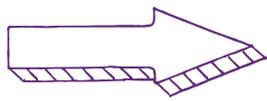


Success for Every Child



SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS:



Building Up the Child Care Supply through Faith-Based Organizations

Currently, San Mateo County faces a shortfall of 19,000 child care, preschool, and after school spaces. Existing providers are being squeezed by the Silicon Valley real estate market; renters are seeing unaffordable increases, and those looking to open new sites or expand face challenges such as lack of usable, affordable space and extreme development expenses and timelines. However, many individuals and organizations in the community are learning and developing new childcare spaces.

Opening childcare centers is not new to Heather Hopkins. After noticing a need for more childcare spaces that could accommodate the ever-changing schedules of busy families, she opened Toddle, a flexible childcare center that serves children ages two to six in Menlo Park. Today, Heather has joined forces with Build Up for San Mateo County's Children to help address the

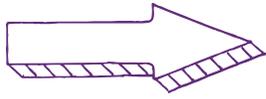


critical shortage of quality childcare facilities in San Mateo County by establishing child care centers on the grounds of existing faith-based organizations.

To Heather, the opportunity for faith-based organizations to help local children and families thrive by closing the educational opportunity gap is one that makes perfect sense. "If faith-based organizations knew the real benefits of using their space for early learning, it would be an obvious next step," she explains with vigor. "There is perfect alignment with early learning



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and faith-based organizations because the goal of each is to help a person to be the best they can be.”

With the help of funding from First 5 San Mateo County, and other public and private sources, Build Up has enlisted the help of Heather to work with Build Up’s director, Christine Padilla, to explore opportunities within faith-based organizations, become liaisons, and provide technical support in the community. The team helps to assess an organization’s potential for hosting onsite early learning programs and assist with the permitting, licensing and renovation processes to open (or expand) child care facilities. They also connect faith-based organizations with early learning partners so that they can operate high-quality preschool and child care programs.

Currently, Heather and Christine are working with eight faith-based organizations in the community - St. Andrew’s Lutheran Church and Sturge Presbyterian Church being two that are farthest along in the process. “If the churches were trying to do this work alone, they’d get so frustrated they would have quit early on,” said Heather. “We’re able to help them overcome the obstacles and understand the many complicated steps in the permitting process. Their vision for providing quality childcare on their church grounds is going to become a reality; it’s a win-win for everyone.”



To learn more about how First 5 San Mateo County and Build Up are creating innovative partnerships to grow and improve the supply of child care and preschool facilities in San Mateo County, visit <https://buildupsmc.com/>.



First 5 San Mateo County is entrusted with the strategic investment of nearly \$7 million public dollars each year specifically earmarked to help children and families in our county succeed. We work on behalf of the more than 53,000 children ages zero to five living here to ensure their every need is met, their families are supported and their future is a priority.