



FIRST 5
ORANGE COUNTY

Helping all children reach their full potential



First 5 Orange County Equity Commitment and Accountability

Introduction

First 5 Orange County is committed to promoting equity and ensuring that all children in our community have an equal opportunity to reach their full potential and thrive. To First 5 OC, equity means that every child deserves the support and resources they need to succeed, regardless of their background or circumstance.

Equity differs from equality. Equality means providing the same level of opportunity and assistance to all. Equity means providing different levels of support and assistance depending on specific needs or abilities.



EQUALITY: Everyone gets the same – regardless if it's needed or right for them.

EQUITY: Everyone gets what they need – understanding the barriers, circumstances and conditions.

To achieve this, we are committed to engaging with parents and families to ensure their voices are heard and their perspectives are included in our decision-making processes. We believe that parents and families are the experts on their own children and are essential partners in promoting the healthy development of our community's children. We will continue to partner with and support service providers and other early childhood system partners as they are fundamental in providing services and supports directly to families.

First 5 Orange County is uniquely positioned to support equity in our many roles including as a partner, funder, convener, service provider and policy advocate. We call on our partners, stakeholders, and community members to join us in this commitment to promoting equity and ensuring that all children have the opportunities they need to succeed. Together, we can create a bright future for the children in Orange County.

Grounding Values

Partnering with Communities



We believe that in order to responsibly support families and children, organizations and institutions need to listen to and partner with families in meaningful ways to create systems that work for them and their children.

Promoting Equity



We are committed to ensuring that every child has an equal opportunity to succeed, regardless of their race, zip code, income level, ability, or any other personal characteristic. We believe that every child deserves the support and resources they need to reach their full potential and thrive, and we will work to eliminate any barriers that may prevent them from doing so.

Fostering Diversity and Belonging



We believe that Orange County is a better place because of the vast diversity in race, ethnicity, culture, faith, ability and life experiences of its residents. We believe that children and families deserve to feel a strong sense of belonging to their community, however they choose to define it.

Using Data



We are also committed to using data, such as our Early Development Index data, to inform our work and identify areas where disparities and inequities exist. This data allows us to understand the specific challenges and needs of our community and work with families to develop targeted strategies and interventions to address them.

Underlying these priority focus areas are six equity principles, which describe how we will do this work.

Principles for Equity Accountability



Reduce harm with how data is collected, analyzed and shared



Start the conversation about equity at the earliest opportunities



Strive to build trusting relationships with partners and communities



Build capacity to represent and carry out an ongoing commitment to equity through onboarding and training



Leverage F5OC's privilege and responsibility to listen to, represent, and amplify the community's voice



Center the language of the majority audience or participants, not defaulting to English.

Equity Accountability

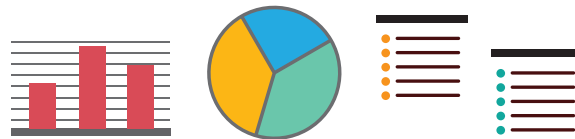
We understand that having an Equity Commitment is not enough; we also need to measure our progress, hold ourselves accountable, and consider the potential for unintended harm on the community from our activities. In order to do this, First 5 Orange County is committed to creating and consistently updating a living, organizational accountability action plan that lives in concert with this Equity Commitment.

We identified four priority areas in which we will hold ourselves accountable. For each of these areas, we also identified a desired outcome to work on, shown below. We will report progress on these desired outcomes and our specific activities to achieve them through Strategic Plan Action Plan reports at every First 5 Orange County Board meeting. Over time, as needed, we will outline new desired outcomes and related activities to continue progressing towards greater equity.



Center community voice

Desired Outcome: Collect and use community voice consistently to improve equity in our programs and our partners knowledge.



Utilize and uplift data

Desired Outcome: Use data to inform our funding practices, empower community partners to take action with data.



Partner

Desired Outcome: Increase equitable practices with community partners through support and accountability.



Establish Internal Operational Practices

Desired Outcome: Embed language access for all First 5 Orange County information and materials.