



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

# GILA 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:



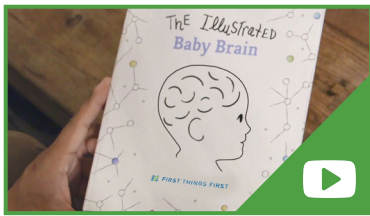
**STRENGTHEN FAMILIES** in their role as their child's first teacher.



**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 GILA REGION

“Based on our study of the needs of children and families in our community, the Gila Regional Partnership Council has always prioritized the developmental and sensory screening strategy. We will continue to fund this service for young children in our region. Quality First is another priority for the regional council. It's exciting to say that all of our region's participating centers and homes are now at a Quality First rating. The regional council continues to fund parenting education to increase opportunities for parents to gain knowledge and information. These include two programs -- Teen Outreach Pregnancy Services (TOPS) and Triple P - Positive Parenting Program.

One of our prioritized goals is strengthening families through parent education. In the Globe-Miami area, we fund the local TOPS program. It has been so successful that we have added additional funding to expand their influence into the Payson (northern Gila) area. We expect good results and are excited to hear about parents' behaviors being changed in a positive way as a result of these classes.”

Fernando Shipley  
Chair, Gila Regional Partnership Council

# 2017 GILA REGION HIGHLIGHTS



## STRENGTHENING FAMILIES

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

**146** Families completed a voluntary series of parenting education classes.



## EARLY LEARNING

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

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

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



## PREVENTIVE HEALTH

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

## TEEN OUTREACH PREGNANCY SERVICES SUPPORT FAMILY AS THEIR SON'S FIRST AND BEST TEACHER

Lydia Aguilar-Ott and her husband started taking parenting classes before their son was born.

They had heard over and over that even when parents aren't directly talking to their young children, kids are always watching and listening.

By the time their son Vhon was almost age 2, they noticed that the toddler had started hitting other children. During a parenting class, they saw Vhon trying to hit another child with a toy hammer. That's when mom and dad started piecing together his behavior.

"We'd be watching 'The Walking Dead' (a show about zombies), and Vhon would try to reenact a fighting scene," she said.

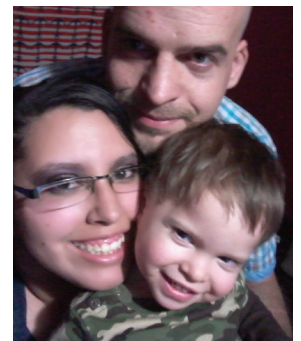
They realized that he was acting out based on what he was watching on television. At the next parenting class, the parents apologized for their son's behavior.

"You may not think that they're watching what you're watching, because they're in and out of the room, but they hear it," Aguilar-Ott said. "They hear mom and dad laughing, and they think it's cool."

It's these types of lessons that Aguilar-Ott has been learning through Teen Outreach Pregnancy Services, or TOPS. The program, which is funded by the First Things First Gila Region, works with pregnant mothers under age 24 to provide healthy pregnancy, childbirth and parenting education and support to families in Gila County.

TOPS worked with the Globe mother from the time she was pregnant until she gave birth to Vhon and as he grew reaching developmental milestones.

Aguilar-Ott soon switched to family-friendly shows and saw his behavior change. The family shows encouraged Vhon to help and now he feeds the family pets and helps mom in the kitchen.








**MORE LOCAL  
STORIES**

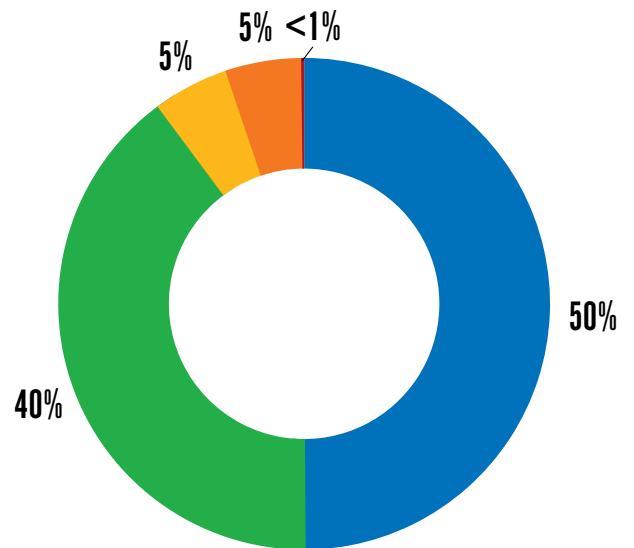
[firstthingsfirst.org/regions/gila](http://firstthingsfirst.org/regions/gila)

# FIRST THINGS FIRST GILA REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL

The First Things First Gila 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 ages birth to 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	\$346,115
	Strengthening Families	\$272,798
	Preventive Health	\$34,115
	Research and Evaluation	\$33,484
	Parent and Community Awareness	\$1,142
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$687,654</b>



## COUNCIL MEMBERS

Fernando Shipley, *Chair*      Sherry Dorathy, *Vice Chair*

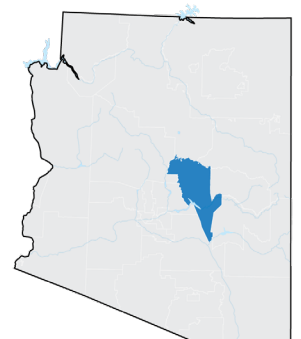
Debora Bunney                  Charles Proudfoot                  Kristin Wade

Debbie Leverance              Melissa Ruff

Audrey Opitz                      Tashina Smith

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The Gila Region is defined as Gila County, not including the lands belonging to the San Carlos Apache Tribe and the White Mountain Apache Tribe, which are their own First Things First regions. The Gila Region's population is located in the small towns of Globe, Payson, Miami, Hayden/Winkelman, Pine/Strawberry, the unincorporated areas of Tonto Basin and Young, and a number of rural unincorporated communities. The Tonto Apache Tribe is located within the Gila Region, adjacent to the city of Payson. The Gila Region includes Legislative District 6. (Legislative districts are not necessarily congruent with regional boundaries.)



Learn more at: [firstthingsfirst.org/regions/gila](http://firstthingsfirst.org/regions/gila)