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### **Brighter Beginnings to Celebrate Opening of Renovated Antioch First 5 Children's Center**

*Festivities on September 15 to include ribbon cutting ceremony, food, music and children's entertainment for all families in the Antioch community.*

Oakland, CA: September 12, 2007. Brighter Beginnings (formerly The Perinatal Council) and First 5 Contra Costa announce the opening of its newly renovated and expanded Antioch First 5 Center. A celebration will be held on Saturday, September 15 from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. The celebration will begin with a ribbon cutting ceremony at 11:00 followed by an open house including lunch, an ice cream social, raffles, live animal shows, crafts, story times and clowns. All families in Antioch and the surrounding communities are invited to attend the celebration of free food, music and entertainment.

The ribbon cutting ceremony will be attended by Assembly Member Mark DeSaulnier and Supervisor Federal Glover. The First 5 Contra Costa organization will be represented by Executive Director Sean Casey.

A dedication to The Joy Motts Children's Fund will also be held as part of the day long program. Mrs. Motts was an Antioch Unified School board member for over 20 years, an active member of the PTA, Young Ladies Institute, Antioch Women's Club, Antioch Little Theatre and served on many committees developing programs for children and families at the state and local level. She had a profound influence on the city of Antioch and the fund has been set up in her honor to carry on her legacy of service to children and the Antioch community.

"We have so many things to celebrate; our beautifully renovated Antioch First 5 Center, our wonderful new name and the announcement of The Joy Motts Children's Fund" said Barbara Bunn McCullough, Ph.D., Executive Director, Brighter Beginnings, "The future

of Antioch begins right here, with its children. Brighter Beginnings is dedicated to providing a safe, nurturing environment where young children and their parents can learn and grow”.

Funded by First 5 Contra Costa, The Antioch First 5 Center serves more than 500 low-income families of children ages 0-5 and their parents. The Center offers parent-child activities involving music, art, stories and physical play that promote bonding and foster children’s learning and development. They also promote family literacy, parenting education, health education and lead a collaborative effort focusing on development for low-income East County youth.

Available also at the Antioch Center are Brighter Beginnings’ family support programs, including their award-winning Black Infant Health program which offers home-based support for African American pregnant moms and dads. Working with mothers at the earliest stage of their pregnancies, the program has achieved significant results by reducing complications during pregnancy and ultimately lowering the risk of infant mortality. Other services include a comprehensive support program for teen parents to encourage staying in school and learning parenting skills, and a home-based program for families referred for crisis management to prevent child abuse and neglect.

Brighter Beginnings programs also include infant/early childhood mental health, and support groups for fathers and young men. The agency also assists clients with enrollment into health insurance programs such as Medi-Cal/Healthy Families and Kaiser Healthy Kids.

#### **About First 5**

First 5 Contra Costa allocates more than \$9.5 million annually to help children ages 0 to 5 grow up healthy and ready to learn. First 5’s funding comes from California’s Proposition 10, which added a 50 cents-per-pack tax on cigarettes to support programs for expectant parents and children ages 0 to 5. First 5 Contra Costa allocates a total of \$1.5 million annually to five First 5 Centers throughout Contra Costa County to help parents nurture and support their children. More information about First 5 Contra Costa is available at [www.firstfivecc.org](http://www.firstfivecc.org) or by calling 925.335.9991

#### **About Brighter Beginnings**

Brighter Beginnings reaches out to families who are stressed to provide home-based support and center-based services which promote healthy births and the healthy development of babies and young children. Each year the non-profit organization serves over 2,200 low-income families in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. Brighter Beginnings programs promote the health and well-being of the mother, baby and entire family before, during and after birth for several years.

Funded primarily by state and federal grants the non-profit has recently expanded its appeals for private donations from community organizations and individuals. A professional management staff with decades of experience in non-profit family support groups supervises 50 paid staff members in three East Bay locations - Oakland, Richmond and Antioch.

More information is available at [www.brighter-beginnings.org](http://www.brighter-beginnings.org) or by calling toll free at 877.427.7134.

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