

FIRST THINGS FIRST Phoenix South 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 Phoenix South Region, there are **65,037 children** (under age 6) with **42% living in poverty**.

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



If we can prepare a child for kindergarten, we ultimately are preparing that same child for college. Poverty is a barrier that can be bridged by education. FTF makes this possible for all children by investing in their lives. Early childhood programs and services are the keys to a brighter future for not only our children but for our communities as well."



Pastor Karen Stewart

Chair of FTF Phoenix South Regional Partnership Council

FTF Phoenix South Regional Key Impact Highlights

[Fiscal Year 2020]



Strengthening Families and Early Literacy

7,686

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

4,630

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



Quality Preschool and Child Care

7,150

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

1,245

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



Preventive Health

2,759

Children received fluoride varnishes applied to protect against childhood tooth decay.

2,336

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

Additional Strategies

4,075

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.

592

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.



Kith and Kin program helps Phoenix mom provide structure in son's life

Alba Souffle noticed her 3-year-old son Aled was struggling with behavior issues at home.

"He would not follow the rules, he would refuse to clean up after himself, and he had temper tantrums," she said.

When these behaviors arose, Souffle, mother of two boys, said she would put aside his most favorable items until his behavior improved. A friend suggested she attend a caregiver class to help her help him.

An instructor from the class invited Souffle to attend the Kith and Kin program after learning that Souffle cared for her children and additional children in her home. Kith (neighbor) and Kin (friend) child care is a common form of caregiving. It usually includes family, friends and neighbors caring for children in their home.

The First Things First Phoenix South Regional Council funds the Kith and Kin program to empower caregivers with tools to encourage a healthy development for children.

Souffle was motivated to attend the Kith and Kin classes to learn ways to reduce the misbehaviors at home.

"I knew I needed to change my reactions to my son's behaviors," Souffle said. "Before the Kith and Kin program, we did not have a schedule to follow. Our routine would be the same daily; we would wake up and watch television."

The classes helped her realize that Aled may have been bored, which caused him to act out.

"I would be frustrated, I did not know what to do," Souffle said. "I felt really bad and ashamed, I would get mad and yell, I was unsure of how to react to my child's temper tantrums."

The Kith and Kin instructor recommended Souffle talk to her son when he was having a tough time and reassured her that his behavior was normal.

After attending the classes, Souffle said she became more aware of her interactions with her children and the two children she cared for before the coronavirus pandemic began. Her patience improved and she became more cognizant about how she was speaking to her children. Now, she makes sure to speak at their eye level, in age appropriate words so they understand.

After spending a year participating in caregiver classes, Souffle feels the environment at home has improved.

Now the family has a schedule which consists of eating breakfast, and working on language and literacy activities such as practicing small motor skills through writing and zipping up

"His temper tantrums have improved, he follows rules easier, he cleans up after play, he is friendly and always happy and smiling."

- Alba Souffle, mother

zippers, playing with puppets and engaging in art activities as their daily routine.

Souffle adds free time in their schedule for pretend play or other activities of interest. For physical activity, the boys ride bikes together before dinner, then get a bath and read a bedtime story. When it comes to cleaning, the family makes it a fun game or a singing activity to motivate the children to clean.

The structured routine helped Aled's behavior.

"His temper tantrums have improved, he follows rules easier, he cleans up after play, he is friendly and always happy and smiling," Souffle said.



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

FTF Phoenix South Regional Partnership Council

The FTF Phoenix South 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 Phoenix South FY20 Total Regional Program Expenditures

Quality Child Care and Preschool

\$9,660,456

Strengthening Families

\$4,281,179

Preventive Health

\$2,873,312

Research and Evaluation

\$509,015

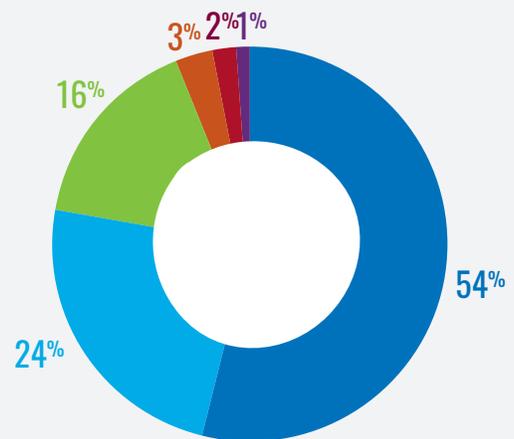
Workforce Development and Training

\$196,270

Coordinating Care

\$54,368

Total \$17,574,600



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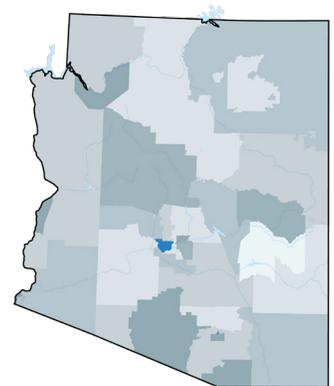
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The **FTF Phoenix South Region** is primarily the southern part of the city of Phoenix. Phoenix South Regional Partnership Council provides services in the city of Phoenix, south of Thomas Road, but also including the communities of Maryvale, north of Thomas (full ZIP code areas of 85031 and 85033 and the city of Phoenix portion of 85037). The region does not include Ahwatukee. The FTF Phoenix South Region includes Legislative Districts 19, 24, 27, 29 and 30. (Legislative districts are not necessarily congruent with regional boundaries.)

Learn more at

[FirstThingsFirst.org/Regions/Phoenix-South](https://www.firstthingsfirst.org/Regions/Phoenix-South)