



FIRST THINGS FIRST

Case Study: Valley of the Sun YMCA

Challenges

The YMCA aims to serve all walks of life. Not just for their members, but more importantly, for their employees.

Staff retention and hiring quality staff have been challenging for many YMCAs nationwide. The Valley of the Sun YMCA made it a priority to address this issue.

Employer Solutions

For their employees, the Valley of the Sun YMCA's leadership found that it was essential to provide competitive benefits—especially for working parents. What was discovered through annual employee satisfaction surveys was that affording child care was a top concern for working parents. Furthermore, they recognized the increasing concern after receiving feedback from businesses in the Phoenix metropolitan area to provide effective child care solutions for their employees.

On-Site Child Care

Twelve locations across the valley.

Child Care Benefit

Free child care for full- and part-time employees over 30 hours/week and 25% discount on child care for part-time employees working under 30 hours/week.

Extended Child Care Hours

Most locations offer hours from 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Flexible Spending

Access to Dependent Care FSAs, allowing up to \$5,000 of pre-tax dollars for child care.

At a Glance

As one of the oldest and largest non-profit organizations in Arizona, the Valley of the Sun YMCA is open to everyone, creating opportunities for each person to reach their full potential. YMCA's Early Learning program, Y-Academy, focuses on holistic child development from children up to age 5, available at all 12 locations throughout the Phoenix metropolitan area.

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“Surveying and listening to our staff gave us the opportunity to implement a program that met their child care needs. It transformed our culture and retention.”

Kris Shields
Valley of the Sun YMCA
Executive Director



Community Solutions

The Valley of the Sun YMCA also consults local employers about suitable child care solutions for their employees like discounted tuition or on-site child care through the Y-Academy. Some of these employers include:

- Hospice of the Valley
- Phoenix Children's Hospital
- Phoenix Elementary School District #1
- Phoenix Suns/Mercury

Why It Matters

Family-friendly policies are a competitive advantage in attracting and retaining talent. As Arizona's workforce demand grows, especially in industries with shift workers—child care solutions will be essential infrastructure for business success.

Why Child Care Solutions Work

According to the U.S. Chamber Foundation¹, employers that invest in child care supports see:

- 55% lower turnover
- 2x employee engagement
- Up to \$3 ROI for every \$1 invested

And thanks to **First Things First** and their work in early childhood², Arizona:

- Generates \$324 million in annual economic output
- Sustains 2,800 jobs, annually
- Produces nearly \$18.2 million in tax revenue

Download the Toolkit

First Things First offers resources to support your employees and examples of family-friendly workplace policies.

FirstThingsFirst.org/Business



FIRST THINGS FIRST

First Things First is Arizona's early childhood agency— supporting families with early childhood resources and partnering with businesses to shape a stronger, more resilient workforce that benefits everyone.

Learn more at FirstThingsFirst.org/business.

¹ US Chamber roadmap <https://www.uschamberfoundation.org/education/ece-employer-roadmap>

² Rounds Consulting Group survey: <https://www.firstthingsfirst.org/2025/04/analysis-shows-fff-investments-contribute-million>