



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

# LA PAZ/MOHAVE 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:



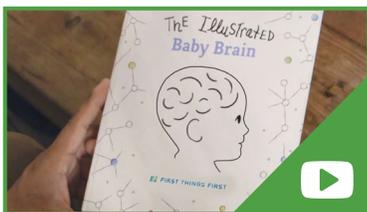
**STRENGTHEN FAMILIES** in their role as their child's first teacher.



**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 LA PAZ/MOHAVE REGION

“The La Paz/Mohave Region faces challenges with school readiness, an increasing number of children who face abuse and neglect, and providing an educated early learning workforce. To address these issues, the council funds home visitation to support parents knowledge of their child's health and developmental needs. Our council has worked diligently with the Mohave County courts to implement the Zero to Three court team approach, so that all parties involved in child welfare have an understanding of infant-toddler mental health.

Our work to increase the number of credentialed early educators has led to a successful partnership with Mohave Community College and Arizona Western College so that early care and education professionals have a pathway to obtain a child development associate credential along with college credit hours. We see the dedication of those teachers reflected in the quality they bring to their classrooms and centers throughout the region.”

Riley Frei  
Chair, La Paz/Mohave Regional Partnership Council

# 2017 LA PAZ/MOHAVE REGION HIGHLIGHTS



## STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND EARLY LITERACY

**1,484** Families of newborns received the Arizona Parent Kit, filled with tips and tools to help support their child's healthy development.

**365** Infants and toddlers involved with the child welfare system benefitted from training and coordinated efforts to meet their unique developmental needs.



## QUALITY PRESCHOOL AND CHILD CARE

**1,107** Children attended preschools and child care programs participating in Quality First.

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

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



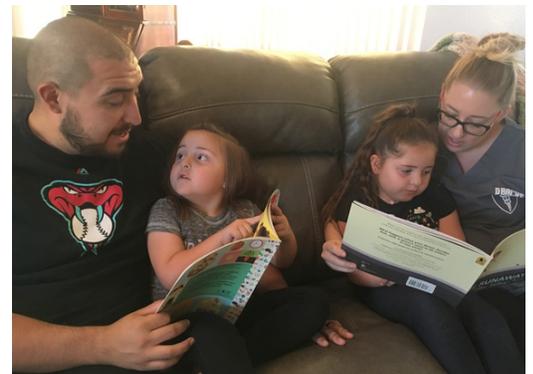
## PREVENTIVE HEALTH

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

## FORMER PREEMIES GET STRONG START AT QUALITY FIRST CENTER

Avery and Ariya Espinosa were born 10 weeks premature, each weighing less than four pounds. They spent their first six weeks in the neonatal intensive care unit in Phoenix. When parents Frank and Torri Espinosa finally brought them home to Kingman, they knew they needed to find child care that would help the girls not fall behind on literacy and language skills.

Luckily, the Espinosas' received Quality First scholarships for the Gingerbread House, a child care center, where the family was confident that the twins would get the engagement they needed. The center is enrolled 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 across Arizona.



By 18 months old, the time when educators say gaps in language begin to appear, the Espinosas noticed the girls catching up to their peers. By age 2, they were right in the middle of the pack.

Torri credits their success to the care they received from a consistent team of quality teachers. To support learning at home, the teachers gave the parents strategies to use, such as asking specific questions to engage the girls about what they learned that day.

Avery and Ariya turned age 5 in August and started kindergarten feeling confident to start school. "To see how far they've come," Frank said. "The last five years have been a blur. I don't know what we would have done if we were on our own."

**MORE LOCAL  
STORIES**

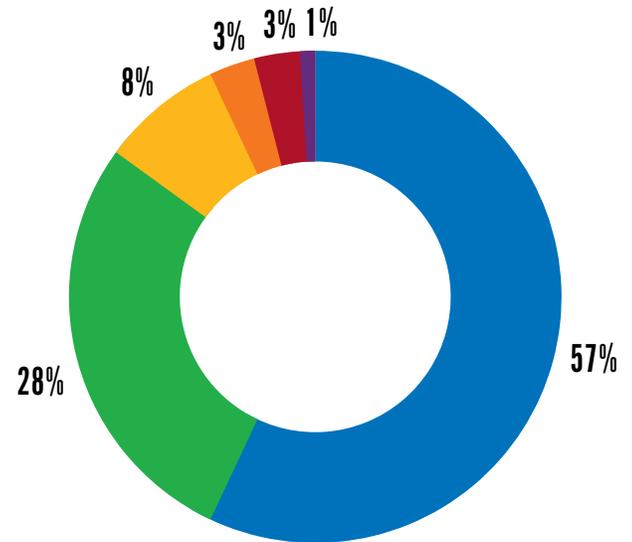
[firstthingsfirst.org/regions/la-paz-mohave](http://firstthingsfirst.org/regions/la-paz-mohave)

# FIRST THINGS FIRST LA PAZ/MOHAVE REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL

The First Things First La Paz/Mohave 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	\$2,011,261
 Strengthening Families	\$985,815
 Workforce Development	\$289,345
 Parent and Community Awareness	\$89,118
 Research and Evaluation	\$88,677
 Preventive Health	\$48,417
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3,512,633</b>



## COUNCIL MEMBERS

Riley Frei, <i>Chair</i>	Jose Garcia, <i>Vice Chair</i>	
Kip Anderson	Claudia Gonzalez	Lori Long
Alisa Burroughs	Debbie Justice	Christy Rail
Margee Chieffo	Betsy Lewis	Vanessa Sandoval

Vijette Saari,  
FTF Regional Director  
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The La Paz/Mohave Region is defined as the combined area of the two counties, not including the lands belonging to the Colorado River Indian Tribes, the Hualapai Tribe and the Kaibab Paiute Tribe. The region does include the Arizona portion of the land belonging to the Fort Mojave Indian Tribe. The region covers about 16,700 square miles, with its northern end separated from the rest by the Grand Canyon. The communities of the region are diverse in population density and in demographics, and are often isolated by large areas of unpopulated land. People and services are concentrated in larger places in the region such as Bullhead City, Kingman, Lake Havasu City and Parker. The La Paz/Mohave Region includes Legislative District 5. (Legislative districts are not necessarily congruent with regional boundaries.)



Learn more at: [firstthingsfirst.org/regions/la-paz-mohave](http://firstthingsfirst.org/regions/la-paz-mohave)