Children's Council Meeting Minutes
October 12, 2026

Council Member	Appointed Council Member or Alternate	Affiliation	Title	Present
Abraham Panni, Kera	Alternate	District #4	Senior Advisor Policy & Communications	X
Alejandre, Melissa	Alternate	Family and Children Services	Program Manager	X
Anderson, Yuri	Alternate	District #4	Chief of Staff	
Askew, Wendy	Member	District #4	Supervisor	
Astengo, Berenice	Alternate	Monterey County Free Libraries	Managing Librarian	
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
Chavez, Jackie	Member	Department of Social Services		
Cota, Caroline	Member	So Mo Co Joint Unified School District	Superintendent	
DaSilva, Charles	Alternate	Monterey County Sheriff's Office	Program Manager-Monterey County Jail	
Diffenbaugh, PK	Alternate	Monterey Peninsula Unified School District	Superintendent	
Dunn, Laura	Member	Child Care Planning Council	Chair	X

Council Member	Appointed Council Member or Alternate	Affiliation	Title	Present
Franks, Roderick	Member	Department of Social Services	Director	X
Garrett, Jason	Alternate	Hartnell Community College	Interim Dean of Academic Affairs	
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	
Jimenez, Elsa	Member	Monterey County Health Department	Director of Health	X
Kenyon, Julie	Alternate	Probation Department		
Lal, Monica	Member	Monterey Peninsula Chamber of Commerce	President/CEO	
Lavorato, Sam Jr.	Alternate	Superior Court, Juvenile Justice Division	Judge	
Luzader, Lori	Member	Special Kids Connect	Executive Director	
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	
Myers-Bowman, Karen	Alternate	Cal State Monterey Bay	Dean Of College of Education	X
Nassoura, Lana	Alternate	Monterey County District Attorney Office	Assistant District Attorney	X
Nieto, Tina	Member	Monterey County Sheriff's Office	Sheriff	

Council Member	Appointed Council Member or Alternate	Affiliation	Title	Present
Netniss, Jennifer	Alternate	Special Kids Connect	Education Director	
Pacioni, Jeannine	Member	Monterey County District Attorney Office	District Attorney	
Perez-Cordero, Liz	Alternate	Behavioral Health		
Pierce, Virginia R.	Member	CAPC	Director	X
Porras, Ralph	Alternate	Monterey County Office of Education	Assistant Superintendent	
Ramirez, Jose	Alternate	Probation Department	Chief	
Rhodes, Melanie	Member	Behavioral Health	Director	
Rodd, Francine	Member	First 5 of Monterey County	Executive Director	X
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	
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

Council Member	Appointed Council Member or Alternate	Affiliation	Title	Present
Diaz, Relindis	Non-Member	Consultant	RLP Facilitator	
Cabrera, Brenda	Non-Member	Salinas Valley Health	Community Coordinator	X

Item	Summary of discussion/review	Action/deliverable
1. Welcome and Introductions	Meeting called to order at 12:11p.m. by Deneen Guss	
2. Public Comment		None
3. Action Items a. Approve the minutes of the September 14, 2026, Monterey County Children's Council meeting b. Approve Designated Alternate Zandra Galvan for Member Carolina Cota c. Approve amended designated Alternate Debbie Gorgulho for Member Sharon Ofek d. Approve Designated Alternate Reid Norris for Member Dan Balwin e. Approve Ana Foglia as At Large Member		a. The minutes of the September 14, 2026, meeting were approved. Motion by Virginia Pierce and seconded by Roderick Franks. b. Designated Alternate Zandra Galvan was approved. Motion by Lana Nassoura and seconded by Caroline Cota. c. Amended designated alternate Debbie Gorgulho for Member Sharon Ofek was approved. Motion by Caroline Cota and seconded by Katy Castagna. d. Designated Altern Reid Norris was approved. Motion by Francine Rodd and seconded by Liz Perez-Cordero. e. At large member Ana Foglia was approved. Motion by Virginia Pierce and seconded by Krista Reuther.

4. Presentations/Discussions:		
a. Bright Beginnings Update	Sonja Koehler provided a monthly update of initiatives events and work.	Update presentation
b. Follow Up from Past Fiscal Year		
Presentations:		
a. Probation Department	This item was moved to next months meeting.	
b. Juvenile Crime in Monterey County: Trends, Warning Signs, and a Problem to Solve Together	Lana Nassoura provided an overview of trends and challenges that impact juvenile crime.	Juvenile Crime in Monterey County presentation
5. Meeting Adjourned		1:35pm