



MONTEREY COUNTY CHILDREN'S COUNCIL

Astengo, Alternate

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Jose Ramirez, Chief, Probation Department (Julie Kenyon, Alternate) Chair

Katy Castagna, CEO, United Way Monterey County (Josh Madfis, Alternate)

Roderick Franks, Director, Dept. of Social Services (Eva Geronimo, Alternate)

Deneen Guss, Ed.D., Superintendent, Monterey County Office of Education, (Ralph Porras, Alternate)

Elsa Jimenez, Director, Health Dept. (Dr. Edward Moreno, Health Officer, Alternate)

Mayra Diaz, Coordinator for Mo. Co. Children's Council

Relindis Diaz, Reflective Practice Facilitator

Sonja Koehler, Director, Bright Beginnings

MEMBERS

José Arreola, Community Alliance for Safety and Peace Jaskiart "Jessica" Bhardwaj, Alternate)

Dan Baldwin, Community Foundation for Monterey County, (Michael Castro, Alternate)

Randy Bangs, Soledad Unified School District (PK Diffenbaugh, Alternate)

Susan Blitch, County Counsel (Annette Cutino, Alternate)

Zulieka Boykin, Housing Authority of Monterey County (TBD, Alternate)

Susan Chapman, Public Defender (Ashley Butler, Alternate)

Caroline Cota, So Co Mo Joint Unified School District (Ruben Pulido, Alternate)

Laura Dunn, Child Care Planning Council (TBD, Alternate)

Michael Gutierrez, Hartnell Community College (Jason Garrett, Alternate)

Monica Lal, Monterey Peninsula Chamber of Commerce

Lori Luzader, Special Kids Connect (Jennifer Netniss, Alternate)

Robin McCrae, Community Human Services

Tina Nieto, Sheriff (Charles DaSilva, Alternate)

Jeannine Pacioni, District Attorney (Lan Nassoura, Alternate)

Virginia R. Pierce, Child Abuse Prevention Council (Claudia Gomez, Alternate)

Vanya Quinones, CSUMB (Karen Myers Bowman, Alternate)

Timothy P. Roberts, Judge, Superior Court, Juvenile Justice Division (Sam Lavorato Jr, Alternate)

Melanie Rhodes, Behavioral Health (Liz Perez-Cordero, Alternate)

Francine Rodd, Monterey County First 5 Commission (Ramona McCabe, Alternate)

Wendy Root Askew, Supervisor District 4, (Eric Mora, Alternate)

Susan Swick, Ohana Montage Health (Krista Reuther, Alternate)

TBD, Department of Social Services (Melissa Alejandre, Alternate)

Hillary Theyer, Monterey County Free Libraries (Berenice,

Mission

The Children's Council provides leadership and policy direction to encourage the development of a comprehensive and collaborative delivery system of services to children and youth in Monterey County.

GENERAL MEETING

901 Blanco Circle, Salinas, CA
MCOE

Monday, January 12, 2026
12:00-1:30pm

AGENDA

1. **Welcome** – Jose Ramirez, Chair
2. **Public Comment** for items not on the agenda (limited to 3 minutes per person)
3. **Action Items:**
 - a. Approve the minutes of the December 8, 2025, Monterey County Children's Council meeting – *Attached*
4. **Presentations/Discussions:**
 - a. [Bright Beginnings Monthly Summary](#)
 - b. Governor's Budget Revise Update
 - c. Reflective Practice – Relindis Diaz
 - d. Context on Food Insecurity Part 2– Melissa Kendrick, Monterey County Food Bank
 - e. Reflective Practice – Relindis Diaz
5. **Announcements** –
6. **Adjourn**

Next meeting: February 9, 2026