

FIRST THINGS FIRST

Northwest Maricopa 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 Northwest Maricopa Region, there are **55,078 children** (under age 6) with **22% living in poverty**.

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

“Quality child care is critical to ensuring families can work and that our children are safe and prepared for kindergarten. We want to ensure that funding continues to flow to child care programs and services in our region, so they remain accessible to the greatest extent possible.”

Erin Hart

Chair of FTF Northwest Maricopa Regional Partnership Council

FTF Northwest Maricopa Regional Key Impact Highlights [Fiscal Year 2020]

Strengthening Families and Early Literacy

10,248 Families of newborns received the Arizona Parent Kit, filled with tips and tools to help support their child's healthy development.

3,980 Families or caregivers served by receiving referrals or by participating in activities at family resource centers.

Quality Preschool and Child Care

6,853 Children attended preschools and child care programs participating in Quality First.

1,058 Children birth to age 5 received a Quality First scholarship to attend high-quality preschools and child care programs.

Preventive Health

1,483 Fluoride varnishes applied to protect against childhood tooth decay.

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

Additional Strategies

2,530 Children received a screening to detect tooth decay, which left undetected and untreated could cause damage to permanent teeth, impair speech development and failure to thrive.

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



Home visitation program helps new mom care for infant son in Wickenburg

Joyce Rodriguez first heard about home visitation when her son Jayden was a baby.

"I found out through my sister, who saw a flyer at Glendale Community College," Rodriguez said. "I thought he's too little. Why would I put him in that?"

The home visitation program that her sister was telling Rodriguez about was through Child and Family Resources. One of their programs provides a parent coach to meet with families of young children to provide voluntary, no-cost, in-home support to families.

The First Things First Northwest Maricopa Regional Partnership Council funds home visitation, which provides parents with regular in-home visits from a trained parent coach, who provides parenting information, models ways to support healthy development and shares connections to other community resources.

"The parent coaches were amazing," Rodriguez said, describing how her parent coach would come to her home in Wickenburg. Many times she brought unique activities, for example, a fishing activity that used a pretzel rod as a pole and colored cheese fish crackers for matching. "It was also a fun snack for the kids to eat," she said.

The parent coach also provided a list of community resources that let Rodriguez know about additional activities she could take her son to in the area. At the time, Rodriguez's husband was traveling frequently for work, and she appreciated the extra support of the home visitation program.

"I used to love going to the library to take him to story time," Rodriguez said.

When it was time for preschool, the parent coach encouraged Jayden's enrollment.

"I didn't know the way to go with pre-k," Rodriguez said. "She brought a list of nearby schools that had pre-k and helped me choose the right one."

A few years later, Rodriguez had her second child, a daughter, Jayleen. This time around, she signed up for the program immediately.

"The parent coaches were always there to help me with resources, They're teaching us, as we're teaching our kids." - Joyce Rodriguez, mother

"Jayleen wasn't talking at the age where she should have been," Rodriguez said.

Rodriguez and her parent coach worked with Jayleen using blocks with letters to encourage Jayleen to speak more. Eventually, after a developmental screening, the parent coach referred Rodriguez to Arizona's Early Intervention Program (AzEIP), which provides early intervention services for children under age 3. Jayleen is now receiving speech therapy.

"The parent coaches were always there to help me with resources," Rodriguez said. "They're teaching us, as we're teaching our kids."

Now, 6, Jayden was prepared for success when he started kindergarten and Jayleen at 2 is getting the speech support she needs.

"The program helped my son, he's so smart," Rodriguez said.



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

FTF Northwest Maricopa Regional Partnership Council

The FTF Northwest Maricopa 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.

FTF Northwest Maricopa FY20 Total Regional Program Expenditures

Quality Child Care and Preschool

\$6,413,204

Strengthening Families

\$2,372,972

Preventive Health

\$1,383,312

Research and Evaluation

\$299,406

Parent and Community Awareness

\$156,425

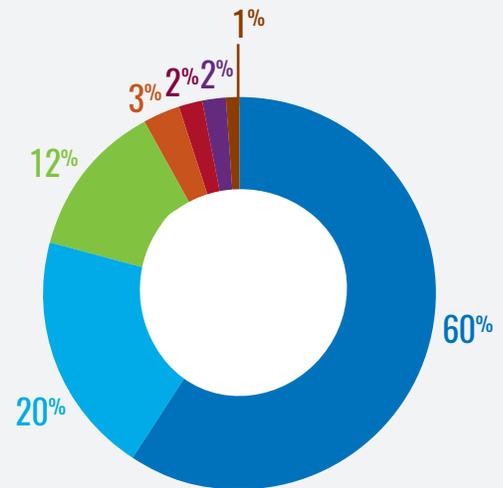
Workforce Development and Training

\$151,039

Coordinating Care

\$54,219

Total \$10,830,576



FTF Northwest Maricopa Regional Partnership Council and Staff

Chair
Erin Hart

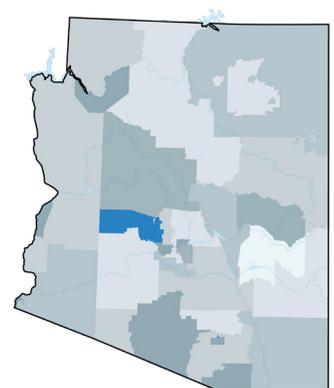
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The **FTF Northwest Maricopa Region** lies entirely in Maricopa County and is densely populated in the east, but very sparsely populated in the west. It includes: six incorporated cities and towns — Peoria, El Mirage, Glendale, Surprise, Wickenburg and Youngtown; several unincorporated places — Aguila, Morristown, Sun City, Sun City West, Waddell and Wittmann; as well as small parts of the city of Phoenix. The FTF Northwest Maricopa Region includes Legislative districts 13, 15, 20, 21, 22, 29 and 30. (Legislative districts are not necessarily congruent with regional boundaries.)

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