



EARLY EXPERIENCES  
BUILD THE FOUNDATION  
FOR A LIFETIME

# LA PAZ/MOHAVE REGION

2018 IMPACT REPORT

 FIRST THINGS FIRST

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

From birth to age 5, a child's brain develops more than any other time in life. Research shows that the quality of a child's early life experiences shape how their brain develops.

First Things First partners with families and communities to help our state's youngest children prepare for kindergarten and beyond.

“

By the time a child is at the end of first grade, we have a very good idea of where they're going to perform for the rest of their life. Any gaps we can fill before they get to kindergarten is going to serve the child, their family and the community, forever.”

**Riley Frei**

Chair

La Paz/Mohave Regional Partnership Council

## That's why Arizonans created First Things First

### HOW WE WORK



#### Early Childhood Funds

Allotted by FTF State Board



#### Local Decision-Making

Each region has 11 volunteer regional partnership council members representing their community. Based on the area's early childhood needs, each council prioritizes goals and strategies to help children birth to age 5 and their families.



#### 28 FTF Regions

represent diverse communities across AZ

#### Partnerships with Local Early Childhood Providers

First Things First offers grant opportunities; providers implement programs and services in communities.



#### Community Collaborations

Regions also collaborate with organizations and entities to build a network of programs and services to better support young children.



## THIS RESULTS IN MORE KIDS READY FOR KINDERGARTEN



# FISCAL YEAR 2018 LA PAZ/MOHAVE REGION IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS

Here are a few highlights of the proven programs and innovative strategies from this region.



## STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND EARLY LITERACY

**1,176** Families of newborns received the Arizona Parent Kit, filled with tips and tools to help support their child's healthy development.

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



## QUALITY PRESCHOOL AND CHILD CARE

**1,131** Children attended preschools and child care programs participating in Quality First.

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

**847** Early childhood educators attended a training or session to improve their skills in working with infants, toddlers and preschoolers.



## PREVENTIVE HEALTH

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

## MOM FINDS THAT QUALITY CHILD CARE MAKES BIG DIFFERENCE IN PREPARING HER GIRLS FOR KINDERGARTEN

Lisa Jaboro wasn't sure if her kids needed to attend preschool since she stayed with them during the day. But as her oldest daughter, Bristol, got older and closer to starting school, Jaboro was worried about the transition from having no formal schedule at home to having a full-day schedule at school.

She started looking into a preschool for her two young daughters Bristol and Jordyn.

She found Little Knights Preschool, which is located on the campus of Lake Havasu City High School, in Lake Havasu City. The preschool offered half-day sessions to help ease that transition and a low staff-to-student ratio. In addition, Little Knights is a participant of First Things First's signature program, Quality First, which help centers make quality improvements that research proves help children thrive, such as creating learning environments that nurture the emotional, social and academic development of every child.



"Brain development is critical during these early years

and meaningful quality play helps promote optimum development," said Little Knights Director Marie Hendry.

Preschoolers at Little Knights begin each day by signing themselves in rather than their parents doing it. When Jordyn started her first year of preschool last year, her signature was barely more than a scribbled line. Now starting her second year, 3-year-old Jordyn can write her full name and is well on her way to building the early literacy skills needed to learn how to read.

"She notices the letter 'J' all over the place now, like when we're driving, she'll point to a sign and say, 'Mom, there's a 'J'!" Jaboro said.

Now that she knows the difference quality care can make, Jaboro said that she knows what to look for when it comes time for the baby of the family, Avery, to start preschool.

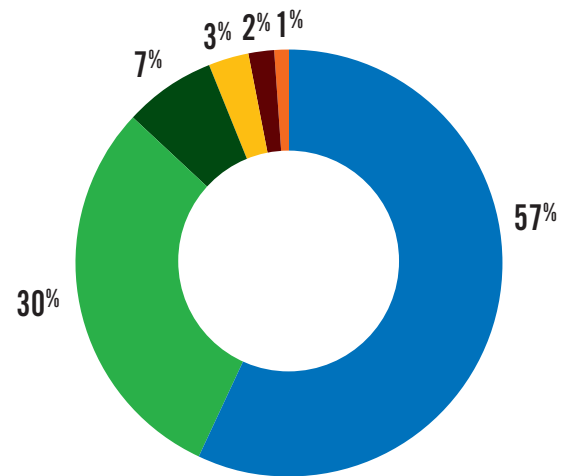
"Before I didn't know what guidelines to look for. I was looking more at the hours and location, to be honest," Jaboro said. "Now I know to look at staffing ratios, what they're teaching, and how they're teaching it. It's about creating a learning environment so the kids are prepared when they start kindergarten."

# LA PAZ/MOHAVE REGIONAL COUNCIL

The FTF 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 birth to age 5. FTF invests in proven programs and innovative strategies through grants to community organizations that provide services to children and families.

## FY18 TOTAL REGIONAL PROGRAM EXPENDITURES

Quality Child Care and Preschool	\$1,980,418
Strengthening Families	\$1,033,409
Workforce Development and Training	\$242,165
Parent and Community Awareness	\$86,654
Research and Evaluation	\$76,520
Preventive Health	\$52,764
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3,471,930</b>



## FIRST THINGS FIRST LA PAZ/MOHAVE REGIONAL COUNCIL MEMBERS

Riley Frei,  
Chair

Jose Garcia,  
Vice Chair

Vijette Saari,  
FTF Regional Director

[vsaaari@firstthingsfirst.org](mailto:vsaaari@firstthingsfirst.org)

928.854.8732

Erin Taylor,  
FTF Community Outreach Coordinator

[etaylor@firstthingsfirst.org](mailto:etaylor@firstthingsfirst.org)

928.854.8732

### Members

Kip Anderson

Betsy Lewis

Alisa Burroughs

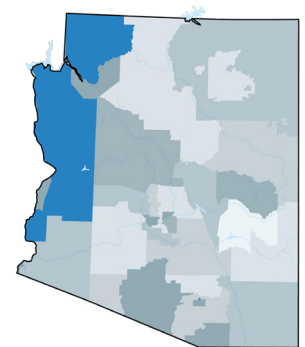
Lori Long

Marguerite (Margee)  
Chieffo

Deb Pennington

Debbie Justice

Christy Rail



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](https://FirstThingsFirst.org/Regions/La-Paz-Mohave)