

COMMUNITY OUTREACH REPORT

May 2013



FIRST THINGS FIRST

Ready for School. Set for Life.

Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council

April Outreach Activities

Chinle Child Abuse Prevention Kickoff

- April 1—BIA Office Complex

ABC Preschool Site Tour & Forum

- April 2—Kayenta Unified School District

Pinon Parent Summit

- April 3—Pinon Unified School District

1:1—Char Kruger, Education Curator, NN Museum

- April 4—Navajo Nation Museum

St. Jude's Family Carnival

- April 4—Tuba City St. Jude Parish

Navajo Nation Safe Kids Meeting

- April 9—Gallup-McKinley County Fire Marshall

Tuba City Child Abuse Prevention Conference

- April 10—Tuba City Chapter House

1:1 (Follow-up) - Char Kruger, Education Curator

- April 11—Navajo Nation Museum

Pinon Taking Back Our Community Resource Meeting

- April 12—Pinon Unified School District

Play: Where Learning Begins Parent Workshop

- April 15—Moenkopi Legacy Inn, Tuba City

Navajo Nurse (N-Nurse) Symposium

- April 18—Little America

1:1—St. Michael's Indian School

- April 18—St. Michael Indian School

Fort Defiance Agency Head Start Conference

- April 19—Nahata Dziil Chapter House

4 Directions of Wellness Show Taping

- April 23—Northern Navajo Medical Center

Alliance for a Healthier Generation Stakeholder Meeting

- April 23—Navajo Nation Quality Inn



BENCHMARKS REACHED

5 PRESENTATIONS

3 ONE ON ONE'S

**5 NETWORKING MEETINGS &
EVENTS**

3 EARNED MEDIA HITS

Story: "Parents Learn Play is a
Child's Work"

- Native News Network
- Navajo-Hopi Observer

Show: "Preventing Childhood
Obesity"

- NNMC 4 Directions of
Wellness Show

1 SITE TOUR

13 SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS



Navajo Parents Learn "Play" is a Child's Work

Native News Network Staff in Native Health. [Discussion »](#)

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TUBA CITY, ARIZONA – Participants at the First Things First Navajo Nation Parent and Caregiver Workshop danced, sang and made toys all in the name of creating a stimulating learning environment for their children. As this year's theme noted, play is where learning begins.

Starting at birth, kids are learning – through everything they see and experience. And their imaginations are running wild. As almost every parent knows, you can spend a lot of money on a child's toy and have them spend more time playing with the box or packaging instead. But, to a child a cardboard box is simply not just a box. It's a house, a car, or as Tuba City High School students re-imagined, a city.

First Things First Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council hosted the workshop because of their commitment in partnering with parents to give children the tools they need for success in grade school and beyond.

About 75 caregivers attended the workshop, which the regional council hopes to make an annual event. Most parents and grandparents mentioned they learned something new about early childhood development and techniques they plan to use in the future with their babies, toddlers and preschoolers.

During the Learning and Teaching with Puppets session, young adults studying to become early educators demonstrated how to create a puppet show stage out of boxes.

Dr. Maria Goatcher, Tuba City High School early childhood teacher, spoke about the benefits of using puppets in the home. Puppets can promote language development and demonstrate cultural awareness. One grandparent who attended the session said she will use puppets to tell her grandchildren traditional Navajo stories.

Another highlight of the workshop was the "Understanding How Young Children Learn" session. Participants were asked to scour through a box of everyday household items and identify how things like empty coffee cans, socks or egg cartons could become toys.

This task was all too familiar for local parent Nick Kinney. He enthusiastically demonstrated how his 4 year old son plays with a paper towel roll, "He bangs it and sings powwow songs or uses it as a telescope to see the stars."

In her keynote address, Tuba City pediatrician Dr. Miran Song encouraged reading to young children daily because it stimulates imaginative play and makes a child's mind work. Since research shows that 80 to 90 percent of a child's brain develops by the time they are 5 years old, it's no surprise that reading is the number one way to help young kids learn.

Other sessions included The Power of Play in Social Emotional Development, Let's Put a Rainbow on Your Plate, Oral Health for Me and Mine with a general lunch session focused on Understanding Challenging Behavior in Young Children.

First Things First is an Arizona voter-created, statewide organization that funds early education and health programs to help kids be successful once they enter kindergarten. Decisions about how those funds are spent are made by local councils staffed by community volunteers. To learn more, visit azftf.gov.



Nick Kinney enthusiastically demonstrates how his 4 year old son plays with a paper towel roll.