



MONTEREY COUNTY CHILDREN'S COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Deneen Guss, Ed.D., Superintendent, Monterey County Office of Education, (Ralph Porras, Alternate)
Elsa Jimenez, Director, Health Dept. (Miriam Mendoza, Alternate)
Roderick Franks, Director, Dept. of Social Services (Eva Geronimo, Alternate)
Jose Ramirez, Chief, Probation Department (Julie Kenyon, Alternate) Chair
Katy Castagna, CEO, United Way Monterey County (Josh Madfis, 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

**Dan Baldwin**, Community Foundation for Monterey County, (TBD, Alternate)  
**Susan Blitch**, County Counsel (Andrew Price, Alternate)  
**Zulieka Boykin**, Housing Authority of Monterey County (Lucila Vera, Alternate)  
**Raymond Buenaventura**, Public Defender (Ashley Butler, Alternate)  
**Jackie Chavez**, Family Children Services (Melissa Alejandre, Alternate)  
**Caroline Cota**, So Co Mo Joint Unified School District (TBD, Alternate)  
**Laura Dunn**, Child Care Planning Council (TBD, Alternate)  
**Debbie Gorgulho**, Soledad Unified School District (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)  
**Sam Lavorato**, Judge, Superior Court, Juvenile Justice Division (TBD, Alternate)  
**Tina Nieto**, Sheriff (Charles DaSilva, Alternate)  
**Jeannine Pacioni**, District Attorney (Lana Nassoura, Alternate)  
**Virginia R. Pierce**, Child Abuse Prevention Council (Claudia Gomez, 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, (Yuri Anderson or Kera Abraham, Alternate)  
**Susan Swick**, Ohana Montaga Health (Krista Reuther, Alternate)  
**Hillary Theyer**, Monterey County Free Libraries (Berenice, Astengo, Alternate)  
**TBD**, Community Alliance for Safety and Peace Jaskiart "Jessica" Bhardwaj, Alternate)  
**TBD.**, CSUMB (Karen Myers Bowman, 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 ASSEMBLY MEETING

**901 Blanco Circle, Salinas, CA  
MCOE**

**Monday, October 12, 2026  
12pm to 1:30pm**

- 1. Welcome/Introductions – Dr. Deneen Guss, 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 September 14, 2026, Monterey County Children's Council meeting – *Attached*
  - b. Approve Designated Alternate, Zandra Galvan for Member Caroline Cota
  - c. Approve Designated Alternate, Sharon Ofek for Member Debbie Gorgulho
  - d. Approve Designated Alternate Reid Norris for Member Dan Baldwin
  - e. Approve Ana Foglia as At Large Member
- 4. Presentations/Discussions:**
  - a. Bright Beginnings Update – Sonja Koehler
  - b. Follow Up from Past Fiscal Year Presentations
    - I. Probation Department – Jose Ramirez
  - c. Reflective Practice – Francine Rodd
  - d. Juvenile Crime in Monterey County: Trends, Warning Signs, And a Problem to Solve Together - Lana Nassoura, DA Office
  - e. Reflective Practice – Francine Rodd
    - I. Break out groups discussion
    - II. Report Out
- 5. Announcements –**
- 6. Adjourn**

**Next meeting: November 9, 2026**