



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



# COCOPA TRIBE 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:



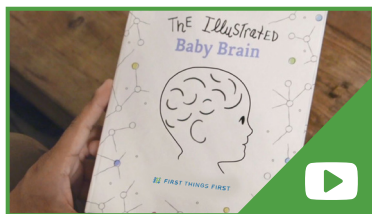
**STRENGTHEN FAMILIES** in their role as their child's first teacher.



**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 COCOPAH TRIBE REGION

“A great need in the Cocopah Tribe Region is to help families learn more about early education and brain development. The Cocopah Tribe Regional Partnership Council has worked through in-home visitation, increasing access to quality child care and providing food boxes to help families. Through these efforts, families are learning about the importance of the early years of life, learning strategies to help their children's development and accessing resources in times of need.

One of our greatest accomplishments this year was in partnership with the Cocopah Early Steps program. Specialists worked with families to conduct developmental screenings and connect families to other community resources. They also helped caregivers improve their parenting skills and understand how children learn through play. Parents and grandparents participating in the program are helping their children to be prepared for a great start in kindergarten.”

H. Jill McCormick  
Chair, Cocopah Tribe Regional Partnership Council

# 2017 COCOPAH TRIBE REGION HIGHLIGHTS



## STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND EARLY LITERACY

**16** Families received voluntary in-home coaching from trained providers to improve their parenting skills.



## QUALITY PRESCHOOL AND CHILD CARE

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

**1** Early childhood professional received a college scholarship to improve their skills in working with infants, toddlers and preschoolers.



## PREVENTIVE HEALTH

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

**79** Food boxes distributed to families with infants, toddlers and preschoolers to meet food insecurity needs.

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## PARENT HOME VISITS HELP COCOPAH TODDLER COMMUNICATE BETTER WITH FAMILY

During a local health fair, a mother of a 2-year-old boy approached the Cocopah Early Steps program table. The mom shared that she and her husband wanted to learn about the development of their little boy and strengthen the bond with him.

First Things First Cocopah Tribe Regional Partnership Council funds the Cocopah Early Steps program, which provides voluntary coaching and in-home support for families. The Early Steps program specialist went to the family's home and enrolled them in the home visitation program.

A developmental screening, completed in partnership with the parent, identified the child's difficulty with verbal communication. The parents said that the boy spoke mostly gibberish, which they understood, but others couldn't. Both parents were eager to learn about how to help their son.

The program specialist provided the family with an age-appropriate book for their son and shared with them how strong early literacy skills are developed. The family learned about the importance of establishing a routine and reading every day and having face-to-face interactions. They also started having conversations with their child about their day-to-day activities, reading street signs and pointing out letters, asking their child questions about what they see and waiting patiently for an answer.

Within a few months, the program specialist saw how the child's speech was improving. During one home visit, the family did a language and cognitive activity, where the boy named basic colors, sang the alphabet song and counted to the number 20. The father described how he and his wife started reading to their son every day, along with reviewing letters from the alphabet, singing and just talking to him.

Eight months later, the boy, now 3, is using complete sentences and has back-and-forth conversations with his parents and others. He has learned to say, "thank you" and "please." He is ready to start preschool.





**MORE LOCAL  
STORIES**

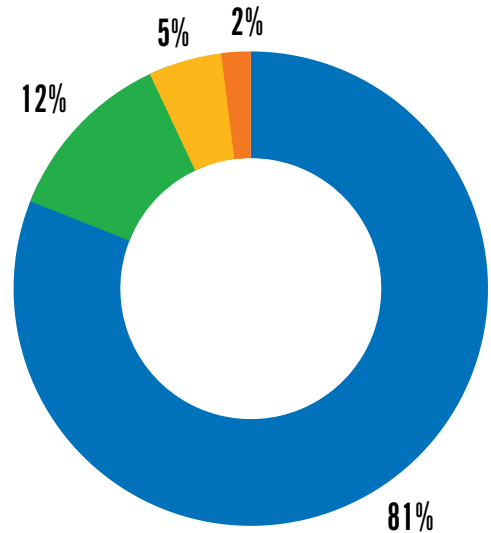
[firstthingsfirst.org/regions/cocopah-tribe](http://firstthingsfirst.org/regions/cocopah-tribe)

# FIRST THINGS FIRST COCOPAH TRIBE REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL

The First Things First Cocopah Tribe 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

 Strengthening Families	\$41,392
 Quality Child Care and Preschool	\$6,113
 Research and Evaluation	\$2,432
 Preventive Health	\$2,432
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$51,137</b>



## COUNCIL MEMBERS

H. Jill McCormick, *Chair* Deal Begay, *Vice Chair*

Ines Gonzalez

Veronica Menta

Elizabeth Renaud

Patricia Rodriguez-

Weissenberg

Paul Soto

River Twist

Paula Twist Koolick

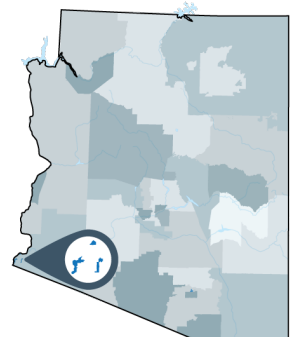
Diane White

Nohemi Ortega  
FTF Regional Director

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The Cocopah Indian Tribe is a federally recognized, sovereign tribe located in the most southwestern corner of Arizona, 13 miles south of Yuma and along the Colorado River. The Cocopah (Kwapa), also known as the River People, have historically lived along the lower Colorado River and delta. They are descendants of the Yuman-language speaking people that occupied the lands along the Colorado River. The current Cocopah Reservation is comprised of three noncontiguous regions: East, North and West Reservations. The boundaries of the First Things First Cocopah Tribe Region match those of the Cocopah Reservation. The Cocopah Tribe Region includes Legislative District 4. (Legislative districts are not necessarily congruent with regional boundaries.)



Learn more at: [firstthingsfirst.org/regions/cocopah-tribe](http://firstthingsfirst.org/regions/cocopah-tribe)