



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
SEPTEMBER 23, 2009

**CONTACTS:** Muffy Berryhill 530-229-8300  
First 5 Shasta  
Brian Richart 530-245-6200  
Shasta County Probation

**FIRST 5 SHASTA AND SHASTA COUNTY PROBATION  
INVEST IN NURTURING FATHERS**

*Dedicated Probation Caseload Specializes in Young Fathers of Children Ages 0-5*

(Redding, CA) – Young fathers entering probation in Shasta County may receive services that not only impact their lives, but also the lives of their young children. Shasta County Probation Department has received an award of nearly \$250,000 from First 5 Shasta for the *Young Fathers Caseload*, an effort that will establish a dedicated probation officer for young fathers, ages 18-25, with 0-5 year old children. Defendants qualifying for the program will benefit from probation supervision that assesses a young father’s needs, refers him to services and assistance supportive of success on probation, and provides him parenting classes to help him be a positive part of his child’s life.

“This caseload is designed to specifically address issues that face young men with children ages 0-5 in the criminal justice system,” says Brian Richart, Chief Probation Officer. “Shasta County Probation has a responsibility to appropriately assess offenders and create case plans aimed at successful reentry into the community. The ultimate goal of the *Young Fathers* program is to reduce recidivism and support success during the probation period and after.”

The First 5 Shasta Commission will contract with Shasta County Probation Department for a three-year period to fund the *Young Fathers Caseload*. Funding provided to the Probation Department will pay for one Deputy Probation Officer who will supervise up to 80 probationers ages 18-25. A risk assessment will help the Probation Officer identify the probationer’s needs and match him with local services and assistance such as education, counseling, employment, and services related to parenting. All *Young Fathers* probationers will be required to participate in the 13-session “Nurturing Fatherhood” parenting program. “Nurturing Fatherhood” facilitators will be male therapeutic professionals, increasing comfort levels and fostering openness in discussion amongst groups consisting of eight to sixteen fathers.

First 5 Shasta will make an additional investment of approximately \$8,000 to jumpstart the “Nurturing Fatherhood” program component. This will cover the cost of training facilitators in the evidence-

-more-

informed “Nurturing Fathers” curriculum adapted from Steven Bavolek’s “Nurturing Parenting Program.” Also included is the cost of materials for facilitators and probationers.

Muffy Berryhill, Executive Director at First 5 Shasta, says “The *Young Fathers* program provides opportunities to break cycles of abuse, incarceration, and adverse childhood experiences for families involved in the criminal justice system. By increasing and improving father involvement in the lives of young children, we can decrease childhood traumas that impact an individual from childhood through the adult years.”

While developing the *Young Fathers Caseload* program, the Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) Study was considered. This study is among a growing body of scientific research indicating a causal link between child maltreatment and later-life risk of physical and emotional health. The ACE Study is a collaborative research project between the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Department of Preventive Medicine at Kaiser Permanente (San Diego). The evidence provided by the ACE Study indicates the *Young Fathers* supervision and services will benefit probationers and boost protective factors around young children. By nurturing fatherhood, the *Young Fathers Caseload* supports healthy, positive changes that effect probationers, their children, and the community they live in.

**About First 5 Shasta**

Research shows that a child’s brain develops most dramatically in the first five years and what parents and caregivers do during these years to support their child’s growth will have a meaningful impact throughout life. Based on this research, California voters passed Proposition 10 in 1998, adding a 50 cents-per-pack tax on cigarettes to support programs for expectant parents and children ages 0 to 5. First 5 Shasta has invested approximately \$12 million in Prop.10 revenues in programs and services that meet local needs.

**About Shasta County Probation Department**

Our Vision: Safer Communities – Better Lives

Our Mission: To Serve the Courts, Protect the Community, Assist Victims, and Enhance Lives Through Investigation, Intervention, Prevention, and Enforcement.

###