



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 Graham/Greenlee Region, there are **3,903 children** (under age 6), with **28% 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 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 Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library, Healthy Families, and Early Literacy Programs.

Regional Key Impact Highlights [State Fiscal Year 2023]

Strengthening Families and Early Literacy

22,837 Books were given to families with children ages birth to 5 years to encourage parent-child interaction and reading.

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

Preventive Health

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

Quality Preschool and Child Care

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

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

8 Early childhood educators received a financial incentive for continuing employment with the same program for at least 12 months and advancing their education and credentials.



Scan to read the family story

Safford siblings discover love of reading through library story time

When Alexandra Scott became a mother, she searched for a program that would help her son's development while instilling in him a love of reading. She found it in Story Time at the Safford City-Graham County Library, where the family's visits soon became a weekly ritual.

The First Things First Graham/Greenlee Regional Partnership Council funds Story Time at the Library and similar programs to help families nurture language development and a love of reading in children from birth to age 5.

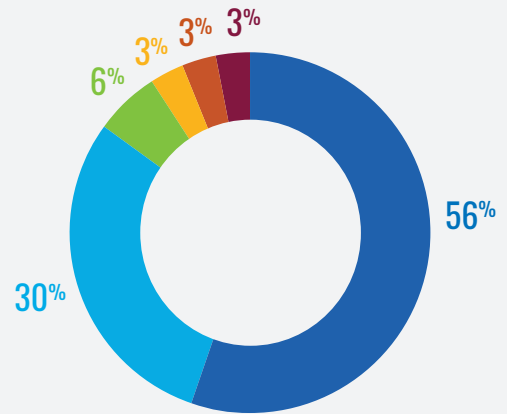


"The importance of early childhood education has been firmly established through academic research. Those of us in higher education recognize that we can play an important role to support early childhood education efforts by offering early childhood education programs and providing support to our students who are parents."

Dr. Susan Wood, Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs at Eastern Arizona College

State Fiscal Year 2023 Total Regional Program Expenditures

Quality Child Care and Preschool	\$412,019
Strengthening Families	\$222,072
Parent and Community Awareness	\$41,564
Workforce Development and Training	\$22,937
Preventive Health	\$20,628
Research and Evaluation	\$19,736
Total	\$739,955



FTF Graham/Greenlee 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.

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Laurie Smith

Vice Chair
Susan Norton

Members
Sarah Camacho
Loretta Desaulniers
Kacey Ekman
Donna McGaughey

Jessamyn Messick
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