



**# FIRST THINGS FIRST**

**2019 IMPACT REPORT**

# Colorado River Indian Tribes Region



**Early experiences build the foundation for a lifetime**



# of a child's brain growth happens 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.



This year our council received the Eddie Basha Regional Partnership Council Excellence Award for Leadership and Service for our Transition to Kindergarten program. Our focus was to better prepare our children for academic success. The program helps our children have the opportunity to be better prepared to start school."

## Elvira Aspa

Chair, FTF Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Partnership Council

## Fiscal Year 2019 CRIT Region Impact Highlights

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



### Strengthening Families and Early Literacy

**462** Books getting into the homes of infants, toddlers and preschoolers through a local distribution program.

**340** Resource guides were distributed to families, so parents could easily access support services and resources to help care for their children.

**274** Adults who attended parenting activities to help support children.



### Quality Preschool and Child Care

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

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

## Additional strategies:



### 30 Children participated

in a summer transition program to prepare to be successful in kindergarten.



## Summer Transition to Kindergarten program helps preschoolers from the Colorado River Indian Tribes area get prepared to succeed

Principal Brian Wedemeyer wanted to change the trajectory of the students starting kindergarten at LePera Elementary School located on the Colorado River Indian Reservation, 20 miles south of Parker. In October of 2017, he met with the First Things First Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Partnership Council with concerns that the majority of children arriving to kindergarten were not prepared to start school.

After a rigorous review of local data and resources, the regional council agreed to invest in this work and find an already established, evidence-based curriculum to implement the Summer Transition to Kindergarten strategy for children who had not had the benefit of attending preschool and will attend kindergarten in the Parker Unified School District.

They found that Arizona State University and Arizona PBS had a Kindergarten Readiness Summer Camp program that helps kids learn to read, share, use scissors and glue, follow directions and be ready for kindergarten. The curriculum uses the characters from the PBS KIDS animation show, “Super Why!”

On the PBS television show, Super Why and his friends are characters that help preschoolers learn to read through pronunciation, rhyming and spelling. Super Why’s friends are characters from “Jack and the Beanstalk” or “Little Red Riding Hood” and tie back to literacy. The Arizona PBS curriculum uses these characters to create fun curriculum to engage children.

Arizona PBS educational outreach team works with local educators and volunteers on using Super Why! curriculum for kids and also how to engage parents to support their children’s success in school.

The regional council formed a partnership with ASU, Arizona PBS, the Parker school district and two local libraries. The school district provided classroom space and Arizona PBS provided the training and a meal for families attending the weekly class and a book for each child. Also, the Arizona Western College Parker Campus Early Childhood program provided opportunities to train local educators.

The program has proven to be very successful. Families have made a great effort to attend each class, and it has encouraged parents to learn with their children.

One parent shared that she has seen so much progress in her child’s ability to recognize letters and has noticed her daughter does a lot of imaginary play using the songs she learned from the program.



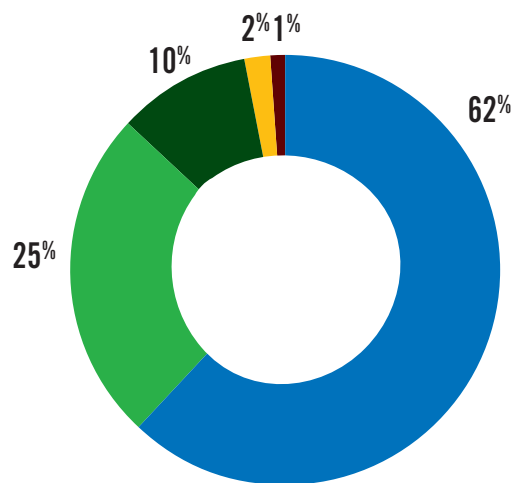


# Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Council

The FTF Colorado River Indian Tribes 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.

## FY19 Total Regional Program Expenditures

Quality Child Care and Preschool	\$223,861
Strengthening Families	\$83,810
Preventive Health	\$34,417
Coordinating Care	\$10,496
Research and Evaluation	\$7,325
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$359,909</b>



## FTF Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Partnership Council

Chair  
Elvira Aspa

Vice Chair  
Brad Sale

### Members

Delise Beavers

Norma Ray

Isabel DeLeon

Monica Rosnagle

Gloria Flores-Lopez

Brian Wedemeyer

Tara Gene,  
FTF Regional Director  
[tgene@firstthingsfirst.org](mailto:tgene@firstthingsfirst.org)  
928.854.8732

The Colorado River Indian Tribes Region is defined as the Arizona part of the Colorado River Reservation, including the town of Parker. The region lies entirely in La Paz County. The Colorado River Indian Tribes Region includes Legislative District 4. Legislative districts are not necessarily congruent with regional boundaries.

Learn more at: [FirstThingsFirst.org/Regions/Colorado-River-Indian-Tribes](https://FirstThingsFirst.org/Regions/Colorado-River-Indian-Tribes)

