Investing in Our Future: Positive Outcomes of Early Childhood Investments

First Things First (FTF), Arizona’s early childhood agency, represents a commitment Arizonans made to our youngest children – that they would have the support they need to start school healthy and ready to succeed. Many young children in Arizona face significant barriers to their success, including poverty, trauma and lack of access to needed resources. In the FTF Colorado River Indian Tribes Region, there are 739 children (under age 6), with 38% living in poverty. Here is how FTF is working to support young children and their families in this region.

90% of a child’s brain grows before kindergarten.

Early childhood matters.

FTF invests in proven programs, like Quality First, and innovative strategies through grants to community organizations that provide services to children and families. Some of the FTF-funded services in this region include the Colorado River Indian Tribes Early Literacy Program and Colorado River Indian Tribes Nutrition and Physical Activity Program.

Regional Key Impact Highlights [State Fiscal Year 2023]

**Strengthening Families and Early Literacy**

- **360** Books getting into the homes of infants, toddlers and preschoolers through a local distribution program.
- **33** Early childhood professionals and adults attended activities to learn more about the importance of early childhood development.

**Quality Preschool and Child Care**

- **151** Children attended preschools and child care programs participating in Quality First.
- **23** Children participated in a summer transition program to prepare to be successful in kindergarten.
Culturally tailored books to showcase Native languages for children in the Colorado River Indian Tribes community

A book project to promote language preservation for children in the First Things First Colorado River Indian Tribes Region was recently unveiled. The books, aimed at children from birth to age 5, will focus on colors, animals and numbers in the different languages of the region's four distinct tribes: the Mohave, Chemehuevi, Hopi and Navajo.

The FTF Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Partnership Council funds native language preservation strategies to give parents and caregivers tools to promote their children's language development that are culturally appropriate.

State Fiscal Year 2023 Total Regional Program Expenditures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality Child Care and Preschool</td>
<td>$96,315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening Families</td>
<td>$90,197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preventive Health</td>
<td>$60,815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent and Community Awareness</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research and Evaluation</td>
<td>$6,313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Coordination</td>
<td>$659</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$264,298</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FTF Colorado River Indian Tribes 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.

**Chair**
Norma Ray

**Vice Chair**
Elvira Aspa

**Members**
Delise Beavers
Gloria Flores-Lopez
Joanna Hermes
Daris Laffoon

**Members**
Monica Rosnagle
Brad Sale
Penny Swarthout

Scan to Learn More and Connect with Staff
FirstThingsFirst.org/Regions/Colorado-River-Indian-Tribes