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 Northwest Maricopa Region, there are 55,078 children (under age 6), with 20% 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 Family Resource Centers and Support for Children with Developmental Concerns.

Regional Key Impact Highlights
[State Fiscal Year 2023]

**Strengthening Families and Early Literacy**
- Families of newborns received the Arizona Parent Kit, filled with tips and tools to help support their child’s healthy development. 7,714
- Families or caregivers served by receiving referrals or by participating in activities at family resource centers. 2,253

**Quality Preschool and Child Care**
- Children attended preschools and child care programs participating in Quality First. 7,292
- Children birth to age 5 received a Quality First scholarship to attend high-quality preschools and child care programs. 1,012

**Preventive Health**
- Children received fluoride varnishes applied to protect against childhood tooth decay. 1,100
- Children monitored to receive appropriate screenings to detect vision, hearing and developmental issues to prevent learning challenges later on. 695
Parents as Teachers Early Intervention Program helps

When Courtney Grell had her first daughter Delaney in 2017, she knew that something was different. Delaney was always hyper, going non-stop. She would have tantrums about putting on her socks or brushing her teeth. The tantrums grew more intense and there was no discipline that worked.

The First Things First Northwest Maricopa Regional Council funds the home visitation program Parents as Teachers Early Intervention – for children with special needs. In the program, families get individualized support and coaching through a home visitor who helps identify and address developmental concerns early, respond to challenging behaviors and support a child's physical, social and emotional development.

Strengthening Families
Positive early experiences, like nurturing relationships with parents and caregivers, promote healthy brain development and learning. First Things First expands families' access to the information, services and supports they need to help their young children achieve their fullest potential.

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>$6,017,391</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strengthening Families</td>
<td>$2,223,541</td>
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<td>Preventive Health</td>
<td>$1,277,258</td>
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<td>Research and Evaluation</td>
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<td>Parent and Community Awareness</td>
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<td>Workforce Development and Training</td>
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<td>Coordinating Care</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$10,083,240</strong></td>
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</tbody>
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FTF Northwest 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.

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Sherie Steele

Vice Chair
Teri Sarmiento

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Brielle Rawlings-Dube

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