & COVID-19 Rates<sup>16, 17</sup>

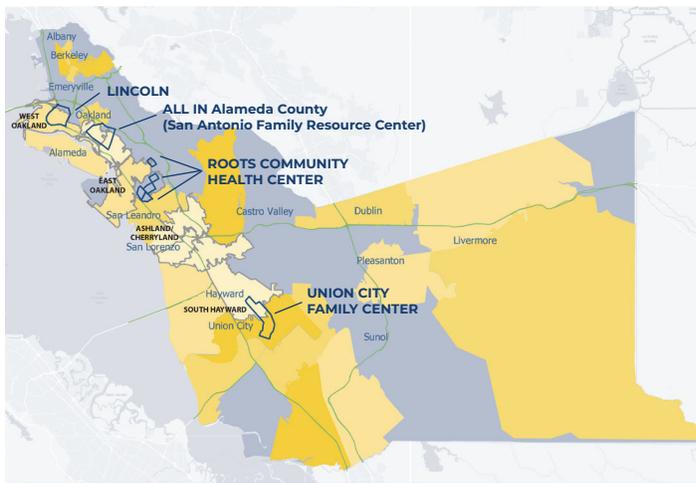


### Legend

- Areas of High Child Poverty (0-5) & High COVID-19
- First 5 Neighborhoods Ready for School Grantee Service Areas
- Alameda County COVID-19 Priority Neighborhoods
- Alameda County
- Freeways

**We find that differences in kindergarten readiness are largely attributable to inequities in access to resources.** The greatest moveable factor continues to be child health and well-being, which is tied to socioeconomic, housing stability, and stress among parents/caregivers.<sup>18</sup>

## Kindergarten Readiness<sup>18</sup>



To learn more about how kindergarten readiness is assessed, view the

### Legend

- Kindergarten Readiness Zip Codes
- Lowest 25%
  - 25% to 50%
  - 50% to 75%
  - 75% to 100%
- Neighborhoods Ready for School Service Areas
  - Alameda County COVID-19 Priority Neighborhoods
  - Alameda County
  - Freeways

\*Zip codes with fewer than 5 participants are not shown.  
\*\*Readiness scores represent individuals living in the zip code and do not represent the overall readiness of children in that zip code.

# The Social Safety Net for Families in Alameda County

First 5 advocates for policies that advance economic justice, and supports strategies such as Universal Basic Income, an improved public safety net, living wage jobs, education and apprenticeship programs, work supports, and savings and wealth-building that promote the health and well-being of families with young children.

## Families with Children Accessing Health and Economic Supports

Children 0-6 Enrolled in Public Benefits in Alameda County 2021<sup>19</sup>

**+** **Medi-Cal 32,008**  
(28% of total children 0-6)

- **Nationally, only 2%–3% of all children receive public early intervention services by age 3 years**, compared with approximately 15% who are estimated to have a developmental disability during childhood.<sup>20</sup>
- Among currently eligible kids in the 1 to 4 age range nationally, **WIC enrollments are just 42%**.<sup>21</sup>

**🍏 CalFresh 12,182**  
(11% of total children 0-6)

- In Alameda County, an estimated **9.9% of children live in a household that has experienced food insecurity** in the past year.<sup>22</sup>
- Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, **the Alameda County Community Food Bank increased food distribution by 51%**.<sup>23</sup>

## Helping Families Navigate the Challenges of the Covid-19 Pandemic

With families facing historic levels of job loss, child care and school closures, health care challenges, and food and housing insecurity, the COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated persistent health and economic inequities. These challenges pose a particular threat with long-term implications for the health and well-being of children under age five, especially children of color.

### Diaper Need

**Without a supply of clean diapers, families cannot leave their children with child care providers and cannot go to work.** Diaper need is a predictor of postpartum depression in mothers and can make it difficult for mothers and babies to form an attachment.<sup>24</sup>

**It costs approximately \$18 a week to diaper one child, and \$1,872 per year to diaper two.**<sup>25</sup> For a parent earning the federal minimum wage, **diapering two children accounts for about 12% of their annual gross income.**<sup>26</sup>

**1 in 3 families struggled to afford** diapers prior to the pandemic.<sup>27</sup>

**California provides \$30 a month** for families receiving CalWORKs to purchase diapers.<sup>28</sup>

First 5 funded an evaluation of the diaper distribution efforts of Help a Mother Out (HAMO) in Alameda County. The evaluation of HAMO's work demonstrated success to make the case for expanded public investment.

**Families who received diapers, a form of income support, reported being healthier and happier.**<sup>25</sup>

**97%**

say their child is healthier

**98%**

say their family feels less stressed

**95%**

have more money in the budget for food

**99%**

say they are a happier caregiver

## Support for Access to Essential Supplies

Through our established [Community Resilience Fund](#), First 5 launched a massive relief effort, based on an equity framework, that prioritizes investment in people and places disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic due to structural race and class bigotries.

### Essential Supplies Distributed by First 5 and Partners

**4,398,760+**  
diapers

**51,764+**  
bottles of hand sanitizer

**17,589+**  
books

**102,965+**  
packs of baby wipes

**881,947+**  
masks

**22,549+**  
coloring books and crayons

**462,400+**  
gloves

**51,472+**  
feminine hygiene products

**1,044**  
air purifiers for 522 family  
child care providers

## The COVID-19 Pandemic's Effects on Early Care and Education

### For Children and Families

Our flagship research on kindergarten readiness in Alameda County consistently shows the importance of early care and education (ECE) participation for children's kindergarten readiness.<sup>18</sup> **High quality, affordable child care is critical for healthy child development, families' ability to thrive, and the county's successful economic recovery from COVID-19.**

Between March 2020 and January 2021 an estimated **153 (7%) of licensed child care facilities permanently closed.**<sup>29</sup>

### For Child Care Providers

We estimate that **the Alameda County ECE field lost \$395 million in FY2020-21 alone** (\$220 million without taking the increased cost of providing care into consideration) and continues to experience losses in the current fiscal year.<sup>30</sup>

### Inadequate Reimbursement Rates for Providers

The **state has increased reimbursement rates**, which could bring an increase of over \$20 million countywide to subsidized child care programs for children birth-5. Yet the **new rates are still far below the true cost of care.**<sup>31</sup>

**96%**  
of Alameda County  
ECE educators  
identify as women<sup>8</sup>

**79%**  
of Alameda County  
ECE educators  
identify as women  
of color<sup>8</sup>

**87%**  
of ECE educators are  
considered very low  
income for Alameda  
County<sup>8</sup>

**20%**  
of providers at child  
care centers reported  
earning less than \$15  
per hour<sup>8</sup>

## Citations

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