



FIRST THINGS FIRST

2019 IMPACT REPORT

Navajo Nation 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.

Healthy development in the early childhood years provides the building blocks for educational achievement, strong kinship and communities. What can we do as parents, relatives and leaders, during this incredibly critical period, is to ensure our children have a strong foundation of development, family and cultural values and love."

Phefelia Nez

Navajo Nation First Lady

Fiscal Year 2019 Navajo Nation Region Impact Highlights

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



Strengthening Families and Early Literacy

210

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

152

Families with young children participated in voluntary home visiting programs proven to reduce parental stress levels, increase connections to community supports, and improve children's cognitive, motor, behavioral and socio-emotional development.



Quality Preschool and Child Care

708

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

231

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



Preventive Health

226

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

26,918

Food boxes, backpacks and food vouchers were distributed to give young children access to nutritious meals.

Additional strategies:



3,669 Books

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



45 Early childhood educators

received college scholarships to improve their qualifications for working with infants, toddlers and preschoolers.



Navajo Nation Growing in Beauty Program instills a love of learning in young girl

LaVedalene Guy first heard about the Navajo Nation Growing in Beauty Program after taking her older children to their doctor's appointments. Once she found out that the program would conduct screenings, such as vision and hearing, along with developmental evaluations, she knew she wanted her baby daughter Mackenzie to be a part of it.

Guy's older children were receiving help for speech delays, and she wanted Mackenzie to start learning as soon as possible.

The First Things First Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council funds Growing in Beauty, which in addition to the developmental screenings, helps children enter early intervention programs in the region. The program also manages voluntary at-home visits with participating families where a trained professional provides parenting information, models ways to support healthy development and connects parents to community resources.

Guy and Mackenzie were accepted into the program when Mackenzie was a baby and have been involved ever since. Now that Mackenzie is almost 3 years old, Guy has seen a difference in her learning.

Guy said she appreciates the developmental screenings that check milestones that Mackenzie should be reaching and learning new ways to help support her daughter's healthy development through the twice-a-month home visits.

"At 2 years old, she was already working at 3-year-old skill level," Guy said. "Her performance level is high. She is talking a lot more with my older ones. She's sociable and not afraid."

During a recent visit, the parent coach did an activity with Mackenzie, where she had different objects and asked the child to categorize into colors.

"Then she mixed it all up," Guy said. "And while we were talking, my daughter was color coding all the red colors together, then crayons, and shapes and the bear. And then she started stacking items from smallest to largest. She's doing stuff like that on her own now."

The parent coach also brings Mackenzie a book at each visit, which Guy reads to her. "We ask her questions while reading the book, 'Why is she crying?' and point out things, 'This is a boy and this is a girl.'"

Now that Mackenzie attends a child care, the teachers have told Guy that Mackenzie loves to be involved in activities, especially reading.

"She'll open a book when the teacher says, 'OK, let's read.' It makes me happy inside to hear that about my child," Guy said.

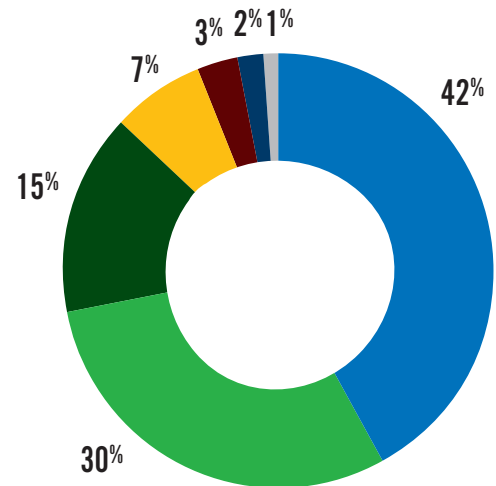


FTF Navajo Nation Regional Council

The FTF Navajo Nation 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	\$1,707,389
Preventive Health	\$1,207,709
Strengthening Families	\$637,089
Workforce Development and Training	\$329,781
Parent and Community Awareness	\$137,123
Research and Evaluation	\$100,106
Coordinating Care	\$27,265
TOTAL	\$4,146,462



FTF Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council

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Dawn Yazzie

Vice Chair
Rhonda Etsitty

Members

Benjamin Barney

Quincy Natay

Victoria Begay

Phefelia Nez

Patricia Gonnig

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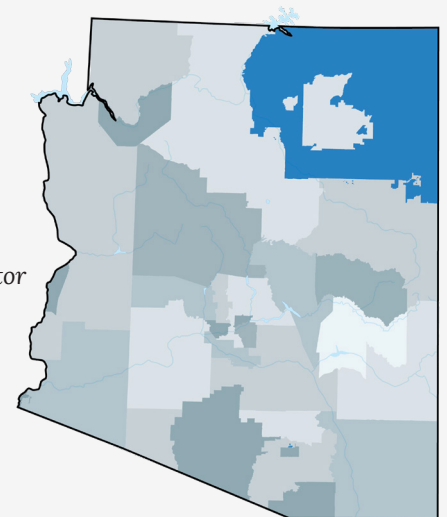
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The Navajo Nation Region is defined as the Arizona portion of the Navajo Nation Reservation. The region covers nearly 16,000 square miles in the northeast corner of the state, stretching across Apache, Navajo and Coconino counties. The entire reservation, which dates to the Navajo Treaty of 1868, also includes lands in Utah and New Mexico. The Navajo Nation Region includes Legislative District 7. (Legislative districts are not necessarily congruent with regional boundaries.)

Learn more at:
FirstThingsFirst.org/Regions/Navajo-Nation