



## FIRST THINGS FIRST

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July 31, 2009

Ms. Donna Vigil, Executive Director  
WMAT Division of Health Programs  
Post Office Box 1210  
Whiteriver, Arizona 85941

Dear Ms. Vigil,

We are writing to submit for approval consideration a data collection and reporting request on behalf of the First Things First White Mountain Apache Tribe Regional Partnership Council for the 2010 Regional Needs & Assets report. As you might remember, First Things First compiles a Regional Needs & Assets report every two years in order to understand trends in the community related to early childhood development and health. From the information contained in the report, the Regional Partnership Council can prioritize the needs and develop appropriate systems to meet those needs. Understanding that the White Mountain Apache Tribe owns all data collected within the reservation boundaries; and knowing the Tribal Health Board provides necessary approvals for any data collection relating to health programs and initiatives, First Things First is seeking the appropriate approvals *prior* to any data collection for the biennial Regional Needs & Assets Report.

Additionally, we are seeking support to have the Fort Apache Indian lands treated as a separate region under First Things First. The Arizona state statute requires that Tribal Regions under First Things First be allowed the opportunity, every two years, to determine whether they would like to have their tribal lands considered a separate region or if they would like to be included in the county region in which they reside.

**Relevance to the Community:** According to the U.S. Census, there are approximately 1,600 children residing within the boundaries of the Fort Apache Indian Reservation. Of those, approximately 50% are at or below the federal poverty level. Although there are programs within the community that provide early childhood development and health services, there is not a system to ensure coordination and sustainability among all early childhood programs. First Things First would help build on the current services that are being offered while creating a sustainable system for children birth through age five and their families.

For your review, I am attaching the 2008 Biennial Status Report, which highlights the work of the Regional Partnership Council over the past 13 months.

We look forward to the continued support of the Division of Health Programs and the Tribal Health Board in improving the lives of our youngest community members.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rochelle Lacapa', with a long, sweeping underline.

Rochelle Lacapa, MPH  
Regional Coordinator

cc: Tribal Health Board Members  
White Mountain Apache Tribe Regional Partnership Council Members

encl: Biennial Status Report