



FIRST THINGS FIRST

2019 IMPACT REPORT

Navajo/Apache 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.

“Intentional early childhood involvement can produce productive citizens in society, and prevent the heartache and cost of cradle to grave care, incarceration; and break the chain of generations of welfare dependent families.”

Nathan Updike

Community Relations for WellCare

Fiscal Year 2019 Navajo/Apache Region Impact Highlights

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



Strengthening Families and Early Literacy

616

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

569

Adults attended parenting activities to learn more about the importance of early childhood development.



Quality Preschool and Child Care

103

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

49

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



Preventive Health

4,970

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

Additional strategies:



9 Infants and toddlers

involved with the child welfare system benefitted from coordinated efforts to meet their unique developmental needs.



1,072 Books

were given to families with children ages birth to 5 years to encourage parent-child interaction and reading.



Healthy Steps helps Holbrook sisters stay on track for kindergarten

Kayla Bennett was a young mother to a newborn baby girl when she first met Deborah Lewis at North Country Healthcare in Holbrook.

Lewis is a Healthy Steps for Young Children specialist, who works with parents of young children to be their child's first and best teacher.

The First Things First Navajo/Apache Regional Council funds the program, which customizes services to meet individual family needs and goals, including: enhanced well-child care, home visits, informational material, parent groups and links to community resources.

For Bennett, the help included helping her navigate the early well-child visits and helping the new mom understand and identify developmental milestones to accurately track her daughter Kailin's healthy development.

"The program helped me keep track of my daughters' development and see where they were at according to their age bracket," she said. "My daughters also both accelerated beyond their abilities in their age group."

A few years later, her second daughter Jordan was born and Bennett soon enrolled her into the program.

"It gave us more knowledge on child development as well as the importance of everyday interactions with your children," Bennett said.

One important lesson that Bennett recalled learning from Lewis is that you cannot spoil your baby by responding when they cry, cuddling or by holding them too much.

"It's showing them you're there to protect them and above all show them you love them," Bennett said. "Since my daughters were young I've always cuddled them and still do. When I do this gesture, their whole mood always changes no matter if they're upset. I've also learned that the more you talk with a child from their newborn stage to age 3, helps them become a better reader, and communicate better."

Going through the program helped prepare Kailin, now 7, to be ready for kindergarten and Bennett expects that Jordan, now 4, will be ready as well.

"The Healthy Steps program has a lot of good resources about early childhood development," Bennett said. "I also tell family and friends that the program helped me grow into a more confident and optimistic parent."

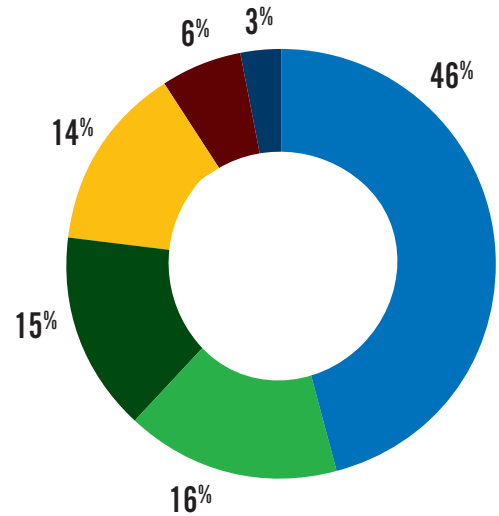


FTF Navajo/Apache Regional Council

The FTF Navajo/Apache 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

Preventive Health	\$675,009
Quality Child Care and Preschool	\$234,373
Workforce Development and Training	\$230,036
Strengthening Families	\$182,975
Parent and Community Awareness	\$90,560
Research and Evaluation	\$39,535
TOTAL	\$1,452,488



FTF Navajo/Apache Regional Partnership Council

Chair
Byron Lewis

Vice Chair
Carrie Classay

Members

Rachel Armstrong

Claude Endfield

Kimberly Avery

Doug Harris

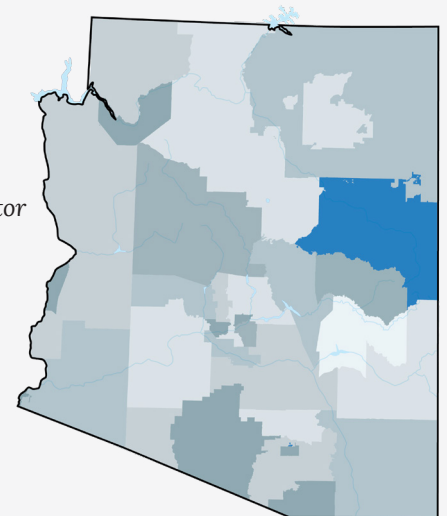
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The Navajo/Apache Region encompasses the central areas of Navajo and Apache Counties, excluding the lands belonging to the Navajo Nation and the Hopi Tribe in the north and the land belonging to the White Mountain Apache Tribe in the south. The region also includes the Forest Lakes community in Coconino County, east of Heber-Overgaard. The region does not include the city of Winslow, which is in Navajo County but is assigned to the Coconino Region. The Navajo/Apache Region includes Legislative Districts 6 and 7. (Legislative districts are not necessarily congruent with regional boundaries.)



Learn more at: FirstThingsFirst.org/Regions/Navajo-Apache-Region