

MEDIA ADVISORY

****Open House****

Early Childhood Leaders Kick Off the Reopening of the Community Learning Center within the Lighthouse for Children in Downtown Fresno

Fresno, CA – First 5 Fresno County (F5FC) announced today the reopening of the Community Learning Center (CLC) located on the second floor of the Lighthouse for Children facility in downtown Fresno after a nearly two-year pause due to the pandemic.

Over the last two years, parents of young children have been maneuvering through the daily ups and downs of parenting, including ensuring their children are up to date on vaccines and meeting developmental milestones amid a global pandemic. Many community resources were overwhelmed, inaccessible, or limited for many families. First 5 Fresno County's Executive Director, Fabiola González said, "Raising children is hard! The pandemic not only added but increased challenges to raising healthy children. We hope families can lean on the Community Learning Center as a resource to support their parenting journey, whether it's a parenting workshop, a socialization group for toddlers and caregivers, a breastfeeding support group, or a referral, the CLC is back and ready to welcome families."

Through a new partnership between F5FC and Fresno Economic Opportunities Commission (Fresno EOC), the CLC will offer services including health, dental, cooking tips/nutrition, socialization, safe spaces for family interventions, support for families with special needs, and literacy. Fresno EOC hopes to highlight the importance of partnerships, build more programming, and develop the CLC to become a wrap-around center as staff assesses the needs of the community. "The Community Learning Center and the Lighthouse for Children are special in my heart! We're thrilled to partner and leverage our resources and programming to serve the families of Fresno County at the CLC," states Emilia Reyes, CEO of Fresno EOC.

The Lighthouse for Children facility was built by F5FC to be an innovative community hub in the heart of downtown Fresno that provides Fresno County families access to services and resources to support the transformative first five years of a child's life. The CLC is designed to be a network of community partners that provide free services to young children and their families all in one location. "We are delighted the Community Learning Center is reopening its doors once again to ensure families have access to resources and support for those critical early years of a child's development," states Supervisor Brian Pacheco, First 5 Fresno County's Commission Chair.

WHAT: Open House for the Community Learning Center at the Lighthouse for Children in downtown Fresno. The media will be able to take a self-guided tour of the center, meet service providers / programming staff and get a glimpse of support provided for families. Visuals will include parents/caregivers and children in classrooms and oral health screening provided by Fresno EOC Health Services.

WHEN: Thursday, October 13th at 4:30 PM – Press Conference

WHERE: Lighthouse for Children, 2405 Tulare St, Fresno CA 93721

WHO: Fabiola González (First 5 Fresno County Executive Director), Emilia Reyes (Fresno EOC Chief Executive Officer) & Jack Lazzarini (Fresno EOC Chief Programs Officer)

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About First 5 Fresno County: At First 5 Fresno County we believe that children thrive when their families thrive. We invest in and partner with public, private & community benefit agencies that serve young children and families—created in 1998 due to the passage of Proposition 10.

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About Fresno Economic Opportunities Commission (EOC): Established in 1965, Fresno EOC is a non-profit Community Action Agency that provides opportunities, strengthens self-sufficiency, and offers support for all people. We listen to the needs of the communities we serve to create effective programs and services. Fresno EOC is at the forefront, continuing the war on poverty with more than 35 programs dedicated to getting people the help they need to achieve their goals.