



## 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 Santa Cruz Region, there are **4,416 children** (under age 6), with **35% 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 Parents as Teachers and family resource centers.

## Regional Key Impact Highlights [State Fiscal Year 2023]

### Strengthening Families and Early Literacy

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

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

### Quality Preschool and Child Care

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

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

### Preventive Health

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



## Nogales boy's healthy development benefits from family resource center visits

Jennifer Quiñonez's son was just a few months old, but the first-time mother felt it would benefit his development to start socializing with other children his age. "There were no other children in my house, so I wanted to find a place where he could be around other children," the Nogales resident said.

The First Things First Santa Cruz Regional Council funds family resource centers in the region to provide families with the information, services and support they need to help their children achieve their fullest potential.



Scan to read the family story

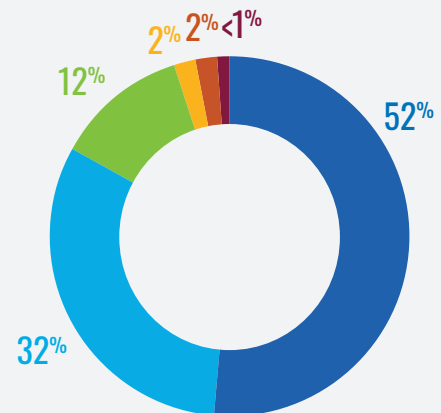


### Strengthening Families

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

Strengthening Families	\$678,047
Quality Child Care and Preschool	\$413,847
Preventive Health	\$157,581
Research and Evaluation	\$29,233
Parent and Community Awareness	\$22,523
Coordinating Professional Development	\$2,333
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,303,565</b>



## FTF Santa Cruz 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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[FirstThingsFirst.org/Regions/Santa-Cruz](https://FirstThingsFirst.org/Regions/Santa-Cruz)

