

# *Ready to Learn*

*"Every child in San Diego County will enter school ready to learn"*

## **Executive Director Retires**



*G*loria Bryngelson, Executive Director for the First 5 Commission of San Diego retired after 29 years of service with the County of San Diego. Ms. Bryngelson held many positions within the County of San Diego and served as the

Executive Director of the First 5 Commission of San Diego, formerly known as the San Diego County Children and Families Commission, since November 1999. Ms. Bryngelson was the Commission's first Executive Director and had the opportunity to lead the Commission's development of an infrastructure responsible for approximately \$40 million dollars per year in State Prop 10 Tobacco Tax funds.

Prior to working with the Commission, Ms. Bryngelson served as the Legislative Coordinator for the Health and Human Services Agency and as the Welfare Reform and Legislative Coordinator for the Department of Social Services.

Ms. Bryngelson will be greatly missed by her staff and her peers in the County and across the State. Not only has she been a great leader but she has also been an inspiration to all. We wish her the best of luck in her retirement.

## **Executive Director Appointed**



*L*aura Spiegel has been named the new Executive Director of the First 5 Commission of San Diego. Ms. Spiegel comes to the County after serving for 15 years as CEO of *Home Start, Inc.*,

a San Diego based non-profit organization, which works to prevent child abuse.

Ms. Spiegel has extensive experience in the area of child and family focused programs. She worked as a child abuse prevention program coordinator for the City of Escondido; she was director of community development at *SAY San Diego, Inc.*, a locally based non-profit agency, which supports the development of young people, their families and communities; and later as CEO of *Home Start*, she oversaw the management and administration of 140 employees and a budget of nearly \$7 million.

Ms. Spiegel earned a bachelors degree in psychology from the University of Arizona. She later attended Arizona State University, where she earned a masters degree with an emphasis on industrial social work and community organization. Please join us in welcoming her as the new Executive Director.

## Parents Can Make a Difference! El Cajon Community in Action (ECCIA)

In 2000, the El Cajon Collaborative applied to the First 5 Commission of San Diego for technical assistance on how to engage parents in community decision-making and community solutions. The Commission contracted with the Consensus Organizing Institute to provide this assistance to El Cajon and 2 other communities beginning in 2000 and then expanded the service to 3 additional communities in 2002.

In El Cajon, a group of parents has been meeting almost weekly for 2 years. They've received training in leadership and advocacy, conducted a door-to-door survey in their neighborhood, and joined policy and community boards such as the PTA, the El Cajon Collaborative, and the First 5 Commission's Technical and Professional Advisory Committee (TPAC). They've also developed and distributed a directory of El Cajon preschools, and are currently hosting forums that involve both kindergarten teachers and parents of children ages 0-5.

Despite their busy schedules these parents are making a difference in their community and in the lives of young children. The Commission applauds ECCIA and the El Cajon Collaborative for their efforts and commitment on behalf of children.

## Grantee Highlight

### Partnership for Smoke-Free Families

Reducing the harmful effects of tobacco smoke exposure on unborn babies and small children is the goal of the Partnership for Smoke-Free Families Program (PSF). PSF, which receives a portion of its funding from the First 5 Commission of San Diego, was founded by Children's Hospital and Health Center, Scripps and Sharp HealthCare.

Services have since been extended to UCSD Healthcare and Naval Medical Center San Diego. PSF provides a standardized program to providers across the childbirth continuum for smoking screening and intervention. At the end of 2002, 294 obstetricians, 280 pediatricians and 9 hospitals were participating. As a result, over 60,000 pregnant women and new mothers have been screened for tobacco use since the program's inception in 1998. Smokers and women exposed to environmental tobacco smoke are linked to treatment interventions.

***For client referrals, contact:***

### THE CALIFORNIA SMOKER'S HELPLINE

**1-877-866-BABY or**

**1-877-866-BEBE (en Español)**

**(TTY) 1-800-933-4833**

## Upcoming Events

### Grantee Meetings

Quarterly Grantee Meetings are held at the Al Bahr Shrine Auditorium located at 5440 Kearny Mesa Road, San Diego, CA 92111 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. The upcoming meeting dates are:

June 24, 2003  
September 25, 2003

### Community Conversations

In its commitment to engage the community, the Commission will be hosting quarterly TPAC meetings in conjunction with community conversations. The upcoming TPAC/Community Conversations are:

May 19, 2003 in National City  
August 18, 2003 in Sherman Heights  
November 17, 2003 in East County

Specific event information will be available through the Civic Engagement Coordinator at (619) 230-6476 and will be posted on our website.

## First 5 San Diego

The First 5 Commission of San Diego is comprised of five members.

### Commissioners

#### Chair

**Greg Cox**

*Board of Supervisors*

#### Vice-Chair

**Ken Colling**

*Member-at-Large*

#### Secretary

**Nora Faine, M.D., M.P.H**

*Member-at-Large*

**Rodger G. Lum, Ph.D..**

*Health and Human Services Director*

**Nancy L. Bowen, M.D., M.P.H**

*Public Health Officer*

## First 5 Commission Meetings

Commission meetings take place regularly on the first Monday of each month from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

TPAC meetings take place regularly on the third Monday of each month from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Quarterly TPAC meetings held in conjunction with Community Conversations begin at 1:00 p.m.

Meetings are open to the public.



Check the Commission's website for potential location and time changes.



*This information is available as a handout for programs to share with parents. To request a copy, e-mail Martha Garcia at: [martha.garcia@sdcountry.ca.gov](mailto:martha.garcia@sdcountry.ca.gov).*

## **Ready to Learn:** **Promoting a love of learning, language and books in your young child**

Even before your child begins kindergarten you can start your child on a path towards a **lifelong love of learning**. One of the most important aspects of early learning and "pre-literacy" for children under age 5 is oral language. Oral language is the ability to listen and speak to others. Children who experience oral language difficulties are more likely to have trouble reading.

There are a variety of activities that can help children to develop a love of learning, oral language and books. Below are some **tips** to help you begin. Many of these activities can begin as soon as your baby is born!

### Tips to Remember

- ♥ Share rhymes and songs with your child
- ♥ Tell stories to your child
- ♥ Encourage your child to draw and write
- ♥ Read out loud to your child every day
- ♥ Talk to your child when you are together
- ♥ Visit the library and take your child to story time
- ♥ Encourage your child to learn new words
- ♥ Have picture books for babies and young children in your home
- ♥ Limit how much TV your child watches and what they watch (educational television together is best)

**Laura Spiegel, Executive Director**

**Newsletter Editor: Martha Garcia, Civic Engagement Coordinator**

**Questions? Comments? Contact:**  
**First 5 Commission of San Diego**  
1495 Pacific Highway, Suite 202  
San Diego, CA 92101  
1(866)726-8831 or (619) 230-6460  
[www.first5sandiego.org](http://www.first5sandiego.org)

# What is School Readiness?

School readiness reflects a range of dimensions, such as a child's health and physical development, social and emotional development, approaches to learning, language and communicative skills, and cognition and general knowledge. To that end, the National Education Goals Panel, an independent branch of the federal government charged with monitoring national and state progress toward the National Education Goals created in July 1990, established three objectives related to its school readiness goal:

1. All children will have access to high-quality and developmentally appropriate preschool and early care programs that help prepare children for elementary school.
2. All parents in the United States will be their children's first teacher and devote time each day to helping their preschool children learn, and parents will have access to the training and support they need.
3. Children will receive the nutrition, physical activity, and health care needed to arrive at school with healthy minds and bodies and to maintain the mental alertness necessary to be prepared to learn, and the number of low-birthweight babies will be significantly reduced through enhanced prenatal health systems.

In many ways these goals represent an important departure from past thinking. They acknowledge that the well being of young children is a shared responsibility between family and society and that collaboration across sectors and institutions is required.

Adapted by the San Diego County Child Care Planning Council from: *Helping Your Child Get Ready for School: What Does it Mean to be Ready for School?* U. S. Department of Education



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1495 Pacific Highway, Suite 202

San Diego, CA 92101

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