



Southwest Maricopa 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 Southwest Maricopa Region, there are **28,512 children** (under age 6) with **16% living in poverty**.

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

FTF Southwest Maricopa Regional Key Impact Highlights [State Fiscal Year 2022]



Strengthening Families and Early Literacy

4,462

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

138

Parents and other caregivers participated in evidence-based trainings designed to improve knowledge of parenting practices and children's development.



Quality Preschool and Child Care

2,237

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

231

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



Preventive Health

233

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

541

Fluoride varnishes applied to protect against childhood tooth decay.

Additional Strategies

67

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.

Avondale family learns new ways to incorporate health habits into every day

Danielle Maxfield was looking for new ways to expand her toddler daughters' learning opportunities.

Like many families, who were adjusting to the COVID-19 pandemic world of remote work and limited preschool participation, the Avondale mom asked for help from a local moms group on Facebook. Some suggested a virtual program that provides parents and caregivers with ways to incorporate health and nutrition at home.

The First Things First Southwest Maricopa Regional Partnership Council funds the Health and Nutrition program offered through Maricopa County Department of Public Health. This program provides a fun and engaging way for families to learn more about how to incorporate healthy habits into their day to day, while also providing education on nutrition.

The goal is for families to be more informed about nutrition and wellness, while helping motivate them to eat healthy and be physically active.

These small changes led to positive outcomes for her and her family. Now her daughters are eager to explore new foods, and are excited to get involved in tasks like making dinner.

“They now help me make meals,” said Maxfield.

“I feel like it is helpful for them to learn how to do that. If we are making a smoothie I will ask what fruit they want and then the girls will go and pick out a fruit. It's a fun way for them to get involved and I learned that still makes a difference.”

“We were always fairly active, but now they have other options of things to do,” Maxfield said.

“They will ask to play certain games and are very vocal now about what they want to do after learning some activities from class. The parachute game is a big one in our home now.”

The parachute game incorporates listening and directions for the children to follow. It has families lifting a parachute or sheet over their heads and running under it or sitting along its edges to make a parachute bubble.

The classes showed Maxfield ways to teach and incorporate healthier habits into their family dynamic. For example, now at the grocery store, she asks Addilynn, 2, and Arley, 1, what type of vegetables they want. She's also more intentional about activities, and including them in the dinner making process and letting the girls choose outside activities.



Read more FTF stories at
FirstThingsFirst.org/Region-Stories

FTF Southwest Maricopa 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 First Teeth First, Quality First and family resource centers.

FTF Southwest Maricopa SFY22 Total Regional Program Expenditures

Quality Child Care and Preschool

\$1,896,104

Strengthening Families

\$1,235,342

Preventive Health

\$797,233

Research and Evaluation

\$135,800

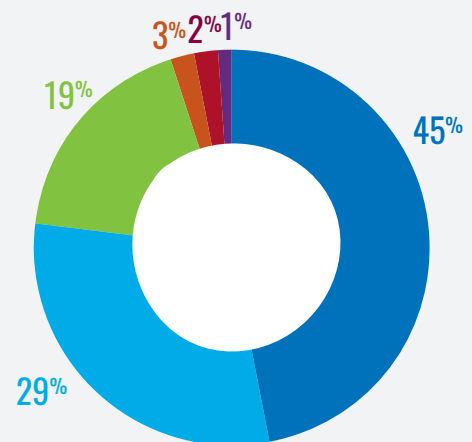
Parent and Community Awareness

\$86,726

Coordination

\$55,514

Total \$4,206,720



FTF Southwest Maricopa Regional Partnership Council and Staff

Chair

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Vice Chair

Jamie Lopez

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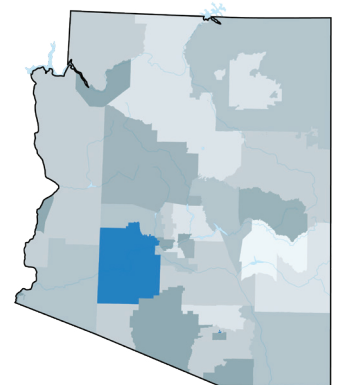
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The **FTF Southwest Maricopa Region** spans 4,325 square miles across the Southwest Valley. The largest region in Maricopa County, it is a predominantly rural area that has been one of the fastest-growing population centers in the state. This expansive region includes Avondale, Buckeye, Gila Bend, Goodyear, Litchfield Park, Tolleson and Tonopah.

Learn more at

[FirstThingsFirst.org/Regions/Southwest-Maricopa](https://www.firstthingsfirst.org/Regions/Southwest-Maricopa)