

FIRST THINGS FIRST

East Maricopa Region

2020 Impact Report



From birth to age 5, a child's brain grows more than any other time in life.

90%

of a child's brain growth happens before kindergarten.

Early childhood matters.

First Things First partners with families and communities to help our state's youngest children prepare for kindergarten and beyond.

Many young children in Arizona face challenges that threaten their healthy development and learning. In the FTF East Maricopa Region, there are **54,701 children** (under age 6) with **14% living in poverty**.

Here is how FTF is working to support young children and their families in this region.



It is my observation that when the policy makers in the major community institutions work together to raise community awareness and participation in early education programs, real change in the lives of children can be made. It takes a long-view perspective, numerous partnerships and hard work, but community dividends will be great."



Mike Hutchinson

Executive Vice President of PHX East Valley Partnership

FTF East Maricopa Regional Key Impact Highlights

[Fiscal Year 2020]



Strengthening Families and Early Literacy

4,179

Families or caregivers served by receiving referrals or by participating in activities at family resource centers.

248

Families with young children participated in voluntary home visiting programs proven to reduce parental stress levels, increase connections to community supports, and improve children's cognitive, motor, behavioral and social-emotional development.



Quality Preschool and Child Care

7,891

Children attended preschools and child care programs participating in Quality First.

489

Children birth to age 5 received a Quality First scholarship to attend high-quality preschools and child care programs.



Preventive Health

1,143

Children received a screening to detect tooth decay, which left undetected and untreated could cause damage to permanent teeth, impair speech development and failure to thrive.

399

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

Additional Strategies

5,446

Families

of newborns received the Arizona Parent Kit, filled with tips and tools to help support their child's healthy development.

765

Children

received coordinated care at visits to their medical clinic to meet their social and health needs.



Nurse Family Partnership helps first-time mom learn how to take care of infant son in Tempe

Due to personal struggles before the delivery of her newborn son, Liz Anderson knew there was a possibility that her baby might go into the care of a foster home.

But Anderson found support and coordination of care provided by the Nurse-Family Partnership, a home visitation program funded by the First Things First East Maricopa Region, which proved to make all the difference in the world.

The Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) program provides regular visits by trained nurses starting early in pregnancy and continuing through the child's second birthday. The program is designed to support first time moms to the path of a healthy pregnancy, a strong network of support and positive parenting practices.

Anderson's nurse home visitor through NFP provided moral support, parenting education and referrals to numerous resources to help prepare Liz for the birth of her son and for the anticipation of foster care for him, with the goal of reunification.

"I didn't have family nearby so my home nurse, Carrie, was a huge source of support, knowledge and a sense of accountability," Anderson said. "Even though my son did not initially come home with me, Carrie came every week to teach parenting skills and to help me know that I was not alone."

Within his first year, Anderson was overjoyed to have her son Thomas return to her home in Tempe, but admitted to feelings of anxiousness and inadequacy in knowing what to expect as

a first-time mom. Thomas was born two months prematurely and was still showing several signs of developmental delay in communication and gross motor skills.

Helping parents provide responsible and competent care is one of the program's goals. Anderson was referred to appropriate healthcare and support services where she was diligent to attend every medical appointment for Thomas. She was also encouraged to spend time each day doing exercises with Thomas, recommended by his occupational therapist. In addition to these supports, the home nurse shared valuable parenting information and gave Anderson a safe place to express any challenges.

"This program came in the right moment and actually help save my life."
- Liz Anderson, first-time mother

"Nurse Carrie helped me every step of the way, with advice on feeding, sleeping and tips on helping him learn to crawl, walk and talk," Anderson said. "She made sure that we were connected to many resources including AzEIP (Arizona Early Intervention Program), which provided occupational therapy services. Soon after that, Thomas' development just skyrocketed, and I was feeling more confident as a parent."

Thomas is now an active, thriving toddler. Anderson credits the coordination of care provided by NFP that Thomas can effectively communicate his needs, eat successfully, go on walks, toss balls and regulate some of his emotions. In addition, Anderson proudly shares that through the support of her nurse home visitor, she has learned how to pick up on his cues and better respond to his needs.

"I have never seen a happier child, who laughs and smiles all the time," Anderson said. "This program came in the right moment and actually help save my life. I learned how to take care of me, so I can take care of him and because of that he is learning and growing. This program gave me the confidence and security needed to know I am doing the right thing."



Read more FTF stories at
[FirstThingsFirst.org/Region-Stories](https://www.FirstThingsFirst.org/Region-Stories)

FTF East Maricopa Regional Partnership Council

The FTF East Maricopa Regional Partnership Council is made up of volunteers who study the unique needs of the local community and decide how funds should be used to best support the healthy development and early learning of young children birth to age 5. FTF invests in proven

programs and innovative strategies through grants to community organizations that provide services to children and families. Some of the programs in this region include Healthy Families, Nurse-Family Partnership and Parents as Teachers.

FTF East Maricopa FY20 Total Regional Program Expenditures

Quality Child Care and Preschool

\$4,345,177

Strengthening Families

\$2,324,201

Preventive Health

\$1,118,504

Research and Evaluation

\$238,274

Parent and Community Awareness

\$173,757

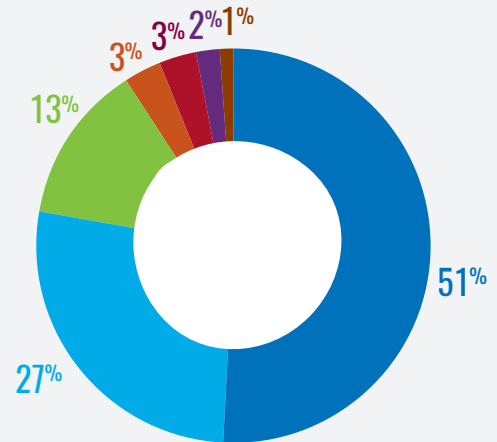
Workforce Development and Training

\$138,043

Coordinating Care

\$54,369

Total \$8,392,325



FTF East Maricopa Regional Partnership Council and Staff

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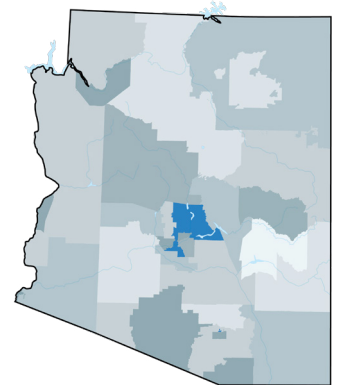
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The **FTF East Maricopa Region** lies entirely within Maricopa County and spans urban communities to the east of Phoenix as well as less densely populated, suburban and rural communities reaching towards the edges of the Maricopa County boundary. This diverse, expansive region includes: three cities — Chandler, Scottsdale and Tempe; five towns —

Carefree, Cave Creek, Fountain Hills, Guadalupe and Paradise Valley; three unincorporated places — Goldfield Ranch, Rio Verde and Sun Lakes; two Phoenix neighborhoods — Ahwatukee and Paradise Valley Village; and one Indian reservation — the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation. The FTF East Maricopa Region includes Legislative Districts 1, 15, 17, 18, 24, 26 and 28. (Legislative districts are not necessarily congruent with regional boundaries.)

Learn more at

[FirstThingsFirst.org/Regions/East-Maricopa](https://www.firstthingsfirst.org/Regions/East-Maricopa)