



# 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)

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**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, Alternate)

## 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