



FIRST THINGS FIRST

2019 IMPACT REPORT

Southeast Maricopa 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.



Building the knowledge base and skill set of Arizona's parents requires more than nine months of gestation. It is a life-long apprenticeship."

Billie Enz

Member of FTF Southeast Maricopa Regional Partnership Council

Fiscal Year 2019 Southeast Maricopa Region Impact Highlights

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



Strengthening Families and Early Literacy

475

Families or caregivers served by receiving referrals or by participating in activities at family resource centers.

11,074

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



Quality Preschool and Child Care

5,188

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

607

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



Preventive Health

680

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

2,492

Children received a screening to detect tooth decay, which left undetected and treated could cause damage to permanent teeth, impaired speech development and failure to thrive.

Additional strategies:



586 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 social-emotional development.



Home visitation program helps Mesa girl with her confidence

When Frankie Littlebear and her husband, Danny, discovered Parents as Teachers, a home visitation program funded by the First Things First Southeast Maricopa Region, they were curious about how the program would benefit their 2-year-old daughter, Ariya.

Littlebear thought it might help give their daughter a jumpstart on reaching milestones. She quickly found that not only was Ariya learning, but she also gained valuable lessons on how to teach her daughter.

Parents as Teachers provides voluntary coaching and in-home support for families. For Littlebear, that meant a parent educator visited her home in Mesa twice a month. During each visit, the parent coach provided parenting information, teaching strategies and connections to other community resources.

“As a parent, you wonder if you have the proper tools to teach your child,” Littlebear said. “Now with the help of our parent educator, I’ve learned many different approaches so that my husband and I can help Ariya with life skills and prepare her for kindergarten.”

Littlebear’s coach provided her with lessons to make learning fun, like placing shape cutouts on the floor and hopping from shape to shape, matching up colors, making buildings out of blocks, even learning different textures and sizes by playing with different balls. The parent educator showed Littlebear ways to incorporate teaching with everyday items as simple as pipe cleaners and straws.

“When our parent educator visits, Ariya lights up with excitement waiting for her to pull the next activity out of her bag,” Littlebear said. “She brings paints, blocks, instruments, tea sets, magnets and our daughter’s favorite: books!”

When the family first started the program, Ariya was quiet and shy. She even hid behind her parents. As the Littlebears participated in the program, they watched Ariya develop rapidly. In a short amount of time, Ariya, now 4, became outgoing. Today, she confidently introduces herself to other children when playing at the park.

“I’m so proud of Ariya. I love learning how to teach her,” Littlebear said. “Our parent educator has given both of us confidence.”

Littlebear attributes much of Ariya’s success to the foundation established from the home visits with Parents as Teachers. And now, Ariya’s 9-month-old sister, Amiya, is benefitting, too.

“The connection between parent and child at this stage is so valuable and precious,” Littlebear said. “They remember all you do for them, and having a helping hand in my daughter’s learning process is a huge plus.”

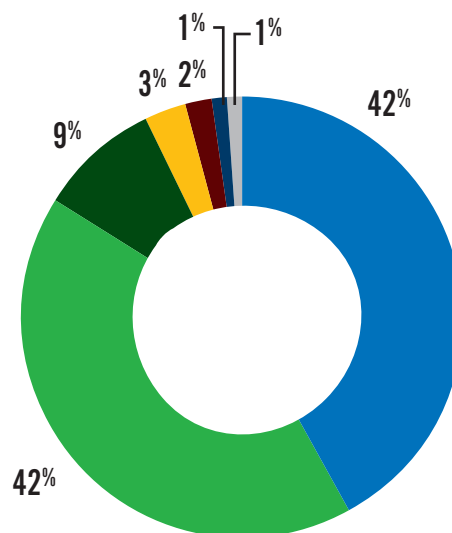


FTF Southeast Maricopa Regional Council

The FTF Southeast Maricopa 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

Strengthening Families	\$4,146,556
Quality Child Care and Preschool	\$4,104,056
Preventive Health	\$911,841
Research and Evaluation	\$273,804
Parent and Community Awareness	\$197,017
Workforce Development and Training	\$93,128
Coordinating Care	\$69,002
TOTAL	\$9,795,404



FTF Southeast Maricopa Regional Partnership Council

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Katrina Cope

David Crummey

Billie Enz

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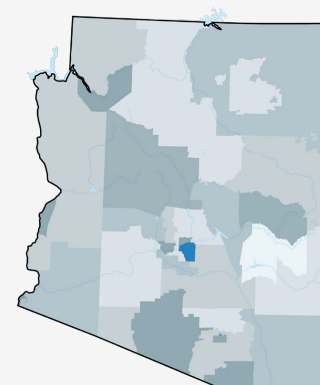
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Learn more at:
[FirstThingsFirst.org/Regions/Southeast-Maricopa](https://www.firstthingsfirst.org/Regions/Southeast-Maricopa)

The Southeast Maricopa Region is comprised of several communities within the southeastern portion of Maricopa County and includes Mesa and Gilbert, as well as the parts of Queen Creek and Apache Junction which lie within Maricopa County. It also includes some unincorporated areas adjacent to Mesa or Gilbert. The Southeast Maricopa Region includes Legislative Districts 12, 16, 17, 25 and 26. (Legislative districts are not necessarily congruent with regional boundaries.)