



FIRST THINGS FIRST

Emergency Child Care Scholarships Summary Description and Update - 4/2/09

The Emergency Child Care Scholarships is a *temporary* strategy to help stabilize families with young children (birth through age 5) with incomes up to 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. Many families in Arizona are unable to afford the costs of early care and education for their children as a result of job loss, decreased earnings or other factors related to the economic downturn. As a result, young children are subject to having their care disrupted or terminated, leaving parents to make difficult choices such as quitting their job or leaving their children in settings ill-equipped to meet the developmental and safety needs of young children.

The First Things First (FTF) response stems from a worsening decline in access to child care by families in economic crisis. The immediate need for child care propelled First Things First to design a response that promotes continuity of care, one of the most important factors in the healthy development of young children.

What is First Things First doing?

First Things First will provide temporary scholarships for roughly 10,000 children statewide. Discretionary funds in the amount of \$23.3 million dollars will be released for these scholarships immediately. Of that, \$675,133 is allocated to the La Paz/Mohave Region. This amount will provide approximately 330 scholarships for a minimum of 4 months. The allocation of scholarships is based on a combination of the number of children birth through age 5 and the number of children birth through age 5 living in poverty in any given region as a proportion of the total number of children in the state. Scholarships will be awarded directly to participating providers for eligible families by the administrative home, comprised of a partnership between the Valley of the Sun United Way, United Way of Northern Arizona and United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona. The administrative home for distribution of scholarships in La Paz and Mohave Counties is the United Way of Northern Arizona. We anticipate that the scholarship program will begin in April.

How can providers participate?

True to the FTF mission, this strategy ties scholarships to quality care. Regulated center- and home-based child care providers who are accredited by national organizations recognized by the Arizona Department of Education and the Department of Economic Security and/or who have applied to and are eligible for Quality First may participate in the emergency scholarship response. Being eligible means providers are regulated and in good standing with the regulating body. Selected providers will be determined based on their geographic location or region and preference will go to providers that offer full-day, full-week, year-round services and services to infants and toddlers. Accredited centers and those who applied for Quality First can contact the appropriate United Way to apply to participate. Interested providers who have not applied to Quality First can do so at www.azftf.gov. A list showing which regions the United Ways are covering and their contact information is attached.

Once providers have applied and are determined to be eligible, they will sign a contract with United Way and receive the scholarship payment up front on a monthly basis. Payments are based on age and part-or full-time status as follows:

Type of Care	Per Month Scholarship for Full Day Enrolled Children (more than 4 hours per day)	Per Month Scholarship for Part Day Enrolled Children (4 hours or less per day)
Infant / Toddler (birth – 35 months)	\$678	\$339
Preschool (36 months – 5 years or kindergarten entry)	\$550	\$275
Family Child Care	\$391	\$195

Which families qualify for scholarships?

Families whose household income is at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Guideline who are employed, seeking employment or advancing their skills to attain or maintain employment are eligible for the scholarships. Families receiving a Department of Economic Security (DES) subsidy are not eligible for scholarships. Those who qualify for a DES child care subsidy but are on a waiting list also do qualify, but they must retain their status on the waiting list, especially since the First Things First Emergency Child Care Scholarships are temporary. Up to three children per family are eligible for scholarships if they are between the ages of birth through five.

Families should contact their providers to see if the home or center is participating and to determine if they qualify for a scholarship. Copies and documentation of family eligibility for scholarships is required and will be maintained at the provider level. Documentation is to include any of the following: current pay stubs, written statement from employer, documentation of current receipt of public assistance such as KidsCare, Food Stamps, Free and Reduced Lunch Program, etc. If unemployed, a letter from previous employer whenever possible is required. For those who are self employed, the most recent Individual Income Tax Form 1040, Form 1099, or W-2 forms are required.

When will the scholarship be available and how long will they last?

First Things First and the United Ways that serve as the administrative home for this strategy are working diligently to implement the program by the target date of April 1, 2009. The scholarships will last a minimum of four months. The possibility of extending scholarships beyond July 31, 2009 is dependent on how quickly providers and families participate in the program and if individual regions choose to extend the strategy by directing additional regional funds into the program.

Can the Emergency Child Care Scholarships be tied to regional funding for access and affordability?

Absolutely. The contract with the United Way partners can be extended to support regional scholarship and/or stipend strategies either from an expedited perspective made possible by the bid waiver or through the access and affordability to child care strategies in the existing funding plan.

Participating United Way Contact Information – www.emergencyscholarships.org

Organization	Contact Person	E-mail	Phone /Fax	First Things First Regions Covered
Valley of the Sun United Way	Karyn Parker	emergencyscholarships@vsuw.org	Phone: 602-240-6324 Fax: 602-240-6325	Salt River Pima, Gila River Tribe, Graham/Greenlee, Gila, Pinal, North Phoenix, Central Phoenix, South Phoenix, NE Maricopa, Central Maricopa, SE Maricopa, NW Maricopa, SW Maricopa, San Carlos Apache Tribe
United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona	Vanessa Felty	ccscholarships@unitedwaytucson.org	Phone: 520-903-3999 Fax: 520 -903-9002	North Pima, Central Pima, South Pima, Pascua Yaqui Tribe, Cochise, Tohono O'odham, Yuma, Cocopah, Santa Cruz
United Way of Northern Arizona	Kathy Turner	kturner@nazunitedway.org	Phone: 928-773-9813 Fax: 928-773-9814	Yavapai, Hualapai, Coconino, Colorado River Indian Tribe, LaPaz/Mohave, Navajo Nation, Navajo/Apache, White Mountain Apache

Estimated Emergency Childcare Service Numbers by RPC

	Discretionary Allocation	Possible Service Numbers (4-Month Scholarships Available)
Cochise RPC	492,876	241
Cocopah Tribe RPC	4,724	2
Coconino RPC	397,674	194
Colorado River Inidan Tribes RPC	33,967	16
Gila River Indian Community RPC	124,894	61
Gila RPC	111,161	54
Graham/Greenlee RPC	111,701	54
Hualapai Tribe RPC	8,140	3
La Paz/Mohave RPC	675,133	330
Navajo Nation RPC	643,117	315
Navajo/Apache RPC	194,656	95
Pascua Yaqui RPC	25,799	12
Pinal RPC	1,150,929	563
Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community RPC	42,357	20
San Carlos Apache RPC	74,408	36
Santa Cruz RPC	227,888	111
Tohono O'odham Nation RPC	68,261	33
White Mountain Apache RPC	104,833	51
Yavapai RPC	542,045	265
Yuma RPC	922,232	451
Central Pima RPC	1,897,926	929
North Pima RPC	438,082	214
South Pima RPC	946,330	463
Central Maricopa RPC	1,481,146	725
Central Phoenix RPC	2,772,762	1,358
North Phoenix RPC	2,014,915	987
Northeast Maricopa RPC	566,353	277
Northwest Maricopa RPC	1,615,979	791
South Phoenix RPC	2,688,927	1,317
Southeast Maricopa RPC	2,186,638	1,071
Southwest Maricopa RPC	456,550	223
TOTAL	23,022,405	11,262

Notes:

- 1) Assumes 1.5% removed from Discretionary Allocation for administrative costs.
- 2) Scenario assumes a \$537.17/month average for each child over four months of service with a 10% "part-time" factor
- 3) Uses half distribution based on population 0-5 and half based on population 0-5 in poverty