

Policy Evaluation: *Engaging the right people at the right time*

American Evaluation Association Conference 2013
October 17, 2013 | Washington, D.C.

Twitter:

@HarderCo

@first5monterey.org



About us



First 5 Monterey County supports community partnerships and programs that enhance the lives of children, from the prenatal stages through age 5, and their families.

Vision – All children reach their full potential in a family and community that values and respects childhood.



Harder+Company Community Research is a comprehensive social research and planning firm with offices in San Francisco, Davis, San Diego, and Los Angeles, California. Our mission is to help our clients achieve social impact through quality research, strategy, and organizational development services.

Learning Objectives

At the end of this session, you will be able to:

- + Articulate some benefits and challenges of reaching out to key influencers who are not the “usual suspects”
- + List at least three places to start looking for key influencers in your community and/or policy area of interest
- + State three strategies for increasing your response rate with this group of respondents

Overview

- + Background and context
 - *F5MC's emergent policy platform*
- + Evaluating the policy panorama
 - *Hearing from the right people*
- + Lessons and insights
 - *Identifying the benefits and possibilities*

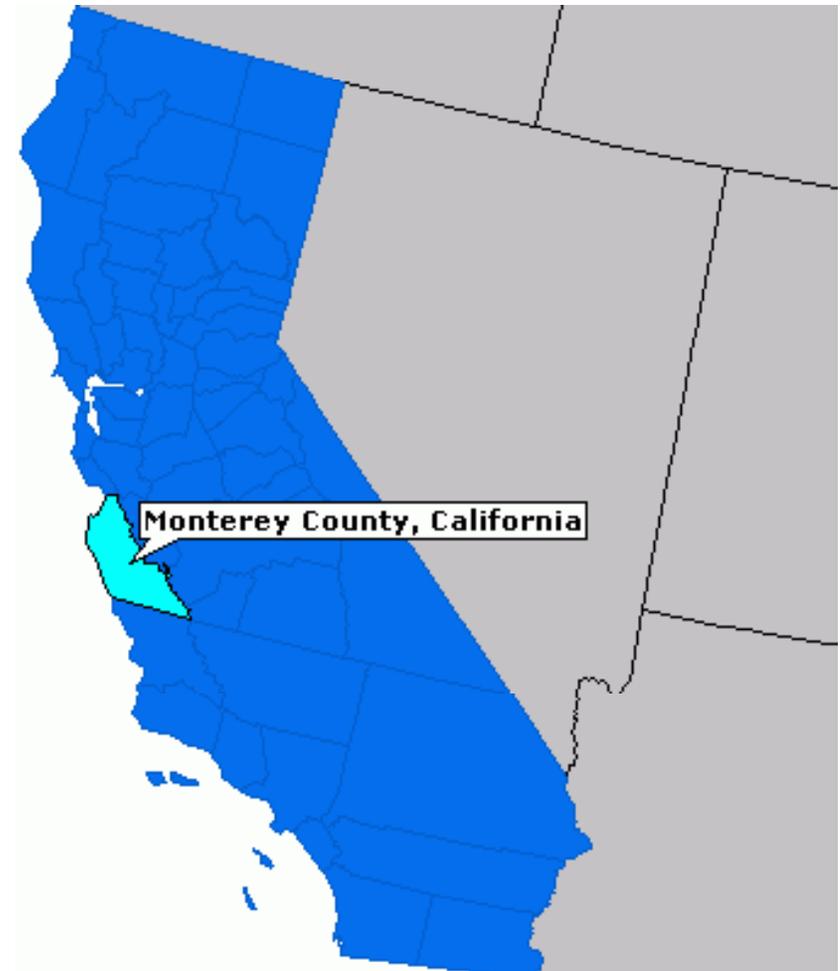




Background and context:
F5MC's emergent policy platform

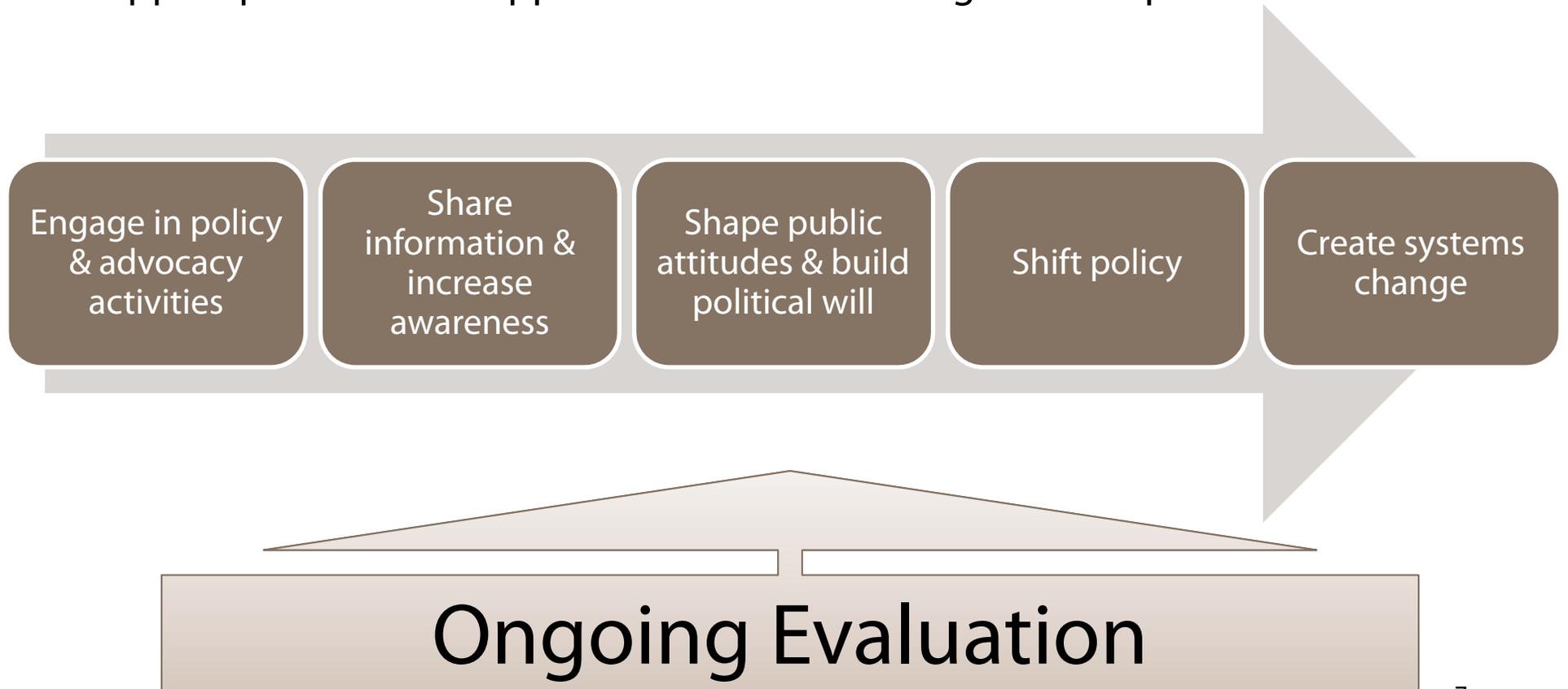
F5MC Background

- + Invests in child and parent development during the earliest years
- + Works to elevate the visibility of early childhood development and impact public policies that support all children to reach their full potential



F5MC's Policy & Advocacy Efforts

F5MC seeks to increase awareness, identify new champions, and build the will of the community to collaborate intentionally, shift resources, and support policies that support children in reaching their full potential.





Evaluating the policy panorama: *Hearing from the right people*

Research questions

- 1) What are the **top policy issues** in Monterey County? How is early childhood development related to those top policy issues?
- 2) What are the **opportunities and challenges** facing early childhood development in local policy panorama?
- 3) How has F5MC promoted **local policy and advocacy work** in early childhood development?

Methods to get some answers

- + Grantee Survey
- + Community Partner Survey
- + Media Tracking
- + **Key Informant Interviews**
 - Opportunity for “key influencers” and the “usual suspects” to offer their perspectives

The challenge with selecting stakeholders

- + Hearing from the “right people” whose views on policy issues carry weight and predictive value*
- + There is a tendency to hear from the “usual suspects” who are used to participating in these kinds of interviews:
 - Public sector leaders
 - Elected officials (or their representatives)

Tradeoffs: Limiting interviews to the “usual suspects”

Pros

- + Easier to get a hold of, though you sometimes get a representative
- + Breadth of knowledge about a host of economic, environmental and social impact issues.

Cons

- + May be prone to telling you what you want to hear and inclined to support the policy issue being studied
- + May not reveal the range of factors that drive the placement of an issue on the policy agenda.

Look for the key influencers

Depending on the study's scope and location, some helpful places to look may include:

- Business (e.g., business associations, trade groups, Chambers of Commerce)
- Labor
- Faith-based organizations
- Education
- Government agencies (e.g., law enforcement, health and human services)

...and don't forget about the "usual suspects."

Generate a list of key influencers

Convene people and groups who can identify and prioritize individuals across sectors, for example:

- Evaluation Advisory Committee
- Staff
- F5MC Commission

Sample: Our List

	D	E	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R
1	Title/Position	Agency/Affiliation	Needs to be educated	Mover/shaker	dept	cbo/np	faith	labor	biz	govt	phil	edu	legal	media
2	Vice President	1st Capital Bank							1					
3	Executive Director	2nd Chance Family & Youth Services				1								
4	Executive Director	Action Council				1								
5	Executive Director	AFL-CIO Monterey Bay Central Labor Council						1						
6	Interim Superintendent	Alisal Union School District										1		
7	Director	Behavioral Health			1									
8	Supervisor District 1	Board of Supervisors, County of Monterey								1				
9	Supervisor District 2	Board of Supervisors, County of Monterey								1				
10	Supervisor District 4	Board of Supervisors, County of Monterey								1				
11	Supervisor District 5	Board of Supervisors, County of Monterey								1				
12	Supervisor District 3	Board of Supervisors, County of Monterey								1				
13	President	Cal State Monterey Bay										1		
14	Assembly Member Dist. 28	California State Assembly								1				
15	Assembly Member Dist. 27	California State Assembly								1				
16	Senator Dist. 15	California State Senate								1				
17	Senator Dist. 12	California State Senate								1				
18	Council Member	Carmel-by-the-Sea								1				
19	President/CEO	CHISPA				1								
20	Police Chief	City of Salinas											1	
21	City Council Member	City of Salinas								1				
22	Chief Executive Officer	Clinica de Salud del Valle de Salinas				1								
23	Publisher	Coast Weekly												1
24	Retired	Community Alliance for Safety and Peace											1	
25	President/CEO	Community Foundation for Monterey County									1			
26	President/CEO	Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula (CHOMP)				1								
27	Executive Vice President of	D'Arrigo Brothers							1					
28	Bishop	Diocese of Monterey					1							
29	Pastor	East Salinas Family Center United Methodist Church					1							

Refine the list

- + Developed a list of 1,500 potential respondents across a host of sectors
- + Limited resources and time forced us to narrow that list dramatically
- + Used key criteria to prioritize respondents
 - Power and influence (*e.g., ability to influence actions of groups or individuals*)
 - Geographic representation (*e.g., local, regional, countywide*)
 - Sector type (*e.g., business, government, media*)



Lessons and insights: *Identifying
the benefits and possibilities*

Lessons + Insights

Early childhood development is probably not going to crack the top five issues any time soon, but we identified how it relates to some of the most salient issues.

Interviews also shed light on some issues that are not related to early childhood at all.

By virtue of doing these interviews you're elevating the visibility of the policy issue that you're inquiring about.

Don't be afraid to cast the net too wide.

The results are less biased since you aren't just talking to people and organizations that are already in your camp.

Policy importance is highly situated based on who is responding.

Questions and comments?



Aimée Fribourg
Research Associate
Harder+Company
Community Research
afribourg@harderco.com



David Dobrowski
Evaluation Officer
First 5
Monterey County
david@first5monterey.org

Thank you!

Thank you for participating today.

For a copy of this presentation, please visit the AEA eLibrary or our AEA 2013 Conference page at <http://harderco.com/publications/conferences-presentations/>.

Let's keep this conversation going! Contact us via:

Harder+Company

Twitter: @HarderCo

Phone: 415-522-5400

First 5 Monterey

Twitter: @first5monterey

Phone: 831-444-8549

