

Children's Council Meeting Minutes
April 13, 2026

Council Member	Appointed Council Member or Alternate	Affiliation	Title	Present
Abraham Panni, Kera	Alternate	District #4	Senior Advisor Policy & Communications	
Alejandre, Melissa	Alternate	Family and Children Services	Program Manager	
Anderson, Yuri	Alternate	District #4	Chief of Staff	X
Askew, Wendy	Member	District #4	Supervisor	
Astengo, Berenice	Alternate	Monterey County Free Libraries	Managing Librarian	
Bangs, Randy	Member	Soledad Unified School District	Superintendent	
Bhardwaj, Jaskiart "Jessica"	Alternate	City of Salinas		
Blitch, Susan	Member	County Counsel	County Counsel	
Boykin, Zulieka	Member	Housing Authority	Executive Director	
Buenaventura, Raymond	Member	Public Defender Office	Public Defender	
Butler, Ashley	Alternate	Public Defender Office	Public Defender	
Castagna, Katy	Member	United Way Monterey County	President and CEO	X
Castro, Michael	Alternate	Community Foundation of Monterey County	Director of Community Investments	X
Chavez, Jackie	Member	Department of Social Services		X
Cota, Caroline	Member	So Mo Co Joint Unified School District	Superintendent	
DaSilva, Charles	Alternate	Monterey County Sheriff's Office	Program Manager-Monterey County Jail	X

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Diffenbaugh, PK	Alternate	Monterey Peninsula Unified School District	Superintendent	
Dunn, Laura	Member	Child Care Planning Council	Chair	
Franks, Roderick	Member	Department of Social Services	Director	
Garrett, Jason	Alternate	Hartnell Community College	Interim Dean of Academic Affairs	X
Guss, Deneen	Member	Monterey County Office of Education	Superintendent	X
Gutierrez, Michael	Member	Hartnell Community College	Superintendent	
Gomez, Claudia	Alternate	Door to Hope	Director of Family Services	
Jeronimo, Eva	Member	Department of Social Services	Deputy Director	X
Jimenez, Elsa	Member	Monterey County Health Department	Director of Health	
Kenyon, Julie	Alternate	Probation Department		X
Lal, Monica	Member	Monterey Peninsula Chamber of Commerce	President/CEO	X
Lavorato, Sam Jr.	Alternate	Superior Court, Juvenile Justice Division	Judge	
Luzader, Lori	Member	Special Kids Connect	Executive Director	X
Madfis, Josh	Alternate	United Way Monterey County	Vice President Community Investments	
McCabe, Ramona	Alternate	First 5 Monterey County	Director of Programs	
Mendoza, Miriam	Alternate	Monterey County Health Department	Assistant Director of Health Services	
Nassoura, Lana	Alternate	Monterey County District Attorney Office	Assistant District Attorney	

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Nieto, Tina	Member	Monterey County Sheriff's Office	Sheriff	
Netniss, Jennifer	Alternate	Special Kids Connect	Education Director	
	Member	CSU Monterey Bay	President	
Pacioni, Jeannine	Member	Monterey County District Attorney Office	District Attorney	
Perez-Cordero, Liz	Alternate	Behavioral Health		X
Pierce, Virginia R.	Member	CAPC	Director	X
Porras, Ralph	Alternate	Monterey County Office of Education	Assistant Superintendent	
Pulido, Ruben	Alternate	Chualar Union School District	Superintendent	
Ramirez, Jose	Alternate	Probation Department	Chief	X
Rhodes, Melanie	Member	Behavioral Health	Director	
Rodd, Francine	Member	First 5 of Monterey County	Executive Director	
Reuther, Krista	Alternate	Ohana Montage Health		X
Swick, Susan	Member	Ohana Montage Health	VP/Chief Mental Health Officer	
Theyer, Hillary	Member	Monterey County Free Libraries	Director	
Wouden, Michelle	Alternate	Public Defenders Office	Public Defender	

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Koehler, Sonja	Non-Member	Bright Beginnings	Director	X
Perez Diaz, Mayra	Non-Member	United Way	Coordinator of MCCC and Community Impact Director, Early Childhood Investments	X
Diaz, Relindis	Non-Member	County of Monterey Children's Behavioral Health	RLP Facilitator	X
Roque, Maribel	Non-Member	SVMH	Well Being Program Manager	X
Cabrera, Brenda	Non-Member	SVMH	Well Being Coordinator	X
Gonzalez, Abbygale	Non-Member	Read to Me Project	Program Director	X

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Item	Summary of discussion/review	Action/deliverable
1. Welcome and Introductions	Meeting called to order at 12:08p.m. by Jose Ramirez	
2. Public Comment		None
3. Action Items a. Approve the minutes of the March 9, 2026, Monterey County Children's Council meeting		a. The minutes of the March 9, 2026, meeting were approved. Motion by Deneen Guss and seconded by Eva Jeronimo.
4. Presentations/Discussions a. Dolly Parton Imagination Library a. Monterey County Probation Department Community Challenge for Change	Nina Alcaarez of First 5 Monterey County presented a brief overview of the program to the COUNCIL. Julie Kenyon presented an overview of programs and challenge for change for Probation services to the COUNCIL.	DP Imagination Library Presentation Probation Department Presentation
5. Meeting Adjourned		1:35pm