20 YEARS FIRST THINGS FIRST

Early Childhood Policy Brief

Arizonans support updating the state's funding model

to include vaping and other nicotine products. In a statewide survey of 600 likely 2026 general election voters, there was broad support for this change to help maintain Arizona's early childhood programs.

80% total support

Support holds after Arizonans hear both sides.

Majority support across party lines to modernize the funding model.

(62% of Republicans, 82% of Independents and 92% of Democrats)

Legislative takeaway:
70% more likely to support a legislator who votes in favor

This solution builds on an Arizona approach centered on local communities, parental leadership and early investment, while updating the model to reflect changes in the nicotine market.

An Arizona model built on local needs

First Things First was created by Arizona voters to help children from birth to age 5 arrive at kindergarten healthy and ready to succeed.

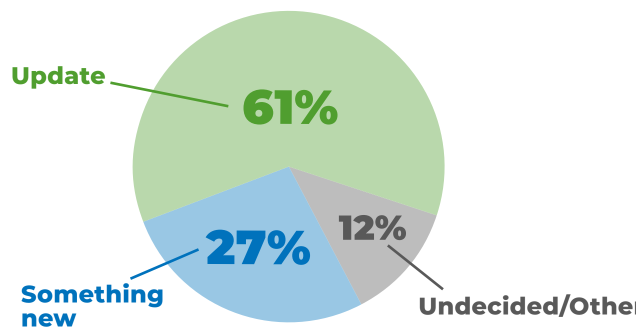
Families are First
Parents are a child's first teacher and First Things First supports them in that role.

Communities Know Best
Regional partnership councils identify local needs and recommend how to best support families.

Accountability and Results Matter
Investments are tied to improving outcomes for children, families and communities.

The solution is an update to the current model, not something new

By nearly a 2-to-1 margin



Arizonans agree, without vaping and other nicotine products playing by the same rules as traditional cigarettes, communities could face further service cuts beyond the 1/3 already experienced.

Why it matters to Arizona families

96% say the first **5 years of a child's life** are important in shaping future educational, health and economic outcomes.

90% say affordable, **high-quality child care** is important to Arizona's economy and workforce.

75% prefer **maintaining early childhood programs** through additional funding or budget reprioritization.

Early investment delivers economic returns

16% return on investment
High-quality programs generate a 16% annual return on investment through better education, employment and health outcomes.*

$300+ million annually
First Things First investments contribute more than $300 million each year to Arizona's economy.**

115,000+ jobs supported
Expanding access and affordability could support 115,000+ jobs and add $9,300 in annual household income.***

Statewide sample composition
39.5% republican | 32.5% democratic | 26.0% independent/unaffiliated

Source
Data Orbital, First Things First Survey Toplines. n=600 likely 2026 Arizona general-election voters. Reported margin of error: +/-4.08 percentage points.

* Arthur Rolnick, "Investing in Early Childhood Development Is Smart Economic Development," Wisconsin Family Impact Seminars, 2014..
**Center for the Future of Arizona.
***Unlocking Potential: Turn Arizona's Priorities into Economic Gains prepared by Rounds Consulting Group, October 2025.

Stronger Families. Stronger Communities. Stronger Arizona Economy.

Learn more at FirstThingsFirst.org