



### **First 5 Fresno County Sustainability Project 2011**

First 5 Fresno County's Sustainability Project supports agencies in developing and implementing plans to sustain high-quality outcomes for children ages 0-5 in Fresno County. Through a structured eight-month, team-based curriculum, agencies think and plan strategically about how to build their internal capacity to pursue and secure resources that will address their agency's long-term needs. Throughout the process, teams identify not only critical financial needs, but also essential political, technical and administrative resources required to achieve long-term sustainability.

Monthly full-day workshops walk sustainability teams through each step of the sustainability planning process with the ultimate goal of creating a comprehensive sustainability plan. Teams assess organizational and program strengths and weaknesses; identify resource needs and program goals; target potential funding sources and partnerships; and develop strategies to build community support and organizational capacity. (Sustainability teams from each agency consist of 2 to 4 people, which may include the executive director, finance officer, program director, development director and board members.) Throughout the project, First 5 Fresno County and selected consultants will provide support and technical assistance, as needed.

Agencies that successfully complete a written sustainability plan are eligible to receive a sustainability stipend to fund some of the staff time needed to create and implement their plans. The project culminates with a Sustainability Forum that brings programs together with representatives from local private and corporate foundations, corporations, county offices and nonprofit agencies. Participating grantees present their sustainability plans, and receive feedback on these plans.

## **The Sustainability Project Workshop Outline**

**Workshop #1: Introduction to the Planning Process** - The first workshop provides an overview of the planning process and guidance on key questions organizations need to answer before starting to plan, including who to include in the planning efforts and how to structure and manage their involvement.

**Workshop #2: Developing a Vision & Results Orientation** - This workshop helps agencies define what they want to sustain. Teams revisit program visions; assess current strategies and activities; and determine the scope and quality of programming your organization wants to provide over the next three to five years.

**Workshop #3: Building Organizational Capacity & Community Support** – This workshop helps to define other types of strategies – in addition to financing strategies – which an organization will need to implement to sustain their agency’s programs. These include, for example, mobilizing community support, cultivating leadership, and building organizational capacity.

**Workshop #4: Creating a Strategic Financing Plan** - This workshop takes agencies through the process of developing a strategic financing plan, beginning with estimating the fiscal resources needed, and then analyzing a range of funding sources and financing strategies to identify those that are most appropriate.

**Workshop #5: Benchmarking & Evaluation** - This workshop will explore how to measure, manage, and improve organizational results. Utilizing a performance-driven approach – benchmarking – we will explore the process of measuring an organization’s business processes against leaders in any industry to gain insights to improve performance.

**Workshop #6: Writing & Marketing your Plan** - This workshop briefly describes the content and organization of the written plan. It will also explore strategies for using the plan with different types of funding sources and various stakeholders.

### **Workshop #7: Presentation Development and Tools**

**Submission of Sustainability Plan** - Formal review, feedback and revision process with sustainability teams, consultants and First 5 Fresno staff.

**Sustainability Forum** - The forum will bring participating grantees together with foundation, corporate and nonprofit leaders. At the forum, grantees will present their completed sustainability plans to and receive feedback from a panel of representatives from foundations, county entities and nonprofit leaders.