

### Food Assistance and Nutrition

**Strategy Description:** Increase access to nutritious food for families with children ages birth through five in the region. Financial literacy and education on the nutritional needs of young children are essential elements to making an impact on the future for children in the region.

The First Things First Board recognized and responded to the hardships endured by families due to the economy's state of crisis. The Regional Partnership Council supplemented the economic response efforts initiated by the Board and allocated additional resources toward food assistance, with a mandate that at least 30% of the funding be reserved specifically for infant formula.

During times of economic downturn, the rural and Tribal communities historically require a longer time to recover, mainly due to the limited economic supports, employment opportunities, and the lack of revenue through tourism, one of the Hualapai Tribe's major source of income. The hardships for the Hualapai region are exacerbated by the isolated location of the region and the 50 mile distance to the nearest grocery store and hospital, for example. This positions families on the reservation in devastating situations, and often parents do not have the resources to provide adequate food and nutrition for their children, leaving them hungry, insecure of their next healthy meal, and at risk for poor development.

Research has shown that even moderate under-nutrition, the type seen most frequently in the United States, can have lasting effects on the brain development of children. According to the Center on Hunger and Poverty, inadequate nutrition is a major cause of impaired cognitive development, and is associated with increased educational failure, elevated occurrence of health problems, and higher levels of aggression, hyperactivity, and anxiety among impoverished children.

The Regional Partnership Council concluded that the families in the region continue to experience hardship and food insecurity, and because eating patterns are formed early in life and may be carried into adulthood, healthful eating habits need to be developed early on. The Regional Partnership Council has put forth a strategy for supporting families in need of food assistance, providing education on the nutritional needs of children, and referring families to resources, such as financial literacy, to assist families in obtaining stability in their children's lives. The food assistance provided with this strategy must be nutritious and follow the Food Guide Pyramid. Support from the federal Women Infant and Children program is limited, and due to the extended hardships experienced by families in the region, many families do not have other resources to sustain a nutritious diet for their infant. Therefore, the Regional Partnership Council has placed an emphasis on responding to that need and mandating that at least one-third of the funding must support parents in meeting the nutritional needs of infants and assist with the provision of infant formula. Additionally, financial literacy education is essential for supporting families to independence and breaking the constant state of crisis many families find themselves cyclically involved in. The provider carrying out this strategy will need to utilize a positive, family centered, and evidence-based financial literacy curriculum.

The success of this strategy will require coordination with: 1) the family support and nutrition education programs in the community to ensure the community's resources are maximized to serve families, and 2) the WIC program to ensure access to a nutritious diet for all pregnant women and their babies. The Food Assistance and Nutrition provider will need to develop a partnership with WIC to make certain that mothers are first receiving support and infant formula through the WIC resources and that First Things First funding does not supplant services currently available or covered by existing federal funding or other existing sources.

Hualapai Tribe Regional Partnership Council Strategy #4b  
 Strategy Name: Food Assistance and Nutrition

<b>SFY 2011 Expenditure Plan for Proposed Strategy</b>	
<b>Allocation for proposed strategy</b>	\$ <u>8,330</u>
<b>Budget Justification:</b>	
Educational materials and administrative costs .....	<b>\$1,000</b>
Food packages range in cost of \$16-\$40 per food box (Food provision through distribution of food boxes, basic staples, or to go along with a financial literacy or nutritional lesson) .....	<b>\$5,131</b>
<p>Infant Formula (On average, 30 babies are born each year in the region; the Regional Council places this at the highest priority for food insecurity, and sees it imperative that infants are given the nutrients they need for the crucial first year of development. The Regional Council has mandated that 30% of the food cost is reserved for infant formula, and that the formula provided accommodates the individual dietary needs of the infant at-risk of the lasting effects of food deprivation.)</p>	
30% of the food costs .....	<b>\$2,199</b>