

## RESOLUTION NO.

### BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, COUNTY OF SAN MATEO, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

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### RESOLUTION AFFIRMING COMMITMENT TO YOUNG CHILDREN, FAMILIES, AND SENIORS IN THE COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

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**WHEREAS**, the County of San Mateo recognizes the importance of addressing the evolving needs of young children, families, and seniors to ensure a thriving and equitable community for all; and

**WHEREAS**, the County acknowledges that all individuals, regardless of age, deserve access to stable, nurturing environments, safe and supportive communities, and vital services that promote health, dignity, and well-being; and

**WHEREAS**, the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University identified three critical ingredients for healthy child development in the early years: stable, nurturing relationships; sound nutrition; and safe, supportive environments; and

**WHEREAS**, mounting scientific evidence underscores that the first years of life are a crucial period for the healthy development of a child's brain and body; and

**WHEREAS**, family adversity—including financial hardship, homelessness, parental incarceration, substance use, and mental health challenges—can impede a caregiver's ability to provide stable, nurturing care, sound nutrition, and a safe environment for young children; and

**WHEREAS**, early adversity and trauma can detrimentally affect brain development, leading to long-term physical and behavioral health concerns, as well as social and academic challenges for young children, and similarly, aging adults may experience challenges in accessing necessary services and living with dignity; and

**WHEREAS**, helping families, including young children, parents, and seniors, are

supported by systems that foster resilience and well-being is essential for creating a community that thrives across generations; and

**WHEREAS**, the elderly, particularly those with chronic health conditions, mobility limitations, or cognitive impairments, face unique challenges in accessing services, securing adequate healthcare, and maintaining social connections, and the County of San Mateo is committed to working to improve the quality of life for seniors through better access to services, housing, and health care; and

**WHEREAS**, loneliness and social isolation are growing concerns for seniors, with significant negative impacts on their mental and physical health, including increased risk of depression, anxiety, and chronic disease, and the County recognizes the urgent need to address these challenges; and

**WHEREAS**, addressing early adversity in children and promoting healthy aging in seniors is an investment with high returns, fostering lifelong mental and physical health, academic success, employment opportunities, and aging with dignity while reducing social challenges and advancing equity; and

**WHEREAS**, the County of San Mateo First 5 San Mateo County supports the early development of children through investments in quality child care, health services, and parent education programs, and also provides resources for aging adults through services like senior nutrition programs, transportation, and health support services; and

**WHEREAS**, San Mateo County has implemented family support services through its Human Services Agency, offering resources such as housing assistance, food security programs, and employment support to help stabilize families and reduce economic stress, and similarly provides outreach and assistance programs for seniors to improve their health and financial stability; and

**WHEREAS**, the County of San Mateo is committed to policies that support all age groups, working to provide greater access to safe, affordable housing, mental health services, and social services for both children, families, and seniors; and

**WHEREAS**, access to affordable childcare, elder care, mental health services, affordable housing, and community-building activities for seniors and families is critical for their stability and well-being, and the County recognizes the need to expand and improve these services; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2024, the former U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy declared parental stress a public health crisis, noting the intense pressures parents face today, including financial strain, isolation, and challenges related to technology and social media, which contribute to a growing youth mental health crisis, and similarly, stressors such as economic hardship, healthcare access, and isolation affect senior mental and physical health as well; and

**WHEREAS**, the County of San Mateo has a responsibility to address these issues through a collaborative approach that includes families, community members, and partners from diverse sectors, with a focus on both the needs of children and seniors; and

**WHEREAS**, fostering supportive networks for parents—such as parenting groups, peer mentorship programs, and culturally responsive community services—can mitigate the effects of stress and improve outcomes for both caregivers and children, and equally, support networks for seniors—such as senior mentorship programs and community engagement opportunities—are essential for improving their mental and emotional well-being; and

**WHEREAS**, community leaders and stakeholders in San Mateo County are dedicated to creating a supportive environment where all children, families, and seniors can thrive, acknowledging that trauma and hardship may arise at any stage of life and impact a family's ability to succeed, while also understanding that seniors have unique and often overlooked needs that deserve attention.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Supervisors of the County of San Mateo affirms its commitment to creating environments that allow young

children, families, and seniors to thrive by promoting stable, nurturing relationships, providing access to sound nutrition, and maintaining safe, supportive community spaces; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the County of San Mateo shall continue to prioritize policy initiatives and funding that support families' economic stability, enhance parenting education and family support programs, and expand access to quality, affordable child care and early learning opportunities, as well as providing seniors access to affordable healthcare, housing, and community services that support aging with dignity; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the County of San Mateo shall continue to prioritize the needs of young children, families, and seniors in county plans and policies addressing housing, behavioral health, economic development, aging services, and land use; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the County of San Mateo shall advocate for increased mental health resources and family support services to address the declared public health crisis of parental stress, and shall equally advocate for resources that address the mental health and social isolation challenges faced by seniors, understanding that robust support systems for parents and seniors contribute directly to the well-being of individuals and the broader community; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the County of San Mateo shall actively address senior loneliness and social isolation by exploring expansion of senior engagement programs, community-building activities, and mental health support initiatives designed to foster connections, reduce isolation, and improve overall well-being for seniors in the community.

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