



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



PIMA SOUTH 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:



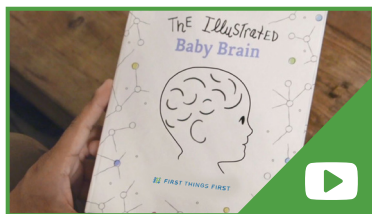
STRENGTHEN FAMILIES in their role as their child's first teacher.



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 PIMA SOUTH REGION

“The Pima South Regional Partnership Council recognizes that in order to continually improve quality and access to child care and early education in the region, we must also improve the professional development of caregivers in the field. We are proud to support scholarships for professionals pursuing higher education in early education. After reviewing studies about the greatest needs for families and children living in the region, the council implemented oral health and family support strategies.

Through these strategies, tooth decay has decreased and the number of expectant mothers receiving dental care has increased. In 2017, 97 professionals received hands-on learning opportunities with local and national experts and 84 professionals received college credit. The number of families participating in family support programs increased, giving parents tools to improve their child's health and development.”

Connie Espinoza
Chair, Pima South Regional Partnership Council

2017 PIMA SOUTH REGION HIGHLIGHTS



STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND EARLY LITERACY

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

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



QUALITY PRESCHOOL AND CHILD CARE

3,294 Children attended preschools and child care programs participating in Quality First.

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



PREVENTIVE HEALTH

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

2,787 Fluoride varnishes applied to protect against childhood tooth decay.

COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP A LIFE-CHANGER FOR CHILD CARE PROVIDER

When Desiree Lohrenz decided to open a home child care center in Tucson, she wanted it to be the kind of early learning environment that would have a lasting impact on young boys and girls.

While working to obtain certification as a licensed care provider, she came across Quality First, a signature program of First Things First (FTF) that seeks to improve early learning for Arizona's youngest children.

Lohrenz seized the opportunity for training and tools that Quality First offers through coaching, assessments and incentives that would ultimately benefit the children in her care.

"One of the biggest points in the training in Quality First is meaningful interactions," Lohrenz said. "It's not just 'here's my classroom, here's my lesson plan.' It's 'how do we get them to truly understand the lesson? How do we reach each individual child? How do we make learning count for them?'"

She soon learned of Quality First's professional development program. One part of the FTF program offers college scholarships for educators to take early childhood education classes. She quickly enrolled in Pima Community College and now has an associate degree in early childhood education. She is currently working toward a bachelor's degree at the University of Arizona. She expects to graduate in May 2018.

"My degree has further increased my understanding and appreciation for differences in young children in every way," Lohrenz said. "Working with special needs children, I have a better understanding of how to work with children of all backgrounds and abilities."

She now uses her early childhood education skills in a Quality First preschool in Vail, where her work impacts dozens of children daily.

"You see the children open up," Lohrenz said. "When you first see them, you don't know how they're going to respond to something. You don't know how they're going to make that connection. And by the end of it, they're fully ready for kindergarten."




**MORE LOCAL
STORIES**

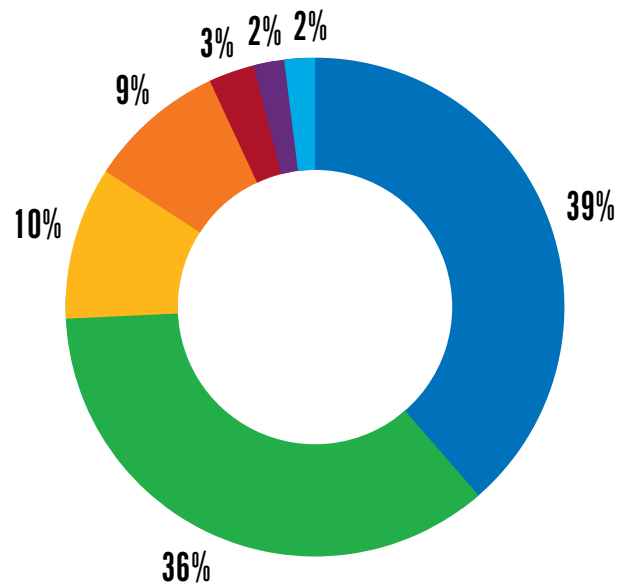
firstthingsfirst.org/regions/pima-south

FIRST THINGS FIRST PIMA SOUTH REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL

The First Things First Pima South 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	\$2,196,038
	Quality Child Care and Preschool	\$1,985,542
	Workforce Development and Training	\$553,105
	Preventive Health	\$492,884
	Research and Evaluation	\$168,832
	Coordinating Support	\$100,000
	Parent and Community Awareness	\$88,064
	TOTAL	\$5,585,005



COUNCIL MEMBERS

Connie Espinoza, *Chair* Lynn O'Connor, *Vice Chair*

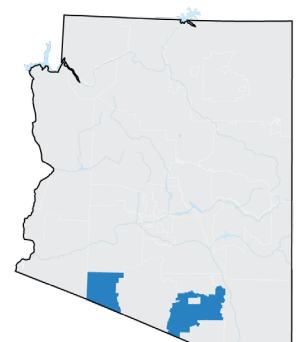
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The Pima South Region is defined as the southern portion of Pima County, not including the lands belonging to the Pascua Yaqui Tribe and the Tohono O'odham Nation, plus a small part of Santa Cruz County around the Amado community. The Pima South Region includes Legislative Districts 2, 3, 4 and 14. (Legislative districts are not necessarily congruent with regional boundaries.)



Learn more at: firstthingsfirst.org/regions/pima-south