



## MISSION

*The mission of First 5 Sonoma County is to maximize the healthy development of all Sonoma County children from the prenatal stage to age five through support, education, and advocacy.*

First 5 Sonoma County funds programs and services for Sonoma County children from the prenatal stage to age five and their families. First 5 is funded by the California Children and Families Act (Proposition 10). This Act was passed by California voters in November 1998. It placed a tax on tobacco products and brings in more than \$500 million per year for First 5 statewide.

First 5 in each county in California receives a share of this tax money based on how many babies are born in that county each year. Sonoma County's share is about \$5 million annually.

The California Children and Families Act says that First 5 dollars must be spent to promote, support, and improve the early development of children five years old and younger. First 5 Sonoma County does this by funding programs and services for young children and their families and by working to improve early childhood development.

First 5 Sonoma County began in December 1998 when the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors created the Sonoma County Children and Families Commission. The Commission has seven members and governs First 5 Sonoma County. It makes funding decisions and oversees funded programs and services.

For the period 2006-2010, First 5 Sonoma County has selected six priority outcomes to guide its funding decisions. These outcomes focus on aspects of children's health, parent education and support, and early care and education. For more information about First 5 Sonoma County's priority outcomes, please see Strategic Plan documents on our website at [www.first5sonomacounty.org](http://www.first5sonomacounty.org).

## GATEWAY TO QUALITY MINI-GRANT PROGRAM

First 5 Sonoma County's Gateway to Quality Mini-Grant Program is available to child care providers and early childhood educators seeking to improve the quality of their child care environments. It is the required track for child care providers who have previously received a mini-grant from First 5 Sonoma County. There is no minimum request. (Please see section F regarding limits on the maximum size of requests.)

All Gateway to Quality mini-grants must help First 5 Sonoma County achieve the priority outcome: *Early care and education will be of the highest quality.*

## A. PURPOSE

The Gateway to Quality Mini-Grant Program is intended to support child care providers who have successfully completed an academic course (or equivalent) in Harms-Clifford environment rating scales\* (ECERS, FCCRS, or ITERS) to improve the quality of their child care environment. This grant program is part of First 5 Sonoma County's mini-grant program. Awards made through this program shall be used for materials and equipment, facility improvements or renovations, and other quality improvement projects. Awards are intended to improve scoring on the environment rating scales. Quality Improvement Validators will collaborate with applicants to insure that items requested address environment rating scale improvements.

\*The Harms/Clifford environment rating scales are used to define program quality in early childhood settings and to identify areas that need improvement. These scales are being used world wide and have been designed for center-based and family child care programs serving children of all ages. They evaluate the child care environment's effectiveness in meeting the needs of children in terms of health and safety, positive relationships, and opportunities for stimulation and learning.

## B. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

- Are located in Sonoma County;
- Serve families with children from birth to age 5 who reside in Sonoma County (at least 75% of children served);
- Possess a valid child care license from the State of California Community Care Licensing;
- Have **not** received any type of First 5 mini-grant in the last two years;
- Have successfully passed an environment rating scale course (SRJC's Child 200.4 or equivalent) ; and
- Have completed an environment rating scale self-assessment within the past twelve months, and updated it as necessary to reflect subsequent improvements.
- Child care providers who have previously received a mini-grant from First 5 Sonoma County must apply in this track. This track is also open to all child care providers who meet the eligibility requirements.

## C. ELIGIBLE USES

- Equipment, materials, and toy purchases;
- Facility improvements primarily benefiting the child care program
- Outdoor play area improvements; and
- Additional uses that may be identified in conjunction with the Gateway to Quality Improvement Validator.

## D. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Please submit **one (1) original and seven (7) copies of your application, including your entire environment rating scale self-assessment** to the address listed below. In order to be considered for funding, your application must include:

- A signed Application Cover Sheet with an original signature
- A completed Application Form (with attached narrative)
- A completed Budget Form (Please supply the details requested on the budget form; your application will not be funded if your budget is not complete.)
- A copy of your child care license

**Applications will not be reviewed if fewer than 7 copies are submitted with the original.**

## E. SUBMISSION DEADLINES

There are two application periods each year: **June 1 – July 15** and **December 1 – January 15**. Applications must be submitted **no later than 5:00 p.m.** on the last day of each application period. If the 15<sup>th</sup> falls on a weekend or holiday, applications will be accepted until 5:00 p.m. on the next business day. **Late applications will not be accepted to ensure a fair process for all applicants.**

Applications must be submitted by mail or messenger. **Faxed or e-mailed applications will not be accepted. Applications without an original signature on the cover sheet will not be accepted.**

**Mail or deliver applications to:** First 5 Sonoma County  
c/o Prevention and Planning Division  
490 Mendocino Avenue, Suite 202  
Santa Rosa, CA 95401  
Attention: Gateway to Quality Mini-Grant Program

## F. Notification

Each application will be evaluated and a funding decision will be delivered, in writing, approximately 14 to 16 weeks from the close of the application period.

## G. LIMITS AND PRIORITIES

### 1. Funding Limits

- Family child care providers licensed for 6 to 8 children may request up to \$2,000
- Family child care providers licensed for 12 to 14 children may request up to \$3,500
- Child care centers may request funding up to \$5,000

## 2. Special Consideration

Special consideration will be given to applications that focus on one or more of the following areas:

- Infant/toddler child care
- Child care for children with special needs\*
- Child care for monolingual/bilingual children provided by Spanish-speaking providers

The determination of whether or not an application receives “extra credit” in one or more of these areas will be at the sole discretion of the Commission.

\*Children with special needs refers to those children whose behavior or development affects the family’s ability to find and maintain child care. Special needs may include developmental delays, serious emotional disturbances, speech impairments, deafness, blindness, etc.

## H. SELECTION PROCESS

Your application will be reviewed by First 5 Sonoma County staff and the Mini- and Matching Grant Review Committee. The committee’s recommendations will be presented to the Commission for final approval. Not all applications will be recommended for funding. Applications may be recommended for full or partial funding or no funding. More information or revisions may be requested.

In order to receive mini-grant funding, you will be required to sign a contract agreement with the County of Sonoma and comply with all local, state, and federal laws and regulations.

## I. RESPONSIBILITIES OF GRANTEES

If you receive a mini-grant, you must:

- Certify that funds received through the Sonoma County Children and Families Mini-Grant Program **will not be used to replace (or supplant) funding from other sources**
- Not allow the use of tobacco products at your workplace
- Agree not to accept any funds from the tobacco industry, including event sponsorship and in-kind contributions
- Obey all applicable child passenger safety laws and regulations
- Agree to consult with an evaluation consultant designated by the Commission if required
- Comply with the terms of the contract agreement
- Keep careful records to document authorized expenses
- Keep copies of receipts for each item purchased
- Submit a final expense report in a timely manner

**If you do not comply with these responsibilities, you may be required to return your grant money, and you will not be considered for future funding.**

## J. APPLICATION EVALUATION AND AWARD PROCESS

First 5 Sonoma County will be looking for project applications that:

- Are from applicants who successfully completed all prior grants from First 5 Sonoma County
- Allow us to fund projects throughout all regions of the county
- Comply with all eligibility requirements

**First 5 Sonoma County**  
**490 Mendocino Avenue, Suite 202**  
**Santa Rosa, CA 95401**  
**(707) 565-6680**



## GATEWAY TO QUALITY MINI-GRANT APPLICATION COVER SHEET

Amount Requested from First 5 Sonoma County: \_\_\_\_\_  
(This amount must be \$5,000 or less depending on your eligibility, see section F.)

Project Name or Brief Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Tentative Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please allow four months or more after the application deadline.)

Applicant Agency or Individual: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Tax ID Number of applicant or fiscal agent: \_\_\_\_\_

[Social Security #, Federal Employee Identification Number, or non-profit status, e.g. 501(c)3]

Please note: Mini-grant awards to individuals may constitute taxable income — please consult your tax preparer for further information.

### CERTIFICATION OF APPLICATION

The Applicant Certifies:

To the best of my knowledge and belief, information in this application is true and correct. The application has been authorized by the governing board of the applying agency (if applicable). I understand that any materials created under this grant are public domain and may be used and/or reproduced by the State of California, the County of Sonoma Department of Health Services' Prevention and Planning Division and First 5 Sonoma County. I understand that this is a public document and open to public inspection.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Person authorized to bind this agreement)

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## GATEWAY TO QUALITY MINI-GRANT APPLICATION FORM

*Please answer the following questions on additional sheets of paper. Number your responses to match the question number and label each page with your name and the project name. Please type or neatly print your responses. Limit the length of your responses as indicated.*

1. Have you previously received mini-grant funds from First 5 Sonoma County?\*
- Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, indicate each mini-grant application month and year and the amount received:

_____	_____	\$ _____	_____	_____	\$ _____
month	year	amount	month	year	amount

\*If you are applying for an agency, please list previous mini-grants specific to the site(s) or program(s) for which you are applying.

2. Give a history of your organization and its capacity to undertake and complete the proposed project. (1/2 page limit)
3. Who will benefit from your project? How many individuals do you expect to reach? (Describe specifically who will benefit, i.e. age, gender, ethnicity, children with special needs, etc.) (1/2 page limit)
4. Clearly state which subscale(s) (i.e. space and furnishings, personal care routines/basic care, activities) your Gateway to Quality mini-grant will improve and why you wish to focus your mini-grant in those areas. See section A. (1/2 page limit).
5. On the attached budget identify the environment scale items you are addressing in your mini-grant request (i.e. dramatic play, music/movement, gross motor equipment) and the purchases you wish to make to improve your scores on these items.

6. If any of your environment rating scale scores in the Personal Care Routines/Basic Care subscale are below 3, describe below your plan to improve these scores.

Personal Care Routines / Basic Care Items	Current Score	Plan for Improvement



# SAMPLE

## GATEWAY TO QUALITY MINI-GRANT APPLICATION BUDGET FORM

Please use this format to fully itemize your project’s budget. Use a separate sheet of paper if necessary (using the same format). Include actual tax and shipping charges. Attach detailed information for each item you are asking for in the grant. For example, provide a copied page from a catalog or website that describes the item and lists its price. **Note: Mini-grant funds cannot be used to pay relatives or to pay anyone living in your household.**

Rating Scale Item	Score	<b>Requested Purchases and Quantity</b> Please attach descriptions and photos from a catalog or website to clearly identify the items you are requesting to improve your score.	<b>Total Amount</b>
1. Nap/Rest	1	Stackable cots – set of 5	\$169.95
2. Nap/Rest	1	Cot covers – set of 6	87.95
3. Dramatic Play	2	Multicultural Clothing – set of 5	149.00
4. Dramatic Play	2	Foods from many cultures – set of 4	49.95
5. Dramatic Play	2	Dress-up Storage Center – quantity 1	179.95
6. Child-related Display	3	Heavy-duty fold & roll cubby unit – quantity 1	499.00
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			
11.			
12.			
13.			
14.			
15.			
<b>LABOR/INSTALLATION (attach bid)*</b>			
17.			
18.			
		<b>Sub-Total</b>	\$1,135.80
		Shipping/Handling	\$170.25
		Tax	\$96.54
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,402.59</b>

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Rating Scale Item	Score	Requested Purchases and Quantity <small>Please attach descriptions and photos from a catalog or website to clearly identify the items you are requesting to improve your score.</small>	Total Amount
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			
11.			
12.			
13.			
14.			
15.			
16.			
<b>LABOR/INSTALLATION (attach bid)*</b>			
17.			
18.			
<b>Sub-Total</b>			
Shipping/Handling			
Tax			
<b>TOTAL</b>			

Applicant Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

\*If your project involves labor or installation (for example, assembling and installing new playground equipment), please describe who will do the work and whether it is paid or volunteer labor: \_\_\_\_\_