



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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First 5 California Announces New Deputy Director *Organization to prioritize legislation, hires government relations lead*

Sacramento, Calif. — [First 5 California \(First 5\)](#) announced this week the hiring of Jorge De La Cruz as the organization's Deputy Director of External and Governmental Affairs. De La Cruz will lead the development and implementation of the organization's bold public policy agenda guided by the Commission's North Star.

"I am so excited to continue our advocacy work on behalf of California's youngest children and families with Jorge," said Jackie Thu-Huong Wong, Executive Director of First 5 California. "He brings a wealth of expertise and dedication to public policy and I am confident in his ability to further strengthen our organization's leadership in the early childhood space as we continue working to achieve equitable outcomes for California's children, families, and communities."

With a diverse background spanning over a decade in communications, government affairs, and community engagement, Mr. De La Cruz has consistently demonstrated his commitment to improving the lives of Californians, particularly children and families.

Before joining First 5 California, Mr. De La Cruz served in key leadership roles where he navigated legislative landscapes, forged partnerships, and advocated for policies that impact communities statewide. Previously, Jorge held roles at Mendoza Immigration, the California Lottery, and the California Department of Public Health, where he spearheaded efforts to address pressing issues facing communities across the state. At Mendoza Immigration, Mr. De La Cruz served as Director of Communications, championed the rights of immigrant communities, and advocated for comprehensive immigration reform. While at the California Lottery, he played a key role as the Assistant Deputy Director of Public Affairs and Communications in enhancing public awareness of the Lottery's impact on education funding.

"I am proud to join First 5 California as their new Deputy Director of External and Government Relations. Joining a team dedicated to the well-being of children in the state is both an honor and a privilege," said Mr. De La Cruz. "I look forward to collaborating with stakeholders and communities to champion the early childhood development initiatives that will shape a brighter future for California's children."

With his diverse background, strategic vision, and unwavering commitment to serving the community, Mr. De La Cruz is poised to elevate policies, practices, and resources that help to create trauma-informed, healing-centered, and culturally responsive systems that serve families and young children in California and create lasting impact.

For more information about First 5 California, visit www.ccfc.ca.gov.

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ABOUT FIRST 5 CALIFORNIA:

First 5 California was established in 1998 when voters passed Proposition 10, which taxes tobacco products to fund services for children ages 0 to 5 and their families. First 5 California programs and resources are designed to educate and support teachers, parents, and caregivers in the critical role they play during a child's first five years – to help California kids receive the best possible start in life and thrive. For more information, please visit www.ccfc.ca.gov.