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**First 5 San Bernardino Commemorates the Retirement of  
Executive Director Karen Scott**

*After 46 years of public service, including 18 years leading First 5 San Bernardino, Karen Scott retires following a career dedicated to championing children's early development*

**SAN BERNARDINO, CA (March 13, 2026)** – [First 5 San Bernardino](#) prepares to bid a heartfelt farewell to Executive Director Karen Scott following the organization's inaugural *State of First 5 San Bernardino* event on March 20, marking the culmination of a 46-year career in public service to San Bernardino County.

Scott has served as Executive Director of First 5 San Bernardino for 18 years, leading the organization's efforts to promote, support and enhance the health and early development of children from the prenatal stage through age 5. Reflecting on her career, Scott reflected feeling an immediate calling to work that supports young children and families.



"Helping children thrive from the very start of their lives has been at the heart of my work for many years," said Karen Scott. "Raising children truly takes a village, and I'm deeply proud that First 5 San Bernardino has been able to support families across our county."

Scott's education and background is in Public Administration and Administration of Justice, and she has worked in the realm of Human Services for [San Bernardino County](#) since 1977 before her role at First 5 San Bernardino. She has committed decades to strengthening systems that support children, families and communities.

First 5 San Bernardino was founded in 1998 and funded by The California Children and Families Act, through excise taxes on cigarettes and tobacco products. First 5 San Bernardino has built sustaining collaborations with dozens of partner agencies, nonprofits and community stakeholders to help thousands of families. Through initiatives such as [Quality Start](#), [Help Me Grow Inland Empire](#), [Maternal Health Network](#), [Footsteps2Brilliance](#) and more, the organization works to ensure all children in San Bernardino County are healthy, safe and prepared to thrive.

Under Scott's leadership, First 5 San Bernardino adopted an [outcomes-based approach](#) to measuring the impacts of its investments, demonstrating how programs improve the outcomes for children and families. She also helped guide the organization toward a systems-building model that strengthened collaboration across early childhood programs.

One example is Quality Start San Bernardino, which now supports more than 2,000 children across 30 locations throughout the county. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Scott helped ensure that funded partners could maintain continuity of services, so families continued receiving essential support during an unprecedented time.

Scott's contributions have earned numerous recognitions, including the Nancy B. Varner Lifetime Achievement Award from the [Loma Linda Children's Hospital Foundation](#) and the Woman of Distinction Award from [47th District Assemblymember Eloise Gomez-Reyes](#).

"Karen Scott has truly been a mentor to me since she entered the doors of First 5 San Bernardino 18 years ago," said Assistant Director Cindy Faulkner. "I thank her for her dedication, leadership and commitment to the First 5 staff, Commissioners, partners and the families that we serve. Wishing her a retirement filled with family, friends and many adventures."

First 5 San Bernardino will host a retirement celebration for Ms. Scott following the State of First 5 San Bernardino event on March 20, where she will also be honored with an official proclamation recognizing her decades of service.

Looking ahead, the organization remains committed to expanding its outreach to families across San Bernardino County. First 5 San Bernardino continues to partner with community organizations throughout the year to provide resources and support, from [free books and school supplies](#) to [summer safety education](#) and [wellness](#) programs.

For more information on First 5 San Bernardino, visit [First5SanBernardino.org](#).

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### **About First 5 San Bernardino**

First 5 San Bernardino's distinct purpose is to improve the lives of young children and their families by giving them the best possible start in life. For more than 27 years, First 5 San Bernardino has been working dynamically through strategic partnerships to promote, support and enhance the health and early development of children prenatal through age 5, their families and communities. Funded through the 1998 voter-approved initiative, California Children and Families Act (Proposition 10 tobacco tax revenues), First 5 San Bernardino has evolved into a system where stakeholders and services are integrated, coordinated and sustainable, and one that families experience as accessible, inclusive and equitable. For more information, visit [First5SanBernardino.org](#).