

Carpinteria Children's Project at Main



Mission

The Carpinteria Children's Project at Main will produce school-ready children by providing integrated, case-managed services to families from the prenatal stage through third grade. Services will address needs in health and wellness, pro-social behaviors, and pre-literacy language development. Impact will be gauged through an annual evaluation based on pre- and post assessment.

Vision

All children in Carpinteria demonstrate success in their cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development throughout their early school years.

Overarching Goal

All children entering kindergarten in Carpinteria Unified School District will meet school-ready expectations and be succeeding in third grade.

The Carpinteria Children's Project at Main

A quiet crisis is threatening school success for many of Carpinteria's children.

The *readiness gap* opens long before a child's first day of kindergarten and often results in academic struggles, poor self-esteem, and ultimately, school failure. Recent studies have shown that the readiness gap between disadvantaged children and children of means develops as early as nine months of age. The Carpinteria Children's Project at Main aspires to close the readiness gap by ensuring all children are "school ready." As early as the prenatal stage, the Project will provide parents with the knowledge and skills they need to help their children enter kindergarten at maximum readiness. K-ready children will progress upwards and demonstrate grade level proficiency in reading and mathematics by the end of third grade.

According to research, third grade proficiency is a key predictor of high school graduation. The Project's long-term, positive impact will be transformative for hundreds of Carpinteria students, as these future graduates will be well-positioned for admission to four-year colleges and universities. This is ambitious but not impossible given the Project's integrated services, case-management approach.

*Unlocking the potential of all
Carpinteria children*



Distinguishing this Project from Others

There are numerous and laudable efforts that endeavor to improve school performance, but they typically fall short of their goal for several reasons. First, the intervention is too late. It is both difficult and costly to "remediate" students who are already one or more grade levels behind, particularly in reading. With solid evidence that most of Carpinteria's entering kindergarteners are not school-ready, the most impactful intervention is one that occurs well before kindergarten even begins.

Second, other efforts address only a portion of the issues that hinder success. For example, a program that emphasizes fitness and nutrition but fails to address pro-social skills and pre-literacy will likely have a marginal impact on the child as a whole.

Finally, programs that lack sound pre/post assessment measures to gauge their effectiveness will have little understanding of the impact their programming has on the overall well-being of the children and families who participate. **The Carpinteria Children's Project is different because it provides comprehensive, integrated, case-managed services at the earliest possible time in a child's critical years of development.** Services are based on a thorough intake process that determines individual needs, while their impact is measured against expected results through tri-annual evaluation.

Targeting Carpinteria

Carpinteria is the ideal place in Santa Barbara County to successfully manage this unique project. With about 1,600 children ages infant to 8, the area is large enough for the Project to make a demonstrable and replicable difference, yet small enough to overcome obstacles that larger municipalities might pose. More importantly, there is compelling evidence gathered by the Project that a majority of Carpinteria's incoming kindergarteners are not school-ready. This immediately jeopardizes their long-term school success, allowing the achievement gap among these students to grow. This gap can be eliminated altogether if identified needs are addressed at the earliest possible time.

Besides manageability of scale and demonstrated need, the availability of a site large enough to house multiple Project-affiliated providers is another sound reason for a Carpinteria-based project. Having multiple services housed in one location optimizes the Project's ability to serve its members.

Managing the Work

The Project will identify its prospective participants through a variety of means. Each family will complete an intake process that includes an appraisal of needs (health/nutrition, parenting, adult education, etc.). All information will be entered into a database that will serve multiple purposes, including:

- (1) Maintaining updated contact information
- (2) Recording baseline data
- (3) Entering pre-and post assessment results for services received
- (4) Monitoring frequency of participation to ensure families are consistently receiving services
- (5) Evaluating the Project's overall effectiveness against expected results.

The Project will use contracted agencies and its own professional staff to provide services and research-based programs that by working in concert will yield school-ready children.

Project partners (*Carpinteria Unified School District, Community Action Commission of Santa Barbara, First 5 Santa Barbara*, and several private foundations), working with the Project evaluator (*University of California, Santa Barbara – Gevirtz School of Education*), will closely monitor services and programs for their effectiveness in attaining expected results. The partners will meet tri-annually to review performance data and to make adjustments as needed.



Connecting to Future

An investment in early childhood services and education is a first and very critical step toward success throughout a child's early years in school. As stated, reading mastery at third grade is a significant predictor of high school graduation...but graduation is not an end unto itself, it is merely a *benchmark* on a trajectory toward college readiness. Students who are meeting proficiency in third grade will continue to need support and advocacy through their school years if they are to gain entry into and be successful in four-year colleges and universities – which is the school district's ultimate goal for all Carpinteria students. To that end, our funding partners are mapping out additional case-managed services and programs that will take up where this project leaves off to address grades 4-12.

Cumulatively, these two initiatives will guide students along a successful pathway to college readiness and admission. When our "success map" is complete, we will present it to the community and then secure the needed resources to take action. Our obligation to the community is to show that the Project's long-term, concerted efforts will open doors of opportunity for all Carpinteria Unified School District students.

Ensuring Success

Four key strategies drive the Project's work:

STRATEGY 1: Establish parental and community awareness around the importance of the early years of development, prenatal to age 8.

STRATEGY 2: Provide high quality early childhood experiences through formal and informal settings for children ages birth to 8, that support the language and vocabulary development requisite for learning to read.

STRATEGY 3: Provide support to families and providers that promotes the development of the physical and emotional health of children.

STRATEGY 4: Broker partnerships that strengthen neighborhoods by building support for and involvement in education.

Funding the Effort

The annual Project budget is approximately \$2,427,600. Funding comes from a variety of existing sources as shown to the right. Sixty-one percent of the funding sources come from federal, state, and county dollars, with the balance supported by a collaboration of funders, including First 5 Santa Barbara, J.S. Bower Foundation, Hutton Foundation, Orfalea Foundations, United Way of Santa Barbara County, and the Santa Barbara Foundation.



Annual Budget \$ 2,427,600

- > Collaboration of Funders \$ 940,000
- > Community Action Commission - Head Start \$ 913,000
- > CA Department of Education \$ 402,000
- > SB County Public Health \$ 158,600
- > United Way of Santa Barbara \$ 14,000

