

LOCAL BALLOT MEASURES IN CALIFORNIA TO FUND EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION: STRATEGIES, CHALLENGES, LESSONS, NEXT STEPS FOR FIRST 5'S

Margaret Brodkin, Director, Funding the Next Generation

Ingrid Mezquita, Director, Department of Early Childhood, San Francisco

Clarissa Doutherd, Executive Director, Parent Voices Oakland

Sonja Koehler, Cabinet member, Yes for Kids campaign, Monterey County

Angie Dillon-Shore, Our Kids Our Future, Sonoma County

MARCH 27, 2024

FIRST 5 SUMMIT, OAKLAND CALIFORNIA

WILL BE POSTED ON FUNDING THE NEXT GENERATION WEBSITE

Why Local Funding Measures for ECE?

- How we spend our money reflects our values
- Achieving good outcomes for kids costs monty
- Funding inequity is a social justice issue.
- The real money is in the public sector.
- Acting locally has great potential.



- **“What gets funded, gets done.”**



What is a voter-approved public, local, dedicated children's funding stream?

- **Voter-approved** – ballot measure passed by electorate
- **Public** – allocated by government – “where the money is,” brings transparency, accountability
- **Local** – allocated at the county or city level – meets specific needs of community, empowers community (ongoing), strengthens accountability and engagement, building blocks of broader movement, untapped potential
- **Dedicated** – can only be spent on services to children, youth and/or families – Children come last when part of larger pot
- **Funding stream** – structured into the local budget, as opposed to year-to-year budgets



BENEFITS OF LOCAL CAMPAIGNS FOR FUNDING FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

LOCAL GENERAL FUND IS FLEXIBLE “MAGIC MONEY”

- Local level – where engagement happens, foundation of children’s movement
- Fills gaps in services
- Leverages state, federal, private dollars
- Promotes innovation, coordination and systems reform
- Focuses on prevention
- Facilitates local accountability, leadership and local infrastructure
- Generates public support – people see outcomes
- Leads to more local funding



First 5's – Challenges and Assets



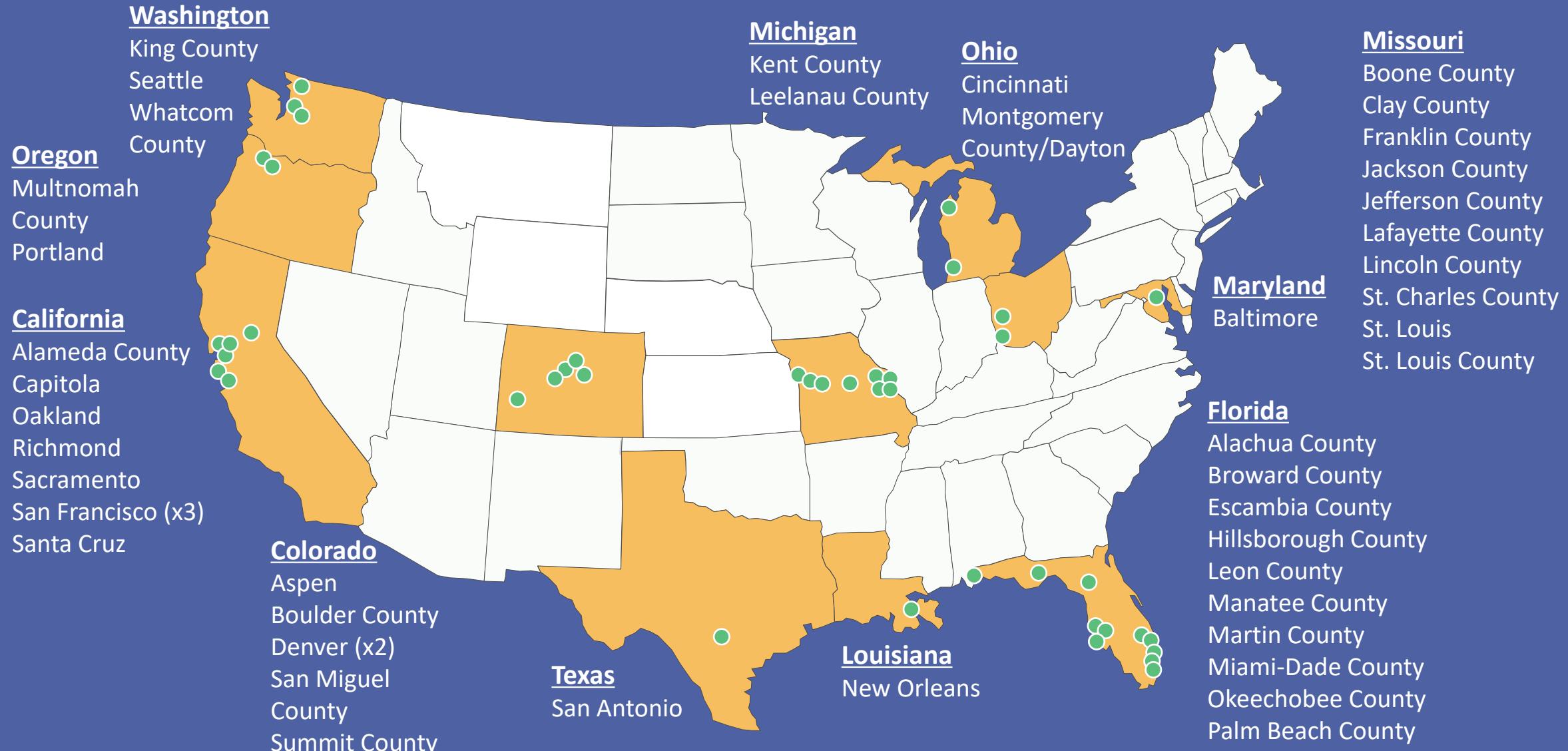
ASSETS

- Credibility with public, elected officials, community advocates and networks
- Stable, funded organizational structure
- Long history of documenting need and developing future priorities
- Track record of funding solutions
- Built-in political allies

CHALLENGES

- History of reliance on state funding - little need for local revenue advocacy
- Focus on primary role as funder, less experience working to change local public policy
- Inexperience with collective action to address local revenue issues
- Constraints by being part of government

Voter-Approved Children's Funds as of 2023





Voter-Approved Children's Funds in California

1991 and 1996

San Francisco pioneered Children's Fund; Oakland followed.

2016

Funding campaigns began in Napa, Marin, Sacramento and Solano. Humboldt successfully prioritized children for marijuana funding.

2018 – 2022

Seven new dedicated funds passed. Five communities put children's services into larger measures. Three other communities placed measures on the ballot although they did not pass.

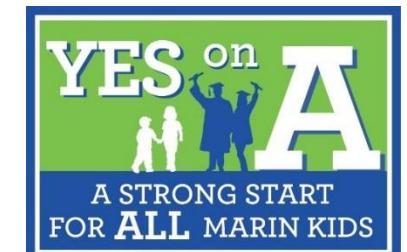
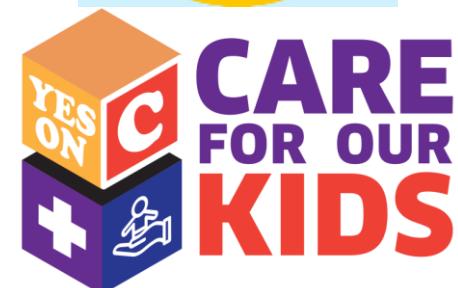
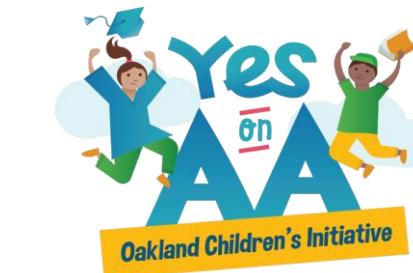
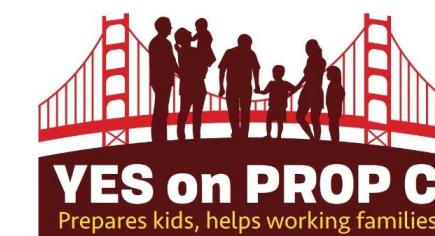
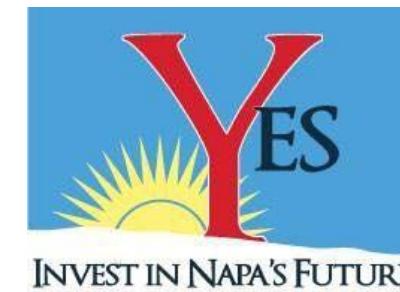


DEDICATED FUNDS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

- San Francisco (3 funds) – set asides, gross receipts
- Oakland (2 funds) – set aside, parcel tax
- Richmond – set aside, real estate transfer tax
- Santa Cruz - cannabis
- Capitola – hotel tax
- Alameda - sales tax
- Sacramento set-aside/cannabis

ELECTIONS 2016, 2018, 2020, 2022 – 20 measures

- ▶ NAPA – 45%
- ▶ MARIN – 63%
- ▶ SOLANO – 59% / 45%
- ▶ SACRAMENTO - 66, 45, 62%,
- ▶ RICHMOND – 76%, 65%, 63%
- ▶ ALAMEDA – 66%, 64%
- ▶ SAN FRANCISCO – 51%
- ▶ OAKLAND – 62%
- ▶ SAN JOAQUIN – 63%, 65%
- ▶ CAPITOLA – 75%
- ▶ SANTA CRUZ - 83%
- ▶ MONTEREY – 41%
- ▶ SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO 47%





BAY AREA EARLY CARE MEASURES

Over \$360M in San Francisco, Alameda, Oakland

PROMOTING EQUITY – SERVING VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

- Increased childcare –scholarships, vouchers grants to centers, etc.
- Wages and benefits for early care workforce, recent raises in SF \$8K - \$30K/yr.
- Preschool
- Facilities and supplies
- Support services – mental health, developmental screenings, basic needs, parent support
- Children's hospital services
- Parent support and basic needs
- Quality enhancement, support for workers
- Administration and evaluation

✓ CITIZEN OVERSIGHT BODIES

✓ BUDGET BASELINES, NO SUPPLANTATION

✓ MANDATED PLANNING, PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



REVENUE OPTIONS: TAXES AND SET-ASIDES

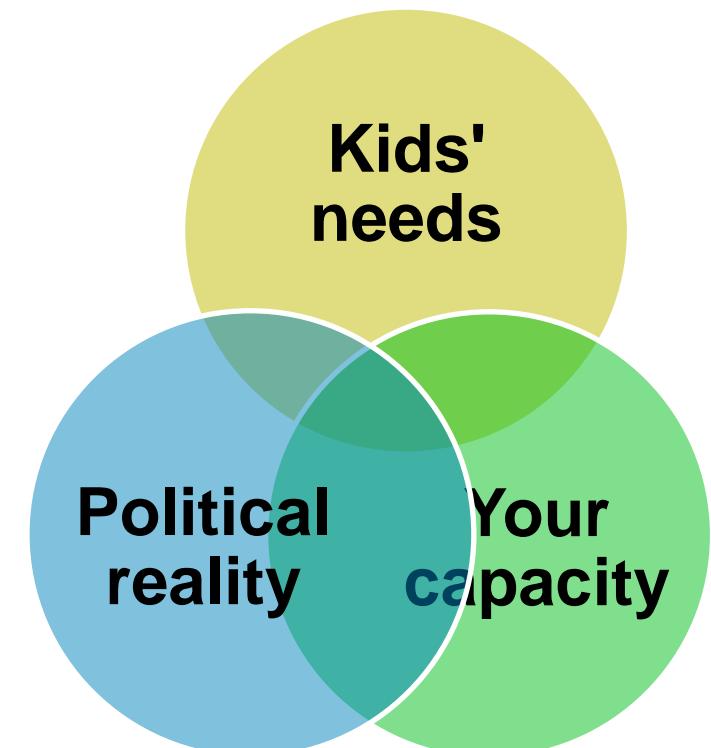
TAXES

Type	Activity Taxed	Limits
Local Sales Taxes	Sale of tangible personal property.	Combined 2% limit for all sales taxes within a county, unless statutory exception.
Parcel Taxes	Property's characteristic such as the square footage, the number of units, or any other metric other than property value.	Special tax limits apply. No rate limits.
Business License Taxes	Any type of lawful business.	If configured as a gross receipts tax, the tax must fairly reflect the proportion of the taxed activity within the jurisdiction.
Cannabis Taxes	Lawful businesses that sell non-medical cannabis.	No rate limit.
Utility User Taxes	Utilities, such as electricity, gas, water, and telephone services.	No rate limit.
Transient Occupancy Taxes	Staying 30 days or fewer in hotels, motels, or other lodging facilities.	No rate limit.
Documentary Transfer Taxes	Transfer of title to property.	Local governments have already met statutory maximum.
Real Estate Transfer Taxes	Transfer of real estate ownership.	Limited to charter cities.
Admission Taxes	Entrance costs fees to access sporting events, theaters, parking lots, etc.	No rate limit.

SET-ASIDES

Dedicated portion of existing revenue to children and youth.

- Can be done in charter cities and counties.
- No limit on amount – only what is politically feasible.
- Generally, require voter initiative





Roadmap For Creating Dedicated Funding

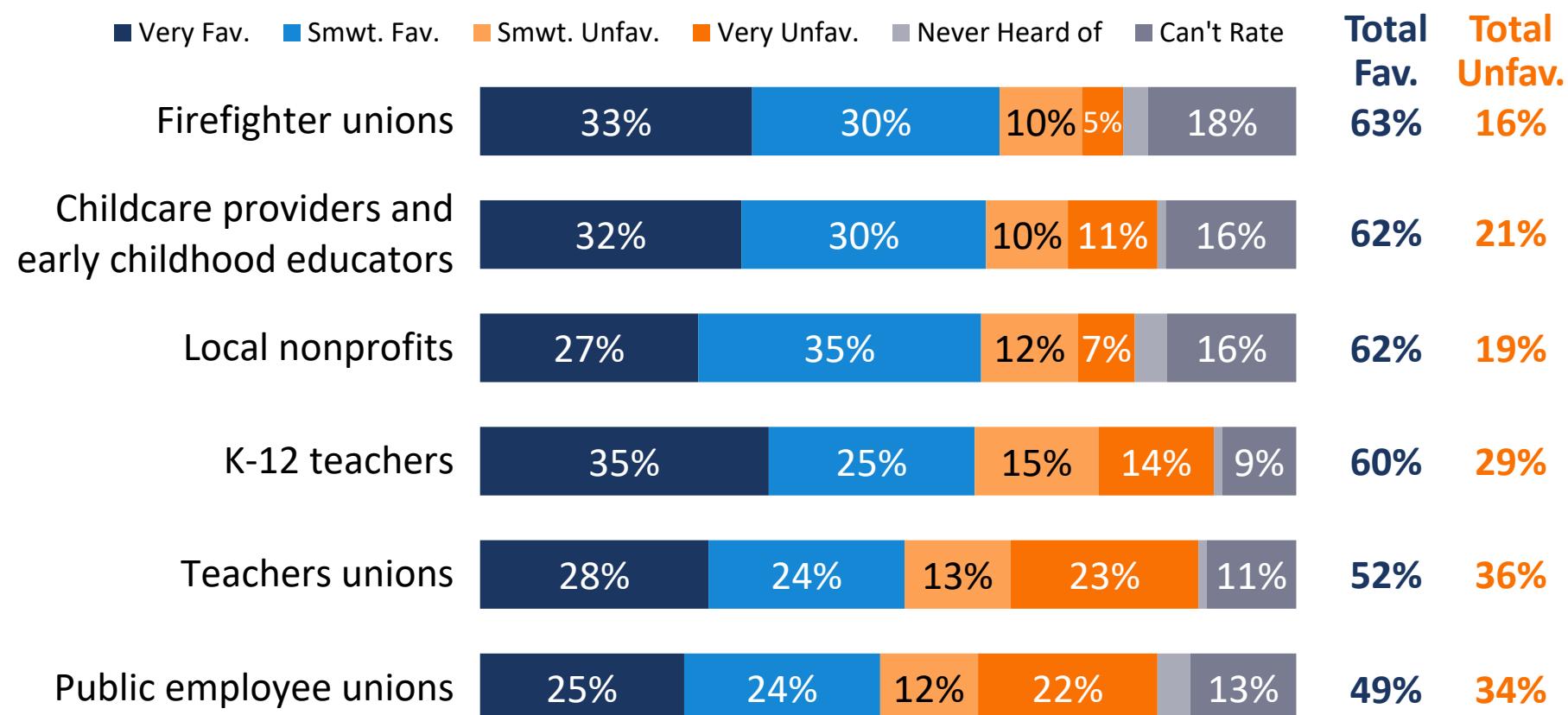
THERE ARE KEY ELEMENTS OF WORK, BUT NO LINEAR PATH
TIMELINE – 2 – 6 YEARS – BUILDING POLITICAL CAPITAL

- **Making the case**
- **Building the base**
- **Crafting the proposal**
- **Mounting the campaign**

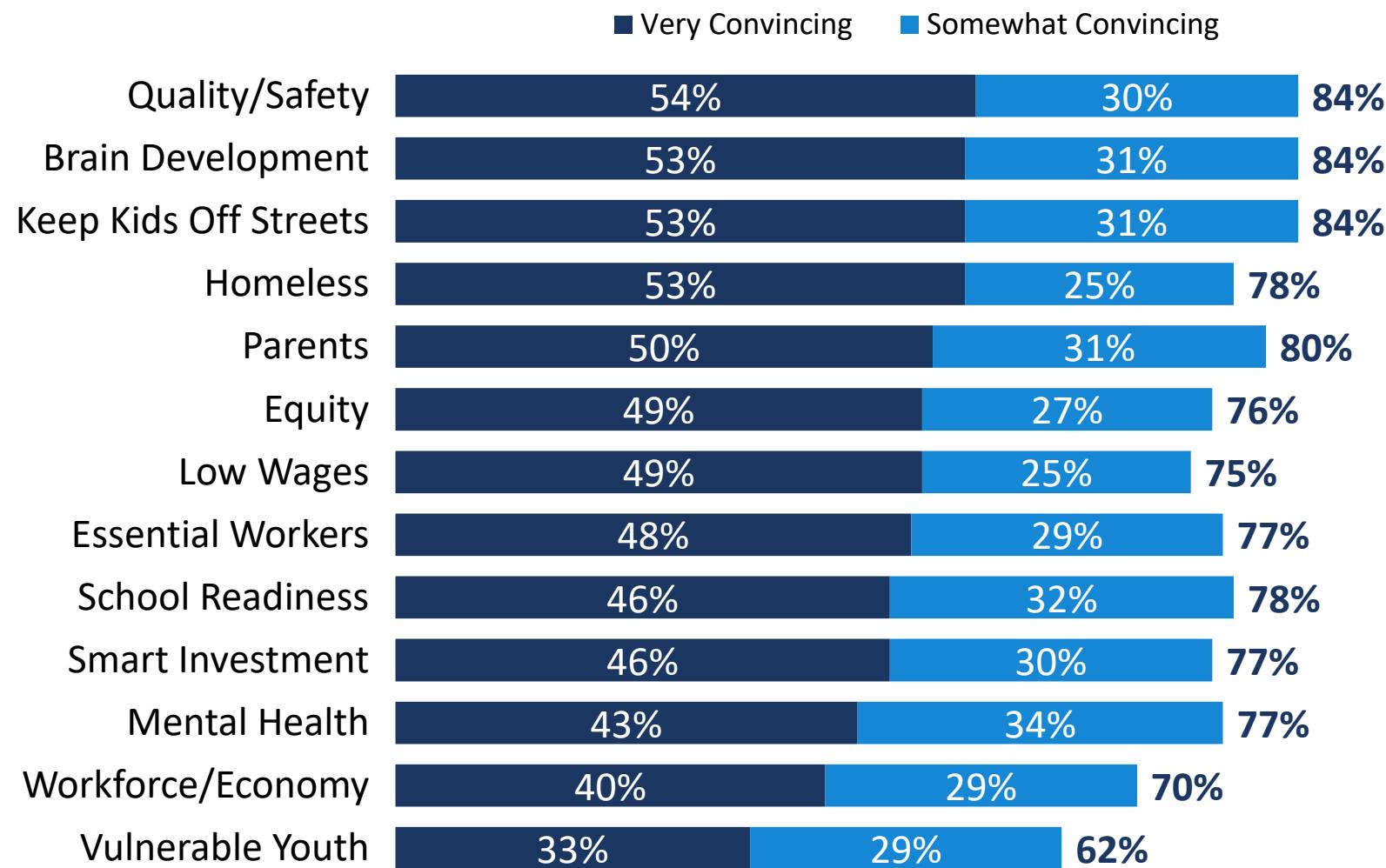


Voters view firefighter unions, childcare providers and local nonprofits most favorably...

I'm going to mention a few people and organizations that are active in public life. Please tell me whether you have an overall favorable or unfavorable opinion of that person or organization.



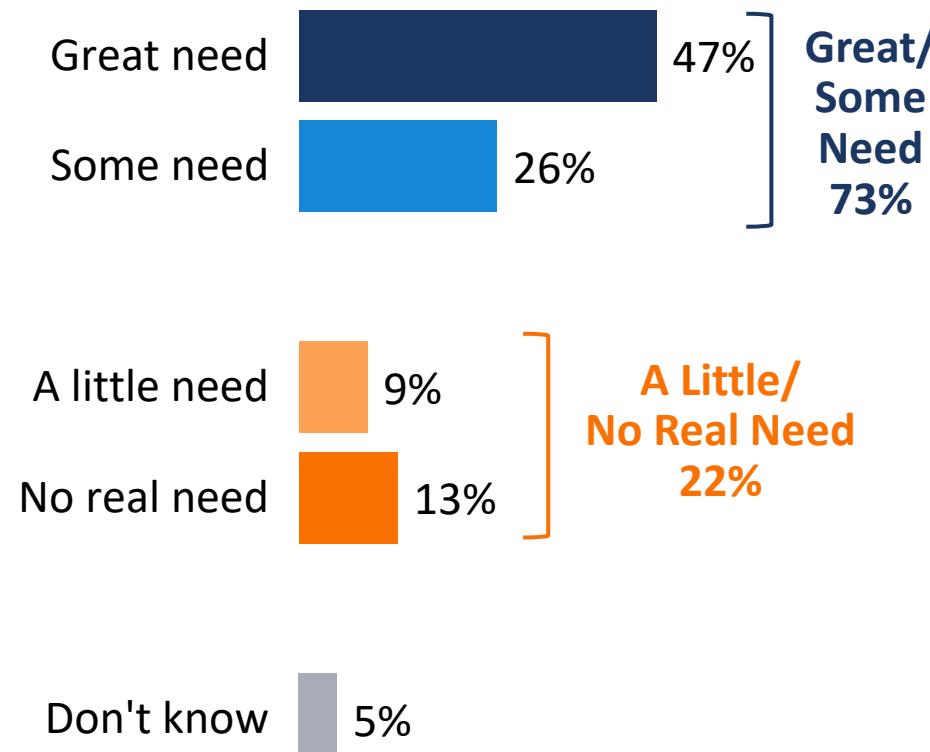
Messages on quality and safety of care, brain development, keeping kids out of trouble and supporting homeless children are all highly compelling.



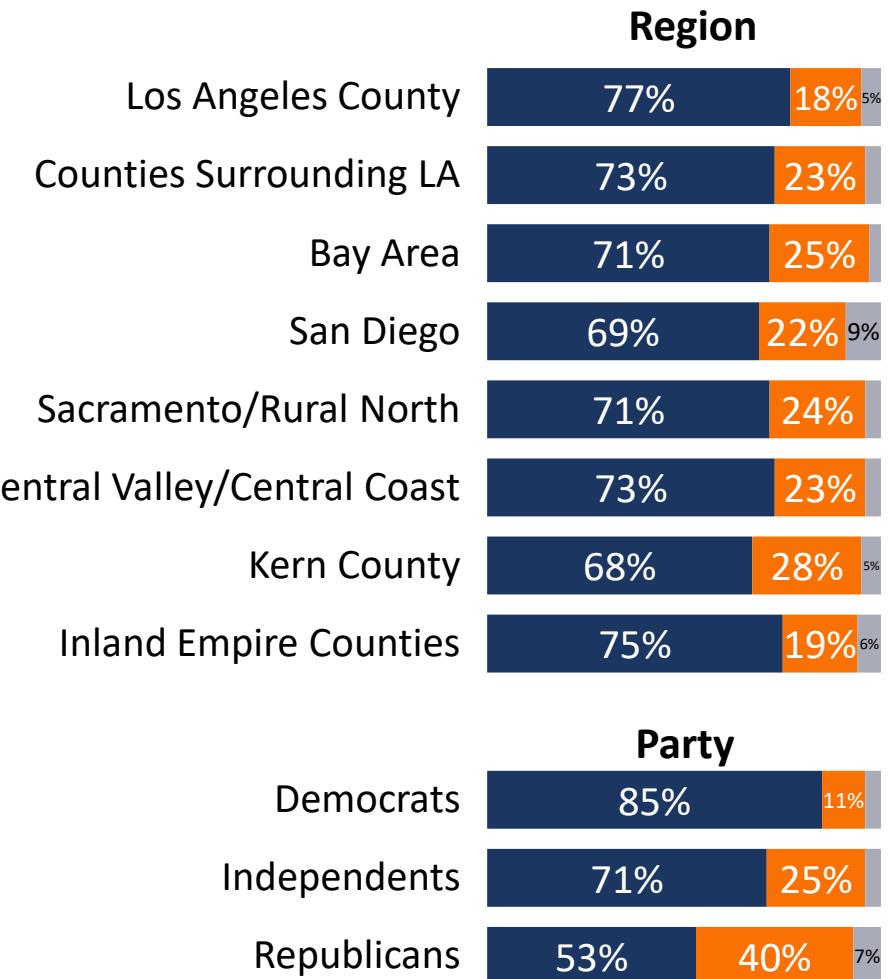
Q13. I would like to read you some statements from supporters of increasing funding for programs to support children and youth. Please tell me whether you find it very convincing, somewhat convincing, or not convincing as a reason to support the proposed such increased funding. Split Sample

Three-quarters say there is a need for additional funding for programs serving children and youth.

Do you think there is a great need for additional funding, some need, a little need, or no real need for additional funding for programs that serve children and youth in your community?



■ Great/Some Need ■ A Little/No Real Need ■ Don't Know



Voters statewide rank untreated mental health among kids as a major concern.

Extremely/Very Serious Problem

Issue	All Voters	Region						Central Valley/ Central Coast
		Los Angeles County	Counties Surrounding Los Angeles	Bay Area	San Diego	Sacramento/ Rural North		
Homelessness	94%	95%	93%	94%	96%	97%	92%	
The cost of living	90%	92%	91%	86%	89%	87%	92%	
The cost of housing	85%	85%	91%	80%	79%	95%	83%	
Substance abuse	79%	74%	81%	81%	79%	70%	89%	
Government waste and inefficiency	75%	71%	85%	65%	67%	79%	81%	
Untreated mental health issues for children and youth	74%	72%	75%	73%	75%	84%	74%	
Crime	71%	71%	71%	78%	61%	66%	75%	
^Gun violence	63%	69%	57%	68%	61%	57%	61%	
The quality of K-12 public education	60%	62%	58%	61%	63%	55%	60%	
The amount you pay in taxes	59%	55%	68%	59%	59%	45%	63%	
The lack of affordable childcare and pre-school for parents	59%	60%	56%	53%	66%	63%	65%	
Climate change	53%	66%	39%	55%	59%	54%	46%	
A lack of afterschool programs for youth	49%	42%	55%	49%	48%	50%	54%	

Q3. I'm going to read you a list of issues that some people say are problems in California. Please tell me whether you think it is an extremely serious problem, a very serious problem, a somewhat serious problem, or not a serious a problem in California. ^Not Part of Split Sample

WHAT HAVE CAMPAIGNS TAUGHT US?

- ▶ Elections are unique organizing and communication opportunities to create sustainable local funding.
- ▶ The early care community has huge potential power. But must develop new skills and role in civic life.
- ▶ It takes a village – partnerships, coalitions, ORGANIZING!
- ▶ Proposing positive solutions is compelling.
- ▶ Parents have influential voices. Children are irresistible.
- ▶ Must engage in political arena.
- ▶ Must be willing to take the initiative and take risks.
- ▶ Drama helps make the case. Media amplifies the case.
- ▶ Staff support is essential.
- ▶ IT ALL COST MONEY. Foundations and C4 funders can make THE difference.

Local organizing is exhilarating and empowering.

Process matters.



WHAT NEEDS TO BE IN PLACE?

- ▶ **Convening organization**
- ▶ **Diverse network/coalition prepared for political engagement**
- ▶ **Baseline information on community needs**
- ▶ **Agreement about what to fund**
- ▶ **Time and motivation to organize the base**
- ▶ **Resources to lay groundwork, e.g., dedicated staff support**
- ▶ **Political champion(s) - desirable, not necessary**
- ▶ **Passion and willingness to take risks**



FIRST 5'S CAN BUILD THE SKILLS AND POLITICAL CAPITAL TO PLAY A POWERFUL ROLE IN PUBLIC FINANCE DECISIONS

GETTING STARTED

- Prepare for a new type of work – skills, structure, vision
- Research key foundational info – costs, revenue, legal options
- Increase focus on broader public – town halls, media
- Strengthen network of support for young children – build a mailing list and a coalition
- Build political capital – Visibility in public forums (at Board of Supervisors), Nurture a political champion, Engage in budget advocacy
- Have early successes – publicize them. Funding, Task Forces, Policy resolutions, Events, Reports





MAKE REVENUE ADVOCACY A PART OF YOUR WORKPLAN

- Develop policies and priorities that can lay groundwork for a revenue measure.
- Dedicate staff time to mobilize the resources of a network and ensure ongoing momentum:
 - Research
 - Convene meetings
 - Develop materials
 - Train parents, volunteers
 - Liaison with decision-makers
 - Outreach to media
 - Build the coalition





Not yet ready for a single dedicated measure?

**CONTINUE TO BUILD THE MOVEMENT.
YOU CAN START WITH LOCAL BUDGET BATTLES**

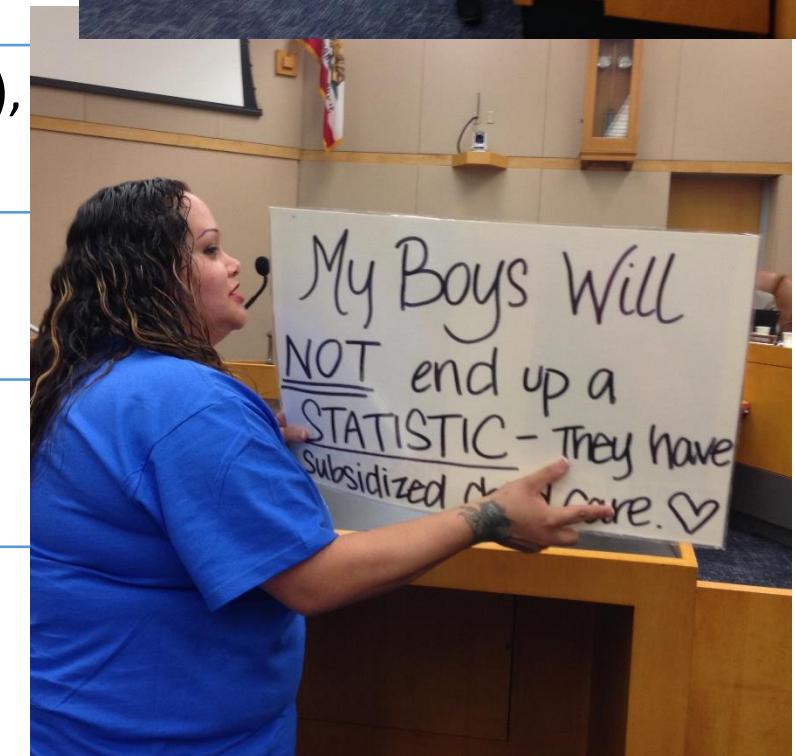
Keep eyes open for emerging local measures. Get a seat at the table when new money could become available.

Form alliances with related advocacy groups (housing, mental health), and organizations with money for campaigns (unions, hospitals)

Start ballot experience with low hanging fruit – small changes in city code (e.g., San Diego building childcare centers in parks)

Consider creating civic infrastructure first – departments, offices, cabinets, councils.

Keep vision of full funding alive. Don't let anyone think that the problem is solved – until it is.





TRAINING, COACHING, CONSULTATION BY FNG

Learning community, Presentations to individual communities,
Consultation with campaign leaders, National conference

- Assessing political feasibility
- Revenue options
- Legal issues
- Prioritizing needs
- Assessing your local budget
- Drafting a measure
- Timelines
- Political strategy
- Campaign budgets
- Coalition partners
- Fundraising
- Communication strategies, including digital
- Messaging
- Polling



FUNDING THE NEXT GENERATION



- ▶ Provides technical assistance to coalitions working on local funding streams for children and youth
- ▶ Sponsors learning communities and conferences
- ▶ Support includes speaking, convening, facilitating, trouble-shooting, coaching, and more.
- ▶ Numerous tools and resources are available.

CONTACT:

Margaret Brodkin, Margaret@fundingthenextgeneration.org

415-794-4963

www.fundingthenextgeneration.org