

FIRST THINGS FIRST

Gila River Indian Community Region

2022 Impact Report



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

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

First Things First (FTF) 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 Gila River Indian Community Region, there are **1,530 children** (under age 6) with **66% living in poverty**.

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

FTF Gila River Indian Community Regional Key Impact Highlights [State Fiscal Year 2022]



Strengthening Families and Early Literacy

39

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.



Preventive Health

42

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



Quality Preschool and Child Care

<10

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

5

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

<10

Preschools and child care programs participated in Quality First, receiving coaching, quality improvement supports, health consultation and access to professional development.

Additional Strategies

6

Early childhood educators

received college scholarships to improve their skills in working with infants, toddlers and preschoolers.



Family, friend and neighbor program helps young children learn and grow

For some babies, toddlers and preschools on the Gila River Indian Community it is not unusual to spend part of their day being cared by someone other than their parents and not in a formal child care program.

Whether that care is with a grandparent, aunt or uncle, or with a trusted neighbor or friend, the First Things First Gila River Indian Community Regional Partnership Council recognizes that this type of care is important.

That's why it funds the family, friend and neighbor program in the community to support caregivers in helping the young children in their care to learn and grow. Programs are free and usually include classes or group meetings with other caregivers that are led by trained professionals. Caregivers learn how to better support the health, development and learning of the young children in their care through health and safety practices, educational activities and understanding more about child development.



The family, friend and neighbor program provides in-home child care providers, which can also include foster and adoptive parents, with no-cost assistance to help ensure children birth to age 5 get access to quality education outside of a licensed child care setting.



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

FTF Gila River Indian Community Regional Partnership Council

FTF regional partnership councils are made up of volunteers who study the unique needs of the local community and inform 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 Quality First and Home Visitation/Parenting Education and Baby Smarts Program.

FTF Gila River Indian Community SFY22 Total Regional Program Expenditures

Quality Child Care and Preschool

\$156,608

Strengthening Families

\$101,629

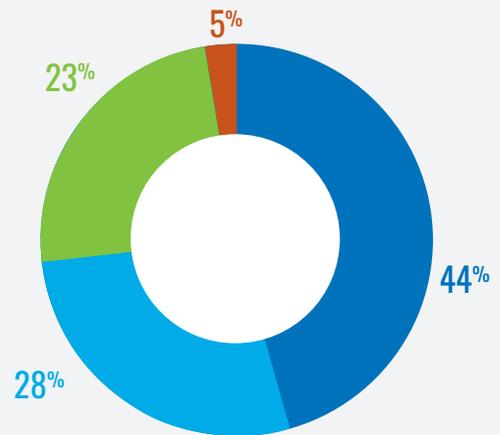
Preventive Health

\$82,713

Research and Evaluation

\$16,180

Total \$357,129



FTF Gila River Indian Community Regional Partnership Council and Staff

Chair

Sandra Nasewytewa

Vice Chair

Elisia Manuel

Members

Deborah Chadwick

Anna Edwards

Gleebah Enos

Annette Lewis

Priscilla Foote

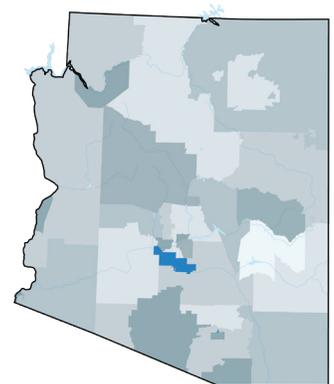
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Geographically, the **FTF Gila River Indian Community** is located on 372,000 acres of land in south-central Arizona. The community lies south of the cities of Phoenix, Tempe and Chandler, and north of Casa Grande, and its east to west borders run from Coolidge to Tolleson.

Learn more at

[FirstThingsFirst.org/Regions/Gila-River-Indian-Community](https://www.FirstThingsFirst.org/Regions/Gila-River-Indian-Community)