



FIRST THINGS FIRST

Creating an Early Childhood System



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What is a System?

An organized, inter-related network of elements, programs and services for all children.



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Purpose of System Planning in Arizona

To achieve measureable results for Arizona's young children and their families



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Why is a System Important?

Affecting school readiness requires comprehensive approaches and involvement from all sectors: health, mental health, family support, early care and education, parents, higher education, faith communities, business, the media and many others



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Why is a System Important?

- To maximize resources including multiple funding streams with their own regulations and requirements
- To foster partnerships and coordination of service delivery
- To improve the performance of multiple systems impacting young children and their families





Why is a System Important?

- There are individual variations in the circumstances and needs of children and their families
- There is duplication of services and a lack of coordination and many children are not being served



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Why is a System Important?

- Current services may have both public and private funding and this mix of funding can result in confusion for families.



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Why is a System Important?

- Helps to secure needed policy changes and improvements
- Better communication among partners
- Reduce turf issues through shared vision and agreed-upon goals and objectives
- Improve continuity of services

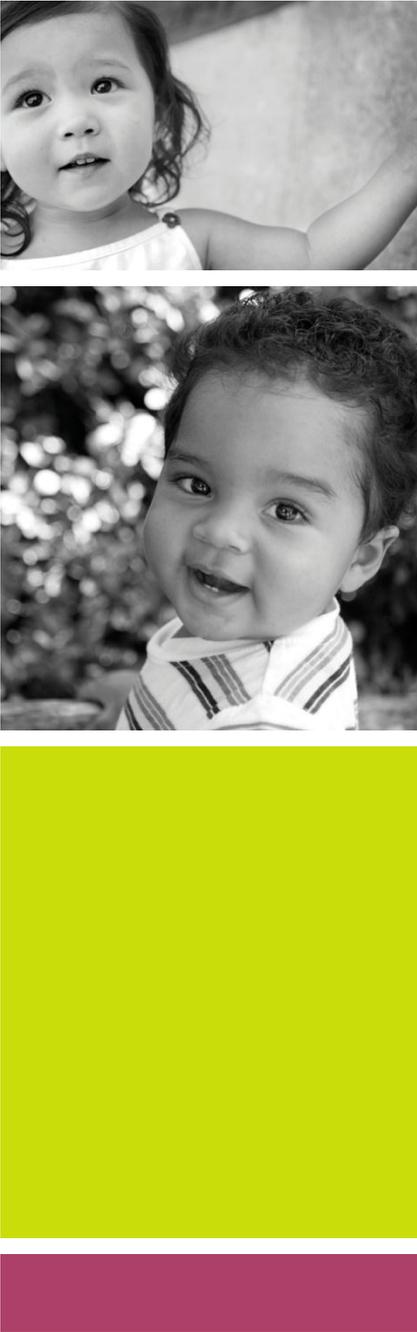




Characteristics of an Effective System

- Comprehensive
- Accessible for children and families
- Scalable
- Outcome focused
- Accountable





Components to Consider Early Childhood Goal Areas

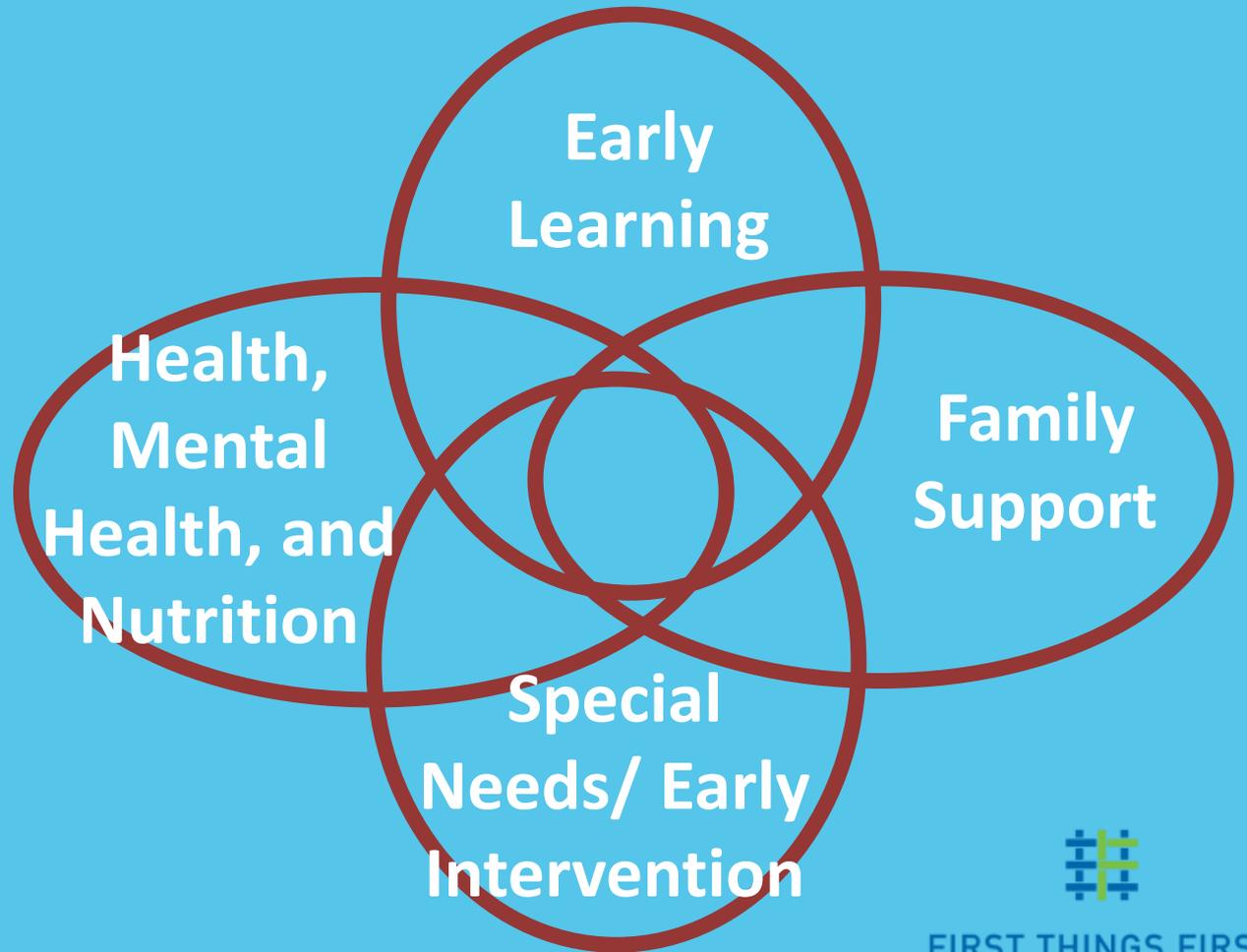
- Early Learning and Education
- Family Support and Literacy
- Health, Mental Health and Nutrition
- Special Needs & Early Intervention



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Early Childhood System Framework



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System Areas to Consider

- **Context**—successfully building a political context that leads to resources
- **Components**—establish effective programs and services
- **Connections**—create better linkages between components
- **Infrastructure**—create supports that enable continuous improvement
- **Scope and Scale**—the system can produce broad impacts for system beneficiaries



Arizona's Early Childhood System

If We:	We Create:	Resulting in:	Achieving:
<p>Develop and fund high quality services for children and families that are necessary but not yet available</p>	<p>Coordinated, high quality service system for young children</p>	<p>Early Learning All children have access to high quality, culturally responsive early care and education.</p>	<p>All Arizona's children are ready to succeed in school and in life.</p>
<p>Strengthen already existing high quality services for children</p>		<p>Family Support and Literacy All families have the information, services and supports they need to help children achieve their fullest potential.</p>	
<p>Partner to build a system of early childhood services and information for families</p>		<p>Early Childhood Professional Development All child care/education and health professional are well prepared, highly skilled and compensated commensurate with their education and experience.</p>	
<p>Lead through the synergy of statewide and local strategic planning</p>		<p>Health All children have access to high quality preventive and continuous health care to promote physical, mental, oral and nutritional health.</p>	
<p>Harness data and technology to build infrastructure and support data-based decision making and accountability</p>	<p>Leadership capacity and infrastructure to create and sustain the high-quality service system</p>	<p>Early Childhood System The early childhood system is high quality, child and family centered, coordinated, integrated and comprehensive.</p>	
<p>Shift the brand and awareness of early childhood in Arizona</p>		<p>Public Awareness All Arizonans understand the importance of the early years and recognize the influence of early childhood development , health and education on Arizona's economy and quality of life and, as a result, substantially support early childhood development, health, and education both politically and financially.</p>	

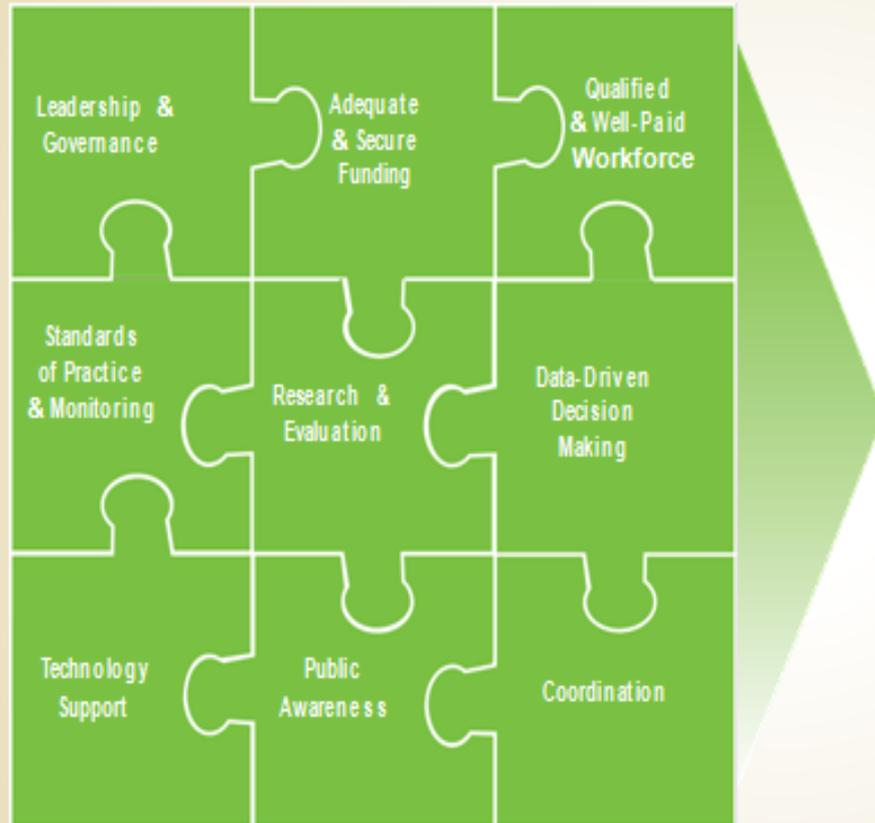
Developing a Model Early Childhood System

SYSTEM VISION: All Arizona children by the time they are 5 years old have a solid foundation for success in school and in life because we have worked together to create a family-centered, comprehensive, collaborative and high-quality early childhood system that addresses the child's development, health and early education.



Key System Elements and System Outcomes

Having all elements in place will help accelerate positive outcomes.



Access to high-quality, culturally responsive early care and education

Access to high-quality preventive and continuous health care

Information, services and support for families

Well-prepared, highly skilled and appropriately compensated professionals

Coordinated, integrated and comprehensive system

Public understanding and support

10 School Readiness Indicators

1. #/% children demonstrating school readiness at kindergarten entry in the development domains of social-emotional, language and literacy, cognitive, and motor and physical
2. #/% of children enrolled in an early care and education program with a Quality First rating of 3-5 stars
3. #/% of children with special needs enrolled in an inclusive early care and education program with a Quality First rating of 3-5 stars
4. #/% of families that spend no more than 10% of the regional median family income on quality care and education with a Quality First rating of 3-5 stars
5. % of children with newly identified developmental delays during the kindergarten year
6. # of children entering kindergarten exiting preschool special education to regular education
7. #/% of children ages 2-4 at a healthy weight (Body Mass Index-BMI)
8. #/% of children receiving at least six well child visits within the first 15 months of life
9. #/% of children age 5 with untreated tooth decay
10. % of families who report they are competent and confident about their ability to support their child's safety, health and well being

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GOVERNANCE & FINANCING

All sectors will be engaged in creating & sustaining collaborative structures to ensure an effective early childhood systems.

PARENT SUPPORT & EDUCATION

All families of children prenatal to five will have the support & information they need to promote their child's optimal development & school readiness.

EARLY CARE & EDUCATION

All families will have access to high quality early care and education.

HEALTH

All families of children prenatal to age five will have access to a full range of prevention & treatment services to ensure their children are healthy.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

All Arizonians will recognize the importance of early childhood and act to support policies and investments promoting a healthy beginning for all children.



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Ready for School. Set for Life.

GOVERNANCE & FINANCING

All sectors will be engaged in creating & sustaining collaborative structures to ensure an effective early childhood system.

- A. Establish and sustain a structure to effectively coordinate the planning, financing, delivery and evaluation of early childhood programs.
- B. Increase the capacity of local partnerships working to coordinate, improve and expand delivery of early childhood programs and services.
- C. Ensure accountability with program standards and performance measurements to track identified school readiness indicators.
- D. Promote a high quality workforce providing services for young children and families.

1. A strong workforce of professionals serving children and families sustained by an effective professional development system.
2. State budget and policies reflect and support key system goals.
3. Increase data linkages and information sharing among partners and agencies.
4. Align regional plans to state-level priorities and coordinate among local programs
5. Increase a strong, effective governance structure at both the state and regional levels.
6. An effective system of evaluation for program improvement and accountability.

PARENT SUPPORT & EDUCATION

All families of children prenatal to five will have the support & information they need to promote their child's optimal development & school readiness.

- A. Increase access for all families to quality information and supportive services.
- B. Increase the quality of parenting support programs.
- C. Increase the integration of Navajo culture into parent support and education programs

System Outcomes—

1. Increase capacity of home visiting and parent education programs
2. Increase use of strategies to promote and sustain parental involvement
3. Increase child care and health professional awareness of family support best practices
4. Increase inter-agency coordination
5. Increase uniformity of agency and provider messages to parents

Child/Family Outcomes—

1. Increase family awareness of available services and supports
2. Increase early literacy and language
3. Increase number of parents enrolled in based parent education and support programs
4. Increase family participation in early childhood programs through parent leadership opportunities

EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

All families will have access to high quality early care and education.



- A. Improve the quality of early care and education programs.
 - B. Expand availability and access to high quality early care and education programs.
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System Outcomes—

1. Increase quality of early care and education (ECE) programs
2. Increase coordination of funding and service delivery among ECE programs and between ECE programs and public schools
3. Increase use of appropriate, consistent, and comprehensive assessments by ECE programs

Child/Family Outcomes—

1. Increase number of children enrolled in high quality early care and education programs
2. Increase number of children scoring in the appropriate development range or meeting the appropriate benchmark
3. Increase number of 3rd grade students passing standards of learning assessments
4. Decrease retention rates for children in grades K-3

HEALTH

All families of children prenatal to age five will have access to a full range of prevention & treatment services to ensure their children are healthy.



- A. Increase access to health services through expansion, increased coordination, and effective practices and policies.

**System Outcomes–**

1. A strong workforce of health professionals serving children and families
2. Increase therapists serving children
3. Increase coordination among health care programs
4. Increase data linkages and information sharing among partners and agencies.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

All Arizonians will recognize the importance of early childhood and act to support policies and investments promoting First Things First for all children.



- A. Persuade the public and key leaders and decision makers of the importance of early childhood and the benefits of early childhood initiatives.
- B. Increase participation and engagement of leaders to support state and regional early childhood initiatives.
- C. Promote collective action to alter key early childhood systems and policies at regional and state levels, in both public and private entities.
- D. Regularly inform the public and all stakeholders of progress on the Navajo Nation's Regional Partnership Council's efforts.



System Outcomes—

1. Strong, organized community networks for advocacy and building public will
2. Consistent and effective advocacy messages for various audiences
3. A strong, growing, and mobilized pool of early childhood champions in all sectors
4. Increase awareness of the importance of early childhood development
5. Stakeholder commitment to a unified policy agenda

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Roles of the System Partners

- **Leaders – convening and facilitating**
- **Partners – co-convene and facilitate or participate**
- **Participants**



Next Steps

- An open, visible process is needed;
- A diverse group of thinkers is important to draw from knowledge that already exists;
- Choose strategic areas to focus on for an actionable agenda;
- Consider breadth and depth of the system;
- Determine if components are equally weighted or if some areas are prioritized.



- What do you want to see in place in the early childhood system in 5, 10, 15 years?
- What are the issues and obstacles that stand in the way of that vision?
- What are strategies for building and strengthening the EAC system in the next 2 years?
- How are we going to implement the step-by-step for strengthen the EAC system.