

FIRST THINGS FIRST

Graham/Greenlee Region

2020 Impact Report



From birth to age 5, a child's brain grows more than any other time in life.

90% of a child's brain growth happens before kindergarten. Early childhood matters.

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

Many young children in Arizona face challenges that threaten their healthy development and learning. In the FTF Graham/Greenlee Region, there are **3,903 children** (under age 6) with **25% living in poverty**.

Here is how FTF is working to support young children and their families in this region.

“The good majority of a person's life trajectory is set within the first few years of their life. If a child is loved, nurtured and cared for when he or she is young, the likelihood of a well-adjusted adolescence and adulthood is much greater. If a child has a true sense of his or her infinite potential, there is no limit on what that child can accomplish throughout their life.”



Michael Peterson

Graham County Superior Court Judge

FTF Graham/Greenlee Regional Key Impact Highlights [Fiscal Year 2020]

Strengthening Families and Early Literacy

25,854 Books were given to families with children ages birth to 5 years to encourage parent-child interaction and reading

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

Preventive Health

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

Quality Preschool and Child Care

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

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

14 Early childhood educators received a financial incentive for continuing employment with the same program for at least 12 months and advancing their education and credentials.

Additional Strategies

2,064 **Adults** attended parenting activities to learn how about early child care development in a fun setting.

7 **Early childhood educators** received college scholarships to improve their qualifications for working with infants, toddlers and preschoolers.



“Melissa helped me to redirect my emotions and learn how to handle myself better, so I can be a better mom.” - Katrina Lunt, veteran and mother of two young children

Home visitation program helps Duncan mom pass on self-regulation skills to kids

Karl Lunt was born at Mt. Graham Regional Medical Center in Safford, and his mom, Katrina Lunt was worried.

Although the labor and delivery were smooth, Lunt is a veteran who suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and general anxiety and depression. She also had a 17-month-old daughter Klaura at home, and was unsure of her ability to care for two young children.

While still in the hospital, Lunt received a visitor from Child & Family Resources, who shared services available to families of newborns. The new mom’s attention was drawn to a home visitation program called Healthy Families Arizona. Healthy Families provides a parent coach who visits the family in their home to provide parenting information, teaching strategies and connections to community resources.

Many families struggle with situations that can cause stress for parents and may compromise children’s healthy development, so the First Things First Graham/Greenlee Regional Partnership Council funds the voluntary Healthy Families program as a way to offer parents of young children individualized support.

Lunt, who lives in Duncan, was thrilled to find out that help was available to her at no cost. As she began receiving visits from her home visitor, Melissa, Lunt’s confidence as a mother began to grow.

“Melissa helped me to redirect my emotions and learn how to handle myself better, so I can be a better mom,” Lunt said. Now, she is able to pass those self-regulation skills on to her children to help them be more successful.

After developmental screenings showed that Karl and Klaura were not meeting appropriate developmental milestones, Melissa would bring fun activities for the children to help them develop specific skills. For example, she would introduce an activity such as stacking, sorting or creating a toy from everyday objects in the home, and then let Lunt take the lead.

As the children learned and developed new skills, Lunt was busy learning too. In addition to gaining parenting skills, she was working on a bachelor’s degree online. During the hard days when she wanted to quit, Lunt said Melissa would give her the courage to keep going by telling her to take it one day at a time and helping her focus on the end goal.

Lunt recently received her bachelor’s degree and attributed a lot of their success as a family to Melissa and the Healthy Families program. Today, Klaura is excited to start kindergarten in the fall, and Karl is right on track with all of his developmental milestones.



Read more FTF stories at
[FirstThingsFirst.org/Region-Stories](https://www.FirstThingsFirst.org/Region-Stories)

FTF Graham/Greenlee Regional Partnership Council

The FTF Graham/Greenlee Regional Partnership Council is made up of volunteers who study the unique needs of the local community and decide how funds should be used to best support the healthy development and early learning 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. Some of the programs in this region include Healthy Families, Quality First, Parenting Outreach and Awareness and Literacy Programs.

FTF Graham/Greenlee FY20 Total Regional Program Expenditures

Quality Child Care and Preschool

\$484,006

Strengthening Families

\$229,595

Preventive Health

\$52,977

Parent and Community Awareness

\$33,963

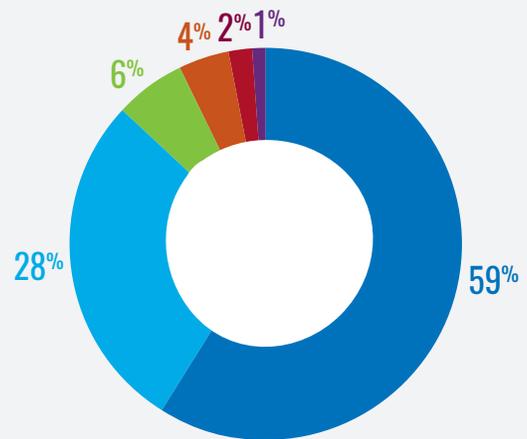
Research and Evaluation

\$25,029

Workforce Development and Training

\$18,961

Total \$844,531



FTF Graham/Greenlee Regional Partnership Council and Staff

Chair
Laurie Smith

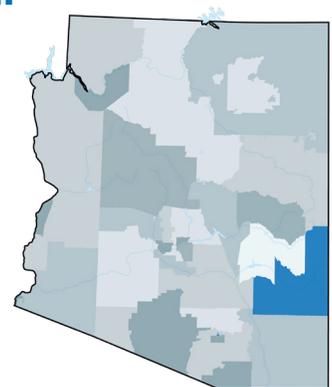
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*The **FTF Graham/Greenlee Region** is defined as the combined area of the two counties, not including the lands belonging to the San Carlos Apache Tribe within Graham County. Legislative districts include: 14. (Legislative districts are not necessarily congruent with regional boundaries.)*

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