



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



NAVAJO NATION 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:



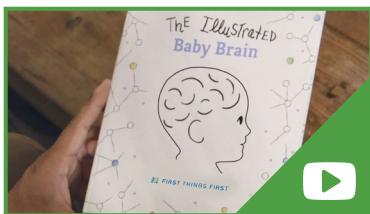
STRENGTHEN FAMILIES in their role as their child's first teacher.



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 NAVAJO NATION REGION

“The Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council recognizes an important opportunity to improve the quality of child care and preschool for our community's young children. In 2017, the council strived to provide and enhance access to quality early education. Through strategies such as Quality First, mental health consultation and college scholarships, the council is improving quality in early education by supporting learning environments that nurture social, emotional and cognitive development of young children.

“Arizona PBS has worked with higher education institutions on Navajo Nation to provide many early childhood professionals with scholarships to attain their bachelor's degrees. The regional council has been committed to professional development and through this strategy is ensuring early learning centers will have qualified teachers who help build children's foundational skills to be ready for kindergarten.”

Dawn Yazzie
Chair, Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council

2017 NAVAJO NATION REGION HIGHLIGHTS



STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND EARLY LITERACY

406

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

207

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



QUALITY PRESCHOOL AND CHILD CARE

693

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

227

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



PREVENTIVE HEALTH

338

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

2,216

Fluoride varnishes applied to protect against childhood tooth decay.

QUALITY FIRST PRESCHOOL HELPS CHINLE PRESCHOOLER GAIN IMPORTANT LITERACY SKILLS

Lola Wood was trying her best to get her young son Takoda interested in learning while they were together at home, but felt like he needed more motivation and knowledge than she was able to offer. "I knew there was a way to teach little people how to learn, and I didn't know how to do it," Wood said.

Takoda's dad, Quincy Natay, is a member of the First Things First Navajo Nation Regional Council and the superintendent of Chinle Unified School District, where he helped to get the preschool center that Takoda would eventually attend.

The Chinle Elementary School Preschool participates in Quality First, a signature program of FTF, which partners with child care and preschool providers to improve the quality of early learning across Arizona.

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.

Both Natay and Wood said the program's focus on early literacy helped their son learn to read at an early age and expand his vocabulary. "The center asked parents to read to Takoda every night and sent home projects to promote conversation and relationship-building among the family. The routines and interactions were an important step for Takoda to develop a large vocabulary," Natay said.

"Once Takoda learned to read, that completely changed his life," Wood said. "Then he could see what was going on – he's now able to identify things that were just a blur."

Takoda, now 7 years old and a second grader, is reading a grade above his level, and has made it a goal for himself to be reading at a fifth-grade level by the end of the school year.



**MORE LOCAL
STORIES**

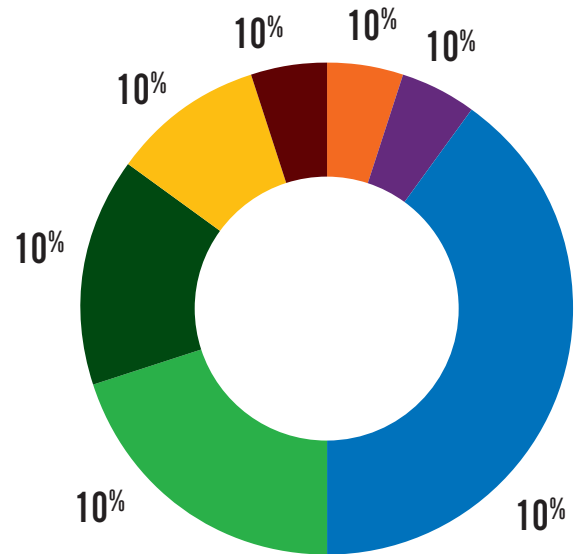
firstthingsfirst.org/regions/navajo-nation

FIRST THINGS FIRST NAVAJO NATION REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL

The First Things First Navajo Nation 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	\$1,556,933
Preventive Health	\$1,242,901
Strengthening Families	\$824,334
Workforce Development and Training	\$209,475
Parent and Community Awareness	\$137,218
Research and Evaluation	\$134,527
TOTAL	\$4,105,387



COUNCIL MEMBERS

Dawn Yazzie, *Chair* Rhonda Etsitty, *Vice Chair*

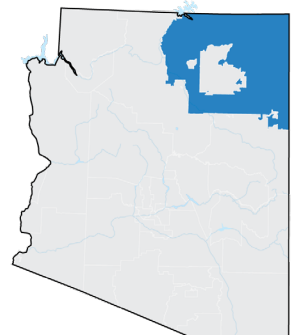
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The Navajo Nation Region is defined as the Arizona portion of the Navajo Nation Reservation. The region covers nearly 16,000 square miles in the northeast corner of the state, stretching across Apache, Navajo and Coconino counties. The entire reservation, which dates to the Navajo Treaty of 1868, also includes lands in Utah and New Mexico. The Navajo Nation Region includes Legislative District 7. (Legislative districts are not necessarily congruent with regional boundaries.)



Learn more at: firstthingsfirst.org/regions/navajo-nation