



Investing in Our Future: Positive Outcomes of Early Childhood Investments

First Things First (FTF), Arizona’s early childhood agency, represents a commitment Arizonans made to our youngest children – that they would have the support they need to start school healthy and ready to succeed. Many young children in Arizona face significant barriers to their success, including poverty, trauma and lack of access to needed resources. In the FTF Southeast Maricopa Region, there are **68,482 children** (under age 6), with **18% living in poverty**. Here is how FTF is working to support young children and their families in this region.



90% of a child’s brain grows before kindergarten.
Early childhood matters.



FTF invests in proven programs and innovative strategies through grants to community organizations that provide services to children and families. Some of the FTF-funded services in this region include Family Resource Centers, Home Visitation, and Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care.

Regional Key Impact Highlights [State Fiscal Year 2023]



Strengthening Families and Early Literacy

8,582

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

1,171

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



Quality Preschool and Child Care

3,796

Children attended 3-5 star rated preschools and child care programs participating in Quality First.

600

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



Preventive Health

1,566

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.

518

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



Quality First preschool allows Queen Creek girl to thrive

In fall of 2022, Julia Payan and her husband faced a difficult decision. Payan wanted to be home with her newborn, Santiago, which required her to quit a job she loved, but with only one income, the family would no longer be able to afford to send Logan to preschool. This was devastating to Payan because she would have to stop her studies and dream of working to support families with young children.

The First Things First Southeast Maricopa Regional Council funds Quality First scholarships to help eligible families afford quality early care and education for their young children.



Scan to read the family story

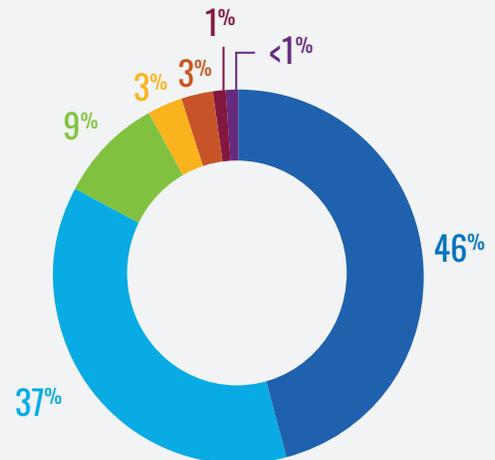


Strengthening Families

Positive early experiences, like nurturing relationships with parents and caregivers, promote healthy brain development and learning. First Things First expands families' access to the information, services and supports they need to help their young children achieve their fullest potential.

State Fiscal Year 2023 Total Regional Program Expenditures

Quality Child Care and Preschool	\$4,349,122
Strengthening Families	\$3,499,362
Preventive Health	\$856,216
Workforce Development and Training	\$269,554
Research and Evaluation	\$235,944
Parent and Community Awareness	\$122,209
Coordinating Care	\$68,210
Total	\$9,400,617



FTF Southeast Maricopa Regional Partnership Council

FTF regional partnership councils are made up of volunteers who study the unique needs of the local community and inform how funds should be used.

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