



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



**WHITE MOUNTAIN APACHE
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:



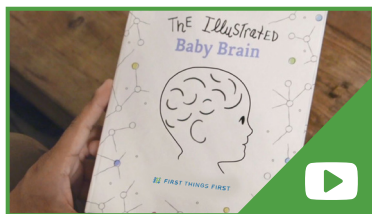
STRENGTHEN FAMILIES in their role as their child's first teacher.



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 WHITE MOUNTAIN APACHE TRIBE REGION

After studying the needs of young children and families in our community, we found that many children face issues with dental health and accessing quality child care to prepare them for kindergarten. To support better dental health in our community, the council funded dental health screenings and fluoride varnishes for thousands of young children to keep children healthy and school ready.

In addressing the lack of access to high-quality early care and education programs, the White Mountain Apache Tribe Regional Council funded First Things First's signature program, Quality First, to increase access to quality child care centers and preschools. In 2017, investments in Quality First to support stronger curriculum, one-on-one care, assessing children with special needs and healthier classroom environments helped to provide higher quality care for hundreds of local children.

Jessica Beach
Regional Director, White Mountain Apache Tribe Region

2017 WHITE MOUNTAIN APACHE TRIBE REGION HIGHLIGHTS



QUALITY PRESCHOOL AND CHILD CARE

- 306** Children attended preschools and child care programs participating in Quality First.
- 59** Children birth to age 5 received a Quality First scholarship to attend high quality preschools and child care programs.
- 23** Early childhood professionals received college scholarships to improve their skills in working with infants, toddlers and preschoolers.



PREVENTIVE HEALTH

- 141** Children received screenings to detect vision, hearing and developmental issues to prevent learning challenges later on.
- 1,185** Fluoride varnishes applied to protect against childhood tooth decay.
- 1,232** Children received screening to detect cavities and any oral health issues that might affect their overall health.

QUALITY FIRST PROGRAM HELPS CHILD WITH SPEECH DIFFICULTIES FIND HER VOICE

Military families face many challenges. From moving to a new town every two to four years to adjusting to the deployment of a family member, military families' lives are in constant change that affects young children in different ways.

For young Auriah Ahasteen, those changes affected her speech development.

Auriah was 2 years old when her family moved from California to a U.S. Army base in North Carolina.

"She was used to having a big family around, so when we moved, it was hard on her," said her mother, Heather Ahasteen. "She stopped talking."

When the family relocated to Arizona two years later, Ahasteen enrolled Auriah into the White Mountain Apache Tribe Head Start in Whiteriver. The Head Start is a part of First Things First's signature program, Quality First. 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.

At the time, Auriah wasn't able to speak in full sentences or put sounds together. Unable to communicate with her teachers or peers, the 4-year-old would act out in frustration. Teachers evaluated Auriah's speech and recommended a speech therapist. They also encouraged Ahasteen to read with her daughter daily.

"I still read with her every day," her mother said. "She loves to read."

Slowly, Auriah's speech improved.

"I feel like we really benefitted from this program," Ahasteen said. "The teachers knew how to teach Auriah to calm herself, so her behavior problems decreased. They worked with her one-on-one to improve her communication."

Now Auriah is age 6 and in the first grade. She's doing well academically and socially. Ahasteen credits the teachers at the Quality First Head Start for preparing Auriah for elementary school.




**MORE LOCAL
STORIES**

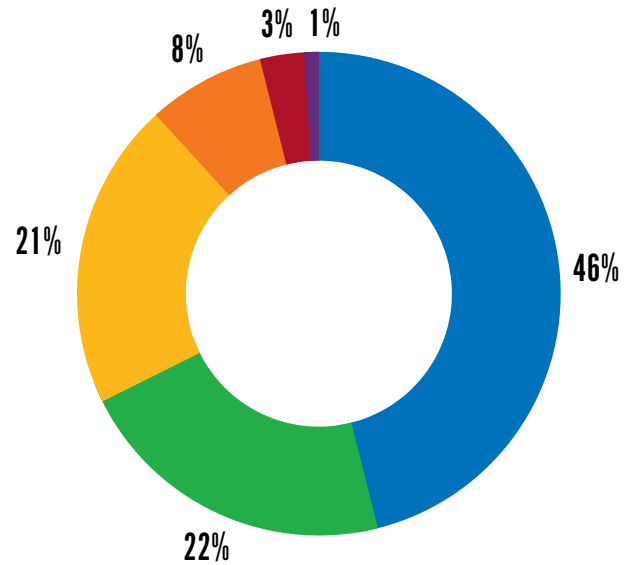
firstthingsfirst.org/regions/white-mountain-apache-tribe

FIRST THINGS FIRST WHITE MOUNTAIN APACHE TRIBE REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL

The First Things First White Mountain Apache 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

	Quality Child Care and Preschool	\$307,009
	Strengthening Families	\$141,866
	Preventive Health	\$135,548
	Workforce Development and Training	\$49,550
	Research and Evaluation	\$18,768
	Parent and Community Awareness	\$6,899
	TOTAL	\$659,641



COUNCIL MEMBERS

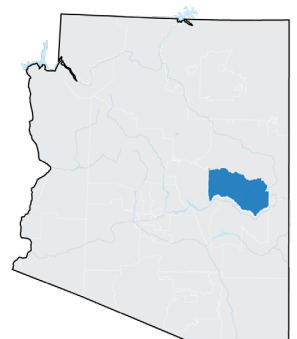
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Jandi Craig Ardith Titla

Mary Kline Dawnafe Whitesinger

Richard Sanchez Andrea Woolridge

Jessica Beach,
FTF Regional Director
jbeach@firstthingsfirst.org
928.532.5041



The boundaries of the White Mountain Apache Tribe Region are the same as the Fort Apache Indian Reservation. The region covers more than 2,500 square miles in Apache, Gila and Navajo counties. The larger communities in the region are Whiteriver, Cibecue, North Fork and Canyon Day. The White Mountain Apache Tribe Region includes Legislative District 7. (Legislative districts are not necessarily congruent with regional boundaries.)

Learn more at: firstthingsfirst.org/regions/white-mountain-apache-tribe