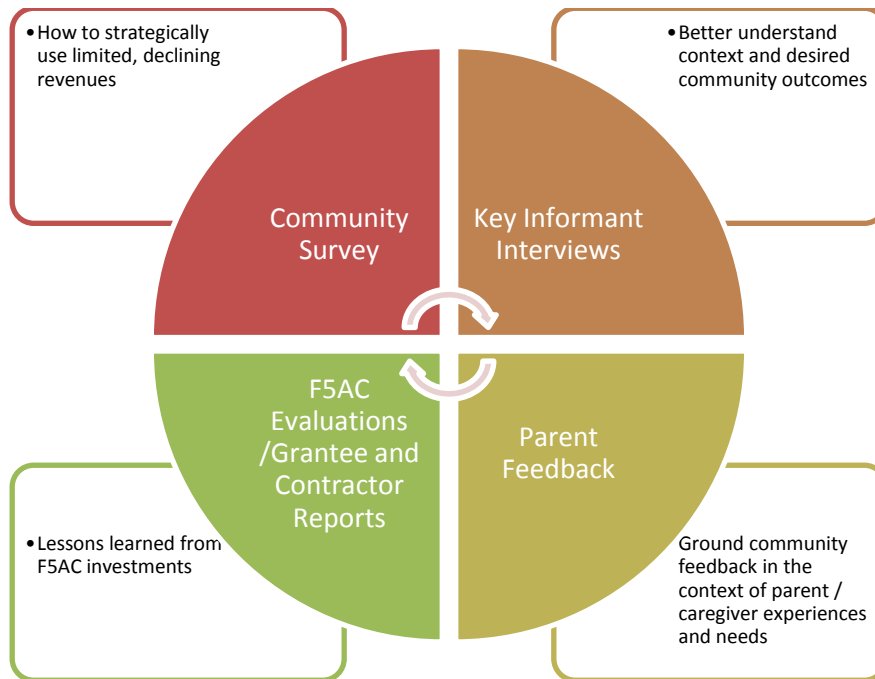


**STRATEGIC PLANNING: COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS**

**METHODOLOGY**

An online community survey was opened from December 20, 2011 through January 12, 2012. The outreach was based on available email addresses from contacts in First 5 Alameda County’s database, ECC Online. Individuals were welcome to share the survey with their personal contacts. So the outreach naturally selected individuals who have had some prior or current relationship with F5AC. A total of 560 respondents completed the survey.

Additional efforts to obtain community feedback will be conducted via upcoming key informant interviews, review of existing contractor reports and F5AC evaluation reports. Staff is reviewing parent feedback collected over time and determining what additional feedback should be obtained.

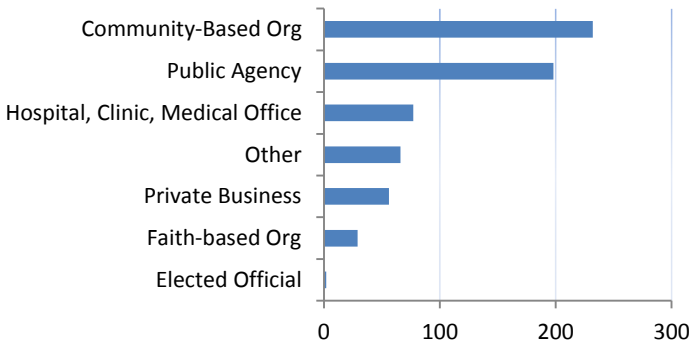


Closer to the end of the calendar year, a set of existing community meetings will be identified to vet a draft of strategic plan updates to date.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM COMMUNITY SURVEY

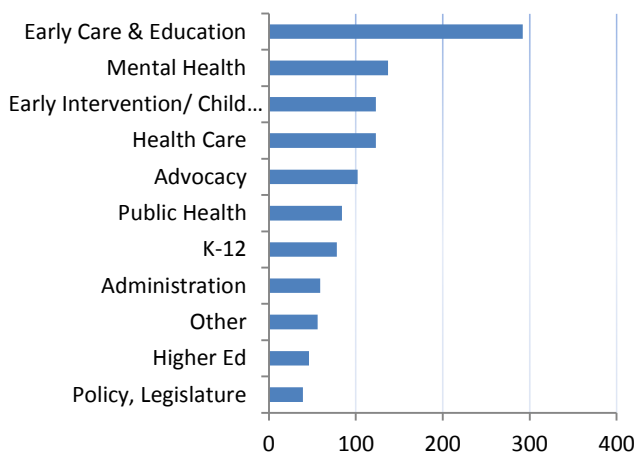
### Who participated in the survey?

**Number of Respondents by Org Type**



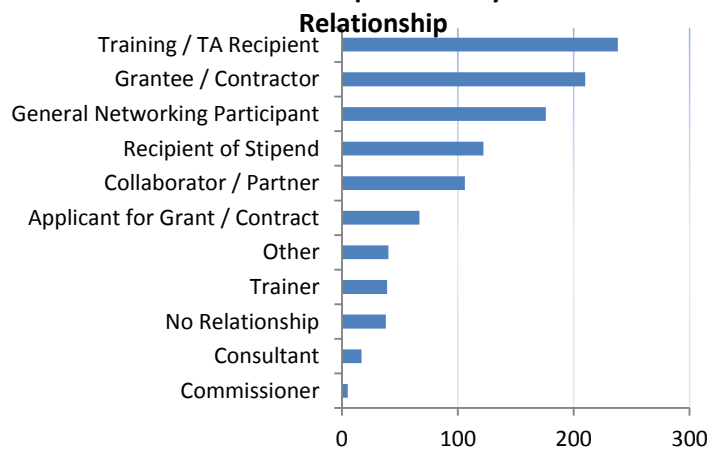
43% represented community-based organizations, 36% public agencies and 14% from a hospital, clinic or medical office.

**Number of Respondents by Profession\***



Over 53% were from early care and education, 22% each from mental health, health care and early intervention or child development agency. 15% to 18% were affiliated with advocacy, K-12 education, and public health organizations.

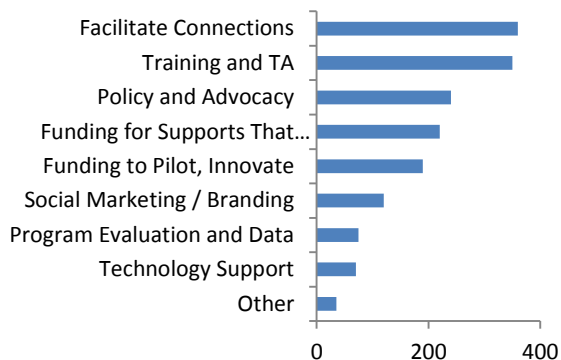
**Number of Respondents by F5AC Relationship**



43% of the respondents were past participants of a F5AC training and/or technical assistance, 38% were past or current grantees or contractors, 32% participated in general networking opportunities facilitated by F5AC, and 22% received a stipend for participating in ECE professional development activities. 19% considered themselves collaborators or partners of F5AC. A smaller group represented individuals who applied for grants or contracts (12%) and those with no prior relationship to F5AC (7%).

## What should First 5 Alameda County direct its resources towards?

### Relative Priorities, Based on Top 3 Choices



Given a chance to rank items from a list of ways to use F5AC resources, the top three priorities that surfaced are:

- Facilitating connections between services / supports that serve young children
- Training and technical assistance in capacity building on early childhood topics, and
- Policy and advocacy

### Recurring themes

It was clear the respondents were aware of the impact of declining tobacco tax revenues on F5AC's future services and direction. The majority of feedback validated the strategic focus on:

1. Policy, Advocacy and Communication: keep early childhood at the policy, program and budget development discussions, assist in developing funds for early childhood programs, communicate successes to broader community
2. Community and Provider Capacity Building: encourage best practices and ongoing professional development, build community's capacity to implement strong programs
3. Continuum of Care and Linkages to improve families' experiences in accessing supports they and their young children need: improve connections between providers and break down system silos, streamline, coordinate services, bring agencies to each other

Respondents also resonated with the need for F5AC to:

- Stay anchored in supporting parenting, beginning supports prenatally, and helping families with accessing basic needs
- Close gaps in services that other entities are not able to fill by helping identify gaps in supports and services and funding supports to close those gaps
- Build community "hubs" where caregivers and providers can go to for resources and information
- Support community's ability to advocate for their programs through research, data collection, testing innovative strategies, and bringing in funding sources

### Concerns raised by respondents

When asked what F5AC should NOT fund respondents suggested that

- F5AC should not *waste* resources; it should choose investments that are beneficial to the community. For example,
  - F5AC should use evaluation data and communication / marketing more effectively, without the wasting resources on "slick" ads (some confusion between First 5 California media campaigns and F5AC materials). These types of investments should help build infrastructure and communication capacity in the community.

- F5AC should not duplicate or compete with community organizations who have the capacity or who can build their capacity to deliver services. There is a perception that F5AC investments go toward self-preservation.
- Although some comments encouraged continued funding for direct services, a larger number of respondents recommended directing resources away from direct services, or away from using F5AC internal staff for direct services.
- F5AC should not become detached from families and the direct service sector. F5AC should invite local input, listen to the community, learn from practices on the ground.
- Although F5AC provided an effective safety net for children at high risk of developmental delay, some respondents would rather see renewed focus on early childhood and prevention, not just backfilling for essential services.
- F5AC should not spread investments too thinly, but be cautious about being overly narrow.
- F5AC programs have increased demand for services and supports that don't exist in the community, or whose funding is severely compromised or vulnerable.

Repeated themes highlight the desire to use funding for programs that:

1. Demonstrate positive outcomes
2. Build new partners and collaborations
3. Have working plans for sustainability or can leverage other funding
4. Are practical, realistic
5. Are helpful to the community
6. Meet identified community / family needs

#### **CONTRASTING VIEWS ON THE SAME THEME**

Differences of opinion were expressed regarding:

- Whether, and how, to balancing funding for innovation or non-traditional approaches with proven and evidence-based programs; between being prescriptive about standards of practice versus appreciating local approaches
- Equity in funding allocation; e.g., should investments target highly paid site directors versus poorly paid teachers / family providers, poor versus working class versus well-to-do families, small and medium organizations versus large agencies, populous neighborhoods versus countywide reach?
- Appropriate funding levels; e.g., below \$75,000, which makes bringing programs to scale difficult, versus serving as the primary funder for programs that cannot continue after F5AC funding cycles end

In the follow-up with respondents who were willing to be interviewed, additional context and desired community outcomes can be explored with different stakeholders. Topics that could use deeper inquiry include:

1. How could F5AC strategies be more responsive to parents and provide more parenting supports?
2. Which community capacities does F5AC not know about, and can leverage?

3. What common outcomes could various county agencies get behind, and implement collaboratively?
4. Which “Community Benefits?” can F5AC impact, and how would they be measured?
5. How does F5AC decide whether to narrow versus broaden its reach or strategy?
  - a. Strategy or outcome specific
  - b. Disparity specific
  - c. Fidelity to best practices
  - d. End user (provider) specific: someone who sees a large number of families versus someone who serves a small number of families more intensively
6. What are various strategies for moving programs into the community?
7. What would a strong, resilient early childhood system of care look like?