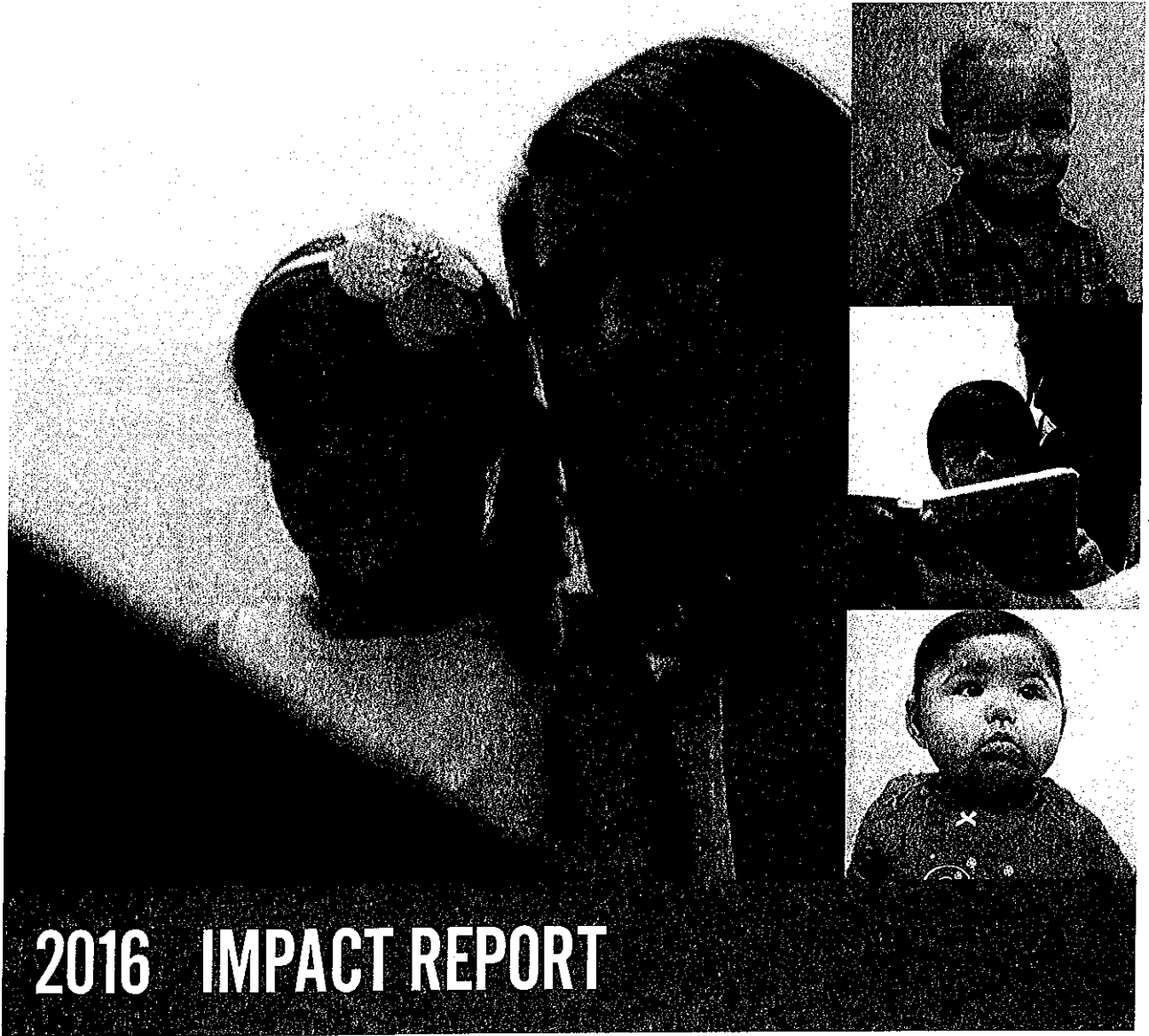


FIRST THINGS FIRST

Pima South



2016 IMPACT REPORT

THE PATH TO SCHOOL SUCCESS BEGINS AT BIRTH

A child's early years hold the key to their success in school and in life. 90% of brain development happens before kindergarten. That's why Arizonans created First Things First (FTF) – to give more children the tools they need to arrive at school healthy and ready to succeed.

Decades of research demonstrates that children with access to high quality early development and health experiences are more prepared for kindergarten, do better in school and are more likely to graduate and enroll in college. They also tend to be healthier and more productive members of society.




Early literacy and its impact on school success is just one example of why investing in early childhood is so important:



High quality early learning experiences, rich in language and literacy, reduce early learning gaps and ensure that children are ready to start reading when they enter kindergarten.

ARIZONA'S INVESTMENT IN YOUNG CHILDREN

As an early childhood system partner, First Things First invests in proven programs and innovative strategies that:

-  **IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF EARLY LEARNING**
-  **STRENGTHEN FAMILIES**
-  **PROMOTE HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT**

By getting more Arizona kids ready for school, First Things First helps put children on a path to academic success that benefits them, our communities and our state.

FISCAL YEAR 2016 IMPACT

QUALITY PRESCHOOL PUTS PHOENIX FIRST GRADER AT TOP OF CLASS

Anita Meek had a decision to make. Because of when her son Levi's birthday landed, Meek feared that her son would be one of the youngest in his kindergarten class and would struggle to keep up every year. She decided to enroll him in preschool instead.

A family member told her about the Robles Preschool Program in the Altar Valley School District in Tucson.

"I am a single parent, who at the time was working two jobs, so I knew preschool was going to be an important part of getting my son ready for kindergarten," Meek said.

Robles Elementary Preschool participates in Quality First, a signature program of First Things First, which partners with child care and preschool providers to improve the quality of early learning across Arizona. Quality First funds quality improvements that research proves help children thrive, such as training for teachers to expand their skills and to help create learning environments that nurture the emotional, social and academic development of every child.

"His preschool teacher was amazing," Meek said. "She had great open communication with the parents."

Preschoolers participated in events like the school's holiday program and science night, which was a personal favorite of Levi's.

"I was amazed at some of the knowledge he would come home with," Meek said. "One time, we were at home having some ice cream before bedtime, and Levi asked me 'Mom, do you think my ice cream is a solid, liquid, or gas?' I could not believe he was learning so much in preschool!"

Today Levi is excelling in the first grade. He is on the Principal's Honor Roll and loves math and reading.

"Preschool was a big part of his learning and success," Meek said.



2,379

Children had access to a higher standard of early learning through preschool and child care programs participating in Quality First.



185

Infants, toddlers, and preschoolers accessed high quality early learning with the help of a preschool or child care scholarship.



168

Families of newborns left the hospital with tools to help support their child's health and learning.



613

Families received voluntary, evidence-based home visitation from trained providers to enhance their parenting skills and deal with specific challenges, including first-time parenting, parenting a child with special needs or dealing with multiple births.



76

Parents and other caregivers completed a voluntary series of community-based classes on topics like parenting skills, brain development, early literacy and nutrition.



702

Children received screenings to detect vision, hearing and developmental issues to prevent learning challenges later on.



3,079

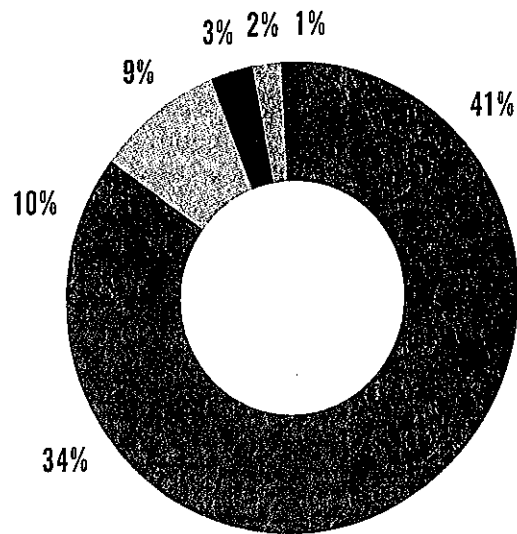
fluoride varnishes were applied to protect against dental decay.

FULFILLING OUR COMMITMENT TO ARIZONA'S YOUNGEST KIDS

Each First Things First regional partnership council, made up of local volunteers, studies the unique needs of its Arizona community and decides how funds will be used to best support the development, education and health of its young children (birth to age 5, before kindergarten). FTF invests in proven programs and innovative strategies through grants to community organizations that provide services to children and families.

PIMA SOUTH FY16 PROGRAM EXPENDITURES

● Strengthening Families	\$2,185,330
● Quality Child Care & Preschool	\$1,808,070
● Workforce Development & Training	\$528,814
● Preventive Health	\$491,566
● Research & Evaluation	\$145,193
● System Coordination	\$100,000
● Parent & Community Awareness	\$41,568
Total	\$5,300,541



FIRST THINGS FIRST PIMA SOUTH REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL

Nicole Harrington,
Chair
Connie Espinoza,
Vice Chair

Paul Ohm

Cyndi Barningham

Linda Kubiak

Sagrario Dyer

Virginia Juettner

Jennifer Hook

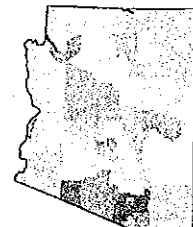
David Dumon

Jaymie Jacobs
Regional Director

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The Pima South Region is defined as the southern portion of Pima County, not including the lands belonging to the Pascua Yaqui Tribe and the Tohono O'odham Nation, plus a small part of Santa Cruz County around the Amado community. The Pima South Region includes Legislative Districts 2, 3, 4 and 14. (Legislative districts are not necessarily congruent with regional boundaries.)



FirstThingsFirst.org



OVERVIEW

First Things First partners with parents and communities to give all Arizona children the opportunity to arrive at kindergarten healthy and ready to succeed.

Created by Arizona Voters

In 2006, Arizonans made an historic decision on behalf of our state's youngest citizens. By majority vote, they made a commitment to all Arizona children 5 and younger: that kids would have the tools they need to arrive at school healthy and ready to succeed. The voters backed that promise with an 80-cent per pack increase on tobacco products, so that funding for early childhood services for our youngest children would not be at the mercy of economic and political winds. The initiative also created the statewide First Things First board and regional partnership councils that share the responsibility of ensuring that these early childhood funds are spent on strategies that will result in improved education and health outcomes for kids 5 and younger.



Focused on Kids Birth to 5

Why focus on kids 5 and younger? Research shows that 90% of a child's brain develops by age 5. Because of this rapid development, what happens to children in the early years lays the foundation for a lifetime. Research has proven that kids with quality early childhood experiences do better in school. They are more likely to advance into college and successful careers. They also tend to be healthier and demand less from the public welfare system.

Driven By Local Communities

Not all children have the same needs; and voters designed First Things First to meet the diverse needs of Arizona communities. Decisions about which early education and health strategies will be funded are made by regional partnership councils made up of community volunteers, not government bureaucrats. Each regional council member represents a specific segment of the community that has a stake in ensuring that our children grow up to be healthy productive adults, including: parents, tribal representatives, educators, health professionals, business leaders, philanthropists and leaders of faith communities. The regional councils study the challenges faced by children in their communities and the resources that exist to help kids in their area. Because of all these factors, the regional councils know best what their kids need.

Proven to Work

National studies show that children exposed to high-quality early childhood education:

- Are 40% less likely to need special education or be held back a grade;
- Are 70% less likely to commit a violent crime by age 18;
- Have better language, math and social skills, and better relationships with classmates;
- Have better cognitive and sensory skills and experience less anxiety; and,
- Score higher on school-readiness tests.

First Things First's signature programs build on this body of research to address critical early childhood needs statewide, including supporting parents in their role as a child's first teacher, improving the quality of early learning in homes and child care centers, enhancing the professional skills of teachers working with our youngest kids, and helping doctors to address a child's developmental and physical needs.

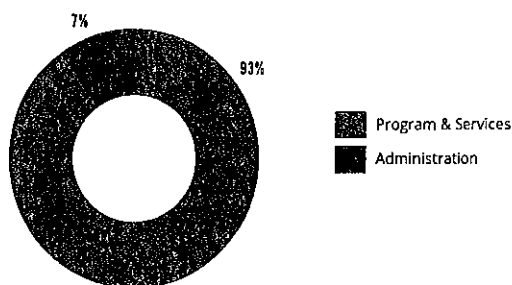
Effective

The impact of First Things First programs has been significant. In Fiscal Year 2016 alone:

- 34,812 parents and caregivers attended parenting workshops or groups at family resource centers. In addition, more than 232,000 accessed early childhood information, resources or referrals through the centers.
- 72,058 families of newborns left the hospital with tools to help the support their child's health and learning.
- 6,121 families received voluntary, evidence-based home visitation from trained providers to enhance their parenting skills and deal with specific challenges, including first-time parenting, parenting a child with special needs or dealing with multiple births.
- 3,711 parents and other caregivers completed a voluntary series of community-based classes on topics like parenting skills, brain development, early literacy and nutrition.
- 51,069 children had access to a higher standard of early learning through preschool and child care programs participating in Quality First.
- 9,250 Infants, toddlers, and preschoolers accessed high quality early learning with the help of a preschool or child care scholarship.
- 27,376 children received screenings to detect vision, hearing, and developmental issues to prevent later learning challenges.
- 48,480 children received an oral health screening to detect tooth decay. In addition, 41,805 fluoride varnishes were applied to protect against dental decay.

Efficient

In addition to being effective, First Things First is also efficient. Investments in programs and services that help prepare children for success constituted approximately 93% of spending in FY2016. Administrative expenses are kept low - approximately 7% in FY16.



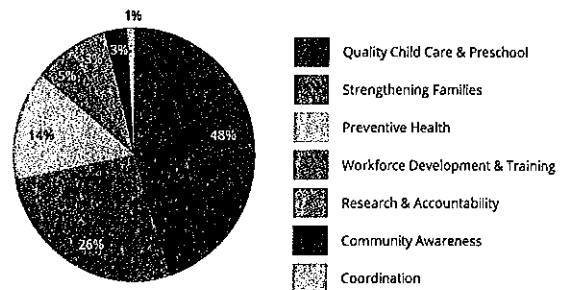
To learn more, visit us at FirstThingsFirst.org



Accountable

Most importantly, First Things First is accountable – to voters, to the state, and most importantly, to Arizona's children. The strategies funded by First Things First have demonstrated effectiveness in improving educational and health outcomes for kids, or in increasing the knowledge, skills and capacities of parents and other caregivers, such as medical professionals and teachers working with young children. FTF grantees are required to submit detailed financial information, as well reports regarding the numbers of children or families served. This ensures that funds are being spent efficiently and that programs are reaching the intended groups of children. In addition, FTF's Quality Assurance Team works with individual grantees to review program implementation and identify best practices that can be shared with other grantees or that can be used to improve the overall program. At the systemic level, FTF has identified 10 indicators to help us ensure that we are contributing in meaningful ways to improved school readiness for Arizona's kids. FTF also worked with a group of national experts to identify additional steps FTF can take to make sure the programs being funded are making a difference – for individual children and families, and for school readiness throughout Arizona.

First Things First Priority Funding Areas FY09-17*



* This figure represents actual expenditures through FY16 and FY17 funding awards through October 14, 2016.

READY FOR SCHOOL. SET FOR LIFE.

EARLY CHILDHOOD MATTERS TO BUSINESS

74%

of business leaders say a skilled workforce is the most important factor to business success.

Zagby International (2005)

The competitiveness of small, medium and large companies depends on having a pipeline of talented, educated employees with the skills needed in today's economy:

- Problem-solving
- Communication
- Decision-making
- Critical thinking
- Motivation
- Collaboration

95%

of CEOs indicate that their companies suffer from skills shortages.

Business Roundtable (2012). Workforce Skills Survey

In Arizona, as in most of the United States, we don't have enough workers with the skills that employers need. Nearly half the American workforce lacks the basic education and communication skills required to get a job and advance. One quarter of Arizona's students don't graduate from high school.

That's the bad news. The good news is that we know how to solve this problem.



**INVESTED IN EARLY
CHILDHOOD YIELDS A
\$16 RETURN**

"The return on investment from early childhood is extraordinary."

Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis

90% of critical brain development occurs before kindergarten. The skills and abilities employers are looking for — focus, self-discipline, motivation and collaboration — all start to take root in the first five years of life.

The ROI from quality early education programs for children birth to age 5 is well established and quantifiable. Study after study demonstrates returns ranging from 4x to 16x, depending on the program analyzed, with strong, positive effects on:

- Kindergarten readiness
- Language, math and social skills
- K-12 test scores
- High school graduation
- College enrollment

Investing in quality early childhood programs for infants, toddlers and preschoolers is the only proven strategy to produce such returns. It also correlates strongly to less crime and less dependence on social services later in life.

The bottom line is clear:

- Quality early childhood education for children birth to age 5 increases school readiness, which leads to workforce readiness.
- Allocating resources to support the health and learning of our young children is a critical economic development strategy.

We know the importance of early childhood.

But don't take our word for it:

U.S. Chamber of Commerce

"(T)he capacity for developmental skills begins in the first five years of life. This is the beginning point for a person's creativity, communication, team working, problem-solving and critical thinking skills."

The Committee for Economic Development

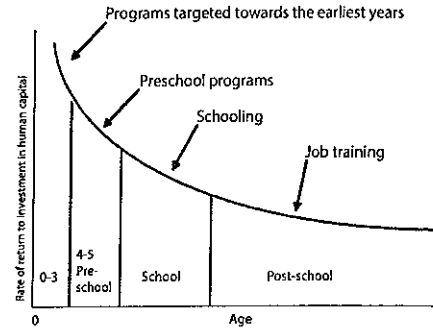
"Business leaders and policymakers should consider investment in young children one of the most effective strategies to secure the future economic strength of their communities and the nation."

The Business Roundtable

"America's continuing efforts to improve education and develop a world-class workforce will be hampered without a commitment to early childhood education."

Returns to a Unit Dollar Invested

Return to a unit dollar invested at different ages from the perspective of the beginning of life, assuming one dollar initially invested at each age



The Heckman Equation

James Heckman

Professor of Economics, University of Chicago
Nobel Prize Winner

What can you do?

The voice of business leaders like you is crucial to Arizona's economic future.

1

CONNECT

with First Things First in your Arizona community to learn more and join the early childhood movement.

2

SUPPORT

high-quality early learning programs in your area.

3

ADOPT

policies in your business that support working parents.

4

TELL

policy makers that you support public investment in early childhood.

FIND YOUR local First Things First regional partnership council at FirstThingsFirst.org.

FIRST THINGS FIRST

A statewide organization created by Arizona voters,

First Things First partners with communities to give all Arizona children the opportunity to arrive at kindergarten healthy and ready to succeed.

To learn more, visit us at FirstThingsFirst.org

READY FOR SCHOOL. SET FOR LIFE.