

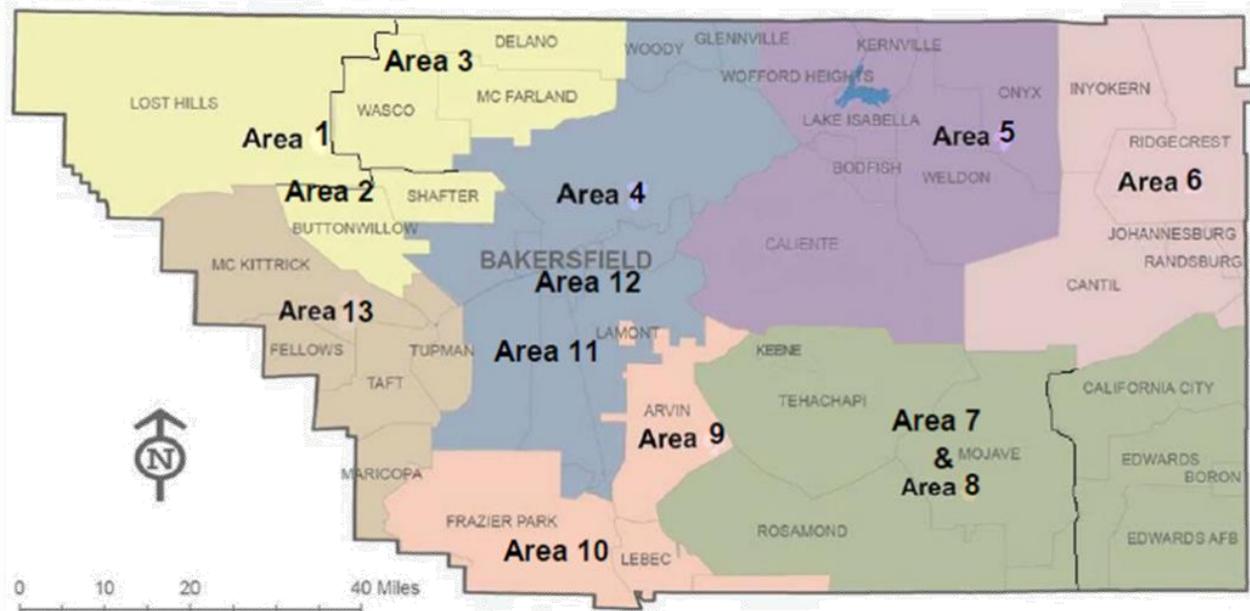


## 2017 Town Hall Meeting **RECAP**

### Purpose

The First 5 Kern Commission is beginning the 2020 Strategic Plan effort and the launch of the next 'Request for Proposal' effort. In preparation, staff met with communities across the county, hosting 12 Town Hall meetings for the purpose of:

1. Sharing First 5 Kern's history and planning steps for the next funding cycle beginning 2020;
2. Identifying priority needs and gaps in services that First 5 Kern can address in the next funding cycle;
3. Utilizing direct discussions with residents to better understand the needs throughout Kern County; and
4. Gathering attendee input, ideas and priorities to share with First 5 Kern Commission.



### Meetings

Town Hall meetings were held in the following cities and surrounding communities (not in order of priority):

1. **Lost Hills** – Area 1
2. **Shafter** – Area 2
3. **Delano** – Area 3
4. **Bakersfield - Oildale** – Area 4
5. **Kern River Valley** – Area 5
6. **Ridgecrest** – Area 6
7. **Mojave** – Areas 7 and 8
8. **Arvin / Lamont** – Area 9
9. **Mountain Communities** – Area 10
10. **Bakersfield - Greenfield** – Area 11
11. **Bakersfield - Southeast** – Area 12
12. **Taft** – Area 13

**First 5 Kern's Vision**

All Kern County children will be born into and thrive in supportive, safe, loving homes and neighborhoods and will enter school healthy and ready to learn.

**First 5 Kern's Mission**

To strengthen and support the children of Kern County prenatal to five and their families by empowering our providers through the integration of services with an emphasis on health and wellness, parent education, and early childcare and education.

**The Process**

Meetings were advertised throughout the County of Kern via flyers, networking and public service announcements. All meetings were open to the public.

Attendees were asked to share how they view programs and services in their surrounding region based on First 5 Kern's focus areas: (I) Health and Wellness, (II) Parent Education and Support Services and (III) Early Childcare and Education.

## LOST HILLS TOWN HALL MEETING – AREA 1

First 5 Kern staff met with 35 residents of the Lost Hills area, including parents and early childcare providers. The two-hour event was held at the Lost Hills Community Center, Wednesday, April 19, 2017. Twenty-nine children were hosted in the outdoor recreation area.

### **Town Hall Hosted By:**

- Lost Hills Family Resource Center (LH FRC)  
Lost Hills Union School District  
14823 Office Lane  
Lost Hills, CA 93249

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The LH FRC provides direct family support services through:

- a. Case management.
- b. Parenting classes.
- c. Health screenings and referrals.
- d. Promoting parents' knowledge of developmental milestones and norms.
- e. Center-based and kindergarten transition services.

### **Discussion Results**

#### **I. Health and Wellness**

- There is limited access to pediatric services in the Lost Hills area.
  - a. Residents must travel to Wasco or Shafter to see a pediatrician.
  - b. Omni Health offers services only three days a week in Lost Hills.
  - c. Extended clinic hours are needed because people have jobs.
  - d. Dental care is not provided locally on a regular basis.
- Prenatal support services are needed.
  - a. The Nurse Family Partnership program serves limited numbers of people.
- Additional child mental health services are desired because:
  - a. Behavioral counseling for children infants to five years of age is needed.
  - b. Residents must travel out of the area for all counseling services, usually to Delano or Bakersfield but sometimes farther, depending on the age of the child and the severity of their condition (including children under 18 years).
  - c. There is difficulty getting to screenings and assessments for speech and language issues for pre-kindergarten aged children.
  - d. Child and parent counseling services would address early childhood behavioral concerns; including children who need services before they reach kindergarten.
  - e. One-on-one counseling for parents is needed to better address parenting styles and behavior issues.

## **II. Parent Education and Support Services**

- Parenting classes using the Nurturing Parenting curriculum are offered in ten-week sessions by the LH FRC. They are well received by local residents because they help parents understand child development stages, parenting styles, discipline techniques and much more.
  - a. The classes provide a link to case management services through the LH FRC, including home visits, assessing educational concerns, parenting techniques, and providing bilingual learning resources.
  - b. The generational and cultural differences between parents should be addressed during parenting classes.
- A parenting support project would assist with dealing with:
  - a. Postpartum and/or ongoing depression.
  - b. Children's behavioral issues such as concerns with drugs and bullying in schools.
  - c. Understanding political challenges raised in the media.

## **III. Early Childcare and Education**

- LH FRC provides excellent early childhood education which they wish to see continue.
- LH FRC provides screenings using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire-3 (ASQ-3) to help parents determine if their child's development is on track for their age.
- Attendees expressed a desire to increase preschool capacity to:
  - a. Include infant/toddler programs before age three.
  - b. Increase preschool capacity to alleviate shortages that cause waiting lists.
  - c. Provide speech and language assessments and support services.
  - d. Increase center-based activities beyond three hours per day.
- Head Start and LH FRC programs work well together.

## **IV. Other Comments**

- Increase activities available to children (e.g. organized sports).
- Ambulance services 'in area' can be a wait time of 30 minutes in an emergency.

**--- END LOST HILLS ---**