



90% OF A CHILD'S BRAIN DEVELOPS BEFORE KINDERGARTEN.

COLORADO RIVER INDIAN TRIBES REGION

2017 IMPACT REPORT



THE FIRST FIVE YEARS

From birth to age 5, the brain develops faster than at any other time in life. And how a child's brain develops in these early years will have a lasting impact on their future.

Science has shown that children with positive, nurturing experiences in their early years go on to be healthier and more successful in school and in life. They're more ready for kindergarten. They're more likely to graduate from high school and go on to college. They're more prepared for a successful career and to be contributing members of their communities.



That's why Arizonans created First Things First – to support the development and learning of our youngest children. First Things First invests in proven programs and innovative strategies that:



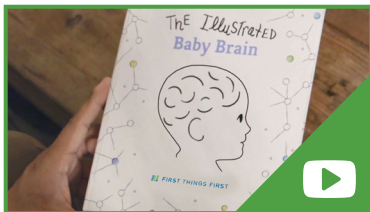
STRENGTHEN FAMILIES in their role as their child's first teacher.



IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF EARLY LEARNING in child care and preschool programs.



PROMOTE HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT to ensure that kids arrive at kindergarten ready to succeed.



WATCH OUR VIDEO

to learn more about early childhood brain development.

<http://www.firstthingsfirst.org/why-early-childhood-matters/the-first-five-years>

EARLY CHILDHOOD IN THE COLORADO RIVER INDIAN TRIBES REGION

“After studying the needs of young children and families in our community, our regional council implemented several strategies in 2017. Some included Quality First, parenting outreach and awareness, court teams and nutrition/obesity/physical activity. The goal of these efforts is to provide parents with literacy tools, quality care and education for the children, nutrition information and recipes, and resources to families that get involved in the court systems.

Among the many accomplishments in 2017, our council partnered with Parker Area Alliance for Community Empowerment (PAACE) in an evening parenting education class held twice a year. We shared literacy tools and make-and-take activities with parents to engage with their children in the comfort of their own homes. The parenting program requires a small time commitment from parents, but attendance was high, so literacy tools could be shared with them.”

Amelia Flores

2017 Chair, Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Partnership Council

2017 COLORADO RIVER INDIAN TRIBES REGION HIGHLIGHTS



STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND EARLY LITERACY

213 Books getting into the homes of infants, toddlers and preschoolers through a home distribution program.



QUALITY PRESCHOOL AND CHILD CARE

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

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

3 Early childhood professionals received college scholarships to improve their skills in working with infants, toddlers and preschoolers.

QUALITY FIRST PROGRAM HELPS PARKER SIBLINGS TAKE CENTER STAGE WITH LEARNING

Amanda Lucas remembers that shortly after enrolling her 2 ½-year-old daughter Layla at the SonShine Center in Parker, the toddler was ready to take center stage with what she was learning.

“She had just turned three, and I remember her standing on top of the coffee table, using it as a stage and belting out her ABCs perfectly,” she said.

Layla, 7, is now a second-grader at Blake Elementary School. She reads at almost a fourth grade level and enjoys chapter books. Her brother, Zachary, also attended the SonShine Center until he was age 3 and moved to the Colorado River Indian Tribes Head Start. Zachary started kindergarten this year and is already testing high on sight-word recognition and writing his name.



Both the SonShine Center and the CRIT Head Start in Parker participate 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 for Arizona kids ages birth to 5.

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.

Research shows that young children who attend quality early care programs have better math, language, and social skills. Both of Lucas' children received Quality First scholarships that helped defray the high cost of child care, but she said it was the high standards of care and instruction that her children received that was most valuable to her.

“The teachers there could read my kids just as well as I could,” Lucas said.

Lucas credits the SonShine Center's hands-on, electronic-free environment with better preparing both her children for school. “We just had our first parent-teacher conferences of the year, and they are both doing great,” she said.





**MORE LOCAL
STORIES**

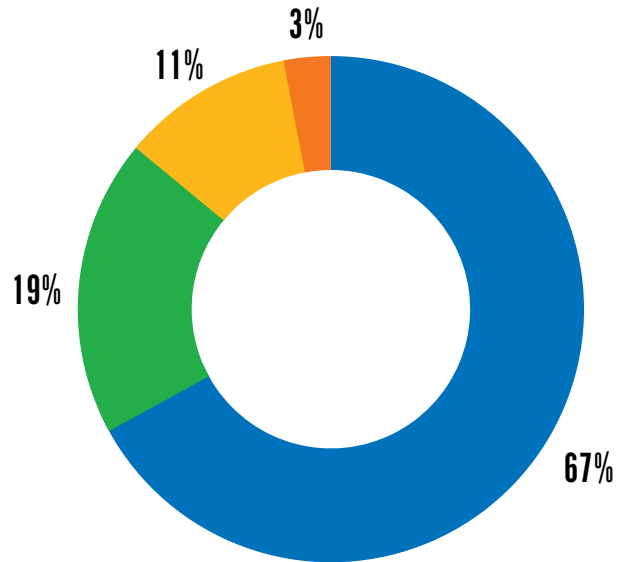
firstthingsfirst.org/regions/colorado-river-indian-tribes

FIRST THINGS FIRST COLORADO RIVER INDIAN TRIBES REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL

The First Things First Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Partnership Council is made up of volunteers who study the unique needs of the local community and decide how funds will be used to best support the development, education and health of young children birth to age 5. First Things First invests in proven programs and innovative strategies through grants to community organizations that provide services to children and families.

FY17 PROGRAM EXPENDITURES

	Quality Child Care and Preschool	\$138,639
	Strengthening Families	\$40,280
	Preventive Health	\$22,289
	Research and Evaluation	\$6,619
TOTAL		\$207,827



COUNCIL MEMBERS

Phillip Colbert, *Chair* Elvira Aspa, *Vice Chair*

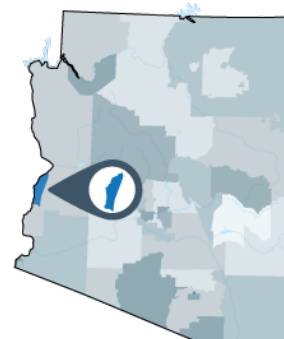
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The Colorado River Indian Tribes Region is defined as the Arizona part of the Colorado River Reservation, including the town of Parker. The region lies entirely in La Paz County. The Colorado River Indian Tribes Region includes Legislative District 4. Legislative districts are not necessarily congruent with regional boundaries.



Learn more at: firstthingsfirst.org/regions/colorado-river-indian-tribes