

2026

NEEDS AND ASSETS REPORT



 **FIRST THINGS FIRST**

Navajo/Apache Region

Navajo/Apache Regional Partnership Council 2026 Needs and Assets Report

Funded by the
First Things First Navajo/Apache Regional Partnership Council

Prepared by the
Community Research, Evaluation & Development (CRED) Team

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INTRODUCTION

Ninety percent of a child's brain growth occurs before kindergarten, and the quality of a child's early experiences impacts whether their brain will develop in positive ways that promote learning. Arizonans created First Things First (FTF) to help ensure that Arizona children have the opportunity to start kindergarten prepared to be successful. Understanding the critical role the early years play in a child's future success is crucial to our ability to foster each child's optimal development and in turn, impact all aspects of well-being in our communities and our state. This Needs and Assets Report for the FTF Navajo/Apache Region helps us in understanding the needs of young children, the resources available to meet those needs and gaps that may exist in those resources.

The 2026 report has been redesigned in response to stakeholder feedback. The revised structure now consists of two parts: the primary report and supplementary sub-regional fact sheets.

The main report is structured around four domains relevant to young children, their families, and the professionals who support them in the region:

- Child, Family & Community Characteristics
- Early Education
- Education & Workforce
- Child Health & Development

This main report uses an infographic and figure-based approach to analyze regional-level data trends, as well as how these regional trends compare to statewide trends. Community-level data, illustrating similarities and differences within the sub-regions of the FTF Navajo/Apache Region, is detailed separately in the Fact Sheets. The FTF Navajo/Apache Regional Partnership Council recognizes the importance of investing in young children and ensuring that families and caregivers have options in supporting the healthy development and education of young children in their care. It is our sincere hope that this information will help guide community conversations about how we can best support school readiness for all children in the FTF Navajo/Apache Region. To that end, this information may be useful to local stakeholders as they work to enhance the resources available to young children and their families and as they make decisions about how best to support children birth to age 5 in communities throughout the region.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The FTF Navajo/Apache Regional Partnership Council wishes to thank all of the federal, state and local partners whose contributions of data, ongoing support and partnership with FTF made this report possible. These partners included the Arizona Departments of Administration (Employment and Population Statistics), Child Safety, Economic Security, Education and Health Services; Child Care Resource and Referral; Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System; and the U.S. Census Bureau. We also want to thank parents and caregivers, local departments and service providers and members of the public who provided local data, attended regional council meetings and voiced their opinions, as well as all the organizations working to transform the vision of the regional council into concrete programs and services for children and families in the FTF Navajo/Apache Region. Lastly, we want to acknowledge the current and past members of the FTF Navajo/Apache Regional Partnership Council whose vision, dedication and passion have been instrumental in improving outcomes for young children and families within the region. As we build upon those successes, we move ever closer to our ultimate goal of creating a comprehensive early childhood system that ensures children throughout Arizona are ready for school and set for life.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

The experiences in the first few years of a child's life lay the foundation for their future. Safe and healthy neighborhood environments, accessible educational opportunities, economically stable families and nurturing social contexts for young children have long-term, positive impacts.¹ This Needs and Assets Report examines the current conditions for young children and their families—including social and economic contexts, early learning systems, education and workforce indicators, health outcomes and supports for children with special needs—in the First Things First (FTF) Navajo/Apache Region.

Sources and Data: The data in this report come from a variety of sources including federal and state agencies and local agencies or service providers. Federal government sources include publicly available data from the 2020 Census and American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates (primarily 2019-2023). The 2020 Census faced unprecedented challenges in data collection, the foremost of which was the COVID-19 pandemic and its disruption of local institutions. Due to these challenges, the 2020 Census is widely known to have undercounted young children and particular populations such as American Indians residing on reservations.² Data in this report from the ACS summarize the responses from samples of residents taken between 2019 and 2023. Because these estimates are based on samples rather than the entire population, ACS data should not be considered exact. Estimates for smaller geographies, such as

regions or sub-regions, are less accurate than estimates for larger geographies, such as the state, because they are based on smaller sample sizes.

Data were provided to FTF by state agencies including the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) and the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES). FTF strategy data related to quality early education, professional development and home visiting were also provided. FTF partnered with the Arizona State University Center for Health Information and Research (CHiR) to create custom tabulations of claims data for young children from the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS). In most cases, the data in this report were calculated specifically for the Needs and Assets process and are more detailed than the data that are published by these agencies for the general public. Whenever possible, this report will use data tailored to the region, but in some cases, there are only county-level or statewide data available to report. This report also includes publicly available data for the county and state, including from state agencies such as the Arizona Department of Commerce's Office of Economic Opportunity, Arizona Department of Education (ADE), and the Arizona Department of Child Safety (DCS) semi-annual child welfare reports. When more recent data from public or state agency datasets were not available, this report cites data from past Regional Needs and Assets Reports for the region.

The data in this report are as complete as possible, but there are cases when data for specific years were unavailable or unable to be reported. State agencies have varying policies about reporting small values. Labels such as <10, <6 or "DS" indicate that a count has been suppressed to protect privacy. When data were not available for a given year or geography, the label "N/A" is used.

Color-coding: This report uses color-coding to indicate the relevant geography for each number or percentage discussed in the text as follows: **Navajo/Apache Region**, **Apache County**, **Navajo County**, **Arizona**, and the **U.S.** Additional important numbers in the text that do not correspond to one of these geographies have been **bolded**.

Data Interpretation Session: The data compiled in this report reflect one way of knowing about the status of young children and their families, but local perspectives on what works well and what needs improvement from community experts who live, work and care for children in the region provide another vital source of information about the needs and assets in the region. First Things First Regional Partnership Council members and other key community experts participated in a facilitated data discussion in the beginning of 2026 to review the data included in this report. During this session, participants shared local knowledge and perspectives to help interpret the data and add additional context about the region. These insights are included throughout the report, attributed to "local key informants" and "local community experts."

Limitations: This report was compiled in the fall of 2025 and spring of 2026 during a time of rapid changes in federal funding and policy. The data presented reflect a particular moment in time.

Where possible, potential impacts of currently known policy decisions grounded in high-quality research have been included, but the full extent of the impact of policies implemented in 2025 and 2026 on early childhood well-being will not be fully clear for years to come.

Throughout this report, state-level data is included to help understand how the region is doing in comparison to Arizona overall. For a more comprehensive discussion of needs and assets at the state level, please see the First Things First 2025 Statewide Needs and Assets Report – Building Bright Futures.^a

Analysis of data and reporting of findings contained in this report were completed by Kara Habersstock Tanoue, Rachel Leih, Madeleine deBlois, Deirdre Avery, Vicki Brown, Terrace Ewinghill, Rachel Gildersleeve, Anvi Bhakta, Beatriz Reyna, Deshawna Yazzie, April Horne, Lauren Moxley, Dora Valencia, Claudia Vega and Felicia Zhang from the Community Research, Evaluation & Development (CRED) team in the John and Doris Norton School of Human Ecology at the University of Arizona.

THE NAVAJO/APACHE REGION

The First Things First regional boundaries were established to create regions that (a) reflect the view of families in terms of where they access services, (b) coincide with existing boundaries or service areas of organizations providing early childhood services, (c) maximize the ability to collaborate with service systems and local governments, (d) facilitate the ability to convene a Regional Partnership Council, and (e) allow for the collection of demographic and indicator data.

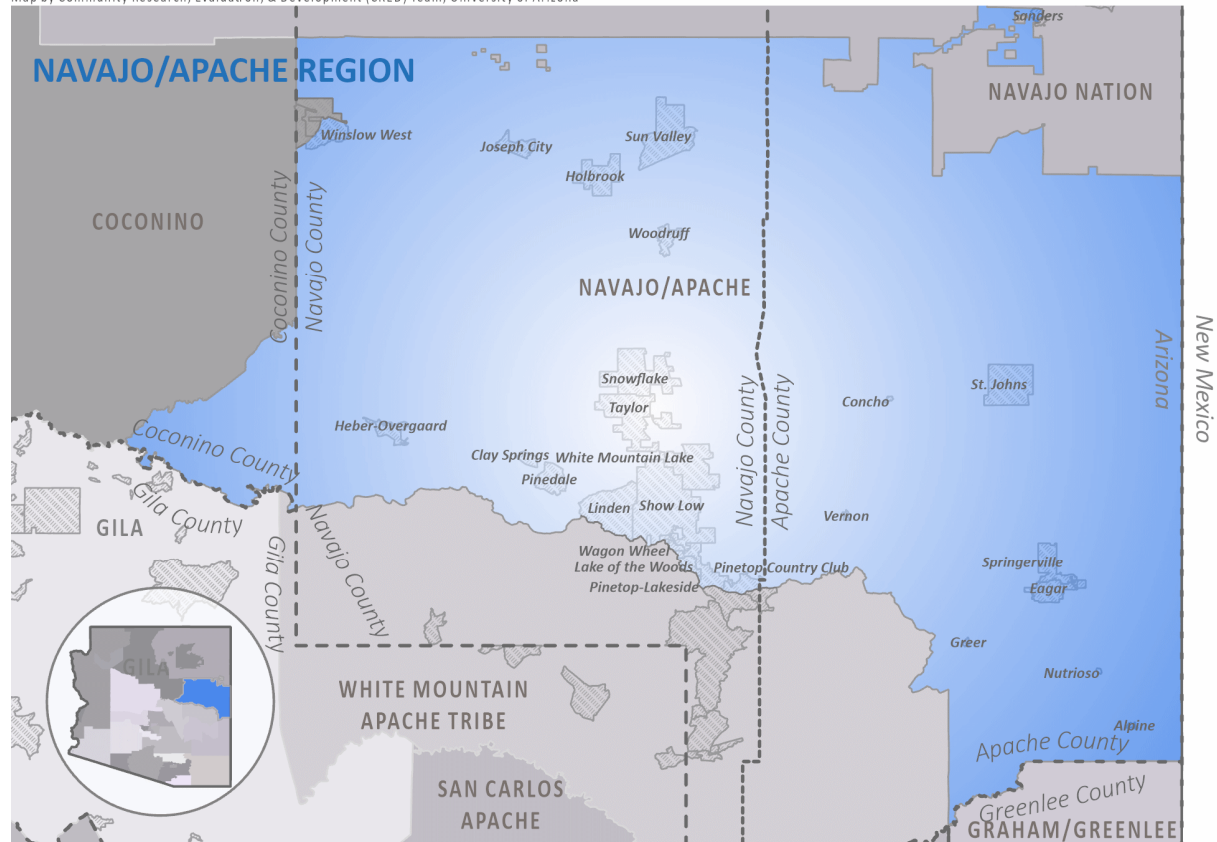
The Navajo/Apache Region encompasses the central areas of Navajo and Apache counties, excluding the lands belonging to the Navajo Nation and Hopi Tribe in the north and the land belonging to the White Mountain Apache Tribe in the south. The region also includes the Forest Lakes community, located in Coconino County west of Heber-Overgaard, and excludes the town of Winslow, which is located in Navajo County but assigned to the FTF Coconino Region. Major towns in the region include Show Low, Pinetop-Lakeside, Snowflake, Taylor, Holbrook, Springerville, Eagar and St. Johns.

The map below shows the geographical area covered by the Navajo/Apache Region. Additional information is available at the end of this report, including a map and table of the region's zip codes and a map of Arizona public school districts in the region in the *Maps & Methods* Appendix.

^a The full report can be found at <https://www.firstthingsfirst.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/2025-State-Needs-and-Assets-Report.pdf>

The First Things First Navajo/Apache Region

Map by Community Research, Evaluation, & Development (CRED) Team, University of Arizona



FAMILY, CHILD & COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS

Young children in the region

While young children make up a small proportion of the overall population, their well-being has wide-reaching impacts on families, social service systems and the state's future population. Continued investment in children's well-being and the well-being of their families was deemed by the National Academy of Sciences as "the most efficient strategy" for strengthening the future workforce and supporting a thriving community.^{3, 4} According to the 2020 Census, the Navajo/Apache Region was home to about **4,714** young children birth to age 5. Between 2018 and 2023, births in the Navajo/Apache Region saw small fluctuations, ranging from a low of **802** births in 2022 to a high of **878** births in 2020.^b While births peaked in the Navajo/Apache Region in 2020, births hit a six-year low the same year statewide.

Despite a relatively constant number of births in recent years, the number of young children counted in the 2020 Census was notably lower than in 2010, decreasing by **24%** from **6,166** young children in 2010 to **4,714** in 2020. This decline was twice the rate observed statewide, where there was a **12%** decrease in the population of young children over the same ten-year period. This was also in contrast to the all-age population, which increased slightly in the region (**+1%**), though this growth was notably smaller than the **12%** increase in the overall population statewide.

Characteristics of young children and the population

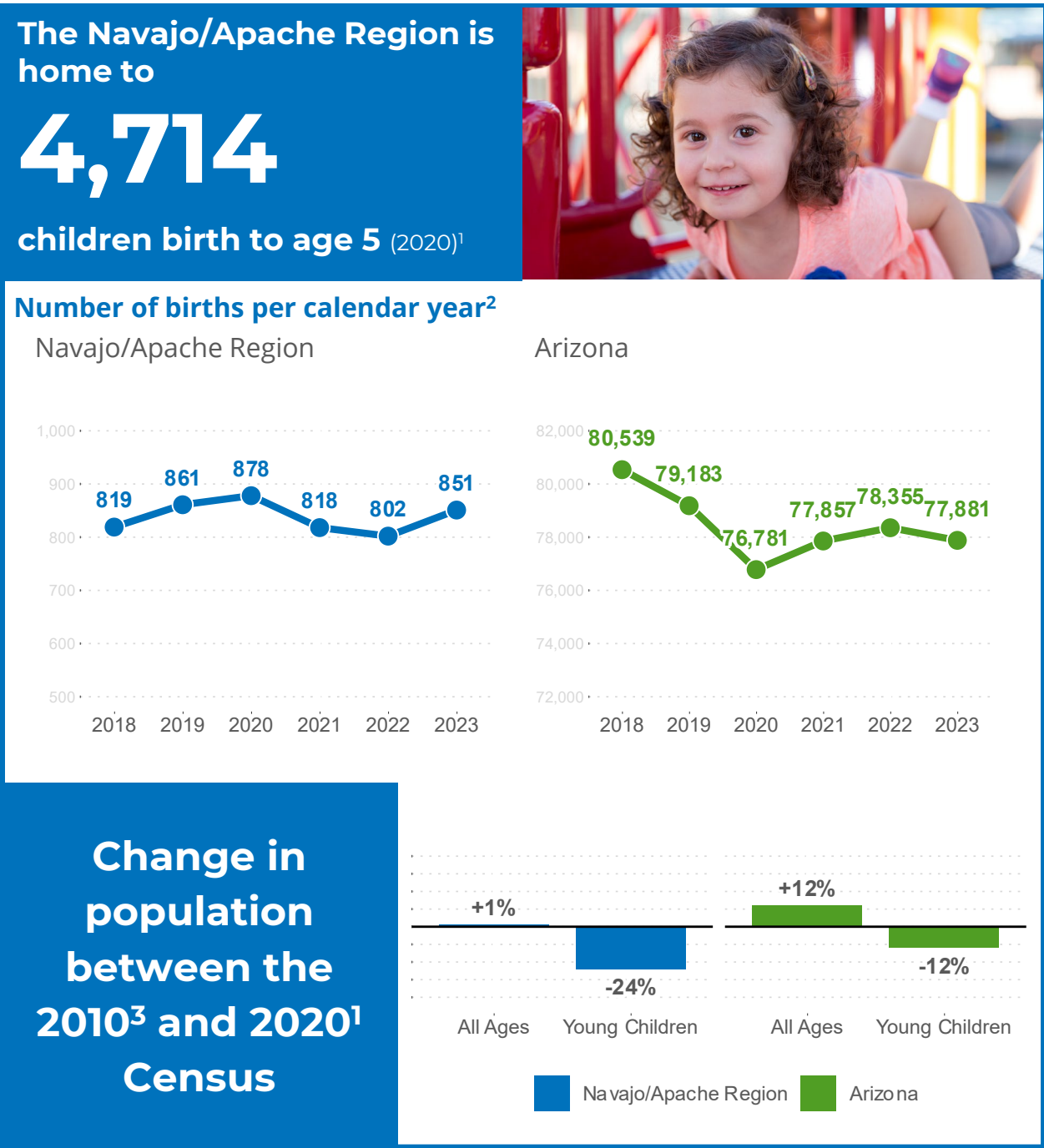
According to the 2020 Census, approximately **73,563** people lived in the Navajo/Apache Region, in **29,001** households. About one in eight households (**12%**) in the region included a young child birth to age 5, a slightly lower proportion of households than across Apache County (**15%**), Navajo County (**15%**), Arizona (**13%**) or the U.S. (**13%**).

Understanding the racial-ethnic composition of communities can inform efforts to ensure equitable access to services and resources. According to the 2020 Census, most Navajo/Apache Region residents identified as non-Hispanic White (**78%** of the total population, **69%** of young children birth to age 4). Young children in the region were more likely to be identified as Hispanic or Latino (**21%**) compared to the total population (**14%**). However, both proportions were lower

^b Note that births are assigned to the region based on the address that parents list on the birth certificate form. This means that babies born to families residing in the region should be counted in regional birth numbers regardless of the location of the hospital where they were born.

Figure 1.

Young children in the region



¹ U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). 2020 Decennial Census, Demographic and Housing Characteristics (DHC).
² Arizona Department of Health Services. (2024). [Vital Statistic dataset].
³ U.S. Census Bureau. (2010). 2010 Decennial Census.

than those observed statewide (**44%** of young children and **31%** of the total population).⁵ The Navajo/Apache Region also had a higher proportion of residents identifying as American Indian (**14%** of young children and **9%** of the total population) compared to Arizona overall (**6%** and **8%**, respectively).⁶ The vast majority (**88%**) of residents in the Navajo/Apache Region spoke English at home. The remaining **12%** of region residents spoke Spanish (**7%**) or another language (**5%**), most likely a Native language^c such as Navajo or Apache. Statewide, **19%** of residents spoke Spanish at home and **6%** spoke another language.⁷

Caregivers for young children

Family structure has important effects on children's development.⁸ For example, living in a single-parent household is often linked to implications for poverty, access to health and education resources, parental health and the quality of a child's interactions with adult caregivers.^{9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14} The 2023 American Community Survey (ACS) estimated that two-thirds (**67%**) of children birth to age 5 in the Navajo/Apache Region lived with two married parents, higher than the proportion statewide (**60%**).¹⁵ Additionally, young children in the region were less likely to reside with one unmarried parent^d (**28%**) than children across the state (**36%**).

Multi-generational households, where grandparents, parents and children live together, are also becoming more common across all racial and ethnic groups.^{16, 17, 18, 19} These living arrangements can offer financial and social benefits, but also stressors such as differing parenting styles and family roles.^{20, 21, 22, 23, 24} According to the 2020 Census, **14%** of young children in the Navajo/Apache Region lived in a grandparent's household, with or without a parent present. Overall, there were **805** grandparents in the region who reported that they were responsible for one or more grandchildren birth to age 17. Key informants noted that an increase in vacation or rental homes in the region has been pricing families out of affordable housing. In response, many are turning to living in multi-generational households to reduce their housing cost burden.

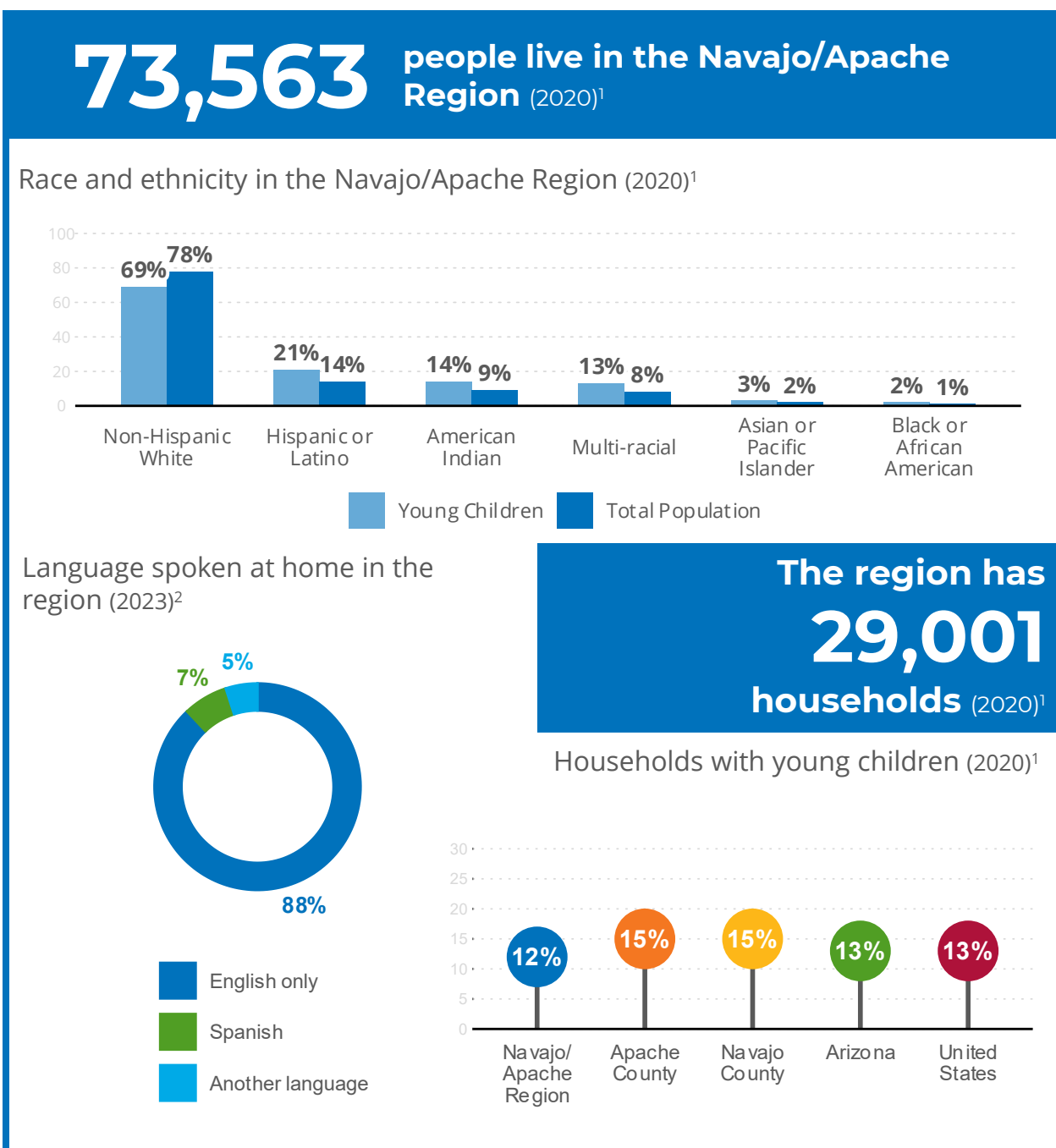
Kinship care, where children live with someone other than their parents (such as grandparents, other relatives or close friends), may bring challenges related to informal guardianship (e.g., difficulties in registering children for school), coping with parental absence and being an aging caregiver for a young child.^{25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31} In the Navajo/Apache Region, **3%** of young children

^c The ACS no longer specifies the proportion of the population who speak Native North American languages for geographies smaller than the state. In Arizona in 2023, Navajo and other Native American languages (including Apache, Hopi and O'odham) were the most commonly spoken language (1.4%) besides English (74%) and Spanish (20%).

^d The term "parent" includes stepparents. Please note that due to the way the ACS asks about family relationships, children living with two unmarried, cohabitating parents are not counted as living with two parents (these children are counted in the 'one parent' category).

Figure 2.

Characteristics of young children and the population



¹ U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). 2020 Decennial Census, Demographic and Housing Characteristics (DHC).

² U.S. Census Bureau. (2024). 2023 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, 2019-2023.

Notes: Race and ethnicity data are non-exclusive, meaning that individuals are counted in each category in which they identify. Language data are for the population ages 5 and older. The American Community Survey (ACS) no longer specifies the proportion of the population who speak Native North American languages for geographies smaller than the state. In Arizona, Navajo and other Native American languages (including Apache, Hopi, and O'odham) are the most commonly spoken (2%), following English (73%) and Spanish (20%).

resided with relatives other than parents (e.g., grandparent, aunt or uncle) and **2%** lived with a non-relative caregiver, the same as rates seen statewide (**3%** with relatives and **2%** with non-relatives).³²

Participation in the labor force can impact families in ways that affect children's health and well-being. For example, unemployment can limit access to resources that support children's physical and mental health.³³ An estimated **83%** of young children birth to age 5 in the Navajo/Apache Region lived in families with at least one parent in the labor force. More than half of all young children in the region (**56%**) lived with all parents in the labor force, making it likely that these families need some form of child care.

Income and poverty among families with children

Poverty is associated with reduced access to nutrition, green space and health care and greater exposure to psychosocial stress and environmental toxins; together, these factors may have implications for children's growth and brain development.^{34, 35, 36} According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, in 2025, a family of two adults and two children was considered to be in poverty if their income fell below \$32,150, while for a single parent with one child the threshold was \$21,150.³⁷ Between 2019 and 2023, an estimated **23%** of young children in the Navajo/Apache Region lived in poverty, a slight decline from the region's poverty rate between 2014 and 2018 (**26%**). Notably, young child poverty rates in Navajo County dropped by 10% during this time (**41%** to **31%**), similar to the notable decrease seen statewide (**25%** to **18%**), a phenomenon largely attributed to pandemic relief funding and policies.³⁸

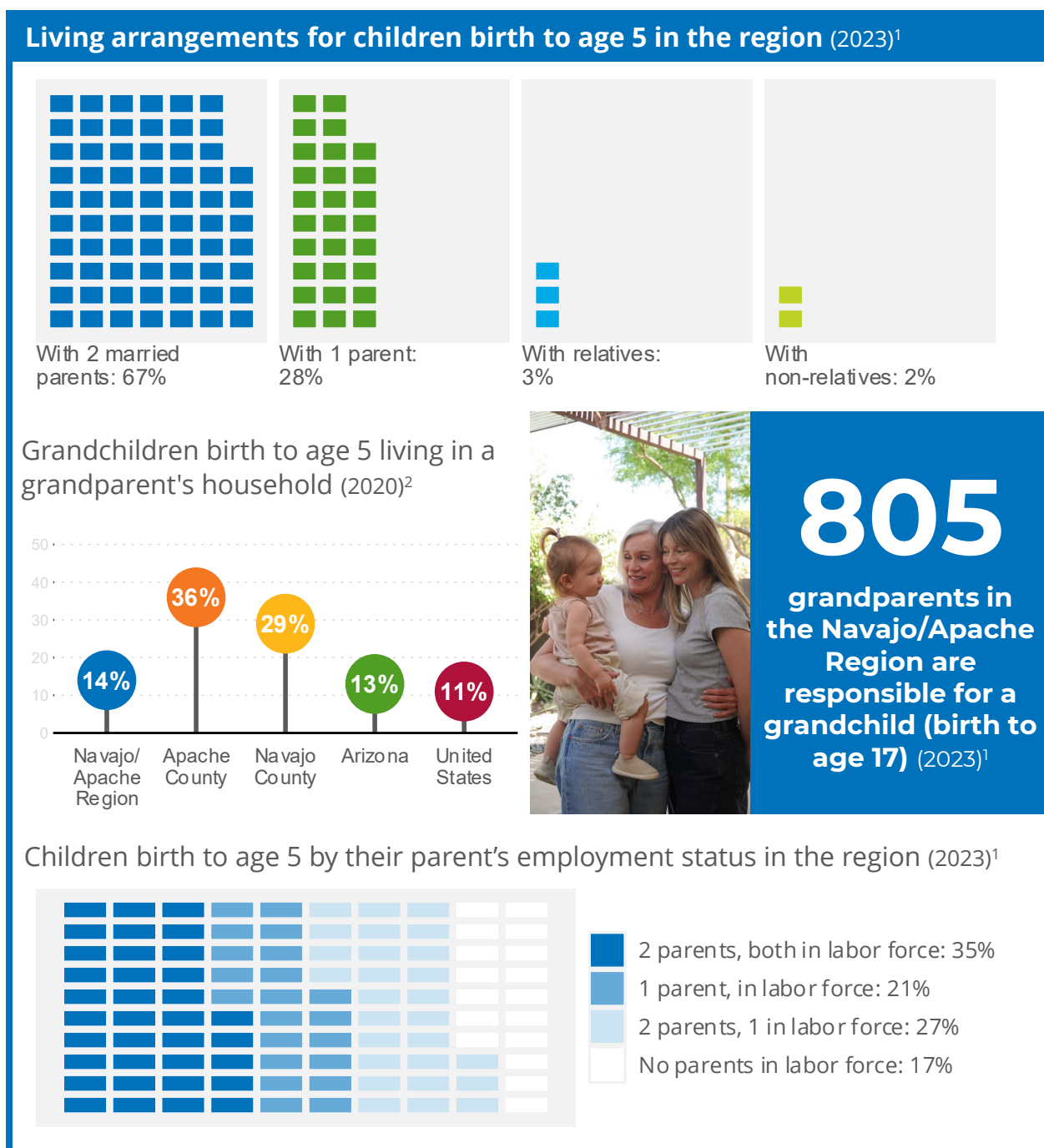
Overall, single-parent families across Arizona earned less than married-couple families in 2023. Married-couple family median incomes in Apache (**\$82,463**) and Navajo (**\$85,107**) counties were more than double the median income for single-male-headed families (Apache County, **\$33,333**; Navajo County: **\$35,972**) and two to three times those of single-female-headed families (Apache County, **\$30,641**; Navajo County, **\$27,877**). Across all family types, the median incomes in both counties were lower than median incomes statewide.

While median family income is a measure of how much families earn, the self-sufficiency standard^e attempts to estimate how much families actually need to earn to fully support themselves. These standards vary by family type and differences in costs of housing, transportation, child care and other budget items across counties and states.^{39, 40} In 2022, the self-sufficiency standard for two parents, one preschooler and one infant was **\$70,576** in Apache

^e For more information on the Arizona 2022 Self-sufficiency standard, please see https://womensgiving.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/AZ2022_SSS_Web.pdf

Figure 3.

Caregivers for young children



¹ U.S. Census Bureau. (2024). 2023 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, 2019-2023.

² U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). 2020 Decennial Census, Demographic and Housing Characteristics (DHC).

Notes: The 4 percentages for living arrangements and employment status should sum to 100% but may not because of rounding. The term "parent" here includes stepparents. Due to the way the ACS asks about family relationships, children living with two unmarried, cohabitating parents are not counted as living with two parents (these children are counted in the 'one unmarried parent' category).

County and **\$70,428** in Navajo County. In both counties, the self-sufficiency standard was lower than the median income for married couples with children. In contrast, the self-sufficiency standard for one parent and one preschooler was **\$46,522** in Apache County and **\$47,287** in Navajo County, exceeding the median incomes for single-male- and single-female-headed families with children. These data highlight the likelihood that more than half of single parents in these counties may not be earning enough income to support their families.

The Arizona self-sufficiency standards were updated in 2025 and reflect a significant increase in the cost of basic needs across Arizona since they were first published in 2002.⁴¹ Navajo County's self-sufficiency standards increased by **22%** for two parents, one preschooler and one infant (**\$85,657**) and **17%** for one parent and one preschooler (**\$55,321**) between 2022 and 2025. Apache County had smaller, though meaningful, increases for the same family types (**+17%, \$82,580; +12%, \$51,887**).⁴²

These rising costs have real implications for families' well-being in the Navajo/Apache Region. When housing costs consume a large percentage of family income, limited funds for basic needs such as food and utilities can influence young children's development.^{43, 44, 45} Traditionally, housing has been deemed affordable for families if it costs less than 30% of annual household income. About one in five households (**21%**) in the Navajo/Apache Region were considered housing cost-burdened, spending 30% or more of their income on housing. This is markedly lower than the **30.8%** of cost-burdened households statewide and means that the region is meeting the Healthy People 2030^f target of **25.5%** or fewer households with a high housing cost burden.⁴⁶ Internet access is a vital utility in homes in today's interconnected world. Reliable broadband enables access to education, employment, telehealth and social connection, highlighting its importance as a "super determinant" of health.⁴⁷ In the Navajo/Apache Region, the vast majority (**95%**) of children under age 18 had access to a computer and internet at home. Taken together, relatively lower rates of high housing costs and promising access to internet and computers at home point to strengths of the region in terms of affordability and connectivity for families.

Food security among young children and families

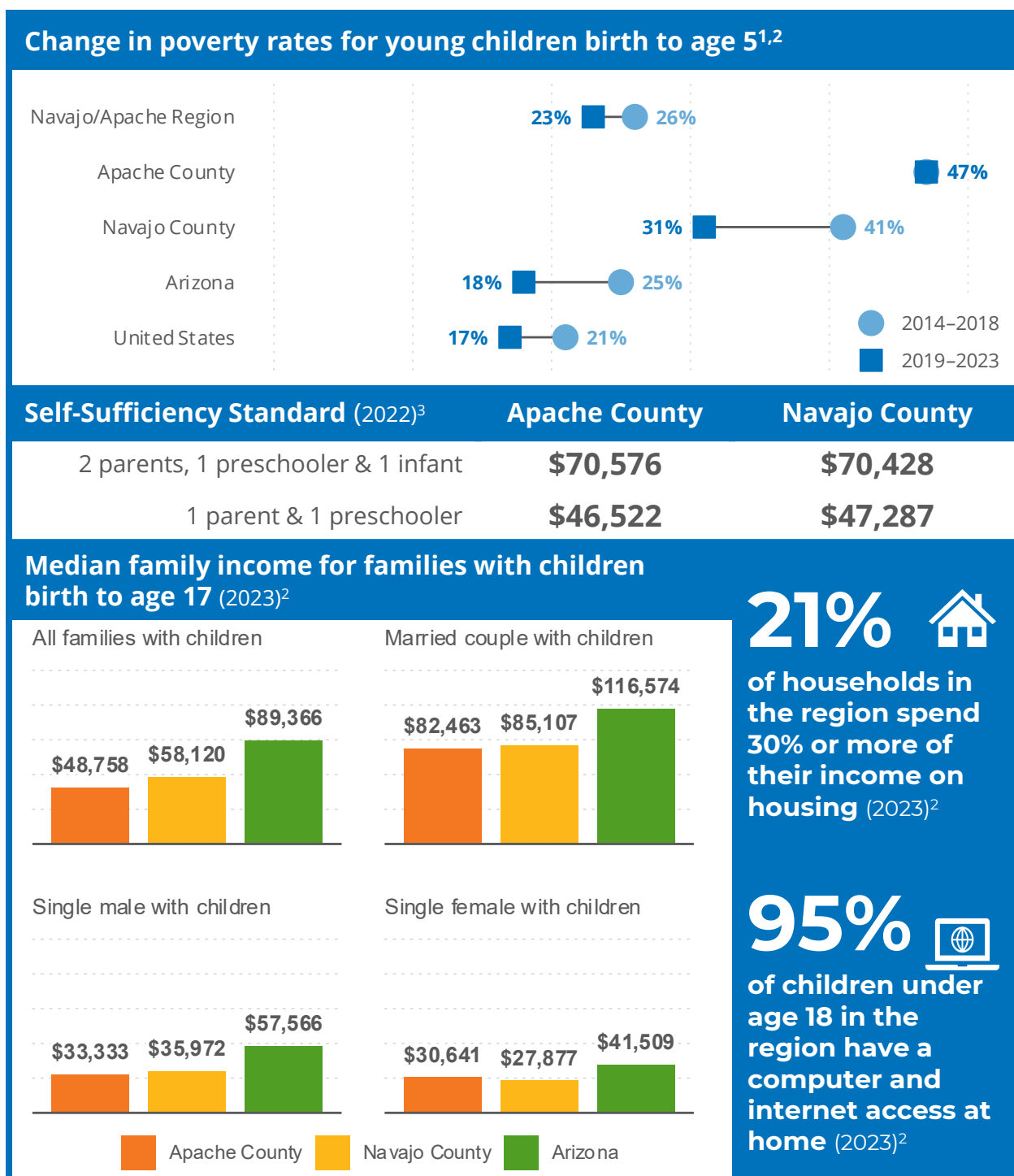
The Special Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program for Women, Infants and Children, known as WIC, provides food assistance, breastfeeding support, nutrition education and referral to other health and community services for women and children, starting in pregnancy until children turn age 5.^g WIC, along with other programs like free and reduced-price school meals, Temporary

^f Healthy People identifies science-based targets to guide national health promotion and disease prevention efforts. For more information see https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/healthy_people/index.htm

^g For more information see <https://www.fns.usda.gov/wic>

Figure 4.

Income and poverty among families with children



¹ U.S. Census Bureau. (2020). American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2014-2018.

² U.S. Census Bureau. (2024). American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2019-2023.

³ Kucklick, A., Manzer, L., and Mast, A.. (2022). [The Arizona 2022 Self-Sufficiency Standard].

Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), can be a key resource for low-income families to ensure they have access to affordable, nutritious food that promotes well-being. Families in Arizona are financially eligible for WIC if their income is at or below 185% of the federal poverty level.^{h, 48} According to 2023 American Community Survey (ACS) estimates, there were **2,372** children birth to age 5 in the Navajo/Apache Region living in households with qualifying incomes for WIC. This equates to nearly half (**49%**) of the young child population in the region. While the region had a larger proportion of young children whose households financially qualified for WIC compared to the state (**38%**) and U.S. (**35%**), an even larger proportion of young children's households financially qualified in Apache (**70%**) and Navajo (**59%**) counties.

Between 2018 and 2022, the number of young children (birth to age 4) enrolled and participating in WIC in the Navajo/Apache Region steadily declined, to a low of **1,992** young children enrolled in 2022. However, enrollment rebounded in recent years, exceeding pre-2022 numbers and reaching a high of **2,370** young children enrolled in 2024. The region had consistently high participation rates among young children enrolled in WIC in recent years, evident in the small gap between the number of children enrolled versus the number of children participating in the program. These high participation rates have even increased in recent years and often exceeded the already high participation rates among young children across the state, with **97%** of enrolled young children in the region and **95%** enrolled statewide participating in WIC in 2024.

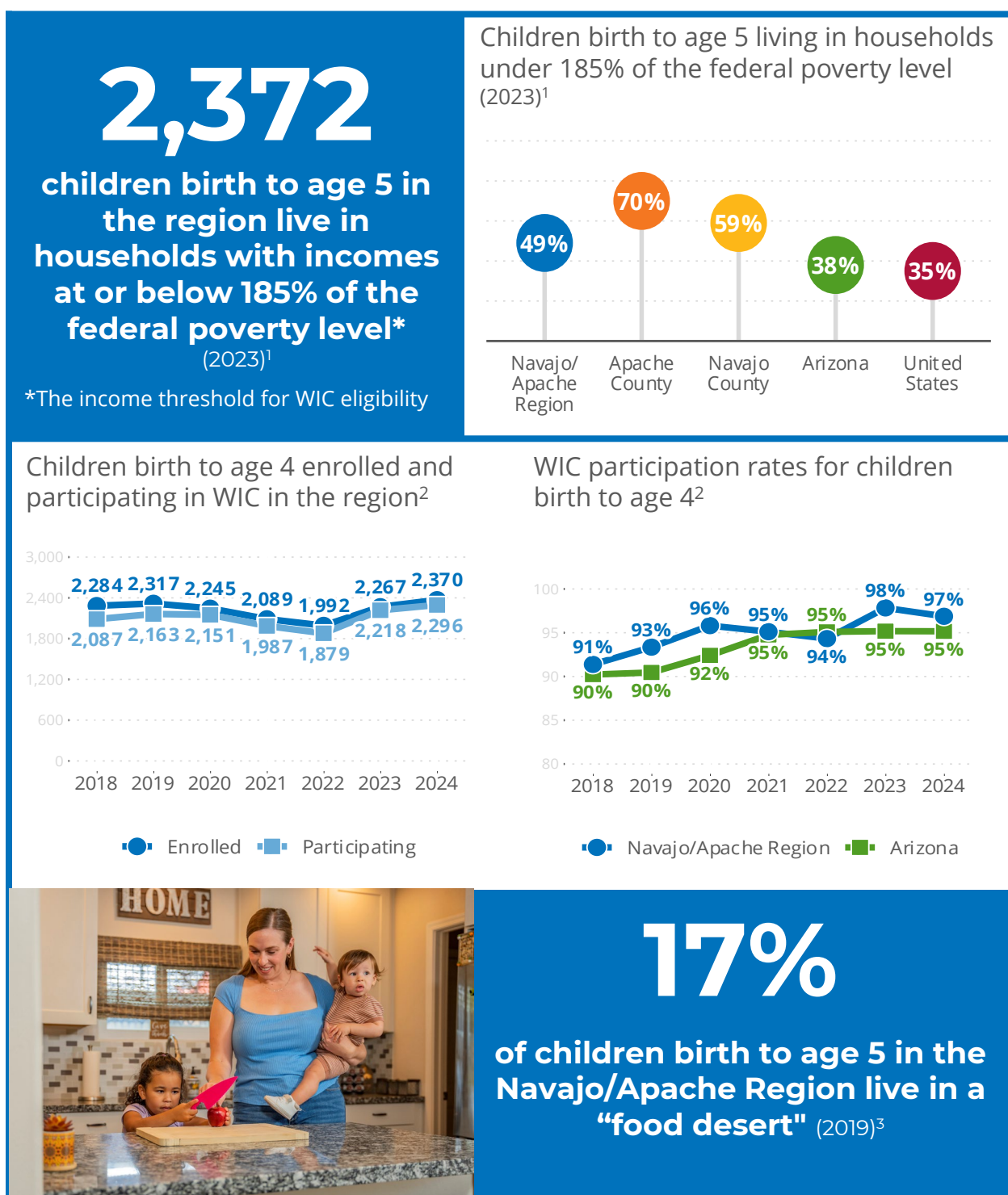
Families' neighborhood environments also influence their access to affordable, nutritious food. Low-income, low-access areas, also known as "food deserts," are geographic areas with high rates of poverty and limited access to fresh food options, a challenge often compounded by limited access to adequate transportation.⁴⁹ Nearly one in every five children birth to age 5 (**17%**) lived in a community in the regionⁱ classified as a low-income, low-access area by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 2019, slightly higher than the **15%** classified as such across the state.⁵⁰ These low-income and low-access areas in the region were mostly located in Navajo County, including the areas just outside of Winslow and Holbrook and the entire towns of Heber and Overgaard.

^h In 2026, the 185% FPL threshold was \$61,050 for a family of four and \$40,034 for a family of two. For more information, see <https://aspe.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/b1bfa16b20ae9b89d525bc35de7c1643/detailed-guidelines-2026.pdf>

ⁱ To view a map of low income and low access census tracts, see <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/go-to-the-atlas>

Figure 5.

Food security among young children and families



¹ U.S. Census Bureau. (2024). 2023 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, 2019-2023.

² Arizona Department of Health Services. (2025). [WIC dataset].

³ Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture. (2022). Food Access Research Atlas.

Note: WIC participation rates reflect the percent of children already enrolled in WIC who attend visits and receive benefits. These do not reflect the share of potentially-eligible children enrolled in WIC.

Child maltreatment response and prevention

Traumatic or stressful life events experienced in childhood, referred to as Adverse Childhood Experiences or ACEs,^j can have lasting impacts on health and life trajectory beyond childhood, with risk increasing as an individual's number of adverse childhood experiences increases.⁵¹ In situations of abuse or neglect, the Arizona Department of Child Safety (DCS) is required to intervene to ensure the safety and well-being of children. When DCS determines that the harm in remaining with their family is too great, a child may be removed from their home, either temporarily or permanently. In recent years, DCS has set an overarching goal of safely reducing the number of children removed from their homes and placed in out-of-home care.⁵² In line with this goal, the number of children reported to DCS who were removed from their homes and placed in out-of-home care has substantially declined in recent years in Arizona, from a recent high of **13,465** children age birth to 17 in state fiscal year (SFY) 2021 to **8,305** in SFY 2024. While out-of-home placements in Navajo and Apache counties also reached a five-year low of **127** children birth to age 17 in SFY 2024, county placement trends showed more fluctuation in recent years than the state.

DCS also aims to place children into a permanent, stable housing situation within 12 months, whether that is through reunification, living with other relatives (known as kinship care) or any type of guardianship or adoption.⁵³ In SFY 2024, almost half (**47%**) of young children birth to age 17 exiting out-of-home care in Arizona were reunified with their families, one in four (**25%**) were adopted^k and one in six (**16%**) were placed in guardianship.^l The other **12%** exited out-of-home care for some other reason, including children who aged out of the out-of-home care system, transferred to another agency, ran away or exited for another reason.

Home visitation programs are a proven strategy for equipping families with needed resources and referrals to promote healthy child development, reduce parental stress and prevent future child maltreatment.^{54, 55, 56, 57} In state fiscal year 2025, **206** families in the Navajo/Apache Region participated in home visitation programs, including the Health Start, Healthy Families AZ, High-Risk Perinatal Program, Family Spirit and Parents as Teachers programs.

^j Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) include eight categories of traumatic or stressful life events experienced before the age of 18 years. The eight ACE categories are sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, household adult mental illness, household substance abuse, domestic violence in the household, incarceration of a household member, and parental divorce or separation.

^k Adoption by a relative, foster parent or other non-relative

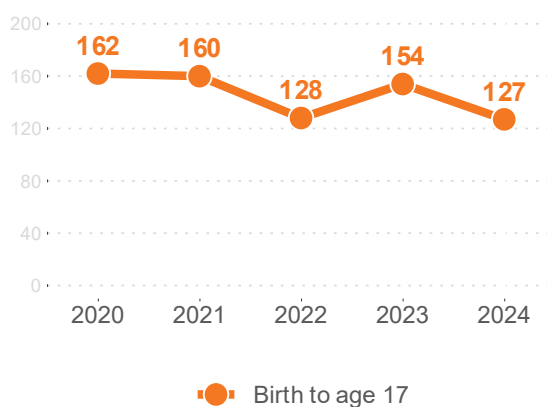
^l Guardianship by a foster parent or other non-relative

Figure 6.

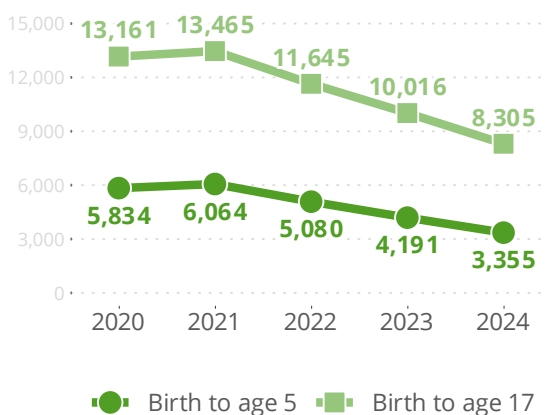
Child maltreatment response and prevention

Children in out-of-home placements with the Department of Child Safety¹

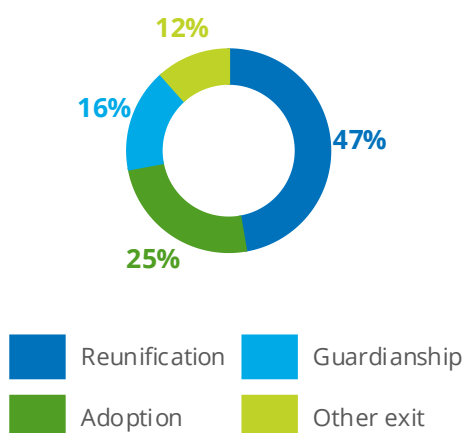
Navajo & Apache counties



Arizona



Case outcomes for children birth to age 17 exiting out-of-home care in Arizona (2024)¹



In the Navajo/Apache Region,

206 families participated in home visitation programs (2025)²

¹ Arizona Department of Child Safety. (2025). Monthly Operational Outcomes Report, May 2025.

² First Things First. (2025). [Home Visitation & Screenings Reach datasets].

Note: Home visitation program data reflects families in the Health Start, Healthy Families AZ, High-Risk Perinatal Program, Family Spirit and Parents as Teachers programs. Families may participate in more than one program (and be counted more than once).

EARLY LEARNING

Availability of quality early care and education

Participating in quality preschool programs can result in between one-third and a full year of additional early learning gains in language, reading and math skills, increasing the academic readiness of children when they enter kindergarten.⁵⁸ According to 2023 American Community Survey (ACS) estimates, **28%** of 3- and 4-year-olds were enrolled in school^m in the Navajo/Apache Region, below the proportion across the state (**36%**).⁵⁹ In the 2024-25 school year, **123** children were enrolled in preschool in public schools in Apache County, and **287** were enrolled in Navajo County. There is likely more capacity in school-based preschool programs in the county than reflected in these numbers. Not all preschool students are well-captured in ADE enrollment data, particularly typically-developing students in part-day programs and preschool students whose families pay a fee for care at a school.

In 2025, there were **20** early care and education providers in the region with the capacity to serve **873** children. Most of this capacity was provided by **14** child care centers with the capacity to serve **725** children, followed by **5** schools (n = **138**), and **1** home-based provider (n = **10**). Between 2023 and 2025, **2** new child care providers opened in the Navajo/Apache Region, and **1** child care provider closed.

An area is labeled a child care desert if there are three times as many children as there are available child care slots (a ratio of **3.0** or more).⁶⁰ Communities in both urban and rural areas of Arizona face a gap between the number of young children and licensed child care slots.^{61, 62, 63} Collectively across all children birth to age 5, the Navajo/Apache Region is considered a child care desert, with a ratio of **4.8** children birth to age 5 per available slot. This is more than twice the ratio for children birth to age 5 statewide (**2** children birth to age 5 per available slot).⁶⁴ For 1-year-olds, the ratio is higher, with **8.2** 1-year-olds per available slot, and the ratio for regulated infant care is highest, with **37.2** infants per available slot, indicating a scarcity of licensed infant child care in the region.

Key informants highlighted that through the First Things First (FTF) Regional Council's System Change Strategy fund, they were able to provide a grant to expand the infrastructure and number of teachers at Tracy's Child Care Center in Show Low in Apache County. The center will be able to serve 16 infants beginning in 2026. Key informants also indicated that there is a preference for more informal family, friend and neighbor (FFN) infant care in the Navajo/Apache Region. In cooperation with FTF and the Small Business Development Center, Northland Pioneer College is

^m School includes nursery school, preschool or kindergarten.

planning to offer courses to in-home child care providers to encourage them to attain accreditation and licensing, with the goal of expanding and improving the quality of family, friend and neighbor care in the region.

Increasing access to quality early care and education

High-quality early learning experiences lay a strong foundation for children's success in kindergarten, elementary school and beyond.⁶⁵ One way that the quality of early child care and education is measured in Arizona is through the Quality First (QF) program.⁶⁶ The QF program rates the quality of child care providers and preschools on a scale from one to five stars, with providers considered high quality when they have received a 3-star rating or higher.⁶⁷ In the Navajo/Apache Region, the **15** providers served by QF enrolled a total of **470** young children in 2025, and **14** of the 15 child care providers had 3-5-star ratings. Three and four-year-olds were most often enrolled in quality settings (**142** and **189** respectively), followed by 2-year-olds (n = **76**), 5-year-olds (n = **47**) and 1-year-olds (n = **16**). There were no infants enrolled in QF providers in the region in 2025.

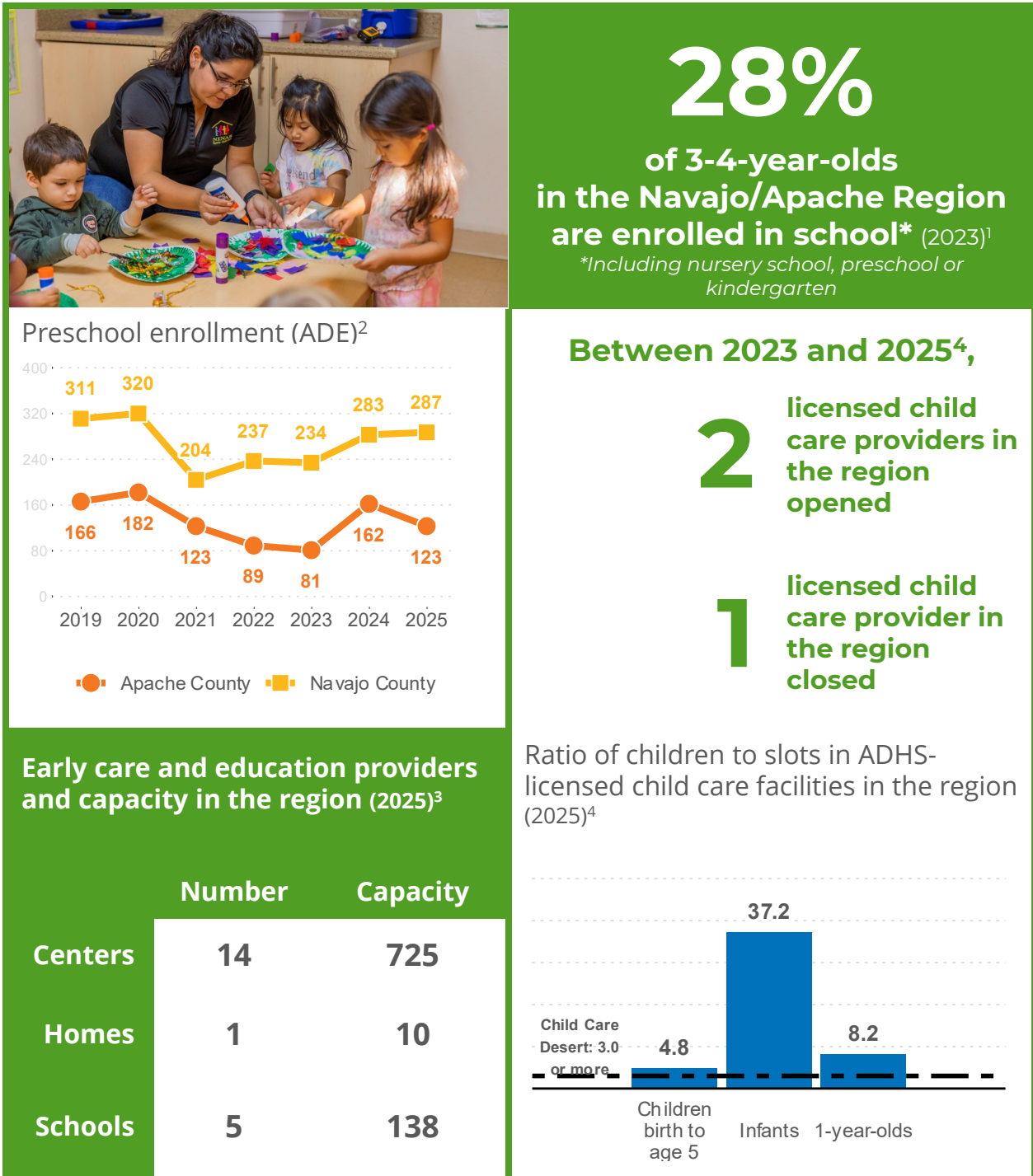
Child care providers enrolled in QF offer scholarships to eligible families to allow those children to access care and to reimburse providers for some of their extra expenses for providing quality care. These scholarships are allocated based on the child care provider's capacity and QF star rating.⁶⁸ However, due to the end of federal pandemic relief funds, statewide allocations for scholarships have decreased by over 3,000 slots from 2024 to 2025.⁶⁹ The number of QF scholarships provided in the region followed the same downward trend from 2024 (n = **34**) to 2025 (n = **22**).

Cost of early care and education

The high cost of formal early care and education can place it out of reach of many families. The average cost of care in Arizona varies by the type of provider and the age of the child, with licensed centers and care for infants the most expensive, largely due to the higher operational costs of center-based care.⁷⁰ The median cost of care for an infant in a licensed center in Arizona in 2024 was **\$1,289** per month.⁷¹ In Northern Arizona (Coconino, Yavapai, Navajo and Apache counties), this type of care was also the most expensive at **\$956** per month, although only slightly more expensive than licensed center care for 1-2-year-olds (**\$944/month**). The least expensive type of care in Northern Arizona was in certified family homes, where median charges ranged from **\$588-\$609/month** based on the age of the child. However, as mentioned above, there was only one registered home-based provider in the region, meaning that home-based care, while more affordable, may not be a realistic option for many families.

Figure 7.

Availability of quality early care and education



¹ U.S. Census Bureau. (2024). 2023 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, 2019-2023.

² Arizona Department of Education. (2025). [October 1 Enrollment, Graduation Rates, Dropout Rates, State Assessment dataset].

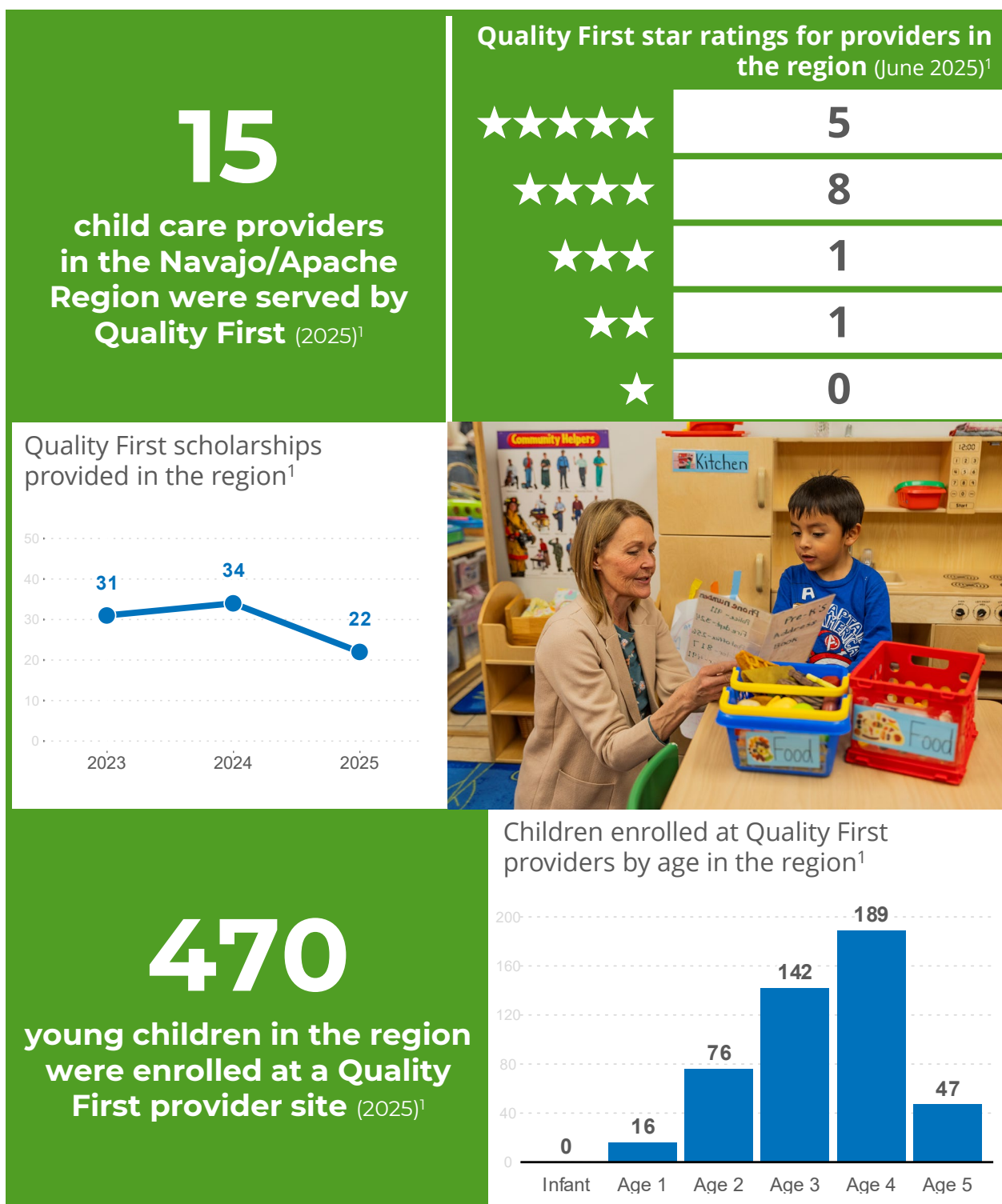
³ Arizona Department of Economic Security. (2025). [National Child Care Data System NCCRAwaredatabase extract].

⁴ Arizona Department of Health Services. (2025). [Child Care Licensing dataset].

Note: Please note that the capacity estimates are based on licensed capacity of the facility (frequently determined by physical building capacity) and may overstate the number of children that are actually enrolled in early education (due to staffing limitations and provider preferences).

Figure 8.

Increasing access to quality early care and education



¹ First Things First. (2025). [Quality First dataset].

According to the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, to be considered affordable, a family should spend no more than 7% of their income on child care.⁷² In Arizona, both married and single-parent families are estimated to spend well above the “affordable” share of their income on infant care.^{73, 74} In Navajo and Apache counties, center-based care for one infant costs at least **20%** of median income for families with children. Apache County families paid a larger proportion of their income for center-based care (**20 - 24%**), compared to families in Navajo County (**16 - 20%**) and across the state (**13 - 17%**). Families in Apache County paid almost one-quarter of median income for center-based infant care (**24%**) and care for 1-2-year-old children (**23%**). The cost of care has also risen in recent years, with the cost of care for 1–2-year-olds increasing the most (**+12%**) between 2022 and 2024. The cost of care for 3–5-year-olds rose **9%** during the same period, while infant care increased by only **1%**.

Early care and education assistance and quality

The Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES) provides child care assistance to financially eligible families, including specific funding for families involved with the Arizona Department of Child Safety (DCS).⁷⁵ This assistance can make child care more accessible for families. Eligibility for and receipt of DES child care assistance among non-DCS-involved families recently reached record highs due to recent statewide investments.^{76, 77} The Navajo/Apache Region mirrored these statewide trends of record-high participation in 2024, with a six-year high of **140** non-DCS-involved children birth to age 5 found eligible and **125** of those children receiving DES child care assistance. In addition, **91%** of non-DCS-involved eligible families used child care assistance in 2024. The proportion of these young children receiving child care assistance in quality environments in the region (**95%**) was also higher than non-DCS-involved children across the state (**80%**). Unfortunately, due to insufficient funding, the DES child care assistance waitlist was reinstituted statewide in August 2024.ⁿ

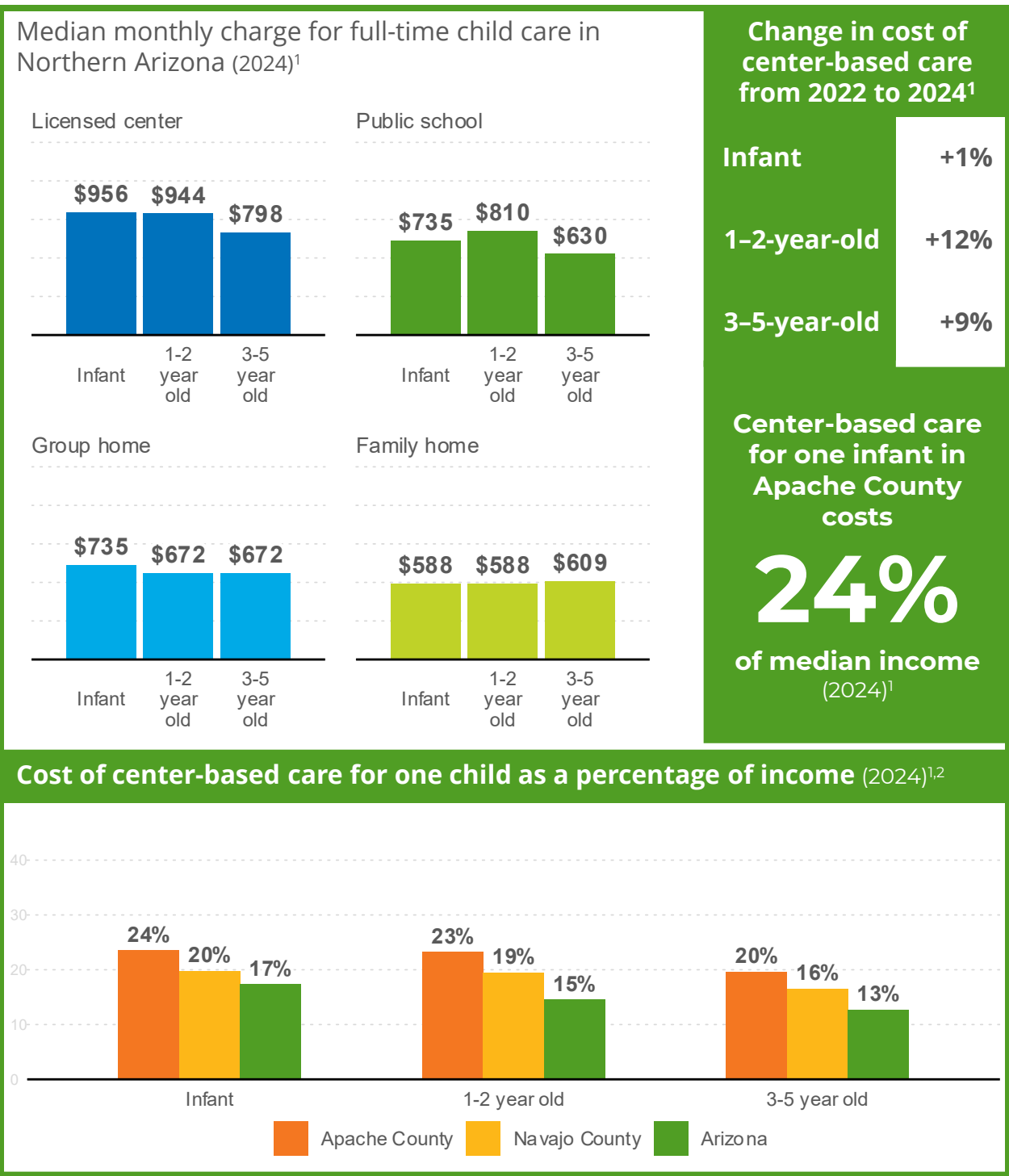
Children are automatically eligible for DES child care assistance when they are involved with DCS.^o For DCS-involved children, the number of children birth to age 5 eligible for child care assistance in the Navajo/Apache Region decreased from a recent high of **124** children birth to age 5 in 2019 to lows of **49** in 2021 and 2022, before rising again to **69** in 2023 and 2024. The number of DCS-involved young children receiving child care assistance followed a similar pattern until 2024, when

ⁿ As of May 1, 2026, there were more than 12,000 children waitlisted statewide. For more information, see <https://des.az.gov/services/child-and-family/child-care/how-apply-for-child-care-assistance>

^o Children involved with DCS include children who have been removed by DCS and placed with a foster family or kinship caregiver as well as children who are residing with their own family but receiving services from DCS (such as in-home family support and counseling). Families of these children are not required to pay a co-pay for child care.

Figure 9.

Cost of early care and education



¹ Health Management Associates. (2024). 2024 Child Care Market Rate Survey. Arizona Department of Economic Security.

² U.S. Census Bureau. (2024). 2023 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, 2019-2023.

Note: Northern Arizona includes Coconino, Yavapai, Navajo & Apache counties.

the number receiving assistance fell to **39**. Those children in the region were more likely to receive this child care assistance in quality environments (**97%**) compared to DCS-involved children across the state (**84%**).

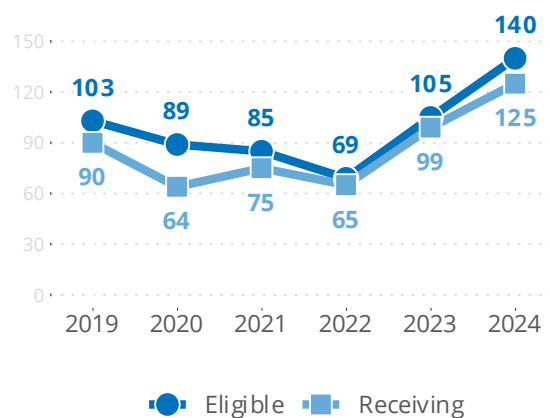
To expand access to quality child care, DES provides enhanced reimbursement rates to child care providers that are considered high quality, including having a 3- to 5-star Quality First rating, national accreditation or applying Head Start Performance Standards. As of November 2025, quality child care providers across Arizona were reimbursed an additional **40%** above the standard reimbursement.

Figure 10.

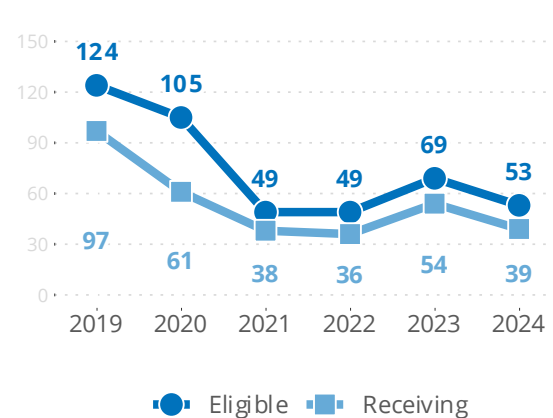
Early care and education assistance and quality

Children receiving child care assistance in the Navajo/Apache Region¹

Non-DCS-involved children



DCS-involved children

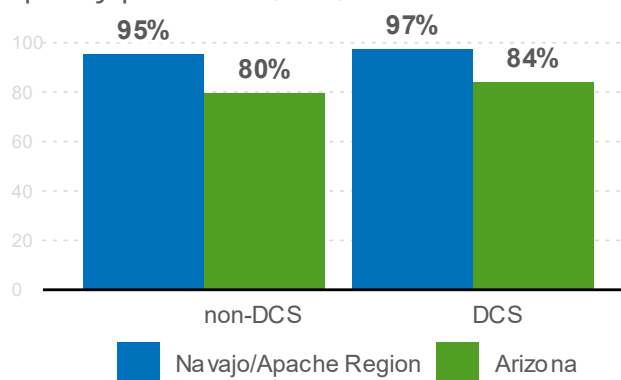


91%

of eligible families* in the region used child care assistance (2024)¹

*Non-DCS-involved families

Children receiving child care assistance in quality providers (2024)¹



+40%

Increased reimbursement rate for quality providers

defined by DES as providers with a 3-5 star Quality First Rating, national accreditation, or applying Head Start Performance Standards (Nov 2025)¹

¹ Arizona Department of Economic Security. (2024). [Child Care Assistance dataset].

EDUCATION & WORKFORCE

K-12 education attendance and achievement

In addition to a quality early childhood education system, a community's K-12 education system can support positive outcomes for children, families and the overall well-being of the community. Individuals who have higher levels of education tend to live longer and healthier lives, and graduating from high school, in particular, is associated with better health, financial stability and socio-emotional outcomes.^{78, 79} Across both Apache and Navajo counties, kindergarten through 3rd grade enrollment has decreased overall since the 2018-19 school year. In Apache County, the lowest recent enrollment counts were in 2024-25 school year (**2,614** students), compared with a high of **2,989** students enrolled in the 2018-2019 school year. Navajo County showed a similar pattern, declining to a near low of **4,536** students in the 2024-25 school year.

Some Arizona families use Arizona's Empowerment Scholarship Account (ESA) to pay for eligible educational expenses, including private or online school tuition, individual public school classes and extracurriculars.⁸⁰ This program was established in 2011 for students with disabilities and expanded to universal eligibility in 2022.^{81, 82} These funds can also be spent on other approved education costs, such as tutoring, technology, textbooks, supplies and national standardized test fees.^{83, 84} In the 2024-25 school year, **2,178** students (preschool through grade 12) in Navajo and Apache counties used ESAs, accounting for **2.3%** of Arizona's **94,600** ESA participants.⁸⁵ By comparison, there were **25,978** total students (preschool through grade 12) enrolled in public and charter schools in Navajo and Apache counties in the 2024-25 school year.

Children's 3rd grade reading comprehension and proficiency skills can predict their future academic success, such as their likelihood of graduating high school and attending college.⁸⁶ Although they remain distressingly low, 3rd grade math assessment passing rates increased in recent years in both Navajo and Apache counties, and across the state. Apache County increased from **27%** in the 2021-22 school year to **34%** in the 2023-24 school year, while Navajo County rose from **32%** to **36%** over the same period. In both Apache and Navajo counties, 3rd grade reading assessment passing rates also improved from the 2021-22 to 2023-24 school year. Apache County passing rates rose from **26%** to **30%** and Navajo County from **30%** to **33%**. In contrast, the statewide reading passing rate declined from **41%** to **39%**. Despite these gains, county rates in the 2023-24 school year remained below the state level, although the gap narrowed that year.

School attendance is an important factor in predicting the academic performance and future health of children. Chronic absenteeism, defined as missing 10% of school days in a school year, predicts a student experiencing academic difficulties and even dropping out of school entirely.⁸⁷ Following the COVID-19 pandemic, chronic absenteeism has become a major issue in school

districts nationwide.⁸⁸ Half of all kindergarten students (**50%**) and over one-third of 3rd grade students in Apache County (**46%**) were chronically absent from school in the 2022-23 school year, compared to less than one-third (**31%**) of kindergarten students and slightly more than one-fifth (**22%**) of 3rd grade students pre-pandemic in the 2018-19 school year. Navajo County showed a similar trend from before the pandemic to the most recent data, but chronic absenteeism remained lower than in Apache County. In the latest available data, **18%** of kindergarteners and nearly one-third (**31%**) of 3rd graders in Navajo County were chronically absent in the 2022-23 school year. Statewide, the kindergarten chronic absence rate was **25.5%** and the 3rd grade chronic absence rate was **23.8%** in the 2022-23 school year.⁸⁹ Increasing attendance among kindergarten students presents a particular challenge because the state mandated age of school enrollment is 6 years, so absences in kindergarten are often not considered truancy, meaning schools have fewer resources to address them.

Graduation and adult educational attainment

Understanding current high school graduation and dropout rates within the state provides insight into the assets and challenges faced by a community and its future workforce. In contrast to adults who dropped out of high school and even those that received a high school equivalency diploma (HSE, also commonly referred to as a GED), adults who graduated from high school have higher rates of employment, higher incomes and better overall health.⁹⁰ Four-year graduation rates in Navajo and Apache counties have remained above the state's rates in recent years.⁹¹ In the 2023-24 school year, the four-year graduation rate was **81%** in both Navajo and Apache counties, above the statewide rate of **78%**.⁹² In that same year, the five-year graduation rate was **86%** in Apache County and **84%** in Navajo County, compared to **81%** statewide.⁹³

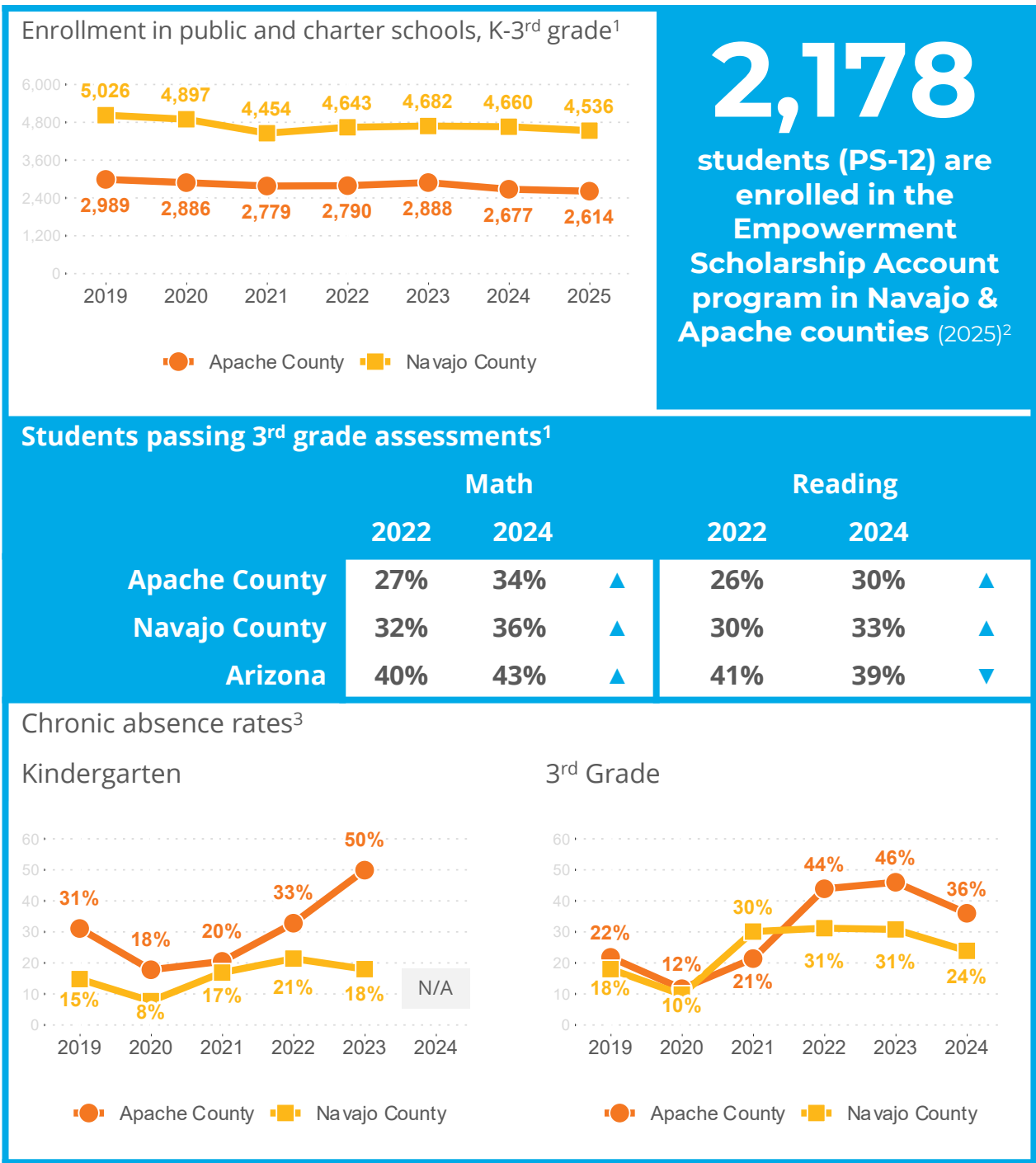
Compared to the U.S. as a whole, Arizona has a larger proportion of disconnected youth, defined as teenagers ages 16 to 19 who are neither attending school nor employed,^p which has been linked to negative physical and mental health outcomes and higher rates of unemployment.⁹⁴ Dropout rates for 7th to 12th grade students in Navajo and Apache counties have increased since the COVID-19 pandemic, with both counties reaching **10%** dropout rates in recent years, double the **5%** rate of both counties in the 2018-19 school year. In the 2023-24 school year, Apache County had a dropout rate of **7%** and Navajo County had a dropout rate of **6%**. Statewide, the 7th to 12th grade dropout rate was **5.3%** in the 2023-24 school year.⁹⁵

Education is a key mechanism for upward economic mobility. As educational attainment in a population increases, wages increase and rates of unemployment decrease.⁹⁶ Of U.S. adults

^p Age ranges for "disconnected youth" vary by source, with some estimates including both teenagers ages 16-19 and young adults ages 20-24 and others focusing on only teenagers or young adults.

Figure 11.

K-12 education attendance and achievement



¹ Arizona Department of Education. (2025). [October 1 Enrollment, Graduation Rates, Dropout Rates, State Assessment dataset].

² Arizona Department of Education. (2025). [Empowerment Scholarship Account Enrollment].

³ Maricopa Association of Governments. (2026). [ReadOn Arizona MapLIT dashboard reports: enrollment, chronic absences, assessments].

Notes: Chronic absences are defined as children missing 10% or more school days. Schools reported absences data very differently in school year 2019-20 due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the shift to remote learning. Absences data were not available for kindergarteners in school year 2023-24.

working full time in 2021, median earnings for those with a bachelor's degree were \$29,000 higher than those with a high school degree.⁹⁷ According to 2023 American Community Survey (ACS) estimates, just over nine in 10 adults ages 25 and older (**92%**) in the Navajo/Apache Region had at least a high school education, higher than the proportion statewide (**89%**).⁹⁸ In the region, **24%** had a bachelor's degree or more. Just under one-third (**32%**), had some college but no degree; this includes individuals who received a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential or other similar post-secondary credential.

Adult employment

Unemployment and underemployment⁹ can impact families in ways that affect children's health and well-being.⁹⁹ Unemployment can limit access to resources that support children's physical and mental health, like health insurance, and can also contribute to family stress, conflict, homelessness and child abuse.^{100, 101} Children with parents who have lost their jobs may also experience poorer school performance and behavioral issues, resulting in grade repetition, suspension or expulsion.¹⁰² Unemployment rates in Apache County and Navajo County have followed the same trend over time as the state, but have consistently been higher by multiple percentage points. Apache County had unemployment rates three to four percentage points higher than the state overall, while Navajo County did slightly better, with unemployment rates consistently about two to three percentage points higher than the state. After the spike in rates during the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, unemployment rates improved and were mostly constant since 2022. In 2024, the unemployment rate was **7%** in Apache County, **6%** in Navajo County and **4%** across Arizona.

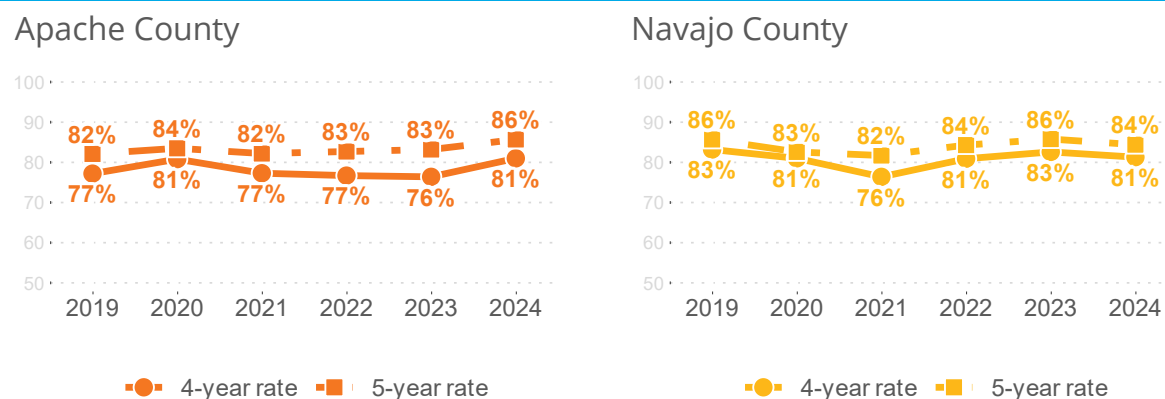
The labor force participation rate includes all persons who are working (employed) or looking for work (unemployed). Persons not in the labor force are largely students, stay-at-home parents, retirees and institutionalized people. According to 2023 American Community Survey (ACS) estimates, under half (**45%**) of the population ages 16 and older was participating in the labor force in the Navajo/Apache Region, meaning a small majority (**55%**) of the population in the region was not working or actively looking for work. This labor force participation rate was notably lower than across the state (**61%**) and U.S. (**64%**), although the region's unemployment rate mirrored the state and U.S. (**5%**). Some key employment sectors in Navajo and Apache counties include public administration, health care and social services, retail trade, accommodation and food services and construction.

⁹ Underemployment means that someone works fewer hours than they would like or is in a job that does not require the skills or training that they have.

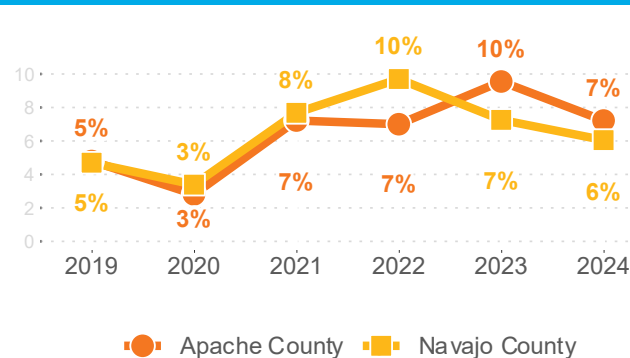
Figure 12.

Graduation and adult educational attainment

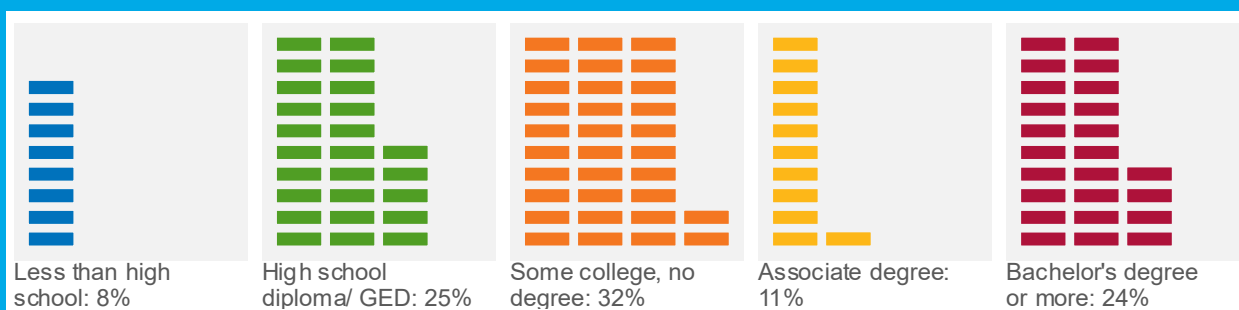
Trends in 4-year and 5-year graduation rates¹



Trends in 7th to 12th grade dropout rates¹



Level of education of adults in the Navajo/Apache Region (2023)²



¹ Arizona Department of Education. (2025). [October 1 Enrollment, Graduation Rates, Dropout Rates, State Assessment dataset].

² U.S. Census Bureau. (2024). 2023 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, 2019-2023.

Notes: Graduation rates are calculated as the percentage of students in a cohort (typically those who enter ninth grade together) who graduate within 4 or 5 years. "Dropouts are defined as students who are enrolled in school at any time during the school year, but are not enrolled at the end of the school year and did not transfer, graduate or die" [State of Arizona Department of Education Graduation, Dropout & Persistence Rate Technical Manual].

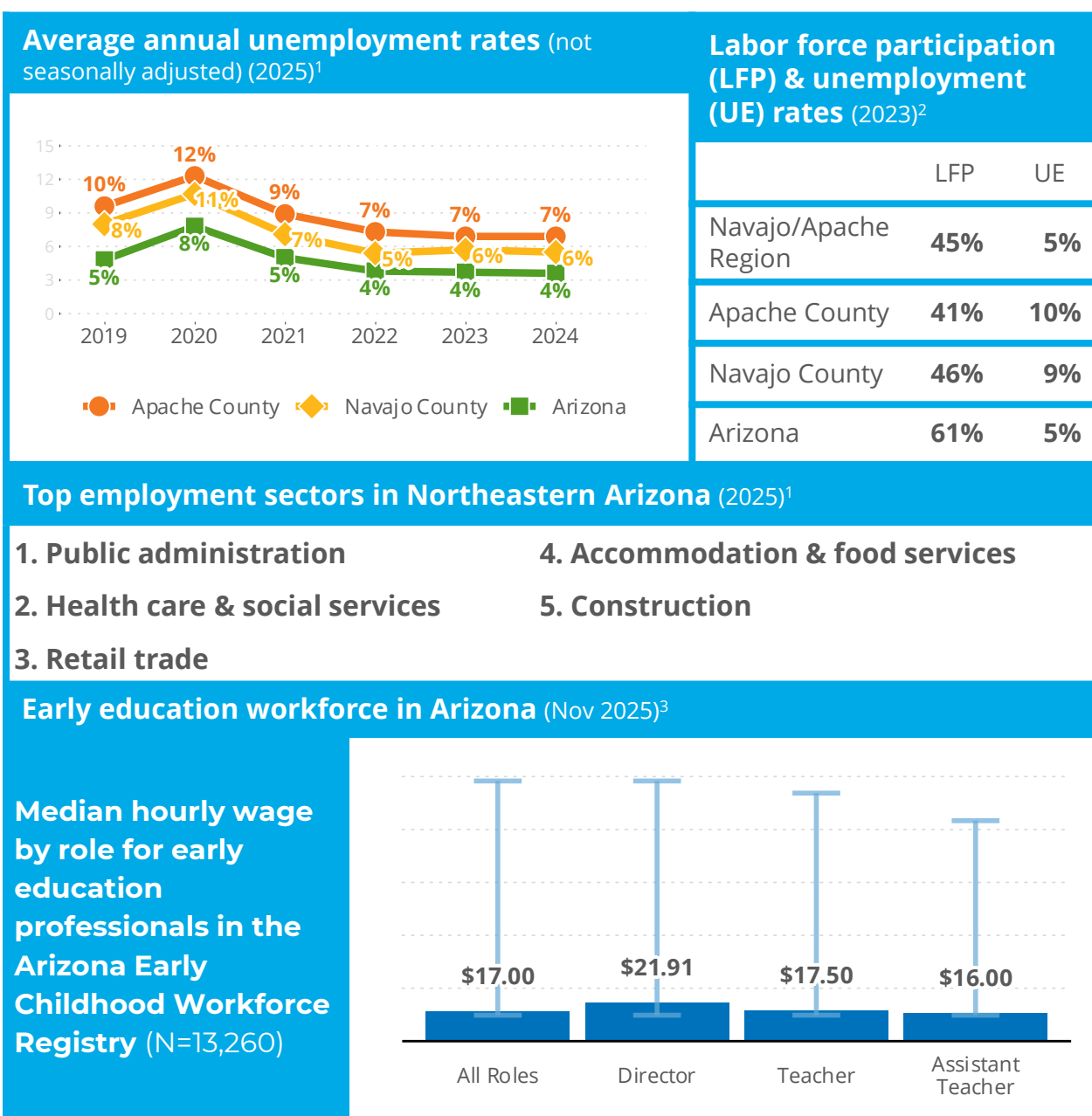
Quality early care and education programs rely on a strong workforce, but factors like low pay make it difficult to recruit and retain these educators. Early care and education is also a field with notable pay disparities;^r with those working as a home care provider, in a Head Start program or a public pre-K program getting paid varying amounts despite performing similar work. For example, the average kindergarten teacher's salary in Arizona is about twice that of an early educator for children birth to age 5.¹⁰³ In Arizona, there were **13,260** early education professionals active in the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry^s in November 2025. The median wage for registered early education professionals in the state was **\$17/hour**, ranging from **\$21.91/hour** for directors to **\$16/hour** for assistant teachers. All median wages fell below the 2025 self-sufficiency standards for one adult and one infant in Apache (**\$24.46/hour**) and Navajo (**\$26.09/hour**) counties.¹⁰⁴

^r Programs such as Head Start and public pre-K programs receive federal funding supports that often allow for better wages and compensation in these settings compared to child care settings that don't receive these funds.

^s The Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry is Arizona's online hub for early childhood educators to track their employment, formal education, and professional development opportunities throughout their career. Early childhood educators access the registry to explore a directory of training, conferences, and other learning opportunities to support career development; fulfill state regulatory training requirements; apply for scholarships to pursue credentials, certificates, and degrees in early childhood education; and to establish career and professional development goals.

Figure 13.

Adult employment



¹ Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity. (2025). [Local Area Unemployment Statistics & Industry Employment datasets].

² U.S. Census Bureau. (2024). 2023 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, 2019-2023.

³ First Things First. (2025). [Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry dataset].

Notes: The "labor force" is all persons who are working (employed) or looking for work (unemployed). The "labor force participation rate" is the fraction of the population who are in the labor force, whether employed or unemployed. Persons not in the labor force are mostly students, stay-at-home parents, retirees, and institutionalized people. The "unemployment rate" is the fraction of the civilian labor force who are unemployed. Employment sector data for Northeastern Arizona includes Gila, Navajo & Apache counties. Educator wage data from the Early Childhood Workforce Registry reflect wages from a sample of early educators active in the registry including teachers (n=6,054), assistant teachers (n=5,535), and directors (n=1,671).

CHILD DEVELOPMENT & HEALTH

Maternal and infant health

Access to quality health care can promote positive health outcomes for mothers and infants.¹⁰⁵ Prenatal care is associated with reduced complications during pregnancy and birth, while also providing expectant parents with an opportunity to engage with health professionals.^{106, 107} The rate of timely prenatal care (care initiated in the first trimester) in the Navajo/Apache Region rose steadily from 2019 (**69.9%**) to 2022 (**77.3%**), but declined in 2023 (**71.6%**). Rates of births to mothers receiving timely prenatal care in the region were consistently higher than those across the state (**68.8% - 71.7%**). The proportion of births to mothers receiving no prenatal care in the region remained at **2.4%** or less during this same time, declining to **1.8%** in 2023, while births to mothers in the region with some prenatal care (i.e., one to four prenatal visits) varied between **3%** and **6%** in recent years.

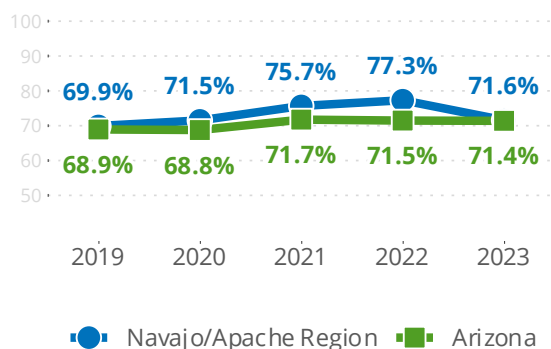
Outside of access to adequate prenatal care, other risk factors like low birth weight, preterm birth and the mother's age at birth can impact child health outcomes.^{108, 109} Low birth weight births (weighing less than 5 pounds and 8 ounces or 2,500 grams) and preterm births (those delivered before 37 weeks of pregnancy) can result in cognitive, respiratory, diabetes and gastrointestinal issues and are one of the largest drivers of infant mortality in the U.S.¹¹⁰ The Navajo/Apache Region had a slightly larger proportion of low-birth-weight births than Arizona between 2020 and 2023. The proportion of low-birth-weight births in the region also increased during this time, from **7.1%** in 2019 to **9.2%** in 2023. Positively, from 2020 to 2022, there was a decrease in preterm births in the region (**11%** to **7%**), although preterm births rose again to **9.2%** in 2023. In 2019, 2022 and 2023, the Navajo/Apache Region met the Healthy People 2030 target for preterm births (no more than **9.4%**). Conversely, Arizona failed to meet the target since 2020, with **9.9%** of births in the state being preterm in 2023.

Teenage parents often experience increased stress and hardship in comparison to adult parents and other non-parent teenagers. They are less likely to complete high school or college and more likely to maintain a lower socioeconomic status and require public assistance to make ends meet.^{111, 112, 113, 114, 115} Just over **6%** of births in the Navajo/Apache Region were to teenaged mothers (ages 19 and younger) between 2019 and 2023, with the region consistently having a slightly higher rate of births to teenage mothers than statewide trends, which remained between **4.5%** and **5.5%**.

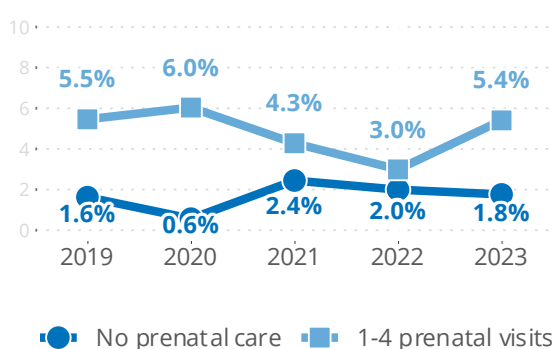
Figure 14.

Maternal and infant health

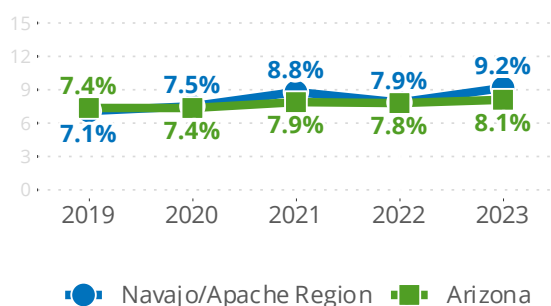
Births to mothers who began prenatal care in the first trimester¹



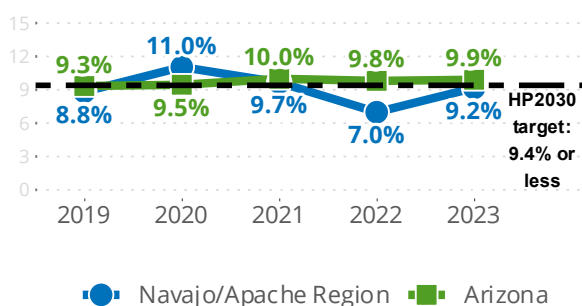
Births to mothers with inadequate prenatal care¹



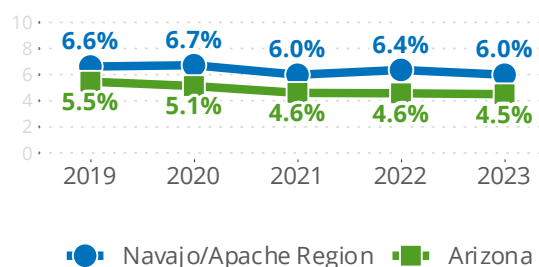
Low birth weight births (less than 2,500 grams)¹



Preterm births (less than 37 weeks gestation)^{1,2}



Births to teenaged mothers¹



¹ Arizona Department of Health Services. (2025). [Vital Statistic dataset].

² Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2025). [Healthy People 2030 Objectives: MICH-02, MICH-07].

Access to care and service navigation

Health insurance coverage is an important indicator of whether families can access, afford and utilize medical care, including access to well-child visits and developmental screenings at a lower cost. According to 2023 American Community Survey (ACS) estimates, **90%** of young children birth to age 5 in the Navajo/Apache Region had health insurance, a lower proportion than the **93%** of young children insured statewide.¹¹⁶ Between 2019 and 2022, the number of young children birth to age 5 in the region enrolled in the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS; Arizona's Medicaid program) steadily increased, reaching a high of **3,551** young children in 2022. Enrollment declined each year after 2022, following statewide trends and likely influenced by the post-pandemic requirement that all members enrolled in AHCCCS reverify their enrollment starting in April 2023.¹¹⁷

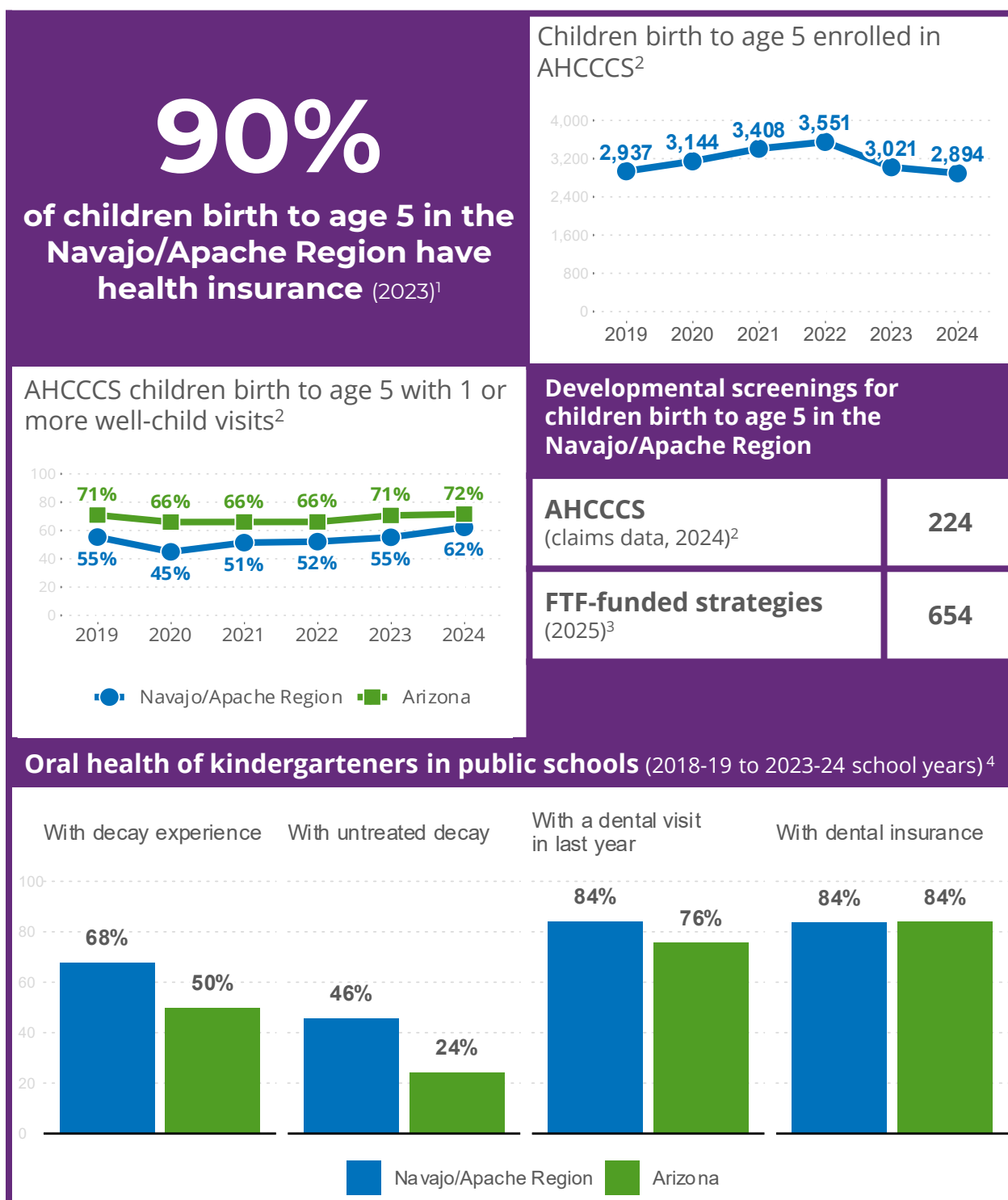
Well-child visits provide scheduled opportunities for pediatricians to monitor growth and development, administer immunizations, observe familial dynamics and provide guidance to caregivers on essential topics and emerging milestones.^{118, 119, 120} Between 2019 and 2024, between **45%** and **62%** of children birth to age 5 enrolled in AHCCCS in the Navajo/Apache Region had one or more well-child visits, lower than trends among young children statewide (**66% - 72%**).

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that providers ask parents about developmental concerns at all infant and well-child visits and have parents complete a standardized developmental screening at the 9-, 18- and 30-month appointments.¹²¹ Ensuring that children have access to timely and adequate screening and intervention services from birth to age 5 can be key for preparing children for kindergarten. In 2024, **431** developmental screenings for children birth to 5 in the region were covered by AHCCCS. In state fiscal year (SFY) 2025, **654** children birth to age 5 in the Navajo/Apache Region received a developmental screening funded by the First Things First Well Child and Family Care strategy. Based on the 2020 Census, this would represent almost one-quarter (**23%**) of children birth to age 5 in the region.

Oral health is a fundamental component of overall health, well-being and self-confidence. Children with dental pain and lower oral health-related quality of life have more school absences and worse academic performance.^{122, 123, 124} In the Navajo/Apache Region, more than two-thirds (**68%**) of kindergarteners in public schools experienced some type of tooth decay and nearly half (**46%**) of children had untreated decay during the 2018-19 through 2023-24 school years, surpassing the state's rates for decay experience (**50%**) and untreated decay (**24%**). While the prevalence of decay was concerning, the Navajo/Apache Region had a larger proportion of children who had a dental visit in the last year (**84%**) than the state (**76%**) and comparable rates of dental insurance (both **84%**), demonstrating that most children in the region had access to dental care and thus an increased opportunity for preventative care and treatment.

Figure 15.

Access to care and service navigation



¹ U.S. Census Bureau. (2024). 2023 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, 2019-2023.

² ASU CHiR. (2025). [AHCCCS claims dataset].

³ First Things First. (2025). [Home Visitation & Screenings Reach datasets].

⁴ First Things First. (2025). [Healthy Smile Healthy Bodies survey dataset].

Note: AHCCCS data reflect children birth to age 5 with approved insurance claims– these data may not reflect all care provided in the region. Developmental screenings were provided through the FTF-funded Well Child and Family Care strategy. Overall, 505 children received developmental, socio-emotional, hearing and vision screenings in the region

Immunization and child mortality

Immunization serves as the best method to prevent communicable childhood diseases in children and their communities. When enough children are immunized, the protection even extends to those who are unable or who choose not to be vaccinated.¹²⁵ In Arizona, one of the required immunizations to enroll in preschool and kindergarten is measles, mumps and rubella (MMR).¹²⁶ Both the Navajo/Apache Region and Arizona had declining MMR immunization rates in kindergarteners between the 2022-23 and 2024-25 school years. The region's MMR vaccine coverage for kindergarteners was strikingly lower than the state during this time. Arizona's coverage declined slightly from **89.9%** (2022-23) to **88.7%** (2024-25), while the region's coverage fell from **69.7%** (2022-23) to **60.9%** (2024-25). This means that around one-third of kindergarteners in the region were not fully immunized against MMR in recent years. It also means MMR coverage in the region was well below the threshold for herd immunity of **95%**, and neither the region nor the state met the Healthy People 2030 target of **95%** or higher.¹²⁷ This is especially concerning as Arizona has been experiencing an active measles outbreak, and Navajo County had **4** reported cases of measles as of June 4, 2026.^t

Children may be exempted from vaccination based on medical restrictions, religious beliefs or personal beliefs. Medical exemptions can apply to students of all ages, while religious belief exemptions apply to students in early care and education programs and personal belief exemptions apply to K-12 students.¹²⁸ Exemptions among kindergarteners in the Navajo/Apache Region were consistently higher than exemptions among children in child care, with almost one in six (**16%**) kindergarteners in the region receiving a personal belief exemption in the 2024-25 school year, compared to the **7.5%** of children in child care who received a religious exemption that same year. For both children in child care and kindergarteners in the region, exemptions from all vaccines showed a steadily increasing trend from the 2021-22 to 2023-24 school years, with **7.6%** of children in child care and **11.3%** of children in kindergarten exempt from all immunizations in the 2023-24 school year. Positively, exemption rates declined across both groups into the 2024-25 school year, with exemptions from all immunizations declining to **6.7%** for children in child care and **7%** in kindergarten. These were still higher rates compared to children in child care (**4.8%**) and kindergarteners statewide (**4.7%**).¹²⁹

Healthy People 2030 set a target of no more than **5.0** infant deaths per 1,000 live births, which the Navajo/Apache Region did not meet, along with the counties and state. Between 2021 and 2023, the infant mortality rate for the region was **5.7** deaths per 1,000 live births, the same as the statewide rate (**5.7**). Apache and Navajo counties' rates were higher, at **5.8** and **7.9**, respectively.

^t For more up-to-date case counts see <https://www.azdhs.gov/preparedness/epidemiology-disease-control/measles/index.php>

Between 2021 and 2023, young child mortality was more than twice as high in Apache County (67.9 deaths per 100,000 children ages 1-4) and Navajo County (65.2) compared to the state (29.8). It is important to note that both Apache and Navajo counties have relatively small populations of young children (4,765 and 7,932 children birth to age 5 according to the 2020 Census), so these larger mortality rates, in reality, equate to a very small number of child deaths. However, these data do suggest that young children in Apache and Navajo counties face much higher risks of death than children statewide.

Young children with special needs

Timely connection with early intervention services—such as speech, physical, occupational and behavioral therapy— can critically shape school readiness and the developmental trajectory of young children with medical conditions, developmental delays and even certain risk factors for delays.¹³⁰ In Arizona, the Department of Economic Security's (DES) Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP), the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), and the Arizona Department of Education's (ADE) Early Childhood Special Education Program each play a role in providing services to families with children who have special needs.

AzEIP^u provides early intervention and a variety of supportive services to families of children birth to age 2 with developmental delays or disabilities.¹³¹ In state fiscal year (SFY) 2024, children birth to age 2 in the Navajo/Apache Region were most frequently referred to AzEIP by physicians (52%). Parents and families were the second most common referral source, with nearly one in five referrals (19%), followed by the Department of Child Safety (DCS, 17%). More than half (59%) of young children referred to AzEIP in the Navajo/Apache Region were found eligible for services, including 57% who received services and 2% found eligible without beginning services within the fiscal year. This is notably higher than the 38% of children statewide found eligible for AzEIP services.¹³² Twenty percent of referred children were assessed as not eligible for services (14%) or screened out (6%). In an additional 20% of referrals, families were either not interested in services (12%) or not able to be reached (8%).

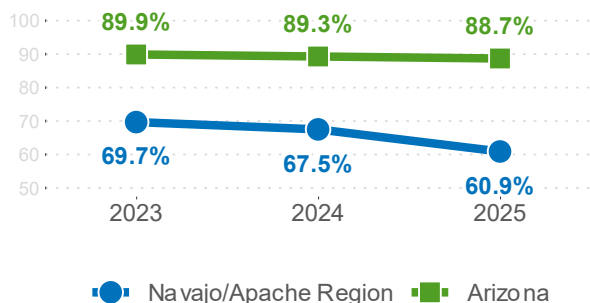
In SFY 2023 and SFY 2024, the number of children birth to age 2 who received services from AzEIP in the region was higher than the previous five years, reaching a seven-year high of 62 children birth to age 2 in SFY 2024. The 62 children served by AzEIP in SFY 2024 represent 2.8% of children birth to age 2 residing in the region per the 2020 Census. This is higher than the 2.5% of children receiving AzEIP services statewide but lower than the proportion of young children accessing early

^u For more information on AzEIP (which is a division of the Department of Economic Security), visit <https://www.azdes.gov/azeip/>

Figure 16.

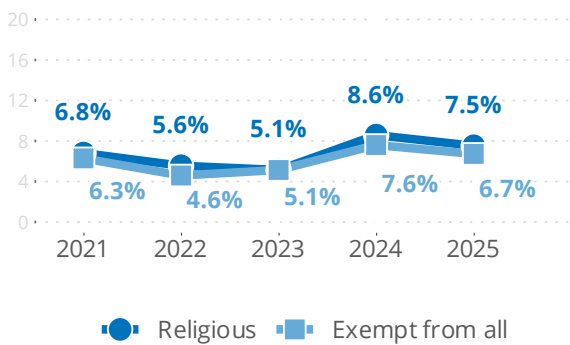
Immunization and child mortality

Kindergarten MMR immunization rates¹

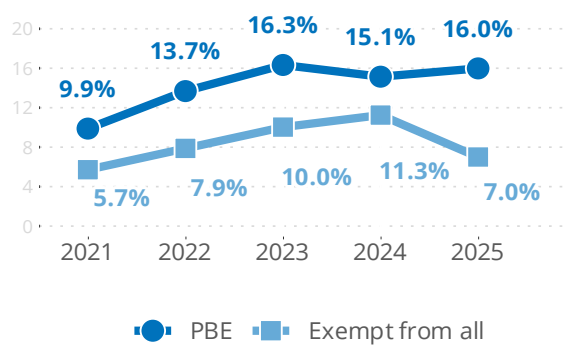


Immunization exemption rates¹

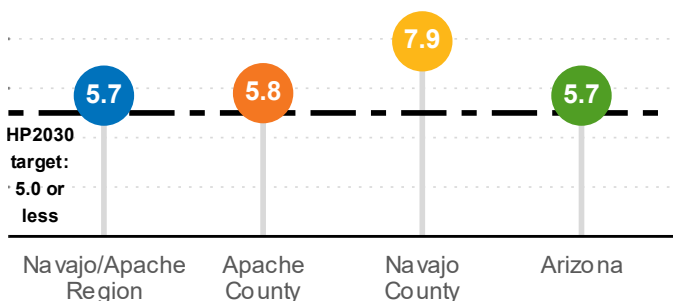
Child care



Kindergarten



Infant mortality rate, deaths per 1,000 live births (2021-2023 combined)^{2,3}



Young child mortality rate, deaths per 100,000 children ages 1-4 (2021-2023 combined)²

Apache County	67.9
Navajo County	65.2
Arizona	29.8

¹ Arizona Department of Health Services. (2025). [Child Care & Kindergarten Immunizations datasets].

² Arizona Department of Health Services. (2025). [Vital Statistic dataset].

³ Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2025). [Healthy People 2030 Objectives: MICH-02, MICH-07].

Note: PBE in the kindergarten exemption figure stands for personal belief exemption.

intervention nationally (**4.3%**).¹³³ However, national research suggests that many more young children would likely benefit from early intervention than are receiving it.¹³⁴

Children who receive a diagnosis of autism, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, cognitive or intellectual disability or down syndrome may also become eligible for services through DDD.^v The number of children birth to age 5 in the Navajo/Apache Region receiving DDD services decreased sharply from a high of **40** young children in SFY 2018 to a low of **14** young children in SFY 2020; service numbers largely increased after that, to **23** young children served by DDD in SFY 2024. Qualifying children may receive services from AzEIP and/or DDD, a number which can be used to estimate the total number of young children receiving early intervention services in a region. A total of **82** children birth to age 5 in the region received services from AzEIP and/or DDD in SFY 2024. This equates to **1.7%** of all children birth to 5 in the Navajo/Apache Region based on estimates from the 2020 Census.

Preschool to 3rd grade students with special needs

As a child with special needs approaches age 3, they can be transferred from AzEIP to the Early Childhood Special Education Program to receive services through their local education agency (LEA).^w In the Navajo/Apache Region, the number of children aged 3 to 5 receiving special education services through their LEA decreased from a recent high of **113** in state fiscal year (SFY) 2018 to a low of **77** in SFY 2021, later increasing to **93** in SFY 2022, representing an **18%** decrease between SFY 2018 and 2022. Across Arizona, the number decreased from a recent high of **10,521** in SFY 2020 to **8,086** in SFY 2022, representing a **23%** decrease over those years.

While the number of K-3rd grade students enrolled in special education across the state showed an overall increase from SFY 2018 (n = **36,468**) to SFY 2022 (n = **37,334**), the region experienced an overall decline during the same period, from **503** children in SFY 2018 to **434** in SFY 2022. Even with this decrease, these numbers remained higher than the early intervention participation would suggest, which may reflect the number of children not getting an adequate assessment of their needs and abilities until they enter the public school system.

Of children ages 3 to 5 receiving special needs services, the vast majority were diagnosed with a developmental delay (DD, **46%**) or speech language impairment (SLI, **44%**) with the remaining **10%**

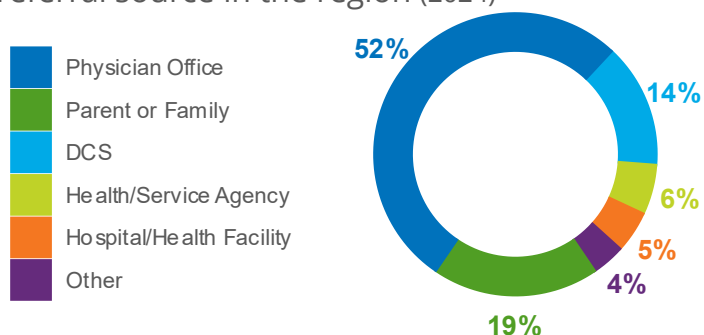
^v For more information on DDD (which is a division of the Department of Economic Security), visit <https://des.az.gov/services/disabilities/developmental-disabilities>

^w For more information on ADE's Early Childhood Special Education program, visit <https://www.azed.gov/specialeducation/early-childhood-special-education> and <https://www.azed.gov/specialeducation/early-childhood-special-education-child-find>

Figure 17.

Young children with special needs

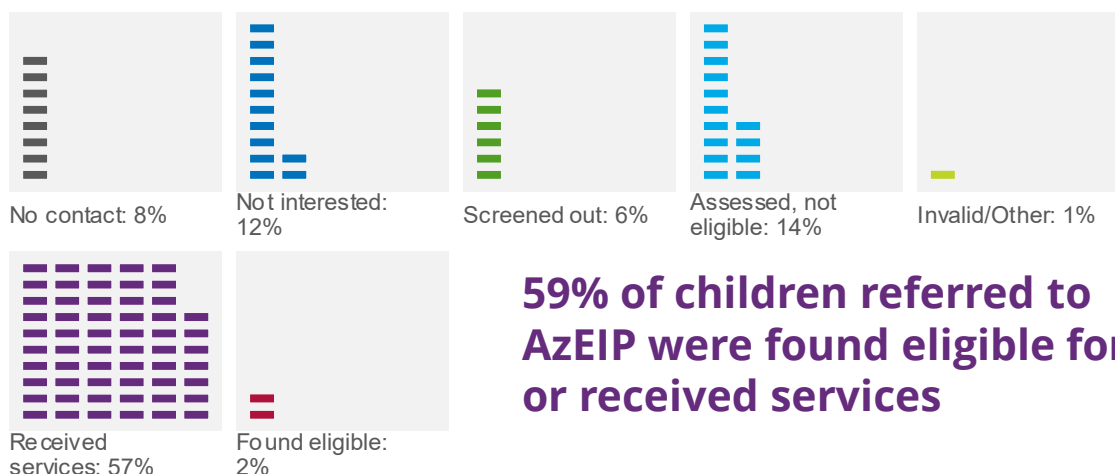
Children birth to age 2 referred to AzEIP by referral source in the region (2024)¹



82

children birth to age 5 were served by AzEIP and/or DDD in the Navajo/Apache Region (2024)¹

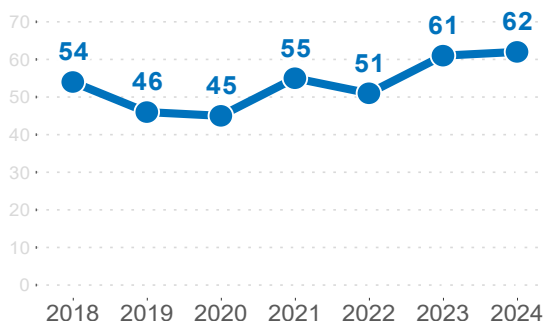
AzEIP referral outcomes for children birth to age 2 in the region (2024)¹



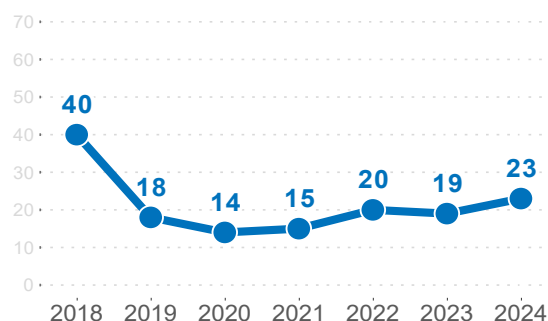
59% of children referred to AzEIP were found eligible for or received services

Young children receiving early intervention services in the region¹

AzEIP (birth to age 2)



DDD (birth to age 5)



¹ Arizona Department of Economic Security. (2024). [Arizona Early Intervention Program & Division of Developmental Disabilities datasets].

Note: Data on young children receiving services reflect the Oct 1 snapshot of AzEIP services, not a cumulative total throughout the year.

having a diagnosis of preschool severe delay (PSD).^x Speech language impairment was the most common diagnosis among kindergarten through 3rd grade students in special education (36%), followed by developmental delay (25%), specific learning disability (SLD, 20%), another diagnosis^y (13%) or autism (7%).

^x In Arizona, preschool severe delay is defined as performance on a norm-referenced assessment that is more than three standard deviations below the mean for typically developing children in the areas of cognitive, physical, communication, social-emotional or adaptive development.

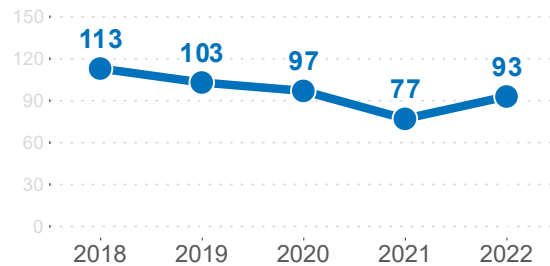
^y The most common disabilities in the “Other” category are other health impairments (these are usually chronic health conditions that affect a child’s ability to attend or participate in school), intellectual disabilities, emotional disturbance, hearing or vision impairment, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairments and deaf-blindness.

Figure 18.

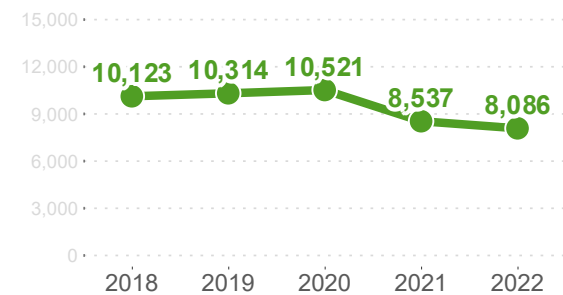
Preschool to 3rd grade students with special needs

Children age 3-5 receiving special education services from local school districts¹

Navajo/Apache Region

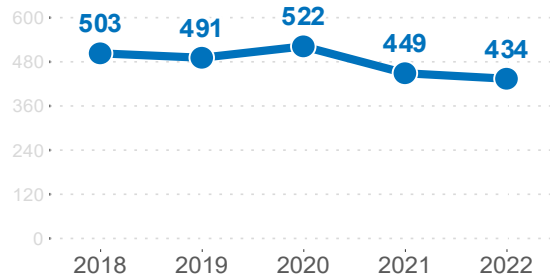


Arizona

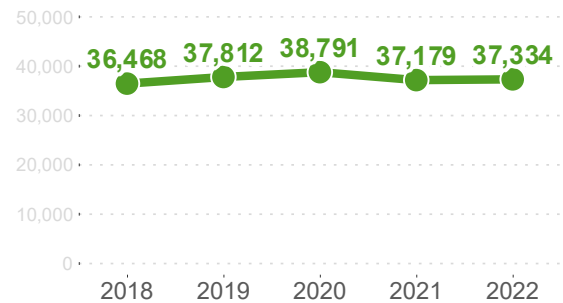


K-3rd grade students enrolled in special education in public and charter schools¹

Navajo/Apache Region

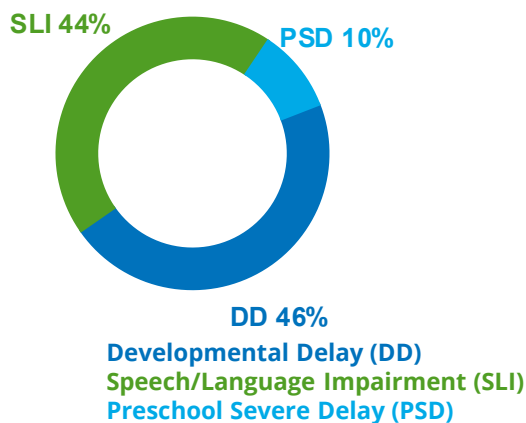


Arizona

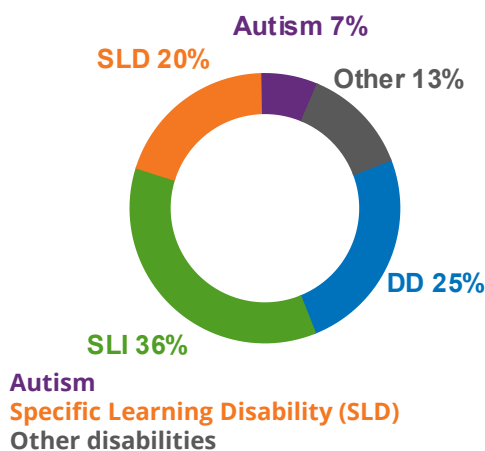


Primary disability for children receiving services in the region (2022)¹

Children ages 3-5



K-3rd grade students



¹ Arizona Department of Education. (2023). [Exceptional Student Services dataset].

Note: Most common disabilities in the "Other" category are other health impairments (these are usually chronic health conditions that affect a child's ability to attend or participate in school), intellectual disabilities, emotional disturbance, hearing or vision impairment, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairments, and deaf-blindness.

MAPS & METHODS

Methods

U.S. Census and American Community Survey Data. The U.S. Census^z is an enumeration of the population of the United States conducted every ten years, and includes information about housing, race, and ethnicity. The 2020 U.S. Census data are available by census block. There are about 108,000 inhabited blocks in Arizona, each with an average population of 66 people. The 2020 U.S. Census data for the region presented in this report were calculated by identifying each block in the region and aggregating the data across all of those blocks. With the implementation of new privacy measures by the U.S. Census, some data previously available at the block level, such as grandchildren living in a grandparent's households or counts of households with children birth to age 5, are now only published at the block group or tract level. Regional estimates for these indicators were calculated by aggregating data over the census tracts which are wholly or partially contained within the region. Data from partial census tracts were apportioned according to the percentage of the 2020 U.S. Census population in that tract living inside the region.

The American Community Survey (ACS)^{aa} is a survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau each month by mail, telephone and face-to-face interviews. It covers many different topics, including income, language, education, employment and housing. ACS data are available by census tract. Arizona is divided into approximately 1,750 census tracts, each with an average population of 3,900 people. ACS data for the region were calculated by aggregating over the census tracts which are wholly or partially contained in the region. The data from partial census tracts were apportioned according to the percentage of the 2020 U.S. Census population in that tract living inside the region. The most recent and most reliable ACS data are averaged over the past five years; those are the data included in this report. They are based on surveys conducted from 2019 to 2023. In general, the reliability of ACS estimates is greater for more populated areas. Statewide estimates, for example, are more reliable than county-level estimates.

Child care capacity calculations. Lists of child care providers are maintained by multiple state agencies in Arizona, including the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS), which licenses child care centers; the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES), which maintains the list of child care providers in Arizona who are active within the National Data System of Child Care NACCRRAware database; the Arizona Department of Education (ADE), which tracks preschool enrollment in public and charter schools; and First Things First (FTF), which administers the Quality First program. The ADHS child care licensing database was used as the primary source for child

^z For more information, see <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census.html>

^{aa} For more information, see <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs.html>

care capacity calculations in this report, as analyses of both statewide and region-level data showed that most child care slots for regulated providers in the region are provided by centers. Centers that only serve children ages 5-12 were removed from child care capacity calculations, as these are typically before- & after-school programs that only serve school-age children. This report also used data from the DES child care provider list to estimate the number of registered care providers and their capacity by type of provider: centers (including Head Start centers), schools and homes (both group home and family home providers). For all tables, providers were geocoded to regions and sub-regions using addresses or coordinates provided in the state agency datasets to assign them to regions and sub-regions. Comparisons of child care capacity to the young child population are meant to provide a relative assessment of the abundance or scarcity of child care supply relative to potential demand. The child care data in this report do not reflect the capacity of unlicensed, unregulated or informal child care providers in the region. The estimated supply may also over-estimate availability in regulated care as it did not account for child care providers that operate under licensed capacity by choice or children who enroll in multiple facilities (e.g., a child who attends part-day Head Start or school-based preschool in the morning and a child care center in the afternoon).

First Things First (FTF) strategy data. Data related to FTF-funded strategies were provided for this report by FTF staff. These data included regional estimates of oral health indicators and hearing, vision, socio-emotional and developmental screening reach, zip code-level service data for home visitation programs, statewide workforce registry wage data and provider-level Quality First participation and enrollment data. The vendor used an apportioning file provided by FTF to create regional estimates of home visitation services from the zip-code level file.

Early education and service data from the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES). Data related to child care assistance, Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP) referrals, outcomes and services, and Division of Developmental Disabilities services were provided by DES. These data were geocoded to regions and sub-regions by staff at DES using a custom shapefile provided by the vendor.

Health data from the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS). Data related to births, infant and maternal health, immunization rates at child care and school facilities, infant and child mortality and enrollment and participation in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) were provided by ADHS. All data apart from immunization data were geocoded to regions and sub-regions by staff at ADHS using a custom shapefile provided by the vendor. The vendor geocoded child care and school facilities to regions using addresses or coordinates provided in the immunization datasets to create custom immunization coverage estimates.

Health data from the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS). FTF partnered with the Arizona State University Center for Health Information and Research (CHiR) to create

custom tabulations of health claims data for young children birth to age 5 enrolled in AHCCCS health care plans. These estimates, at the state, county, regional and sub-regional levels, were provided to the vendor for inclusion in this report.

Employment and industry data from the Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO). Data for unemployment rates^{bb} and major employment sectors^{cc} were obtained from the OEO for counties and multi-county areas (which combine 2-4 small counties to produce a more reliable estimate). The top five employment sectors for each county or multi-county area reflect those with the most overall employees in Quarter 4 of 2024. The Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, the underlying data source for these employment estimates, does not capture farm employment, so agricultural workers are not reflected in these data.

Education data from the Arizona Department of Education (ADE). For past FTF Regional Needs and Assets reports, regional estimates for education data were obtained through a custom tabulation of unredacted data files provided by ADE. Access to unredacted data files was not available for this report. Instead, publicly-available data files published by ADE^{dd} were used to examine trends in enrollment, assessment results, graduation and dropout rates, and data on chronic absenteeism were obtained via the Maricopa Association of Governments and ReadOn Arizona MAPLit data tool.^{ee} Due to the frequency of data suppression in these files to protect student privacy, data could not be reliably aggregated across schools or districts to create regional estimates. Data on services for students with disabilities by grade are not publicly available for geographies smaller than the state, so custom regional estimates from the 2024 Regional Needs and Assets reports were used in this report.

Change calculations. Unless otherwise specified, changes in counts of data over time (i.e., percent increase or decrease) are calculated by subtracting the earlier number (e.g., a 2010 count) from the later number (e.g. the 2020 count) and dividing the result by the earlier number (e.g. the 2010 count). This calculation provides the percent change between the most recent count and the prior count, relative to the prior count.

Data availability. State agency data in this report were provided to FTF by agency staff through a data request process initiated in February 2025 and extending to March 2026. Wherever possible, data were requested for multiple years to allow for the visualization of trends as well as for the most recent year available. However, due to both the constraints of agency staff and agency-maintained datasets as well as the timing of requests, not all data were available on the same time

^{bb} For more information, see <https://o eo.az.gov/labor-market/unemployment>

^{cc} For more information, see <https://o eo.az.gov/labor-market/industry-employment>

^{dd} For more information, see <https://www.azed.gov/accountability-research/data>

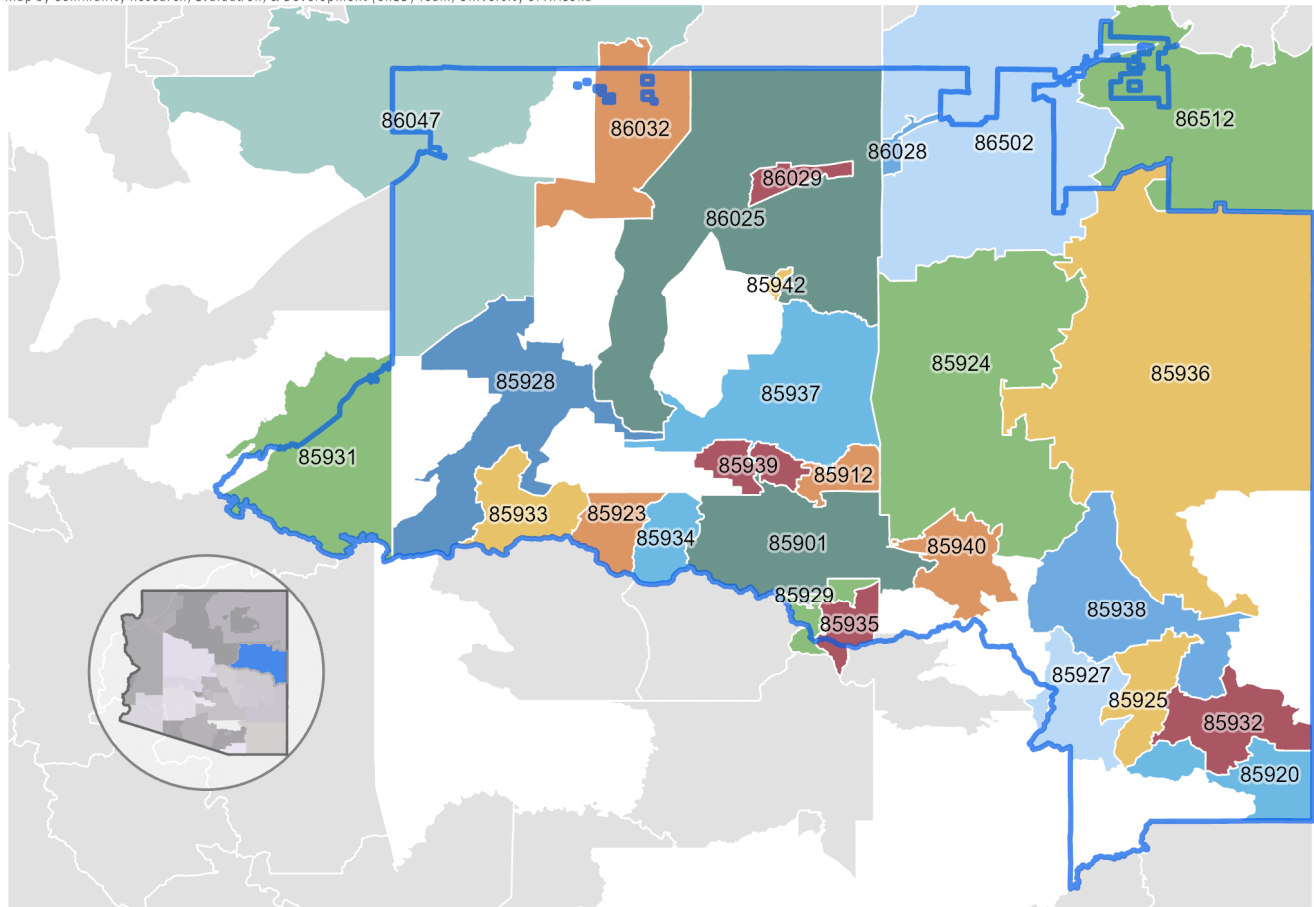
^{ee} For more information, see <https://geo.azmag.gov/maps/readonaz/>

and geographic scales. This report attempts to include the most recent and complete data available, with notes indicating where data were not available for particular time periods or geographies.

Data suppression. To protect the confidentiality of program participants, the FTF Data Dissemination and Suppression Guidelines preclude reporting of social service and early education programming data if the count is less than 10 and data related to health or developmental delay if the count is less than 6. In addition, some data received from state agencies are suppressed according to their own guidelines. ADHS does not report counts between 1 and 5; DES does not report counts between 1 and 9; ADE does not report counts less than 11. Additionally, ADE requires suppression of the second-smallest value or the denominator in tables where a reader might be able to use the numbers provided to calculate a suppressed value. Throughout this report, information which is not available because of suppression guidelines is indicated by entries of "<6" or "<10" or "<11" for counts, or "DS" (data suppressed) for percentages. Data are sometimes not available for particular regions, either because a program did not operate in the region or because data are only available at the county level. Cases where data are not available will be indicated by an entry of "N/A", "NA" or a note that states "data not available."

Map of Zip Codes in the Region

Map by Community Research, Evaluation, & Development (CRED) Team, University of Arizona



Source: Custom map by the Community Research, Evaluation, & Development (CRED) Team using shapefiles obtained from First Things First and the U.S. Census Bureau TIGER/Line Shapefiles (<https://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/geo/shapefiles/index.php>)

Zip Code Tabulation Areas (ZCTAs) in the Navajo/Apache Region

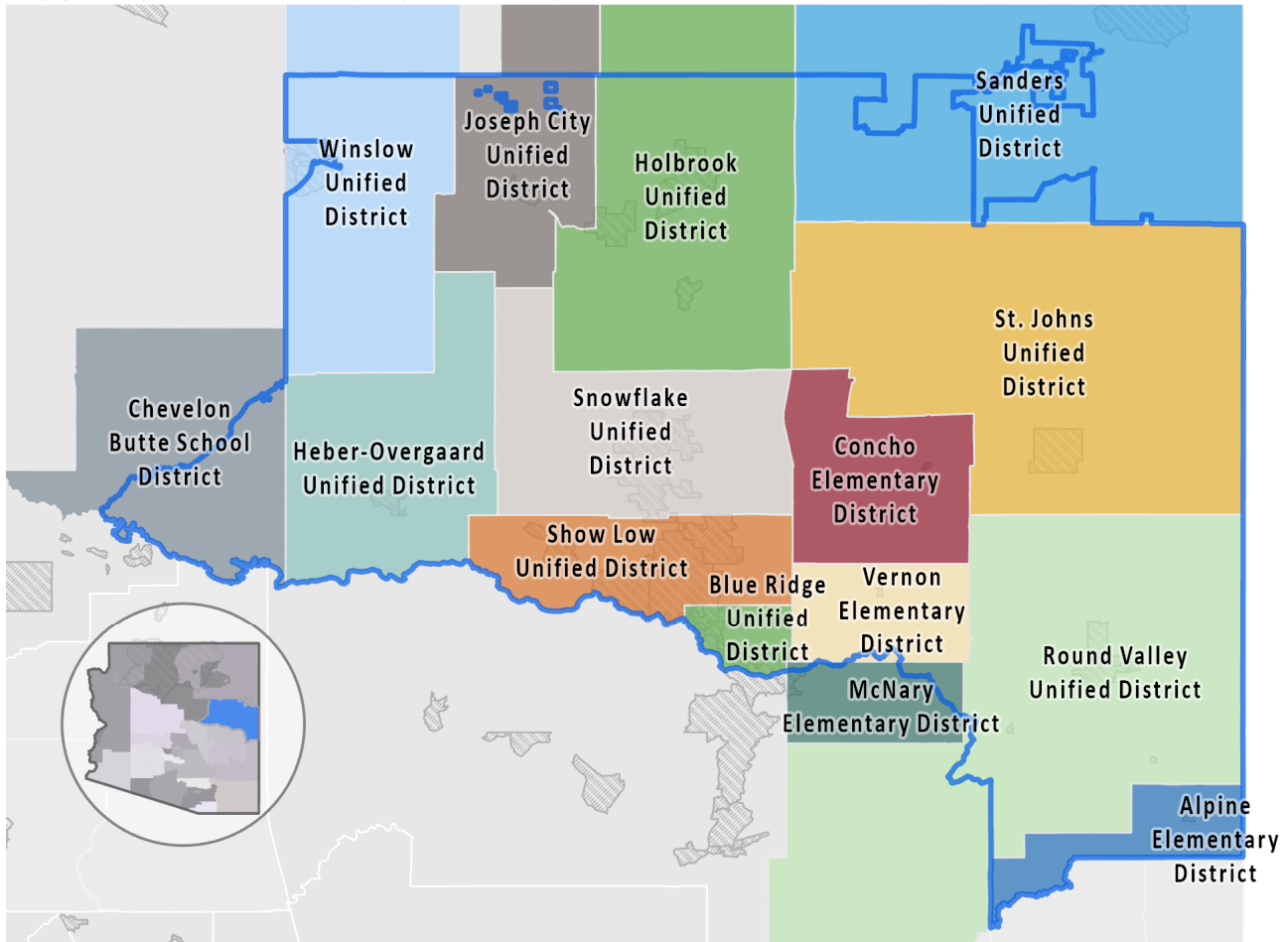
Zip Code Tabulation Area (ZCTA)	Population (all ages)	Percent of this ZCTA's total population living in the Navajo/Apache Region	This ZCTA is shared with
Navajo/Apache Region	73,563		
85901	18,701	100%	
85912	269	100%	
85920	677	100%	
85923	499	100%	
85924	2,851	100%	
85925	4,332	100%	
85927	172	98%	White Mountain Apache Tribe Region
85928	752	100%	
85929	8,031	100%	White Mountain Apache Tribe Region
85931	164	92%	Coconino Region
85932	481	100%	
85933	3,639	100%	
85934	601	100%	
85935	3,686	93%	White Mountain Apache Tribe Region
85936	4,217	100%	
85937	8,434	100%	
85938	2,100	100%	
85939	4,213	100%	
85940	1,580	100%	
85942	64	100%	
86025	5,358	100%	
86028	34	100%	
86029	178	100%	
86032	1,367	97%	Navajo Nation Region
86047	699	5%	Coconino Region, Navajo Nation Region
86502	56	5%	Navajo Nation Region
86512	345	16%	Navajo Nation Region

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2020). 2020 Decennial Census, Demographic and Housing Characteristics, Table P1

Note: With the implementation of differential privacy in the 2020 Census, small area estimates now have injected 'noise' (error) to prevent accidental disclosure of Census responses. Geographies that are not primary census geographies, like ZCTAs, have noisier (or less accurate) estimates than primary geographies, like tracts. ZCTA 85930 overlaps the Navajo/Apache Region, but the portions of the ZCTA in the region is unpopulated.

Map of School Districts in the Region

Map by Community Research, Evaluation, & Development (CRED) Team, University of Arizona



Source: Custom map by the Community Research, Evaluation, & Development (CRED) Team using shapefiles obtained from First Things First and the U.S. Census Bureau TIGER/Line Shapefiles (<https://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/geo/shapefiles/index.php>)

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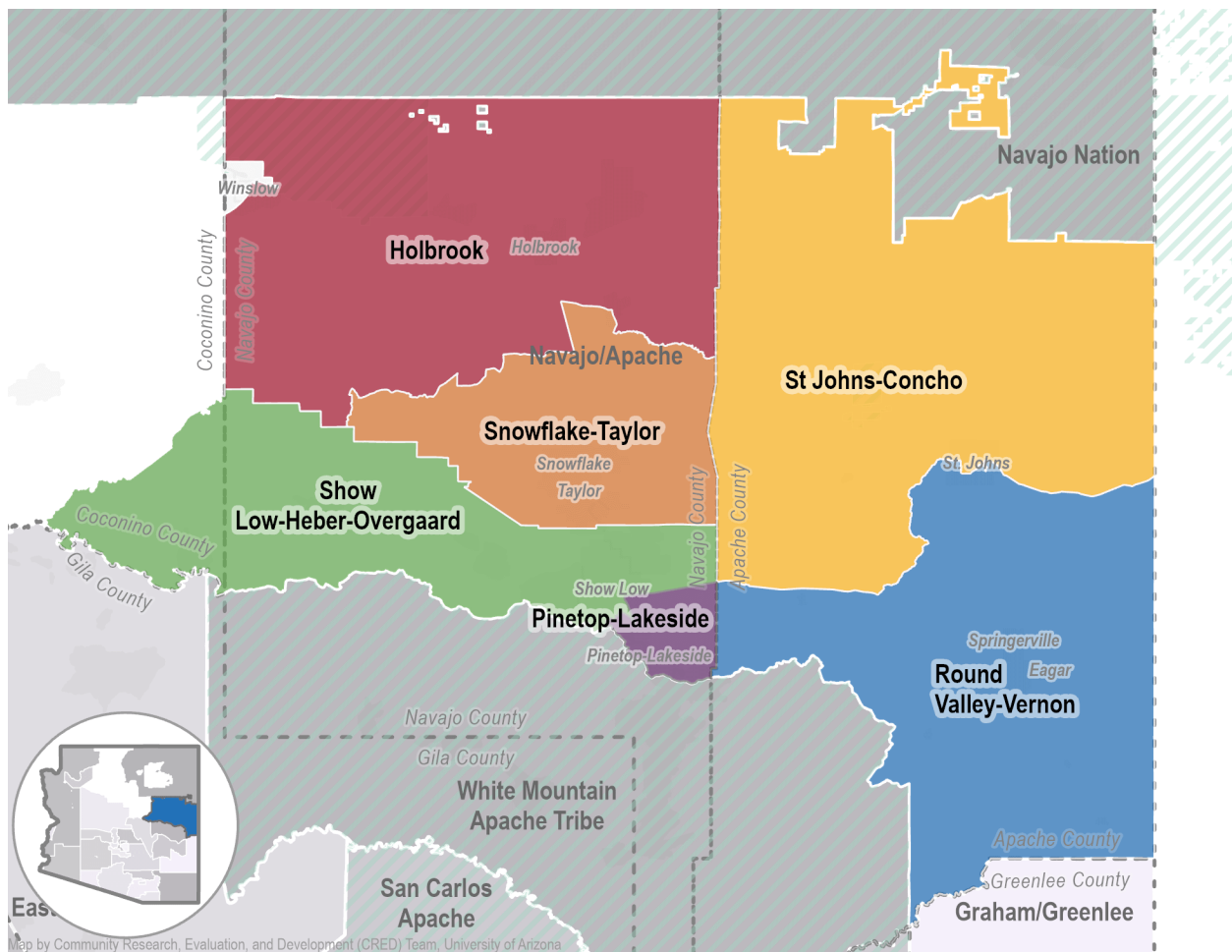
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SUB-REGIONAL FACTSHEETS

Communities vary in terms of needs and assets, even within the same First Things First (FTF) Region. In recognition of this, the following factsheets present a selection of indicators from this Regional Needs and Assets report at the sub-regional level. Examining differences within the region can help Regional Partnership Councils and local stakeholders focus their strategies and efforts to use resources effectively.

Sub-regions in the Navajo/Apache Region



The factsheets that follow provide information about six sub-regions within the Navajo/Apache Region.

The **Holbrook** sub-region is defined as five census tracts (9601, 9602, & the portions of 9604, 9605 & 9606 that are within the Navajo/Apache Region). It contains the city of Holbrook and the Census Designated Places (CDPs) of Winslow West, Joseph City, Sun Valley and Woodruff. The city of Winslow falls within the Coconino Region.

The **Pinetop-Lakeside** sub-region is defined as six census tracts and four block groups (9613, 9625.01-9625.02, 9649.01-9649.02, 9653.01, 9617.01 block group 3 & 9617.02 block groups 1, 2 & 4). It contains the town of Pinetop-Lakeside and the CDPs of Wagon Wheel, Lake of the Woods and Pinetop Country Club.

The **Round Valley-Vernon** sub-region is defined as two census tracts and one block group (9705.01, 9703 block group 1 and the portion of 9705.02 that is within the Navajo/Apache Region). It contains the towns of Springerville and Eagar as well as the CDPs of Vernon, Greer, Nutrioso and Alpine and all of the southernmost part of Apache County except the lands of the White Mountain Apache Tribe.

The **Show Low-Heber-Overgaard** sub-region is defined as nine census tracts and three block groups (9637, 9642.01-9642.02, 9648.01-9648.02, 9652.01-9652.02, 9653.02, 9617.01 block group 1, 9617.02 block groups 2-3 & the portion of Coconino County tract 15 that is within the Navajo/Apache Region). It contains the city of Show Low and the CDPs of Forest Lakes, Heber-Overgaard, Clay Springs, Pinedale, Linden and White Mountain Lake.

The **Snowflake-Taylor** sub-region is defined as three census tracts (9633, 9634 & 9638) and contains the towns of Snowflake and Taylor and the CDP of Shumway.

The **St Johns-Concho** sub-region is defined as three census tracts and two block groups (9702.01-9702.02, 9703 block groups 2-3 & the portion of 9451 that is within the Navajo/Apache Region). It contains the city of St. Johns and the CDP of Concho.

A guide to the factsheets

Each factsheet contains data for a selection of indicators at the state, region and sub-regional level. Where possible, two timepoints are shown for each indicator with an arrow to indicate the direction of the trend (increase, decrease, no change) in the sub-region. In some cases, data were not available for a specific sub-region, indicated with **NA**. Additionally, some data were suppressed to protect individual data privacy in accordance with the FTF Data Policy, indicated with **DS**. The data in these factsheets were obtained through custom tabulations of publicly available data from the U.S. Census Bureau and through FTF requests to state agencies, specifically the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS), Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES) and the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) via a partnership with the Arizona State University Center for Health Information & Research (CHiR). More details on how these tabulations and requests were made can be found in the *Maps & Methods Appendix* of this report.

The indicators included in each tabular factsheet are defined as follows:

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Indicator	Description	Source
Total population	Overall population of all ages	2020 U.S. Census
Population of children (0-5)	Population of children birth to age 5	
Population living in poverty	Percent of the overall population living in households with incomes at or below the federal poverty threshold	2014-2018 & 2019-2023 American Community Survey (ACS) estimates
Children (0-5) living in poverty	Percent of children birth to age 5 living in households with incomes at or below the federal poverty threshold	
Low-income children (0-5) (<185% federal poverty level)	Number of children birth to age 5 living in households with incomes at or below 185% of the federal poverty level (the income eligibility threshold for WIC)	
Housing costs 30% or more of household income	Percent of households spending 30% or more of their household income on housing costs (i.e., considered "housing cost-burdened")	
Children (0-5) with all present parents in the labor force	Percent of children birth to age 5 who live in households with all present parents who work or are looking for work (i.e., live with one parent who works or live with two parents, both of whom work)	
Language other than English spoken at home	Percent of households that speak Spanish or another language (other than English or Spanish). The most common languages spoken in the "Another" language category in Arizona are Native North American languages.	
Ratio of children (0-5) to licensed child care slots	Number of children birth to age 5 per available licensed child care slots. An area is considered a child care desert when the ratio of children to slots exceeds 3.0.	2020 U.S. Census; Oct 2023 & Jan 2025 ADHS licensing datasets
Registered care providers in 2025	Number of registered early care and education providers and their licensed capacity to enroll children. Providers are shown by type: centers (including Head Start centers), schools and homes (both group home and family home providers). Please note that capacity numbers are often higher than actual enrollment.	2025 DES child care provider dataset
Children (0-5) receiving child care assistance	Number of children birth to age 5 receiving DES child care assistance (not including those involved in the child welfare system)	2023 & 2024 DES
Educational attainment (ages 25 and older)	Percent of adults with at least a high school education (i.e., a high school diploma, some college, an associate, Bachelor's or advanced degree) or a Bachelor's degree or more (i.e., a Bachelor's or advanced degree)	2014-2018 & 2019-2023 ACS estimates

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Indicator	Description	Source
Unemployment rate for the adult population (ages 16 and older)	Percent of adults who self-reported that they were unemployed	
Total births	Total number of births in the area, based on address provided on the birth certificate	2020-2021 & 2022-2023 ADHS Vital Statistics dataset
Maternal age 19 or younger	Percent of births to mothers age 19 or younger	
Low birth weight (<2500 grams)	Percent of babies born weighing 2,500 grams or less	
Preterm births (<37 weeks)	Percent of babies born at 37 weeks of gestation or earlier. The Healthy People 2030 target is 9.4% or less.	
Prenatal care (5+ prenatal visits)	Percent of births to mothers who had at least five prenatal visits	
Number of children (0-5) with AHCCCS	Number of children birth to age 5 enrolled in an insurance plan through the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS)	2022 & 2024 AHCCCS claims data processed by ASU CHiR
AHCCCS-enrolled children (0-5) with at least 1 primary care provider visit	Percent of children birth to age 5 enrolled in AHCCCS who had a claim for at least one primary care visit	
Children (0-5) receiving AzEIP, DDD or both services	Number of children birth to age 5 who received AzEIP, DDD or both services	SFY 2023 & 2024 DES

Holbrook	Years	Arizona	Navajo/Apache Region	Holbrook	Change over time
Child, Family & Community Characteristics					
Total population ¹	Census 2020	7,151,502	73,563	7,715	
Population of children (0-5) ¹	Census 2020	480,744	4,714	604	
Population living in poverty ^{2,3}	2014-2018	16.1%	17.6%	23.6%	↓
	2019-2023	12.8%	15.0%	20.9%	
Children (0-5) living in poverty ^{2,3}	2014-2018	24.9%	26.3%	37.6%	↓
	2019-2023	17.9%	23.1%	17.6%	
Low-income children (0-5) (<185% federal poverty level) ^{2,3}	2014-2018	47.2%	52.7%	59.4%	↓
	2019-2023	38.1%	48.9%	46.1%	
Housing costs 30% or more of household income ^{2,3}	2014-2018	30.4%	24.9%	22.0%	↓
	2019-2023	29.4%	21.5%	16.0%	
Children (0-5) with all present parents in the labor force ^{2,3}	2014-2018	61.1%	48.0%	62.8%	↓
	2019-2023	64.4%	55.6%	54.8%	
Language other than English spoken at home (2019-2023) ³	Spanish	19.2%	7.0%	12.3%	
	Another	6.4%	4.9%	13.2%	
Early Education					
Ratio of children (0-5) to licensed child care slots ⁵	Oct 2023	2.0	4.8	3.2	↔
	Jan 2025	2.0	4.8	3.2	
Registered care providers in 2025 ⁴					
Centers	Number	2,427	29	4	
	Capacity	260,689	1,265	222	
Schools	Number	714	5	3	
	Capacity	72,967	221	105	
Homes	Number	755	4	1	
	Capacity	5,063	34	4	
Children (0-5) receiving child care assistance ⁴	2023	35,375	153	DS	
	2024	35,153	164	12	
Education & Workforce					
Educational Attainment (ages 25 and older) ^{2,3}					
At least a high school education	2014-2018	86.8%	88.4%	83.6%	↑
	2019-2023	89.1%	91.8%	86.0%	
Bachelor's degree or more	2014-2018	28.9%	20.5%	15.7%	↓
	2019-2023	32.6%	24.3%	10.9%	
Unemployment rate for the adult population (ages 16 and older) ^{2,3}	2014-2018	6.4%	9.0%	7.8%	↓
	2019-2023	5.1%	5.4%	5.9%	
Child Health & Development					
Total births ⁵	2020-2021	154,638	1,696	248	↓
	2022-2023	156,236	1,653	181	
Characteristics of births ⁵					
Maternal age 19 or younger	2020-2021	4.9%	6.4%	6.5%	↑
	2022-2023	4.5%	6.2%	7.2%	
Low birthweight (<2500 grams)	2020-2021	7.6%	8.1%	5.6%	↑
	2022-2023	7.9%	8.5%	7.7%	
Preterm birth (<37 weeks)	2020-2021	9.7%	10.4%	9.3%	↓
	2022-2023	9.8%	8.1%	7.7%	
Prenatal care (5+ prenatal visits)	2020-2021	91.0%	91.9%	88.7%	↑
	2022-2023	91.7%	93.5%	92.3%	
Number of children (0-5) with AHCCCS ⁶	2022	277,455	3,551	452	↓
	2024	223,506	2,894	331	
AHCCCS-enrolled children (0-5) 1+ primary care provider visit ⁶	2022	83.0%	76.0%	69.9%	↑
	2024	86.0%	82.0%	74.9%	
Children (0-5) receiving AzEIP, DDD, or both services ⁴	SFY 2023	9,991	82	18	↓
	SFY 2024	10,706	82	17	

SOURCES: (1) US Census 2020; (2) American Community Survey 2014-2018; (3) American Community Survey 2019-2023; (4) Arizona Department of Economic Security; (5) Arizona Department of Health Services; (6) Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System data provided by ASU ChiR

NOTES:

DS: Data has been suppressed to protect privacy.

NA: Not available.

SUBREGION DEFINITION: The Holbrook sub-region is defined as five census tracts (9601, 9602, & the portions of 9604, 9605 & 9606 that are within the Navajo/Apache Region). It contains the city of Holbrook and the Census Designated Places (CDPs) of Winslow West, Joseph City, Sun Valley and Woodruff. The city of Winslow falls within the Coconino Region.

Pinetop-Lakeside	Years	Arizona	Navajo/Apache Region	Pinetop-Lakeside	Change over time
Child, Family & Community Characteristics					
Total population ¹	Census 2020	7,151,502	73,563	13,136	
Population of children (0-5) ¹	Census 2020	480,744	4,714	669	
Population living in poverty ^{2,3}	2014-2018	16.1%	17.6%	14.2%	
	2019-2023	12.8%	15.0%	10.5%	↓
Children (0-5) living in poverty ^{2,3}	2014-2018	24.9%	26.3%	16.0%	
	2019-2023	17.9%	23.1%	30.6%	↑
Low-income children (0-5) (<185% federal poverty level) ^{2,3}	2014-2018	47.2%	52.7%	44.8%	
	2019-2023	38.1%	48.9%	71.0%	↑
Housing costs 30% or more of household income ^{2,3}	2014-2018	30.4%	24.9%	29.2%	
	2019-2023	29.4%	21.5%	24.1%	↓
Children (0-5) with all present parents in the labor force ^{2,3}	2014-2018	61.1%	48.0%	42.8%	
	2019-2023	64.4%	55.6%	47.5%	↑
Language other than English spoken at home (2019-2023) ³	Spanish	19.2%	7.0%	5.7%	
	Another	6.4%	4.9%	4.8%	
Early Education					
Ratio of children (0-5) to licensed child care slots ⁵	Oct 2023	2.0	4.8	2.5	
	Jan 2025	2.0	4.8	2.4	↓
Registered care providers in 2025 ⁴					
Centers	Number	2,427	29	5	
	Capacity	260,689	1,265	261	
Schools	Number	714	5	0	
	Capacity	72,967	221	0	
Homes	Number	755	4	2	
	Capacity	5,063	34	20	
Children (0-5) receiving child care assistance ⁴	2023	35,375	153	49	
	2024	35,153	164	58	↑
Education & Workforce					
Educational Attainment (ages 25 and older) ^{2,3}					
At least a high school education	2014-2018	86.8%	88.4%	90.2%	
	2019-2023	89.1%	91.8%	92.6%	↑
Bachelor's degree or more	2014-2018	28.9%	20.5%	26.5%	
	2019-2023	32.6%	24.3%	31.5%	↑
Unemployment rate for the adult population (ages 16 and older) ^{2,3}	2014-2018	6.4%	9.0%	8.0%	
	2019-2023	5.1%	5.4%	7.9%	↓
Child Health & Development					
Total births ⁵	2020-2021	154,638	1,696	242	
	2022-2023	156,236	1,653	240	↓
Characteristics of births ⁵					
Maternal age 19 or younger	2020-2021	4.9%	6.4%	7.9%	
	2022-2023	4.5%	6.2%	5.8%	↓
Low birthweight (<2500 grams)	2020-2021	7.6%	8.1%	9.9%	
	2022-2023	7.9%	8.5%	10.8%	↑
Preterm birth (<37 weeks)	2020-2021	9.7%	10.4%	10.7%	
	2022-2023	9.8%	8.1%	6.7%	↓
Prenatal care (5+ prenatal visits)	2020-2021	91.0%	91.9%	93.0%	
	2022-2023	91.7%	93.5%	92.5%	↓
Number of children (0-5) with AHCCCS ⁶	2022	277,455	3,551	517	
	2024	223,506	2,894	448	↓
AHCCCS-enrolled children (0-5) 1+ primary care provider visit ⁶	2022	83.0%	76.0%	82.4%	
	2024	86.0%	82.0%	82.6%	↑
Children (0-5) receiving AzEIP, DDD, or both services ⁴	SFY 2023	9,991	82	20	
	SFY 2024	10,706	82	DS	↓

SOURCES: (1) US Census 2020; (2) American Community Survey 2014-2018; (3) American Community Survey 2019-2023; (4) Arizona Department of Economic Security; (5) Arizona Department of Health Services; (6) Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System data provided by ASU ChiR

NOTES:

DS: Data has been suppressed to protect privacy.

NA: Not available.

SUBREGION DEFINITION: The Pinetop-Lakeside sub-region is defined as six census tracts and four block groups (9613, 9625.01-9625.02, 9649.01-9649.02, 9653.01, 9617.01 block group 3 & 9617.02 block groups 1, 2 & 4). It contains the town of Pinetop-Lakeside and the CDPs of Wagon Wheel, Lake of the Woods and Pinetop Country Club.

Round Valley-Vernon	Years	Arizona	Navajo/Apache Region	Round Valley-Vernon	Change over time
Child, Family & Community Characteristics					
Total population ¹	Census 2020	7,151,502	73,563	9,863	
Population of children (0-5) ¹	Census 2020	480,744	4,714	602	
Population living in poverty ^{2,3}	2014-2018	16.1%	17.6%	15.4%	↑
	2019-2023	12.8%	15.0%	15.7%	
Children (0-5) living in poverty ^{2,3}	2014-2018	24.9%	26.3%	26.3%	↑
	2019-2023	17.9%	23.1%	46.1%	
Low-income children (0-5) (<185% federal poverty level) ^{2,3}	2014-2018	47.2%	52.7%	54.5%	↑
	2019-2023	38.1%	48.9%	59.2%	
Housing costs 30% or more of household income ^{2,3}	2014-2018	30.4%	24.9%	17.0%	↑
	2019-2023	29.4%	21.5%	20.6%	
Children (0-5) with all present parents in the labor force ^{2,3}	2014-2018	61.1%	48.0%	62.5%	↓
	2019-2023	64.4%	55.6%	50.1%	
Language other than English spoken at home (2019-2023) ³	Spanish	19.2%	7.0%	7.6%	
	Another	6.4%	4.9%	7.8%	
Early Education					
Ratio of children (0-5) to licensed child care slots ⁵	Oct 2023	2.0	4.8	5.8	↔
	Jan 2025	2.0	4.8	5.8	
Registered care providers in 2025 ⁴					
Centers	Number	2,427	29	4	
	Capacity	260,689	1,265	158	
Schools	Number	714	5	0	
	Capacity	72,967	221	0	
Homes	Number	755	4	0	
	Capacity	5,063	34	0	
Children (0-5) receiving child care assistance ⁴	2023	35,375	153	DS	
	2024	35,153	164	DS	
Education & Workforce					
Educational Attainment (ages 25 and older) ^{2,3}					
At least a high school education	2014-2018	86.8%	88.4%	89.3%	↑
	2019-2023	89.1%	91.8%	93.7%	
Bachelor’s degree or more	2014-2018	28.9%	20.5%	22.1%	↑
	2019-2023	32.6%	24.3%	24.6%	
Unemployment rate for the adult population (ages 16 and older) ^{2,3}	2014-2018	6.4%	9.0%	6.0%	↓
	2019-2023	5.1%	5.4%	3.4%	
Child Health & Development					
Total births ⁵	2020-2021	154,638	1,696	224	↓
	2022-2023	156,236	1,653	197	
Characteristics of births ⁵					
Maternal age 19 or younger	2020-2021	4.9%	6.4%	8.0%	↓
	2022-2023	4.5%	6.2%	7.1%	
Low birthweight (<2500 grams)	2020-2021	7.6%	8.1%	7.6%	↑
	2022-2023	7.9%	8.5%	8.1%	
Preterm birth (<37 weeks)	2020-2021	9.7%	10.4%	9.4%	↑
	2022-2023	9.8%	8.1%	12.2%	
Prenatal care (5+ prenatal visits)	2020-2021	91.0%	91.9%	91.1%	↑
	2022-2023	91.7%	93.5%	93.9%	
Number of children (0-5) with AHCCCS ⁶	2022	277,455	3,551	428	↓
	2024	223,506	2,894	316	
AHCCCS-enrolled children (0-5) 1+ primary care provider visit ⁶	2022	83.0%	76.0%	78.0%	↑
	2024	86.0%	82.0%	87.7%	
Children (0-5) receiving AzEIP, DDD, or both services ⁴	SFY 2023	9,991	82	DS	
	SFY 2024	10,706	82	11	

SOURCES: (1) US Census 2020; (2) American Community Survey 2014-2018; (3) American Community Survey 2019-2023; (4) Arizona Department of Economic Security; (5) Arizona Department of Health Services; (6) Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System data provided by ASU ChiR

NOTES:

DS: Data has been suppressed to protect privacy.

NA: Not available.

SUBREGION DEFINITION: The Round Valley-Vernon sub-region is defined as two census tracts and one block group (9705.01, 9703 block group 1 and the portion of 9705.02 that is within the Navajo/Apache Region). It contains the towns of Springerville and Eagar as well as the CDPs of Vernon, Greer, Nutrioso and Alpine and all of the southernmost part of Apache County except the lands of the White Mountain Apache Tribe.

Show Low-Heber-Overgaard	Years	Arizona	Navajo/Apache Region	Show Low-Heber-Overgaard	Change over time
Child, Family & Community Characteristics					
Total population ¹	Census 2020	7,151,502	73,563	22,165	
Population of children (0-5) ¹	Census 2020	480,744	4,714	1,251	
Population living in poverty ^{2,3}	2014-2018 2019-2023	16.1% 12.8%	17.6% 15.0%	18.0% 13.0%	↓
Children (0-5) living in poverty ^{2,3}	2014-2018 2019-2023	24.9% 17.9%	26.3% 23.1%	27.4% 19.6%	↓
Low-income children (0-5) (<185% federal poverty level) ^{2,3}	2014-2018 2019-2023	47.2% 38.1%	52.7% 48.9%	45.1% 48.9%	↑
Housing costs 30% or more of household income ^{2,3}	2014-2018 2019-2023	30.4% 29.4%	24.9% 21.5%	29.4% 23.2%	↓
Children (0-5) with all present parents in the labor force ^{2,3}	2014-2018 2019-2023	61.1% 64.4%	48.0% 55.6%	48.6% 55.1%	↑
Language other than English spoken at home (2019-2023) ³	Spanish Another	19.2% 6.4%	7.0% 4.9%	5.8% 2.2%	
Early Education					
Ratio of children (0-5) to licensed child care slots ⁵	Oct 2023 Jan 2025	2.0 2.0	4.8 4.8	5.3 5.6	↑
Registered care providers in 2025 ⁴					
Centers	Number Capacity	2,427 260,689	29 1,265	10 432	
Schools	Number Capacity	714 72,967	5 221	0 0	
Homes	Number Capacity	755 5,063	4 34	1 10	
Children (0-5) receiving child care assistance ⁴	2023 2024	35,375 35,153	153 164	63 61	↓
Education & Workforce					
Educational Attainment (ages 25 and older) ^{2,3}					
At least a high school education	2014-2018 2019-2023	86.8% 89.1%	88.4% 91.8%	89.4% 93.5%	↑
Bachelor's degree or more	2014-2018 2019-2023	28.9% 32.6%	20.5% 24.3%	21.2% 23.8%	↑
Unemployment rate for the adult population (ages 16 and older) ^{2,3}	2014-2018 2019-2023	6.4% 5.1%	9.0% 5.4%	8.9% 6.7%	↓
Child Health & Development					
Total births ⁵	2020-2021 2022-2023	154,638 156,236	1,696 1,653	439 450	↑
Characteristics of births ⁵					
Maternal age 19 or younger	2020-2021 2022-2023	4.9% 4.5%	6.4% 6.2%	5.2% 6.2%	↑
Low birthweight (<2500 grams)	2020-2021 2022-2023	7.6% 7.9%	8.1% 8.5%	6.8% 7.8%	↑
Preterm birth (<37 weeks)	2020-2021 2022-2023	9.7% 9.8%	10.4% 8.1%	8.9% 4.9%	↓
Prenatal care (5+ prenatal visits)	2020-2021 2022-2023	91.0% 91.7%	91.9% 93.5%	93.8% 95.1%	↑
Number of children (0-5) with AHCCCS ⁶	2022 2024	277,455 223,506	3,551 2,894	967 795	↓
AHCCCS-enrolled children (0-5) 1+ primary care provider visit ⁶	2022 2024	83.0% 86.0%	76.0% 82.0%	80.0% 87.4%	↑
Children (0-5) receiving AzEIP, DDD, or both services ⁴	SFY 2023 SFY 2024	9,991 10,706	82 82	16 20	↑

SOURCES: (1) US Census 2020; (2) American Community Survey 2014-2018; (3) American Community Survey 2019-2023; (4) Arizona Department of Economic Security; (5) Arizona Department of Health Services; (6) Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System data provided by ASU ChiR

NOTES:

DS: Data has been suppressed to protect privacy.

NA: Not available.

SUBREGION DEFINITION: The Show Low-Heber-Overgaard sub-region is defined as nine census tracts and three block groups (9637, 9642.01-9642.02, 9648.01-9648.02, 9652.01-9652.02, 9653.02, 9617.01 block group 1, 9617.02 block groups 2-3 & the portion of Coconino County tract 15 that is within the Navajo/Apache Region). It contains the city of Show Low and the CDPs of Forest Lakes, Heber-Overgaard, Clay Springs, Pinedale, Linden and White Mountain Lake.

Snowflake-Taylor	Years	Arizona	Navajo/Apache Region	Snowflake-Taylor	Change over time
Child, Family & Community Characteristics					
Total population ¹	Census 2020	7,151,502	73,563	13,076	
Population of children (0-5) ¹	Census 2020	480,744	4,714	1,122	
Population living in poverty ^{2,3}	2014-2018 2019-2023	16.1% 12.8%	17.6% 15.0%	19.1% 16.4%	↓
Children (0-5) living in poverty ^{2,3}	2014-2018 2019-2023	24.9% 17.9%	26.3% 23.1%	25.6% 11.6%	↓
Low-income children (0-5) (<185% federal poverty level) ^{2,3}	2014-2018 2019-2023	47.2% 38.1%	52.7% 48.9%	63.0% 31.8%	↓
Housing costs 30% or more of household income ^{2,3}	2014-2018 2019-2023	30.4% 29.4%	24.9% 21.5%	24.1% 21.4%	↓
Children (0-5) with all present parents in the labor force ^{2,3}	2014-2018 2019-2023	61.1% 64.4%	48.0% 55.6%	35.3% 67.6%	↑
Language other than English spoken at home (2019-2023) ³	Spanish Another	19.2% 6.4%	7.0% 4.9%	7.5% 2.4%	
Early Education					
Ratio of children (0-5) to licensed child care slots ⁵	Oct 2023 Jan 2025	2.0 2.0	4.8 4.8	44.9 44.9	↔
Registered care providers in 2025 ⁴					
Centers	Number Capacity	2,427 260,689	29 1,265	2 50	
Schools	Number Capacity	714 72,967	5 221	0 0	
Homes	Number Capacity	755 5,063	4 34	0 0	
Children (0-5) receiving child care assistance ⁴	2023 2024	35,375 35,153	153 164	18 17	↓
Education & Workforce					
Educational Attainment (ages 25 and older) ^{2,3}					
At least a high school education	2014-2018 2019-2023	86.8% 89.1%	88.4% 91.8%	87.6% 91.0%	↑
Bachelor's degree or more	2014-2018 2019-2023	28.9% 32.6%	20.5% 24.3%	19.4% 23.6%	↑
Unemployment rate for the adult population (ages 16 and older) ^{2,3}	2014-2018 2019-2023	6.4% 5.1%	9.0% 5.4%	15.4% 2.2%	↓
Child Health & Development					
Total births ⁵	2020-2021 2022-2023	154,638 156,236	1,696 1,653	365 393	↑
Characteristics of births ⁵					
Maternal age 19 or younger	2020-2021 2022-2023	4.9% 4.5%	6.4% 6.2%	5.8% 5.6%	↓
Low birthweight (<2500 grams)	2020-2021 2022-2023	7.6% 7.9%	8.1% 8.5%	7.9% 7.9%	↓
Preterm birth (<37 weeks)	2020-2021 2022-2023	9.7% 9.8%	10.4% 8.1%	11.5% 8.4%	↓
Prenatal care (5+ prenatal visits)	2020-2021 2022-2023	91.0% 91.7%	91.9% 93.5%	93.4% 95.2%	↑
Number of children (0-5) with AHCCCS ⁶	2022 2024	277,455 223,506	3,551 2,894	740 611	↓
AHCCCS-enrolled children (0-5) 1+ primary care provider visit ⁶	2022 2024	83.0% 86.0%	76.0% 82.0%	77.0% 82.3%	↑
Children (0-5) receiving AzEIP, DDD, or both services ⁴	SFY 2023 SFY 2024	9,991 10,706	82 82	14 23	↑

SOURCES: (1) US Census 2020; (2) American Community Survey 2014-2018; (3) American Community Survey 2019-2023; (4) Arizona Department of Economic Security; (5) Arizona Department of Health Services; (6) Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System data provided by ASU ChiR

NOTES:

DS: Data has been suppressed to protect privacy.

NA: Not available.

SUBREGION DEFINITION: The Snowflake-Taylor sub-region is defined as three census tracts (9633, 9634 & 9638) and contains the towns of Snowflake and Taylor and the CDP of Shumway.

St Johns-Concho	Years	Arizona	Navajo/Apache Region	St Johns-Concho	Change over time
Child, Family & Community Characteristics					
Total population ¹	Census 2020	7,151,502	73,563	7,608	
Population of children (0-5) ¹	Census 2020	480,744	4,714	466	
Population living in poverty ^{2,3}	2014-2018	16.1%	17.6%	16.8%	↑
	2019-2023	12.8%	15.0%	20.1%	
Children (0-5) living in poverty ^{2,3}	2014-2018	24.9%	26.3%	32.8%	↓
	2019-2023	17.9%	23.1%	25.1%	
Low-income children (0-5) (<185% federal poverty level) ^{2,3}	2014-2018	47.2%	52.7%	62.4%	↓
	2019-2023	38.1%	48.9%	60.4%	
Housing costs 30% or more of household income ^{2,3}	2014-2018	30.4%	24.9%	16.0%	↓
	2019-2023	29.4%	21.5%	14.8%	
Children (0-5) with all present parents in the labor force ^{2,3}	2014-2018	61.1%	48.0%	36.0%	↑
	2019-2023	64.4%	55.6%	40.5%	
Language other than English spoken at home (2019-2023) ³	Spanish	19.2%	7.0%	5.9%	
	Another	6.4%	4.9%	5.1%	
Early Education					
Ratio of children (0-5) to licensed child care slots ⁵	Oct 2023	2.0	4.8	3.0	↔
	Jan 2025	2.0	4.8	3.0	
Registered care providers in 2025 ⁴					
Centers	Number	2,427	29	4	
	Capacity	260,689	1,265	142	
Schools	Number	714	5	2	
	Capacity	72,967	221	116	
Homes	Number	755	4	0	
	Capacity	5,063	34	0	
Children (0-5) receiving child care assistance ⁴	2023	35,375	153	12	↔
	2024	35,153	164	12	
Education & Workforce					
Educational Attainment (ages 25 and older) ^{2,3}					
At least a high school education	2014-2018	86.8%	88.4%	86.8%	↑
	2019-2023	89.1%	91.8%	88.5%	
Bachelor's degree or more	2014-2018	28.9%	20.5%	11.7%	↑
	2019-2023	32.6%	24.3%	26.4%	
Unemployment rate for the adult population (ages 16 and older) ^{2,3}	2014-2018	6.4%	9.0%	3.9%	↓
	2019-2023	5.1%	5.4%	3.2%	
Child Health & Development					
Total births ⁵	2020-2021	154,638	1,696	178	↑
	2022-2023	156,236	1,653	192	
Characteristics of births ⁵					
Maternal age 19 or younger	2020-2021	4.9%	6.4%	6.2%	↓
	2022-2023	4.5%	6.2%	5.7%	
Low birthweight (<2500 grams)	2020-2021	7.6%	8.1%	13.5%	↓
	2022-2023	7.9%	8.5%	9.9%	
Preterm birth (<37 weeks)	2020-2021	9.7%	10.4%	14.0%	↓
	2022-2023	9.8%	8.1%	13.0%	
Prenatal care (5+ prenatal visits)	2020-2021	91.0%	91.9%	87.6%	↑
	2022-2023	91.7%	93.5%	88.5%	
Number of children (0-5) with AHCCCS ⁶	2022	277,455	3,551	447	↓
	2024	223,506	2,894	393	
AHCCCS-enrolled children (0-5) 1+ primary care provider visit ⁶	2022	83.0%	76.0%	62.0%	↑
	2024	86.0%	82.0%	71.2%	
Children (0-5) receiving AzEIP, DDD, or both services ⁴	SFY 2023	9,991	82	DS	
	SFY 2024	10,706	82	DS	

SOURCES: (1) US Census 2020; (2) American Community Survey 2014-2018; (3) American Community Survey 2019-2023; (4) Arizona Department of Economic Security; (5) Arizona Department of Health Services; (6) Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System data provided by ASU ChiR

NOTES:

DS: Data has been suppressed to protect privacy.

NA: Not available.

SUBREGION DEFINITION: The St Johns-Concho sub-region is defined as three census tracts and two block groups (9702.01-9702.02, 9703 block groups 2-3 & the portion of 9451 that is within the Navajo/Apache Region). It contains the city of St. Johns and the CDP of Concho.