



FIRST THINGS FIRST

Ready for School. Set for Life.

AGENDA ITEM: Regional Needs and Assets Reports

BACKGROUND: The purpose of the Regional Needs and Assets Reports is to identify assets, coordination opportunities, and unmet needs in early childhood development and health programs in each region. The needs and assets report is intended as the primary vehicle for the collection and analysis of all data available at the regional level, and informs the strategic planning of each regional partnership council.

The following Regional Partnership Councils have completed their 2014 Regional Needs and Assets reports and executive summaries of the report are provided in the attached document (regional partnership councils are listed by regional area order used in the attached document):

Cochise	North Phoenix
Gila	South Phoenix
Graham/Greenlee	Central Pima
Pinal	North Pima
East Maricopa (Northeast and Central)	Pascua Yaqui Tribe
Northwest Maricopa	Santa Cruz
Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community	South Pima
Southeast Maricopa	Cocopah Tribe
Southwest Maricopa	Colorado River Indian Tribes
Navajo Apache	Hualapai Tribe
Yavapai	La Paz/Mohave
Central Phoenix	Yuma

The following Regional Partnership Councils have submitted a request for extension of the deadline (included in attached document) for the completion of their 2014 Regional Needs and Assets reports:

Coconino	San Carlos Apache Tribe
Gila River Indian Community	Tohono O'odham Nation
Navajo Nation	White Mountain Apache Tribe

RECOMMENDATION: The CEO recommends approval of Regional Needs and Assets reports and requests for extension as submitted.

2014

Regional Needs and Assets Reports
Executive Summaries



FIRST THINGS FIRST



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**Central East Regional Partnership Councils
Regional Needs and Assets Reports
Executive Summaries**

**Cochise
Gila
Graham/Greenlee
Pinal**

Executive Summary

Approach to the 2014 Report

This report highlights key population, socioeconomic, health and economic indicators that pertain to children birth through age five and their families in the Cochise Region. A comprehensive list of demographic indicators specific to each zip code is available in Section Two of this report (the Zip Code Fact Box Resource Guide). These indicators were selected for their importance in gaining a comprehensive understanding of the Cochise Region's needs and assets, which are essential to strategic planning and ongoing early childhood system building work.

The Cochise Region Geography

The First Things First Cochise Region and Cochise County share the same boundaries. Therefore, the terms are used interchangeably in this report. Located in the southeastern corner of Arizona, the region borders the state of New Mexico on its eastern side, and on its southern boundary, the international border of Sonora, Mexico. Geographically diverse and expansive, it covers 6,219 square miles. Incorporated cities in the region include Tombstone, Benson, Willcox, Huachuca City, Sierra Vista, Bisbee and Douglas.

The region's economy is primarily based on agriculture, mining, and tourism, with the exception of Sierra Vista, where the Fort Huachuca Military Base is located, and Douglas, which has a manufacturing base.

Population

- The 2010 Census reported that the population of Cochise County was 131,346. This is 10 percent higher than the population of 119,351 reported in the 2000 Census. During the same period of time, the population across the state of Arizona grew by about 25 percent.
- The number of children birth through age five reported in the 2010 Census was 10,125, up 5 percent from 9,640 reported in the 2000 Census. Children in this age group currently comprise approximately 8 percent of the county population.
- Cochise County birth numbers fluctuated between 2010 and 2012, according to the Arizona Department of Health's Vital Statistics Office. The numbers declined from 1,781 in 2010 to 1,660 in 2011, but then increased to 1,700 in 2012.

- Half (50 percent) of all children born in Cochise County in 2012 were White, more than the state average of 45 percent, according to the Arizona Department of Health's Vital Statistics Office. As for ethnicity, Cochise County's proportion of Hispanic/Latino children has been increasing. Hispanic/Latino births made up 41 percent of all county births in 2010 and 42 percent of all births in 2012. These rates exceed those of the state: Hispanic/Latino births in 2012 represented 39 percent of all births statewide.

Social and Economic Circumstances

- Poverty disproportionately impacts young children both in Cochise County and statewide, according to the 2007-2011 ACS. Between 15-16 percent of the general population in Arizona and Cochise County lived in poverty compared to between 25-26 percent of children birth through age five in Cochise County and the state.
- In a positive trend, child poverty for children birth through age five in the Cochise Region decreased approximately 3 percent between the 2000 Census and the 2007-2011 American Community Survey estimate, from 28 to 25 percent. This contrasts the state's numbers, where child poverty in this age group increased from 21 to 24 percent over the same time period.
- According to the 2008-2012 ACS, 37 percent of mothers in Cochise County were unmarried, slightly less than the state average of 38 percent. Among unmarried mothers in Cochise County, 36 percent had less than a high school diploma compared to 9 percent of married mothers.

Early Childhood Education and Child Care

- In Cochise County, the 2008-2012 ACS reported that about 50 percent of children birth through age five living with both parents had both parents in the workforce (3,003 children) and 73 percent of children living with one parent had that parent in the workforce (2,686 children). These children with working parents, about 5,689, need some type of child care. Child care may also be needed for the children of non-working parents who are trying to find employment or who are attending school.
- Regulated child care and education providers include ADHS licensed centers, ADHS certified group homes, and DES certified homes. The FTF Cochise Region had 99 regulated (licensed and certified) child care and education providers in December 2013 registered with the Child Care Resource and Referral database, down from 119 registered providers in December 2011, which is a twenty percent reduction. Most of the decline occurred in certified home providers (from 78 to 51). Among regulated providers in 2013, 41 were ADHS licensed centers, 7 were ADHS certified group homes, and 51 were DES certified homes.

- Despite the downturn in the number of child care and education providers, their capacity has increased recently, as providers are able to care for a greater proportion of the county's children than reported in the 2012 Needs and Assets Report. The maximum authorized capacity of all care and education providers in December 2013 was about 3,469. If one assumes that 80 percent of that capacity is used for children birth through age five, licensed and certified providers in the Cochise Region had slots for an estimated 2,775 children in this age group in December 2013. That is, licensed and certified providers had the capacity to provide care for about 27 percent of the 10,125 estimated children birth through age five in the region and for about 49 percent of the 5,689 children birth through age five with working parents. This is an increase in capacity from the 24 percent of children reported in the 2012 Needs and Assets Report.
- Due to the economic recession and decline in state revenues, the state legislature reduced many family support programs, including child care and education subsidies. The number of families eligible for the child care and education subsidy decreased by 17 percent in the state as a whole and by 25 percent in the Cochise Region from January 2010 to January 2012. In response to the cuts, the Cochise Regional Partnership Council is expending funds on providing scholarships to children through Quality First enrolled providers.
- Quality First is one of the cornerstone systemic strategies of First Things First to improve access to high quality early learning and care settings for children birth through age five. As of December 2013, there were 37 Quality First enrolled providers in the region, up from 26 reported in the 2012 Needs and Assets Report.
- The average cost of full-time care across all providers in the region in December 2013 ranged from \$136 per week for infant care to \$119 per week for the care of four-to-five-year-olds. Infant care in licensed centers was \$168 per week on average, compared with \$132 per week for four-to-five-year-olds. In DES certified homes, infant care cost \$118 per week, on average, compared to \$115 per week for four- to five-year-olds. For families who pay for 50 weeks of care per year, the cost can range from about \$8,400 per year for an infant in an ADHS licensed center to about \$5,900 in a DES certified home.

Family Supports

- In Cochise County, 236 children, or approximately 2 percent of the 10,125 children birth through age five, received TANF (or cash assistance) benefits. This proportion is the same as that of Arizona. TANF enrollments are low and have declined in recent years. This decline is primarily due to state legislative actions to restrict program benefits.

- In Cochise County and Arizona, the proportion of children receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits in January 2012 was much higher than for TANF benefits. Approximately 3,937 children birth through age five were receiving nutritional assistance in the Cochise Region in January 2012, or 39 percent of the 10,125 children in this age group. Statewide, 40 percent of children birth through age five received SNAP in January 2012.
- In January 2012, 2,544 children birth through age four were enrolled in the Women, Infants and Children Program (WIC) program in the Cochise Region. This represents 83 percent of the 3,078 children who were eligible for the program.
- The FTF Cochise Regional Partnership Council identified the need to increase access to comprehensive family education and support services and to increase the availability of resources that support health and access to early learning. Cochise Regional Partnership Council was intentional in how their partners targeted their services across the county.
- In response to a need for families to understand all services and programs offered, the Cochise Regional Partnership Council developed a printed Resource Guide and interactive online version for families and organizations to find programs/services. Home visitation workers within each program and organization have a copy and use it with families, and anyone can access the online version to make use of resources from the area.

Health

- Some health statistics put Cochise County in a position of somewhat greater risk than the state average. In 2012, the county has a lower percentage of mothers with prenatal care in the first trimester (80 percent) than the state (83 percent), according to the Arizona Department of Health Services. Three percent of mothers in Cochise County had no prenatal care, exceeding the state's rate of one percent. Approximately 5 percent of pregnant mothers reported smoking, compared to 4 percent statewide. The percentage of births to teen mothers was also slightly higher for Cochise County: 10 percent compared to the state rate of 9 percent.
- Cochise County outperforms the state on other health risk indicators relating to family structure and poverty, according to the Arizona Department of Health Services. Cochise County had a lower percent of unwed mothers in 2012 than the state, 38 percent compared to 45 percent. Cochise County's share of publicly funded births, at 44 percent, is significantly lower than the statewide average of 53 percent. In a positive trend, births to teen mothers in Cochise County decreased slightly over time, from approximately 12 percent of all births in 2010 to 10 percent in 2012.

- Immunization rates for the Cochise Region in 2012 were about the same as rates for Arizona, according to the Arizona Department of Health Services. In Cochise County and Arizona, 70 percent of children 12-24 months completed their immunization series. In Cochise County, 49 percent of children ages 19-35 months completed their immunization series compared to 48 percent for Arizona. Completion rates must be interpreted with caution, however, due to challenges in calculating the rates.¹
- Dental care among young children continues to be limited in the Cochise Region. The Cochise Regional Partnership Council is addressing the oral health needs for all children birth through age five.

Conclusion

The geographic dispersion and economic disparities of the region's population offer challenges to building a comprehensive, coordinated early care and childhood system in Cochise County. Although access to high quality, affordable early child care and education is improving, it varies by community and remains a critical need.

The Cochise Regional Partnership Council has addressed these needs by employing multi-pronged, long-term strategies in the region to coordinate services and build capacity for early childhood care, education and support services. These include the package of strategies under Quality First, oral health and home visitation.

The Cochise Regional Partnership Council alone cannot address all of the needs documented in this report, many of which are structural deficits in the social service and educational systems. However, the Cochise Regional Partnership Council's approach has been to build on the existing community resources and infrastructure and to partner or collaborate with numerous community agencies and organizations. These are the building blocks for a strong and sustainable early childhood care and education system.

¹ ASIIS-based coverage level estimates are nearly always lower than actual coverage levels given the challenges in determining a completion rate. Fragmented records, children relocating out of state before completing their immunizations, and duplication of records are some reasons for these challenges.

Executive Summary

The Gila Region Geography

The Gila Regional Partnership Council supports the needs of young children in the Gila First Things First Region. The Gila Region has many of the same boundaries as Gila County and includes the Tonto Apache Tribe, while the White Mountain Apache and San Carlos Apache tribal lands fall outside of the region. The majority of the population in the Gila Region lives in Globe/Miami and Payson.

Population

According to U.S. Census data, the Gila Region had a population of 48,303 in 2010, of whom 2,786 (6%) were children under the age of six. Both the Gila Region and Gila County have a smaller proportion of households with children birth through five years of age (9% and 11% respectively) than the state as a whole (16%). The southern portion of the Gila Region (Globe, Miami, Hayden/Winkelman) has more households with children under six than the northern portion of the region (Payson, etc.), where there are fewer households with young children.

In the Gila Region, 74 percent of children birth to five years of age are living with at least one parent, with 26 percent living in a single-female headed household. The region (20%), county (28%) and seven of nine areas in the region have a higher percentage of young children living with grandparents than the state (14%). Four areas have a quarter or more of the young children in their communities living with grandparents; Hayden (45%), Winkelman, Dudleyville (30%), Miami (28%), and Roosevelt (25%).

Most of the adult population living in the region (75%) identified as White, not-Hispanic and more than half (56%) of the population of children aged birth through four living in the region were identified as White, not-Hispanic. Three areas in the region had more than half of children through age four identified as Hispanic; Hayden (86%), Winkelman, Dudleyville (76%), and Miami (57%).

Social and Economic Circumstances

Many families across the Gila Region face economic challenges. The percentage of the population of children aged birth through five living in poverty in the Gila Region (39%) and in Gila County (44%) is higher than the state as a whole (27%). In the Globe area, this percentage is even higher with 48 percent of young children living in poverty. In addition, fewer children living with two parents in the region and the county have both parents in the labor force (24%) compared to the state (32%).

Due to this higher rate of economic disadvantage, many families in the region may benefit from public assistance programs. The number of young children receiving Nutrition Assistance (SNAP) benefits has increased in the region (+20%) and the county (+12%) between 2010 and 2012, more than across the state in the same period (+2%). Individual communities also saw greater increases such as the Hayden area, the Winkelman, Dudleyville area and the Payson area. Overall, half of the young children in the region were receiving SNAP in 2012. In the beginning of 2012, 42 percent of young children in Gila County were participating in WIC, higher than the state rate of 29 percent. In Gila County, 30 percent of

children under 18 years of age faced food insecurity, slightly higher than the state as a whole, suggesting the need for additional food supports.

Educational Indicators

Compared to the rest of the state, the Gila Region lags behind in the educational attainment of its adults. While adults in the region (13%) are less likely to be without a high school diploma or GED than the state of Arizona overall (15%), they are also less likely to have a bachelor's degree or more (17% vs. 27%). In addition, just 40 percent of births in the region are to mothers with more than a high school degree. These factors may limit employment opportunities for many in the region, and early literacy opportunities for some children.

The need for additional early literacy opportunities in the region can be evidenced in a number of ways. First, Gila County 3rd graders performed less well than students statewide in both the math and reading AIMS tests, with a lower percentage of students passing in each subject (50% math, 59% reading) than the state (69% math, 75% reading). In addition, only 16 percent of three and four year olds in the region are estimated to be enrolled in an early learning setting, compared to 34 percent across the state. Finally, only one-quarter of the region's population of children aged birth through five are being served in licensed or certified child care settings. Although the need for early learning opportunities in the region remains large, the Gila Regional Partnership Council is supporting the development of an additional early learning center in the Globe/Miami area, as well as funding child care scholarships through Quality First to address the barrier of affordability that many families in the region face.

Health

While access to health care can be problematic for the Gila Region with all of Gila County designated as a "Federally Medically Underserved Area", and access to specialty medical and mental health services cited as key needs, two recently opened Federally Qualified Health Centers in the Globe and Payson areas may help to make health services more accessible for some in the region.

During 2012, there were 429 births in the region, down overall from 2009, but a slight increase from the previous year. The percentage of women in the region receiving early prenatal care in 2012 (77%), fell below the state average (79%) and the Healthy People 2020 target (78%), but showed an increase of seven percent since 2009. The percentage of births with low birth weight has been decreasing since 2009, with a low of 5.4 percent in 2012. The percentage of births to teen mothers has also been decreasing with a low of 12 percent in 2012, as have the percent of preterm births, with a low of six percent in 2012. One area still in need of improvement is maternal smoking. In the Gila Region, averaged over the four years from 2009-2012, over 16 percent of women reported smoking during pregnancy, much higher than the state of Arizona (4%), and the Healthy People 2020 target of no more than 1.4 percent.

Potentially related to smoking during pregnancy is an indicator of elevated substance use in the region. The age-adjusted mortality rates for both alcohol-induced and drug-induced deaths in Gila County are much higher than the state of Arizona. In particular, the age-adjusted mortality rate for drug-induced

deaths for females in Gila County was 41.7/100,000, twice as high as the state rate, and the highest of any county in the state

Family Support

The number of children removed from their homes between the ages of birth and five has increased from 2011 to 2013, in the region (+48%), county (+56%) and state (+35%). In Gila County, approximately four percent of youth indicated that they currently had an incarcerated parent, and 21 percent indicated that they had a parent who had previously been incarcerated, which may highlight a potential need for resources for these children.

The Gila Region is served by a number of parenting education programs, provided in a variety of settings and by a variety of providers. In addition, teen parents throughout the region are offered parenting education through both in-home and educational supports. The region is also increasing early literacy resources available to families through involvement in the Dolly Parton Imagination Library, and by participating in the network of Read On Arizona communities, offering additional literacy supports and programs for families in the region.

Conclusion

While the Gila Region faces challenges to providing comprehensive, high quality early care and education, children's health care, and support for families with young children due to the diversity of its population and geographical spread of the region, the Gila Regional Partnership Council is committed to the ideal that all children in the Gila Region should arrive at kindergarten healthy and ready to succeed. The Council's commitment to supporting collaboration and expanding early learning opportunities is helping to move the region closer to this goal.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report details findings from the fourth Needs and Assets assessment completed in 2014 for the Graham/Greenlee Regional Partnership Council. This assessment will be used to help guide the Council's strategic planning and funding decisions for the next two years. The report includes relevant comparisons with data from previous years to provide a context of trends within the region.

Methodology

First Things First obtained most of the data included in this report from others state agencies, among them the Department of Economic Security, Department of Health Service, and Department of Education. Most demographic and economic data came from various divisions of the U.S. Census Bureau: the Biennial Census, American Community Survey, and Small Area Income and Poverty Estimate Program. The American Community Survey produces 1-year, 3-year, and 5-year estimates. Each of the estimates has certain distinguishing features.

- One-year estimates are based on 12 months of data collected in areas with a population of 65,000 or greater. These estimates are the most current, but are considered less reliable than the 3-year or 5-year estimates.
- Three-year estimates use data collected over 36 months in areas that have a population of 20,000 or greater. They are less current than 1-year estimates but more current than 5-year estimates. Their reliability level is higher than the 1-year estimates but lower than the 5-year estimates.
- Five-year estimates rely on 60 months of data collected in all areas. With the largest sample size they are considered the most reliable, although they are the least current.

For this report, 5-year estimates were most commonly used due to the small population size of Graham County, Greenlee County, and their communities. In some cases, only one type of American Community Survey estimate was available for an indicator. In other instances, data were not available from American Community Survey source for Greenlee County due to its small population size. Data from different U.S. Census Bureau sources for the same year for the same indicator may slightly differ.

Several general principles guided the choice of data presented and the way the data were shown.

- Whenever possible and useful, provide data for multiple geographical levels - local level (i.e., zip code or town), county, state, and nation – to better enable comparison.
- Whenever possible and useful, provide data for multiple time points to enable identification of trends.
- Percentages are rounded off to the nearest whole percent, except in cases where an additional decimal place will be useful for comparisons.

Key Demographic Findings

- Roughly 8% of the region's population is comprised of children under five years old. Between 2000 and 2012, the population of children under five years of age in Graham County grew faster than the total population.
- Children five years old and younger make 11% or more of the population in several of the region's towns and cities.
- The total population of Graham County is projected to increase by 14% over the next decade; Greenlee County's population is expected to increase by 1% over the same period.
- Thirty-four percent of Graham County grandparents who live with their children and grandchildren have assumed primary caregiving responsibility for their live-in grandchildren; 66% of such grandparents have assumed this responsibility in Greenlee County. This figure is below the statewide and national rates of 42% and 40%, respectively. Seventeen percent of the grandparents in Graham County and who live with their grandchildren and 14% of those who do so in Greenlee County have acted as primary caregiver for the grandchildren for five or more years, indicating they have taken on a long-term caregiving role for their grandchildren.
- The Hispanic proportion of the population, 31% in Graham County and 48% in Greenlee County, exceeds the statewide percentage of 30%.
- A language other than English is spoken in the homes of 20% of the population five years of age and older in Graham County; in Greenlee County this is so for 23% of the population.
- About 14% of the births in 2011 and 2012 were to teens, down from a 5-year high of 18% in 2010. In Greenlee County, the percentage of teen births decreased from a 5-year high of 22% in 2009 to 9% in 2012.

Key Economic Findings

- Between 2008 and 2012, an average of 26% of Graham County's married couple families with children under five years of age were living below the federal poverty level; in Greenlee County 10% of such families were below the federal poverty line. In contrast, 75% of the female-headed households with no husband present and children under five years of age in Graham County were living in poverty. There were no female-headed households with children under 5 years of age living in poverty in Greenlee County.
- From 2011-2013 the number of economically disadvantaged students has shown a downward trend in a few of the region's school districts (Bonita Elementary, Duncan Unified, and Graham County Special Services). However, in 2013, the percentage of students who were economically disadvantaged surpassed 40% in the majority of the region's school districts and charter schools.
- Between 2009 and 2013, the unemployment rate in the Graham County almost steadily decreased from 11.5% to 6.1%. In Greenlee County the unemployment rate also trended downward from a 6-year high of 18.7% in 2009 to 6.0% in 2012, but slightly increased to 6.7% in

2013. The 2013 unemployment rate varied greatly by locality, from 3.4% in Morenci to 9.7% in Clifton.

- The number of families with children ages 0-5 enrolled in the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (i.e. “Food Stamps”) grew from 670 in January 2009 to 1,002 in January 2010 in Graham County and has remained at roughly the same level since then. In Greenlee County, the number of such families increased from 72 in January 2009 to 132 in January 2010, staying at roughly that level since then.
- In 2011, free or reduced lunch enrollment in school districts in Graham and Greenlee counties ranged from 29% in Morenci to 95% in Fort Thomas Unified School District. Forty percent or more of students were enrolled in free or reduced lunch in that year in eight of the nine districts for which data were available.

Key Education Findings

- In Graham County, the percentage of mothers with no high school diploma has gradually decreased from 2008 onward but rose again in 2012. The percentage of Graham County mothers with one or more years of college followed a general upward trend from 31% in 2008 to 39% in 2012. Over the same period, in Greenlee County the percentage of mothers with no high school diploma showed an almost steady downward trend from 2008 to 2012. The county has also experienced relatively steady growth over the period in the percentage of mothers that have attended college for one or more years.
- A much higher percentage of adults in Graham and Greenlee counties have graduated high school compared to the state and nation as a whole. The percentage of adults 25 years and older in Graham and Greenlee counties that have completed some college also surpasses those for the state and nation. However, both counties lag far behind state and national figures for attainment of higher education such as a Bachelor’s, graduate, or professional degree.
- In 2013, 72% of Graham County 3rd grade students met or exceeded the standard in mathematics and 80% did so in reading. In Greenlee County, 81% 3rd grade students met or exceeded the standards on the Mathematics AIMS test in 2013 and 86% did so on the Reading AIMS test.
- Five of the region’s seven public high schools had a graduation rate of 90% or higher in 2012.

Key Early Child Care Findings

- All six of the region’s child care centers and three of the region’s child care homes are enrolled in First Things First’s Quality First rating program. A recently opened child care center in Greenlee County will soon enroll in the program, keeping the region’s participation rate for child care centers in Quality First at 100%.
- The number of available slots in child care facilities licensed by the Arizona Department of Health Services increased from 523 in 2011 to 707 in 2013, a 35% increase.

Graham/Greenlee Regional Partnership Council 2014 Needs and Assets Report Executive Summary

- The number of families in the Graham/Greenlee region eligible for child care assistance from the Arizona Department of Economic Security decreased steadily from 108 in January 2011 to 73 in July 2012. The number of families receiving such assistance was 85 from January 2011 to January 2012 but dropped to 72 in July 2012.
- The number of children in the Graham/Greenlee region eligible for child care assistance from the Arizona Department of Economic Security decreased from 148 in January 2011 to 120 in July 2012. The number of children receiving such assistance steadily increased from 117 in January 2011 to 125 in January 2012 but decreased to 108 in July 2012.
- The number of families on the child care assistance waiting list increased from 25 in July 2011 to 39 in July 2012. The number of children ages 0-5 on the list increased from 39 to 52 over the same period.
- In 2014, the Graham/Greenlee region provided incentives to 20 early care educators through First Things First's Professional REWARD\$, a program that offers stipends to early childhood educators who advance their education or maintain a designated length of continuous employment. In 2015, the region will provide such incentives to 30 early care educators. In addition, six early care educators in the region received T.E.A.C.H. scholarships in 2014 through FTF statewide Quality First support.

Key Family Support Findings

- The Healthy Families home visitation program, formerly only operating in Graham County, is now serving families in Greenlee County.
- A total of 1,215 service visits were provided in 2012 to 36 children ages 0-5.9 with developmental disabilities.
- In 2014, the Graham/Greenlee Partnership Council has funded a range of educational opportunities, materials, and activities for families in the region to promote health, child development and school readiness. The Council has been especially strong in supporting early literacy. In 2012, a Council-funded program distributed 24,000 books to families with young children. The same programs will be funded in 2015.

Key Health Findings

- The percentage of children that completed the 3:2:2:2 vaccination series in Graham County increased steadily from 2010 to 2012. However, the completion rate for all of the years was well below the statewide rate. The percentage of Greenlee County children ages 12-24 months that completed the 3:2:2:2 series was higher than that of the state as a whole in two of the three reported years.

Graham/Greenlee Regional Partnership Council 2014 Needs and Assets Report Executive Summary

- In 2012, 59% of children ages 12 to 24 months in Graham County and 75% of children in that age group in Greenlee County completed the 3:2:2:2 vaccination series. Over the same period, the percentage of children ages 19 to 35 months that completed the 4:1:3:3:1 vaccination series was 43% in Graham County and 50% in Greenlee County. These rates largely mirrored the state rate for that year. Completion rates must be interpreted with caution, however, due to challenges in calculating the rates.²
- Enrollment in KidsCare/KidsCare II increased from 56 in February 2012 to 194 in February 2013. However, the program ended on January 31, 2014. Some children formerly served by KidsCare will enroll in health insurance through the Affordable Care Act (ACA) but some parents that receive health insurance through their employer may not be able to afford the additional cost of adding their children on to their plan.
- In Graham County the percentage of women who had 13 or more prenatal visits increased steadily from 6% in 2008 to 13% in 2012. In Greenlee County, this percentage increased almost steadily from 4% to 17% over the same period.
- In Graham County the percentage of women who had 9-12 prenatal visits increased almost steadily from 32% in 2008 to 43% in 2012; women who had 13 or more such visits increases steadily from 6% to 13% over the same years. In Greenlee County, the percentage of women who had 9-12 prenatal visits increased almost steadily from 30% in 2008 to 53% in 2012; those with 13 or more prenatal visits similarly had almost steady increase over the period, from 4% in 2008 to 17% in 2012.
- In 2012, 12% of the births in Graham County and 11% of the births in Greenlee County were pre-term. This compares to a statewide rate of 9%.
- In four of the five years from 2008 to 2012, the percentage of low birth weight babies born in Graham County has exceeded the statewide rate. In 2012, the Graham County rate was 7.6%, as compared to 6.9% for the state as a whole. In Greenlee County, the percentage of low birth weight babies was lower than the statewide rate in three of the five years. In 2012, 5.3% of the babies in Greenlee County were low birth weight, as compared to the state rate of 6.9%.
- Graham County has 56.5 child fatalities per 100,000 residents, seventh highest among the state's 15 counties. Greenlee County has 41.5 child fatalities per 100,000 residents, making it the thirteenth highest.

² ASIIS-based coverage level estimates are nearly always lower than actual coverage levels given the challenges in determining a completion rate. Fragmented records, children relocating out of state before completing their immunizations, and duplication of records are some reasons for these challenges.

Executive Summary

This report details findings from the Needs and Assets assessment completed in 2014 for the Pinal Regional Partnership Council. This assessment will be used to help guide the Council's strategic planning and funding decisions for the next two years. The report includes relevant comparisons with data from previous years to provide a context of trends within the region.

Methodology

First Things First obtained most of the data included in this report from other state agencies, among them the Department of Economic Security, Department of Health Service, and Department of Education. Most demographic and economic data came from various divisions of the U.S. Census Bureau: the Biennial Census, American Community Survey, and Small Area Income and Poverty Estimate Program. The American Community Survey produces 1-year, 3-year, and 5-year estimates. Each of the estimates has certain distinguishing features.

- One-year estimates are based on 12 months of data collected in areas with a population of 65,000 or greater. These estimates are the most current, but are considered less reliable than the 3-year or 5-year estimates.
- Three-year estimates use data collected over 36 months in areas that have a population of 20,000 or greater. They are less current than 1-year estimates but more current than 5-year estimates. Their reliability level is higher than the 1-year estimates but lower than the 5-year estimates.
- Five-year estimates rely on 60 months of data collected in all areas. With the largest sample size they are considered the most reliable, although they are the least current.

For this report, one or more different U.S. Census data sources may be used in a single exhibit, depending on the type and availability of the data being reported on. In some cases, only one type of American Community Survey estimate was available for an indicator. Data from different U.S. Census Bureau sources for the same year for the same indicator may slightly differ.

Several general principles guided the choice of data presented and the way the data were shown.

- Whenever possible and useful, provide data for multiple geographical levels - local level (i.e., zip code or town), county, state, and nation – to better enable comparison.
- Whenever possible and useful, provide data for multiple time points to enable identification of trends.
- Percentages are rounded off to the nearest whole percent, except in cases where an additional decimal place will be useful for comparisons.

Key Demographic Findings

- Children under five years of age make up approximately 8% of the region's population.
- The population of Pinal County is projected to increase by 39% to 561,844 over the next 10 years.
- Whites constituted the Pinal County's largest racial/ethnic group in 2012, making up 58% of the population, followed by Hispanics at 29%. Within the Ak-Chin Indian community, 84% of people self-identified as American Indian, followed by 9% that reported they were Hispanic.
- About 51% of grandparents in the region that share living space with their children and grandchildren have assumed primary caregiving responsibility for their grandchildren. Nineteen percent of such grandparents have been acting in that role for five or more years.
- In each year from 2010 to 2012, 10% of the births in Pinal County have been to teenagers.
- Twenty-three percent of Pinal residents five years of age and older report that a language other than English is spoken in their homes, although that language may not be spoken exclusively.

Key Economic Findings

- The median family gross annual income in Pinal County rose from \$49,012 in 2011 to \$55,969 in 2012. The median income of single parent male-headed families and female-headed families was 72% and 39%, respectively, of the median income of married couple families in 2012.
- Eighteen percent of Pinal County residents lived in poverty in 2012.
- On average, 43% of single-parent female-headed households with children under five years of age lived in poverty in Pinal County from 2008 to 2012.
- In each year between 2010 and 2013, in a majority of the region's school districts, the percentage of students who were economically disadvantaged surpassed 50%.
- The unemployment rate in the region steadily dropped from 12.2% in 2009 to 8.4% in 2013.
- Total employment in Pinal County has shown a relatively steady increase between the fourth quarter of 2011 and the first quarter of 2013.
- The number of families with children ages 0-5 enrolled in Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) steadily decreased from January 2009 to January 2012.
- Enrollment in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program by Pinal County families with children ages five years or younger steadily increased from 5,457 in January 2009 to 7,387 in January 2012, a 35% increase in enrollment over the period.
- In 2011, in 12 of 13 Pinal districts for which data were available, more than half of students were enrolled in the free or reduced lunch program.
- Only approximately 21% of the children certified for the Women Infant and Children (WIC) Program go on to participate in it.

Key Education Findings

- The percentage of mothers with a high school diploma was 35% in the 2012, the highest of the last five reported years.

- A higher percentage of adults in Pinal County have graduated high school, completed some college, have some college experience, and have attained an associate's degree compared to the state and nationwide. However, the county lags behind state and national figures for attainment of higher education such as a bachelor's, graduate, or professional degree.
- In 2013, 63% of Pinal County 3rd grade students passed the AIMS Mathematics test, a 5% decrease from 2012. Seventy-one percent of 3rd grade students passed the AIMS Reading test, 2% lower than in 2012.
- In 2013, a total of 3,660 preschool and elementary students in Pinal Region's public school districts were enrolled in special education and, of those students, 1,175 (32%) were ELL. Districts with the largest number of Special Education students in 2013 were Casa Grande Elementary District (752), Florence Unified District (608), and Maricopa Unified District (500). Casa Grande Elementary District had the largest number of ELL students (368), followed by Florence Unified and Maricopa Unified with 153 and 136 ELL students, respectively.
- In 2012, graduation rates in Pinal County school districts ranged from 30% for Mary C O'Brien Accommodation District to 97% for Superior Unified School District, with six of the nine districts having a rate between 72% and 79%.

Key Early Child Care Findings

- A total of 43 child care centers and child care homes in the region participated in Quality First in 2014.
- In 2013, a total of 93 child care providers in Pinal County were licensed by the Arizona Department of Health Services.
- Capacity in Pinal child care facilities licensed by the Arizona Department of Health Services increased by 10% between 2011 and 2013.
- The number of Pinal families that were eligible for child care assistance decreased from 660 in January 2011 to 592 in July 2012, a 10% drop. However, the number of families receiving such assistance fluctuated in a narrow range (549-557) over the same period.
- The number of Pinal children eligible for child care assistance decreased by 10% between January 2011 and July 2012, from 1,014 to 914. The number of children receiving such assistance fluctuated between 831 and 863 over the same period.
- The number of Pinal families and children on the child care assistance wait list increased by 56% and 50%, respectively, between July 2011 and July 2012.
- Eight people participated in Department of Economic Security-sponsored Child Care Professional Training held in Pinal Region in June and July 2013. Two trainings have been scheduled in the region in 2014, one in Apache Junction beginning in March 2014 and a second in Casa Grande starting in May 2014.
- In 2014, 83 early education teachers in the region received T.E.A.C.H. scholarships and 66 early care and education teachers received Professional REWARD\$ professional development incentive. The Pinal Regional Partnership Council also provided funding for higher education and credentialing to 64 early care and education teachers.

- The Pinal Regional Partnership Council funded 416 Quality First scholarships slots for families in the region in SFY 2014.

Key Family Support Findings

- In SFY 2014, 330 parents participated in community-based parent education trainings.
- The Pinal Regional Partnership Council funded the distribution of 2,000 food boxes to needy families with young children in SFY 2014.
- Home visitation programs funded by the Pinal Regional Partnership Council provided home visitation services to 416 families in SFY 2014.

Key Health Findings

- Enrollment in Kids Care/Kids Care II increased from 432 in February 2012 to 1,308 in February 2013. However, the program ended on January 31, 2014. Some children formerly served by KidsCare will enroll in health insurance through the Affordable Care Act (ACA) but some parents that receive health insurance through their employer may not be able to afford the additional cost of adding their children on to their plan.
- From 2008-2011, 81-85% of pregnant women in Pinal County had at least nine prenatal visits.
- The percentage of low birth weight babies born in Pinal County between 2008 and 2012 has generally been lower than the statewide rate. However, the rate has risen over the last two reported years from 6.6% in 2010 to 7.2% in 2012.
- From 2010 to 2012, the completion rate for the 3:2:2:2 vaccination series was 73%-74% and in each year surpassed the statewide rate. Over the same period, the percentage of Pinal children ages 19 to 35 months that completed the 4:1:3:3:1 vaccination series ranged from 49% to 51%, similar to the statewide rates. These rates nearly mirrored the state rates for those years. Completion rates must be interpreted with caution, however, due to challenges in calculating the rates.³
- The percentage of the region's children ages 0-2.9 years old that were referred for developmental screening and went on to be screened through the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) has shown a steady decrease from a high of 69% in 2007 to 40% in 2012. The Pinal rates for screening children ages 0-2.9 lagged behind the state rates for 2009-2012. For children ages 3-5.9, the screening rate fluctuated, but in 2012 was less than half (47%) of those referred were screened.
- In 2012 in Pinal Region, 135 children ages 0-2.9 years and 161 children ages 3-5.9 received developmental disability services. Children ages 0-2.9 received 9,277 service visits and children ages 3-5.9 received 20,005 service visits.
- In 2012, ninety-two Pinal newborns were admitted into intensive care units. Of the admitted babies, 106 (55%) were pre-term and 108 (47%) had a low birth weight.

³ ASIIS-based coverage level estimates are nearly always lower than actual coverage levels given the challenges in determining a completion rate. Fragmented records, children relocating out of state before completing their immunizations, and duplication of records are some reasons for these challenges.



FIRST THINGS FIRST

**Maricopa Regional Partnership Councils
Regional Needs and Assets Reports
Executive Summaries**

East Maricopa

(Northeast and Central Maricopa Combined)

Northwest Maricopa

Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community

Southeast Maricopa

Southwest Maricopa

Executive Summary

The East Maricopa Region Geography

The East Maricopa Region is comprised of several communities within Maricopa County. The region was formerly divided into two separate First Things First regions; the Northeast Maricopa Region (which included Scottsdale, Paradise Valley Village, Cave Creek, Fountain Hills, Paradise Valley, Carefree, and Rio Verde, Ft McDowell, Goldfield Ranch) and the Central Maricopa Region (which included Tempe, Guadalupe, Chandler, and Ahwatukee). As of July 1st, 2014, these regions now comprise one First Things First Region, the East Maricopa Region. The East Maricopa Region also includes the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation.

Population

According to U.S. Census data, the East Maricopa Region had a population of 836,688 in 2010, of whom 54,699 (6.5%) were children under the age of six. In the East Maricopa Region, about 12 percent of households have young children. This is a lower percentage than in Maricopa County (17%) and in the state of Arizona overall (16%). However, this proportion varies substantially throughout the region, and two communities in the region greatly outpace the state and county levels for households with young children. In Guadalupe, one third (33%) of all households have one or more children under age six. On the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation, nearly a quarter (24%) of all households have one or more children under age six.

Most children in the East Maricopa Region (89%) are living with at least one parent, and the majority of children not living with a parent live with other relatives such as grandparents, uncles, or aunts (11%). The proportion of children living in a grandparent's household in the region (8%) is below state (14%) and county averages (12%), but in some communities, this proportion is much higher. Three communities have over one-third of children under six living in a grandparent's household; Guadalupe (38%), Rio Verde/Fort McDowell/Goldfield Ranch (37%) and the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation (45%).

Approximately three quarters (76%) of adults in the East Maricopa Region identify as White, non-Hispanic. Most communities in the East Maricopa Region show similar patterns for race and ethnicity among adults as seen in the region overall, with the exception of Guadalupe, which is 63 percent Hispanic and 32 percent American Indian. There are some differences between race and ethnicity proportions for adults and young children in the region. Notably, in the East Maricopa Region, 54 percent of young children are white (compared to 76% of adults), and 27 percent are Hispanic or Latino (compared to 13% of adults).

Social and Economic Circumstances

The estimated proportion of the population uninsured in the East Maricopa Region tends to be slightly lower than in Maricopa County overall. In the East Maricopa Region, 11 percent of the total population and 17 percent of children aged birth through five are living in poverty (compared to 16% and 25%

respectively in Maricopa County). However, poverty estimates vary markedly in communities across the region. In general, economic disadvantage is most concentrated in South Scottsdale, Guadalupe, and parts of Tempe and Chandler.

Educational Indicators

Adult educational achievement is high throughout the region, although there is some variability between communities. Adults in the East Maricopa Region show higher levels of education than adults in Arizona overall. Nearly half (46%) of all adults ages 25 and older in the region have a Bachelor's degree, compared with 27 percent in Arizona overall and 29 percent in Maricopa County. In addition, high school completion rates across the region exceed the state average (77%). Third grade performance on the Arizona Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS) tests exceeded state averages for passing rates in math and reading in all school districts in the region.

In the East Maricopa Region, the percentage of three and four year-old children enrolled in early education settings in 2012 (52%) greatly exceeded state levels (34%). Preschool programs include Head Start and public-school based pre-kindergarten programs available in most of the school districts in the region. However, data also suggest that there may be barriers to accessing early education opportunities in the region. The estimated percentage of three and four year olds enrolled in early education ranges throughout the region, with a high of 74 percent in Paradise Valley and a low of 21 percent in Guadalupe.

The total licensed capacity for regulated child care providers in the region covers roughly three-quarters of the total population of children aged birth through five in the region. Child care providers are concentrated in the southern and central portions of the region, and are sparser in the northern portion of the region. Although this corresponds with the overall population trends in the region, families residing in Cave Creek, Carefree, North Scottsdale and Rio Verde have fewer options for regulated child care providers, and may also have to travel long distances for child care. In addition, data about the cost of child care and information from key informants suggest it is likely to be a challenge for the majority of families in South Scottsdale, Guadalupe, Tempe, Cave Creek, and Chandler to afford the cost of child care. The East Maricopa Region funds Quality First scholarships for children aged birth through five in the region to help low-income families afford quality early education.

The percentage of students enrolled in special education in the East Maricopa Region is approximately equivalent to Arizona schools overall, and slightly higher than in Maricopa County schools over all. More than 10 percent of students are enrolled in special education across all but one of the school districts in the region. This suggests that there may be a higher number of young children in the region who would benefit from an expansion of special education and/or early intervention services. Key informants noted that early identification of special needs such as developmental delays and disabilities is a salient need in the region. A lack of public awareness about the importance of early intervention and the value of early intervention services were also highlighted as concerns by key informants.

Health

There are many hospitals, urgent care centers, and family medicine clinics in the East Maricopa Region. Even so, Guadalupe is designated as an Arizona Medically Underserved Area, and Guadalupe, Chandler, North Tempe, and Paradise Valley are also designated as Federal Medically Underserved Areas. Uneven access to medical care throughout the region is reflected in indicators of prenatal care as well. The percent of births with prenatal care begun in the first trimester, and the number of visits across the entire pregnancy are lower in Guadalupe, Tempe and the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation compared to state and county averages. The percent of births with low birth weight or pre-term births, and infant mortality rates also vary across communities in the region.

In the East Maricopa Region, the number of births to teenage mothers varies by community. While some communities are well-below state and county averages, in other communities, teenage pregnancies are more common. The teen birth rate is highest in the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation (192.4/1,000 births) while Guadalupe (74.7/1,000 births) and Tempe (44.5/1,000 births) also have higher rates than most other communities in the region.

The estimated percentage of uninsured young children in the region is similar to Arizona and Maricopa County, however there is variability by community. An estimated 20 percent of young children in Guadalupe, and 30 percent in Rio Verde/Ft McDowell/Goldfield Ranch are uninsured. These communities also have high percentages of children living with foreign-born parents in the region. These parents may be more likely to be out of work or hold jobs without health insurance benefits, or to be unaware of health insurance options for their U.S. citizen children.

Family Support

The number of children removed from their homes between the ages of birth and five has increased from 2011 to 2013, in the region (+19%), county (+35%) and state (+35%). In some communities in the region, this increase was substantially higher. According to the Arizona Department of Economic Security's Division of Children, Youth and Families, there is also a shortage of foster homes in three communities (Chandler, Tempe, and Fountain Hills) in the East Maricopa Region.

A variety of services that support families with young children, such as family resource centers, early literacy programs, and home visitation programs, are available in the East Maricopa Region. Key informants interviewed noted that the wide availability of resources and activities is a key regional strength. However, data from the 2012 Family and Community Survey suggest that caregivers in the East Maricopa Region were slightly less likely to report that it was easy to find services for young children, and they were slightly less satisfied with services than state averages. Broadening marketing efforts to more child care and early education providers may increase service awareness throughout the region.

System Coordination

System coordination is a salient need throughout Maricopa County. While key informants described community-level system coordination as strong, coordination across communities and First Things Regions can be strengthened. Given high levels of residential mobility, families often struggle to maintain service continuity when they move, as services funded in one First Things First region are not always funded by First Things First regions elsewhere in Maricopa County. Key informants said that it can be difficult for a family to find out what services are available in their new community.

Notable assets in the region include the variety of opportunities for families created by the region's proximity to the Phoenix metropolitan area; numerous professional development opportunities through local community colleges; TEACH and non-TEACH scholarships funded by the region which enable more early childhood professionals to access these professional development opportunities; high levels of parental educational attainment and well-performing school districts; resources for teenage parents; family resource, early literacy and home visitation strategies funded by the region; and ongoing efforts to improve system coordination.

Conclusion

Although the East Maricopa Region faces some challenges to providing comprehensive support for families with young children due to the diversity of the population and the geographical spread of the region, the East Maricopa Region is committed to the ideal that all children in the East Region should arrive at kindergarten healthy and prepared to succeed. The Council's commitment to this work is helping to move the East Maricopa Region closer to this goal.

Executive Summary

The Northwest Maricopa Region Geography

The Northwest Maricopa Region is comprised of several communities within the northwestern portion of Maricopa County, including Aguila, El Mirage, Glendale, Morristown, Peoria, Sun City, Sun City West, Surprise, Waddell (Citrus Park), Wickenburg, Wittmann, and Youngtown. The region is geographically diverse, spanning urban cities proximal to downtown Phoenix as well as sparsely populated communities bordering Yavapai and La Paz Counties.

Population

According to U.S. Census data, the Northwest Maricopa Region had a population of 682,256 in 2010, of whom 55,083 (8%) were children under the age of six. Although the region has a slightly lower proportion of households with young children when compared with Arizona overall, this proportion varies widely throughout the region. The community of El Mirage has the highest proportion of households with young children in the region (30%). In Glendale, which is the most populous community in the region, 18 percent of households have at least one child aged birth through five. Recent data indicate that the population of young children in the Northwest Maricopa Region is growing. Between the 2000 and 2010 census, the population of children aged birth through five increased by 31 percent, greatly outpacing Maricopa County (17%) and Arizona overall (19%). Birth projections for Maricopa County suggest a continued trajectory of population growth.

Most children in the Northwest Maricopa Region (83%) are living with at least one parent, and the majority of children not living with a parent live with other relatives such as grandparents, uncles, or aunts (15%). The proportion of children living in a grandparent's household in the region is equivalent to state and county averages (5%), but in some communities in the region, this proportion is much higher. In Aguila, about 17 percent of children are living in a grandparent's household, and in Wittmann a quarter (25%) of children are living in a grandparent's household.

Nearly three quarters (72%) of adults in the Northwest Maricopa Region identify as White, non-Hispanic. About 20 percent of adults identified as Hispanic. There are some differences between race and ethnicity proportions for adults and race and ethnicity proportions for young children in the region. Notably, 48 percent of young children (ages 0-4) are White (compared to 72% of adults) and 40 percent are Hispanic or Latino (compared to 20% of adults).

The majority of families in the Northwest Maricopa Region speak English at home (81%), and most of the remaining families speak Spanish at home (14%). Linguistic isolation in the region is low overall, at three percent. However, some communities in the region have higher levels of linguistic isolation: Aguila (20%), El Mirage (9%), Glendale (6%), and Youngtown (6%).

Social and Economic Circumstances

Poverty levels tend to be slightly lower in the Northwest Maricopa Region than they are in Maricopa County overall. In the Northwest Maricopa Region, 12 percent of the total population and 21 percent of children aged birth through five are living in poverty (compared to 16% of the total population and 25% of child aged birth through five in Maricopa County overall). However, poverty levels vary markedly in communities across the region. Public assistance program participation and median family income data further illustrate both pockets of affluence and pockets of economic need within the region.

Educational Indicators

About the same proportion of third graders in school districts in the Northwest Maricopa Region pass the Arizona Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS) math and reading tests as in the state and county overall. Graduation rates among school districts in the Northwest Maricopa Region are above the state rate. More than half of births in the Northwest Maricopa Region are to mothers with more than high school-level education, and this percentage has steadily increased in the last few years.

However, data also suggest that there may be barriers to accessing early education opportunities in the region. In the Northwest Maricopa Region, only 28 percent of children ages three and four are estimated to be enrolled in early education settings (compared to the state and county estimate of 34%), and when looking across the region's communities, this percentage drops to as low as five percent (Wittmann). In Glendale, which is home to more than 40 percent of children aged birth through five in the region, only one quarter of these children are estimated to be enrolled in early education settings.

The total licensed capacity for regulated child care providers in the region is 21,124, according to data provided to First Things First by the Department of Economic Security (DES) and Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R). This is less than half the total population of children aged birth through five in the region, although it is important to note that this statistic excludes Head Start Centers as well as unregulated providers (including family and friend care).

The Department of Health and Human Services recommends that parents spend no more than 10 percent of their family income on child care, and data about the cost of child care by percent of median family income suggests that the cost of child care may be an obstacle to accessing early education for families in the Northwest Maricopa Region. The First Things First Northwest Maricopa Region funds 708 Quality First scholarship slots for children aged birth through five in the region to help low-income families afford quality early education.

A variety of professional development opportunities are available in the Northwest Maricopa Region through community colleges and organizations such as Child & Family Resources and Southwest Human Development. The Northwest Maricopa Region funds TEACH and non-TEACH scholarships in order to make professional development opportunities more accessible for early childhood professionals. The wide breadth of professional development opportunities is a substantial asset to the region.

Health

There are many hospitals, urgent care centers, and family medicine clinics in the Northwest Maricopa Region. Even so, the ratio of the population to primary care providers is very high for some communities in the region, most notably in Glendale, El Mirage, and Wickenburg. However, data suggest that prenatal care is accessible and well-utilized in the Northwest Maricopa Region, and the percent of births with fewer than five prenatal care visits has slightly declined between the years 2009 and 2012. The percent of births that are preterm births has also steadily declined in recent years. Tobacco use during pregnancy in the Northwest Maricopa Region is slightly higher than the state average, and exceeds the Healthy People 2020 target for tobacco use during pregnancy.

Family Support

Child welfare is an important issue in Arizona, Maricopa County, and the Northwest Maricopa Region. Child removals by CPS increased by 37 percent between 2011 and 2013 in the region, and the number of children currently in foster care who were removed between birth and age five has also increased. Data indicate a shortage of foster homes in communities throughout the Northwest Maricopa Region, with the greatest shortage in Glendale.

Data from the First Things First Family and Community Survey (2012) suggest that parental involvement in the Northwest Maricopa Region is higher than in the state overall. A variety of services that support families with young children, such as family resource centers and home visitation programs, are available in the region with funding from the First Things First Northwest Maricopa Regional Partnership Council. Data from the Family and Community Survey suggest a perception among families in the region that overall system coordination could be improved. However, new collaborative efforts in Maricopa County to improve system coordination may help address this need.

Conclusion

Notable assets in the region include the variety of opportunities for families created by the region's proximity to the Phoenix metropolitan area; numerous professional development opportunities through local community colleges; TEACH and non-TEACH scholarships funded by the region which enable more early childhood professionals to access these professional development opportunities; high rates of prenatal care throughout the region; resources for teenage parents; family resource and home visitation strategies funded by the region; and ongoing efforts to improve system coordination.

Notable challenges in the region include a low proportion of children enrolled in early education settings; a shortage of dental health care providers for young children; fewer services and resources in sparsely populated communities in the region; a shortage of foster homes; and the need for outreach to Spanish-speaking families, especially those that are linguistically isolated.

Although the Northwest Maricopa Region faces some challenges to providing comprehensive support for families with young children due to the diversity of the population and the geographical spread of

the region, the First Things First Northwest Maricopa Regional Partnership Council is committed to the ideal that all children in the Northwest Maricopa Region should arrive at kindergarten healthy and prepared to succeed. The Council's commitment to this work is helping to move the Northwest Maricopa Region closer to this goal.

Executive Summary

The Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community Geography

The Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community is a sovereign tribe located 15 miles northeast of Phoenix, Arizona, bordering the cities of Scottsdale, Tempe, Mesa and Fountain Hills. The Community is divided into seven districts, and 19,000 of its 53,000 acres are set as a natural preserve. The Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community is home to the Pima (“Akimel O’Odham,” River People) and the Maricopa (“Xalychidom Pipaash,” People who live toward the water).

Population

The boundaries of the First Things First Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community Region match those of the reservation. The population of the region, which includes both tribal and non-tribal members who reside on the reservation, is about 6,300 people according to the 2010 US Census, with 626 being children under the age of six. Just over half (53%) of the young children live with one or both parents. Almost all of the rest live with grandparents or other relatives.

Social and Economic Circumstances

Almost half of the Salt River children under the age of six live in poverty. Median family income on the reservation is only 65 percent of the median income for all families in the state of Arizona. The unemployment rate for 2013 (13%) was greater than that for the state (8%), but substantially less than the average for all of the reservations in the state (24%). An estimated 66 percent of the Salt River children participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP) program, 17 percent participate in the tribal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program (known as LEARN), and 90 percent participate in the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) food and nutrition services program.

Early Care and Education

Many of the 3- and 4-year-old children in the region enroll in the Early Childhood Education Center (ECEC), which is a blended program whose funding comes from Head Start and the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), as well as from the tribe itself.

Health

Health care is available through the Indian Health Service (IHS) at the Salt River Health Center or the nearby Phoenix Indian Medical Center.

In 2012, the most recent year for which data are available, there were 109 births to women who lived on the Salt River Reservation. Half of those mothers started prenatal care during their first trimester,

and nearly a quarter of them had fewer than five prenatal visits. About a quarter of the births during 2012 were to teenaged mothers. Just under ten percent of the births were preterm.

The tribal Child Find Program searches for children who may have special health or developmental needs. In 2013, the program screened 254 children under the age of six.

Additional services are available for immunizations, behavioral health issues, and oral health prevention and treatment. Qualitative interviews with service providers indicate that some children do not receive the services they need because parents do not always follow up on referrals and recommendations.

According to IHS records, about 35 percent of children ages 2 to 5 are overweight or obese. Child welfare services in the region are provided by the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community Social Services Department. In 2013, there were 440 children birth to 17 who were wards of the court. Of these, 117 were placed with relatives and 194 were placed in foster homes.

Family Support

To encourage positive home environments, the tribe, with support from First Things First and other funders, provides parent education classes and conferences on early childhood issues. Some of these programs are targeted to teen parents. Other programs encourage early literacy efforts, to help families prepare their children for kindergarten and later school success.

Caregivers of young children and key informants recognize that the Community offers a wide range of services and programs to families with young children. They also appreciate the support that Tribal leadership provides to Community children in general.

Key informants, parents and caregivers in the region agree that substance abuse is a big challenge for families with young children in the region. For children involved in neglect or abuse, coordinated services are available through the Tribal Social Services Department and the Family Advocacy Center, which houses a co-located multidisciplinary crisis response team.

Conclusion

A strength of the Salt River community is the degree to which service providers and others form partnerships, work together collaboratively, and co-locate services. These coordination efforts help create a community of care that “wants the best for all children.”

Executive Summary

The Southeast Maricopa Region Geography

The Southeast Maricopa Region is comprised of several communities within the southeastern portion of Maricopa County. The region includes Mesa and Gilbert, as well as the parts of Queen Creek and Apache Junction which lie within Maricopa County. According to U.S. Census data, the Southeast Maricopa Region had a population of 725,976 in 2010, of whom 68,473 (9.4%) were children under the age of six. About 18 percent of households had young children, which is slightly higher than in Maricopa County (17%) and in the state of Arizona overall (16%). There is variability within communities in the region, with the highest percentages of households with young children in Queen Creek (28%) and Gilbert (22%).

Population

From 2000 to 2010, the number of children under six in the region increased by more than 12,000. The largest growth was in Queen Creek (+382%), followed by Gilbert and Mesa. Birth rate projections suggest a continued increase in the number of young children in the region over the next decade, highlighting the importance of early childhood to residents of the region.

In the Southeast Maricopa Region, 86 percent of children birth to five years of age are living with at least one parent, which is higher than the state (82%). Although the percentage of children ages birth through five living in grandparent-headed households is lower in the region (9%) than in the state (14%), there is variability across the region. In Apache Junction, for example, 20 percent of young children are living with grandparents.

Social and Economic Circumstances

Although the percent of children living in poverty is lower in the region (18%) than the county (27%) and state (25%), there are pockets of higher economic disadvantage in the region including the Maricopa County portion of Apache Junction (36%) and Mesa (25%). These children are likely to particularly benefit from public assistance programs. In 2012, 29 percent of young children in the region were receiving SNAP benefits; however 68 percent in the Maricopa portion of Apache Junction and 39 percent in Mesa were receiving SNAP during the same period.

Educational Indicators

In general, educational standards and academic achievement appear to be strong in the region. High school completion rates across the region exceed the state (77%), with the exception of Mesa, which falls only slightly lower (76%). In addition, 3rd graders in the region performed better than students county and statewide in both the math and reading AIMS tests. Enrollment in pre-school is also an important indicator of later school success. In the Southeast Maricopa Region, the percentage of three and four year-old children enrolled in early education settings in 2012 (38%) exceeded state levels

(34%). However, this estimated percentage ranges throughout the region, with a high of 50 percent in Gilbert and a low of 18 percent in the Maricopa County portion of Apache Junction.

In the Southeast Maricopa Region in 2014, there were 341 regulated child care providers serving 26,446 children, indicating that approximately 39 percent of young children in the region can be served in regulated early care and education settings. The region is served by a number of center based and home based providers as well as school-based pre-K programs and Head Start and Early Head Start. While child care for three through five year-olds is more affordable in most Southeast Maricopa communities, infant and toddler care is a financial challenge throughout the region. To help offset these financial challenges, the First Things First Southeast Maricopa Region funds both Quality First scholarships and Quality First pre-kindergarten scholarships.

There are a wide variety of professional development opportunities for early childhood professionals in the Southeast Maricopa Region, including formal degree and certificate programs and professional development workshops. Several campuses of Maricopa County Community College offer associates degrees in early childhood studies, Central Arizona College offers a Child Development Associates (CDA) credential and Arizona State University offers several programs in early childhood education and intervention. The region also supports TEACH scholarships and the Professional Reward\$ strategy, which aims to improve the retention of early education professionals by rewarding longevity and progressive education through financial incentives.

Health

Expectant mothers in the region generally receive adequate prenatal care. Specifically, the percentage of women receiving prenatal care in the first trimester and the number of visits across the entire pregnancy exceed state averages and Healthy People 2020 recommendations. Birth outcomes in the region are also quite strong, as the percentage of preterm and low birth weight births in the region are lower than state and county averages. Infant mortality rates are also lower in the region than the state or county. In addition, the percentage of births to teen mothers in the region is below state and county levels.

Lack of insurance coverage can be a barrier to receiving health care. The estimated percentage of young children uninsured in the region is equivalent to Arizona (11%), and slightly higher than for Maricopa County overall (10%). Insurance seems to be the biggest challenge in Mesa, where an estimated 18 percent of the total population and an estimated 12 percent of children ages birth through five are uninsured. Mesa also has the highest percentage of children living with foreign-born parents in the region. These parents may be more likely to be out of work or hold jobs without health insurance benefits.

The percentage of students enrolled in special education in the Southeast Maricopa Region is slightly higher than in Arizona schools overall, and quite a bit higher than in Maricopa County schools overall. Three school districts in the Southeast Maricopa Region (Gilbert Unified District, Mesa Unified District,

and Queen Creek Unified District) have more than double the percentage of students enrolled in special education than in all Maricopa County schools. The other two school districts in the region, Chandler Unified District #80 and Higley Unified School District, also have a greater proportion of students enrolled in special education (12% each) than in Maricopa County schools overall. This suggests that there may be a higher number of young children in the region who would benefit from an expansion of special education and/or early intervention services.

Family Support

The number of children removed from their homes between the ages of birth and five has increased from 2011 to 2013, in the region (+18%), and in Maricopa County and the state (+35% for both). Increases in removals were most pronounced in Apache Junction (32%) and Mesa (37%). Contrary to this pattern, the communities of Queen Creek and Gilbert experienced decreases in the number of children removed by CPS during these years. According to the Arizona Department of Economic Security's Division of Children, Youth and Families, there is a shortage of foster homes in three communities in the region, especially in the Maricopa County portion of Apache Junction and the western portion of Mesa. In Gilbert, the number of foster homes slightly exceeded the number of children removed.

Parental involvement in educational activities with young children helps prepare children to be successful once they start school. The Southeast Maricopa Region funds multiple programs to provide parental education. These programs include a Family Resource Center strategy in partnership with Lutheran Services of the Southwest, and a comprehensive home visitation strategy in coordination with several service providers. Other assets in the Southeast Maricopa Region include good access to health care, well-performing school districts, and high levels of parental involvement.

Conclusion

While the Southeast Maricopa Region faces some challenges to providing comprehensive, high quality early care and education, children's health care, and support for families with young children due to the diversity of its population, the Southeast Maricopa Regional Partnership Council is committed to the ideal that all children in the Southeast Maricopa Region should arrive at kindergarten healthy and ready to succeed. The Council's commitment to system building and system coordination work is helping to move the Southeast Maricopa Region closer to this goal.

Executive Summary

The Southwest Maricopa Region Geography

The Southwest Maricopa Region is comprised of several communities within the southwestern portion of Maricopa County including Arlington, Avondale, Buckeye, Gila Bend/Theba, Goodyear, Litchfield Park, Tolleson, Tonopah, Wintersburg, and the Luke Air Force Base.

Population

According to U.S. Census data, the Southwest Maricopa Region had a population of 274,478 in 2010, of whom 28,492 (10.4%) were children under the age of six. In the Southwest Maricopa Region, about 24 percent of households have young children. This is a higher percentage than in Maricopa County (17%) and in the state of Arizona overall (16%). This proportion varies quite a bit throughout the region, though most zip codes in the region have a greater proportion of households with children under six than the state and county. The population of young children in the region has also increased substantially between 2000 and 2010, with projections for the increase to continue over the next decade.

Most children in the Southwest Maricopa Region (82%) are living with at least one parent. The majority of children in the region not living with their parents (18%) are living with other relatives such as grandparents, uncles or aunts (16%). The percentage of children in the region residing in a grandparent's household (13%) is similar to the state (14%) and Maricopa County (12%). However, there is considerable variability across communities in the region. In the Tonopah/Wintersburg community, 19 percent of children aged birth through five are living in a grandparent's household, as are 17 percent of young children in Arlington and the 85323 zip code of Avondale.

Approximately half (51%) of adults living in the Southwest Maricopa Region self-identify as White and a little more than one third (37%) self-identify as Hispanic. There is considerable diversity in race/ethnicity across the communities which make up the Southwest Maricopa Region, such as in Tolleson and Gila Bend/Theba where nearly two-thirds of adults are Hispanic, almost double that of the region overall. The percentage of young children who are non-White in the region is also higher than the adult populations, especially in some communities. For example, in Arlington (61%) and the 85343 zip code of Buckeye (80%), the percentage of Hispanic or Latino young children is more than double that of Hispanic adults (28% and 32% respectively). In the 85395 zip code of Goodyear, the percentage of Asian or Pacific Islander young children (12%) is twice the percentage of Asian or Pacific Islander adults (6%).

The majority of families in the region speak only English at home (67%), which is lower than in the state (74%) and Maricopa County (73%). There is considerable variability in the percentages of Spanish-speaking households across the region. About half of families in the 85323 zip code of Avondale (48%), Gila Bend/Theba (54%), and Tolleson (57%) speak Spanish at home.

Linguistic isolation in the region (5%) is the same as county and state levels. However, some communities in the region have a higher percentage of households that are linguistically isolated: Arlington (14%), the 85323 zip code of Avondale (10%), Gila Bend/Theba (17%), and Tolleson (10%). Notably, these are also areas with large percentages of young children.

Social and Economic Circumstances

The proportion of the population living in poverty tends to be slightly lower in the Southwest Maricopa Region than in Maricopa County and Arizona overall. However, poverty varies markedly in communities across the region, with very low percentages of young children living in poverty in Tonopah, Wintersburg and Goodyear, and higher percentages in other communities such as Arlington and Gila Bend/Theba. Public assistance program participation and median family income data further illustrate both pockets of affluence and pockets of economic need within the region.

Educational Indicators

Educational achievement and attainment in the region presents a mixed picture. A lower proportion of 3rd graders in the region met or exceeded math and reading standards as measured by the AIMS tests than in Maricopa County and Arizona overall. Adults in the region are more likely than those in the county or state to have a high school diploma or GED (27%), but less likely than county and state comparisons to have a bachelor's degree (21%). Approximately half of births in the Southwest Maricopa Region are to mothers with more than a high school-level education, and this has increased since 2009. Enrollment in pre-school is also an important indicator of later school success. However, in the Southwest Maricopa Region, only 28 percent of children ages three and four are estimated to be enrolled in early education settings (compared to the state and county estimate of 34%). This estimated percentage also varies throughout the region.

The total licensed capacity for the 116 regulated child care providers in the region is 9,440 (CCR&R, 2014). This indicates that there are licensed early care slots for about one third of young children in the region. In addition to child care centers, preschools and home-based providers, the region is also served by Head Start and Early Head Start programs. The Southwest Maricopa Region supports these child care providers and families in the region by funding Quality First services for providers and scholarships for young children to help low-income families afford quality early care and education.

Health

There are many hospitals, urgent care centers, and family medicine clinics in the Southwest Maricopa Region. However, the ratio of population to primary care providers is very high for some communities in the region, most notably in Gila Bend, Buckeye, and Avondale/Tolleson. Avondale/Tolleson and Buckeye are also classified as Health Professional Shortage Areas.

Prenatal care is accessible and well-utilized in the Southwest Maricopa Region. Specifically, the percentage of births with prenatal care begun in the first trimester and the number of visits across the entire pregnancy exceed state averages and Healthy People 2020 recommendations. Birth outcomes in the region are generally strong, with a low percentage of low birth weight births and a low infant mortality rate, both of which are lower than the county and state. However, the percentage of preterm births in the region in 2012 slightly exceeded the state average.

The estimated percentage of children ages birth through five in the region who are uninsured is similar to Arizona and Maricopa County. In some communities, children are more likely to be uninsured, such as in Gila Bend/Theba, where an estimated 25 percent of children ages birth through five are uninsured. This community also has the highest percentage of children living with foreign-born parents in the region. These parents may be more likely to be out of work or hold jobs without health insurance benefits, or to be unaware of health insurance options for their U.S. citizen children.

The percentage of students enrolled in special education in the Southwest Maricopa Region tends to be higher in the region than in Maricopa County schools overall (7%), but close to Arizona schools overall (12%). Of the 16 school districts in the region, only three have fewer than 10 percent of students enrolled in special education.

Family Support

The number of children removed from their homes between the ages of birth and five has increased from 2011 to 2013 in the region (+41%), Maricopa County (+35%) and the state (+35%). According to the Arizona Department of Economic Security's Division of Children, Youth and Families, there is a shortage of foster homes in all of the communities in the Southwest Maricopa Region.

A variety of services that support families with young children, such as family resource centers and home visitation programs, are available in the Southwest Maricopa Region. The region funds a Parent Education Community-Based Training strategy and Family Resource Center strategy, both of which involve several community partners. Data from the 2012 Family and Community Survey suggest a perception among families in the region that it is easy to find services, although respondents from the region were slightly less likely than those around the state to be satisfied with information and resources available about children's health and development.

Conclusion

Other notable assets in the region include access to multiple services for children and families; numerous professional development opportunities for early childhood professionals; TEACH and non-TEACH scholarships funded by the region which enable more early childhood professionals to access these professional development opportunities; and ongoing efforts to improve system coordination.

Although the Southwest Maricopa Region faces some challenges to providing comprehensive support for families with young children due to the diversity of the population, the region is committed to the ideal that all children should arrive at kindergarten healthy and prepared to succeed. The Regional Council's commitment is helping to move the Southwest Maricopa Region closer to this goal.



FIRST THINGS FIRST

**Northeast Regional Partnership
Councils
Regional Needs and Assets Reports
Executive Summaries**

**Navajo/Apache
Yavapai**

Executive Summary

INTRODUCTION

A quick snapshot of quality of life in the First Things First Navajo/Apache Region would show a relatively stable population in the region in 2010, despite a recent decrease in the number of new births in the area. The vast majority of women have prenatal care and most children are born at healthy weights, but when comparing the region to the state, a lower percentage of women in the region start prenatal care in their first trimester, and a higher percentage of babies are born at low birth weight.

While the region is known to be medically underserved, and to have a lower number of primary care physicians in relation to the population, most children are getting access to health care.

Families are not reading to their children as frequently now as they were a couple of years ago, and some families don't have any books in the home. There are more parents that report never playing sports or exercising, never playing games, or never helping with art/craft or science projects with their child. Many children in the region are doing well in school, with good reading skills and high graduation rates, but some children, especially in certain school districts, are struggling with both. The percentage of children referred to a specialist or diagnosed with a special need is declining, and yet there are still a limited number of professionals to serve the children who do have a special need.

The local economy appears to be getting slightly better, with decreasing unemployment rates and fewer foreclosures. However child poverty is still an issue for about one-third of children and food insecurity remains a big problem for families.

Local parents report that they are confident in their parenting skills and in coping with the day-to-day demands of parenting, and yet they report needing more help with child care, parenting classes, and preparing their child for kindergarten.

First Things First, however, is definitely making its mark on the region, with far more parents now aware of First Things First and what it does. Less than five out of ten parents were knowledgeable about First Things First in 2011, compared to seven out of ten parents in 2013, a statistically significant increase.

More details about quality of life in the First Things First Navajo/Apache Region are described below.

PEOPLE IN THE FIRST THINGS FIRST NAVAJO/APACHE REGION

There were 73,083 residents in the First Things First Navajo/Apache Region according to 2010 U.S. Census data; of those, 6,166 were children ages birth through five. Half of children birth through five identified as White, 19% as Hispanic or Latino, and 6% as American Indian or Native American.

Income and Poverty

Poverty

- Children who grow up in poverty are more likely to lack adequate food and basic preventive health care. They are at significant risk for dropping out of school early, having lower levels of literacy, and ending up in poverty as adults.
- About one in four children ages birth through five were living in poverty in the First Things First Navajo/Apache Region between 2007 and 2011.
- Poverty for children ages 5 through 17 was highest in the areas served by Sanders Unified (44%), Concho Elementary (39%) and Vernon Elementary School Districts (37%), and lowest in the areas served by Snowflake Unified (22%) and Blue Ridge Unified (25%) in 2012.

Food Insecurity

When children suffer from a lack of food, it can lead to poor physical and mental health, difficulty learning, increased school absences, and lower test scores than their counterparts.

Nearly 4 in 10 children in both Navajo County and Apache County lived in families that did not have enough food to eat in 2011.

- It is estimated that 83% of food insecure children qualify for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits in Navajo County based on family incomes. Of food insecure households in Apache County, 95% qualify.

Basic Needs and Public Assistance

Going without basic needs such as food, housing, child care, health care, or clothing can have short and long-term consequences to child's health and wellbeing.

One in five families went without a basic need in the First Things First Navajo/Apache Region in 2013, according to parent survey results.

- Commonly reported needs included gasoline for their car (11%), medical care (7%), dental care (5%), prescription medications (4%), food (4%), child care (3%), and propane or natural gas for the home (3%).
- Two out of three (63%) parent survey respondents reported receiving some form of public assistance in 2013.
- The most common forms of assistance reported were food stamps (50%) and WIC benefits (31%).

Unemployment

The unemployment rate measures the number of people who do not have a job and who have actively sought work within the past four weeks.

Unemployment remains high in many communities in the First Things First Navajo/Apache Region.

- The overall unemployment rate in the First Things First Navajo/Apache Region was 7.9% in 2013.
 - Unemployment was highest in Holbrook at 9.8%, followed by Springerville and Snowflake at 8.3% each, and lowest in Heber-Overgaard at 3.9% in 2013.

Foreclosures

When foreclosures force families out of their homes, children are affected both physically and emotionally. When children change homes frequently, it can contribute to lower performance in school and more delinquent behaviors in the classroom.

- Communities in the First Things First Navajo/Apache Region are experiencing higher rates of foreclosure than in Arizona overall.
- One in every 925 homes in Apache County was in foreclosure, while one in every 1,107 homes was in foreclosure in Navajo County, worse than the state at one in every 1,305 in February 2014.

Early Care and Education

Child care

Quality child care helps children develop social and academic skills in preparation for school and life success. It also allows parents to feel confident knowing that their child is well cared for while they are at work or school.

Many parents do not have access to formal child care services in the First Things First Navajo/Apache Region.

- Only about 16% of children ages birth through 11 years old who needed care had child care slots available to them in 2013. This left an estimated 5,937 children ages birth through 11 without formal child care, forcing parents to look for alternative solutions such as relying on support from friends and family.
- The median daily cost of *full-time* child care ranged from \$20 for approved homes to \$30 for center based care in the counties of Navajo, Apache, Coconino, and Yavapai in 2012.

Family Reading and Activities

When families read to their infants and preschool aged children, children learn crucial skills such as how to recognize letters, words and sounds. It gives them a leg up for starting kindergarten, which helps them throughout their school career. Family activities like doing exercise together, playing sports and games, and making puzzles are also key ways for children to learn.

Half of families are reading together 3 to 7 times a week, but more frequent reading is declining.

- One out of four parent respondents (24%) reported reading with their child more than 7 times a week in 2011, down to 17% in 2013, a statistically significant decline.
- A higher percentage of parents reported in 2013 that they never played a sport or exercised, never played games or did puzzles, and never helped with an art/craft/science project as compared to parents in 2011.

School Success

Third grade reading scores are an excellent predictor of later school success, including high school graduation rates and career success. One way to measure third grade reading is by the AIMS reading standard.

Some children had very strong reading skills and others were behind in their reading.

- St. Johns (92%) and Blue Ridge Unified School District (86%) had the highest percentage of children who passed the reading standard while Sanders Unified School District consistently had the lowest percentage at 40% in 2013.

Graduation rates in the First Things First Navajo/Apache Region varied greatly from district to district.

- The graduation rate was 90% or over in four school districts: the Joseph City Unified School District, St. Johns Unified, Show Low Unified, and Snowflake Unified in 2012. Sanders Unified School District had the lowest graduation rate at 69%.

Special Needs

Children with Special Needs

It's crucial to have early identification of children's special needs so that they can get the support and opportunities they need to achieve success in school and in the community.⁴ Developmental screenings including oral, vision, cognitive and audio screenings are an important practice to ensure children's optimal growth.

There are limited services for children with special needs in the First Things First Navajo/Apache Region.

- There were only three audiologists and 33 speech language therapists in the Navajo/Apache Region in 2013.
- Six percent of First Things First Navajo/Apache Region parent survey respondents reported their child had been diagnosed with a developmental delay, disability, or special need in 2013, down from 10% in 2011, a statistically significant decrease.
- Sixty-three percent of child care provider survey respondents in the First Things First Navajo/Apache Region reported that they referred families to Child Find, a program for screening and referral for young children, in 2013; but 18% said they did not know what Child Find was, and 16% did not know whether or not they had referred families.

Health

Access to Needed Health Care

Children with a regular source of primary health care and health insurance have better health, receive more preventative care, and have lower rates of hospitalization because they get treated for conditions before they become too serious.

All communities in the First Things First Navajo/Apache Region were classified by the Arizona Department of Health Services as Health Professional Shortage Areas and Medically Underserved Areas.

- There was one primary care physician for every 2,066 people living in Apache County, and one for every 1,018 residents in Navajo County in 2012. These provider-to-population rates are both much higher than the ratio in Arizona as a whole at one for every 785 residents.

The vast majority of children got health care when they needed it, but some went without it.

⁴ Steele, M.M. (2004). Making the case for early identification and intervention for young children at risk for learning disabilities. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 32(2) 75-79.

- Of parents who reported their child needed medical care, 94% reported the child received care *all or most of the time* while nearly 6% said their child received it *some of the time or never* in 2013

Healthy Births

There were 910 total births in the First Things First Navajo/Apache Region in 2012, the lowest number of births in the last six years. It's important that pregnant women get adequate prenatal care so that they will be more likely to have better birth outcomes. Babies born to mothers who receive no prenatal care are three times more likely to be born at a low birth weight (less than 5.5 pounds), and five times more likely to die.

Nearly 28% of women in the First Things First Navajo/Apache Region did not receive prenatal care in their first trimester of pregnancy in 2012.

- A slightly higher percentage of babies were born at low birth weights in the region compared to Arizona as a whole, 8% and 7% respectively, in 2012.

Teen Births

Teen mothers tend to give birth prematurely with babies born at low birth weights. The mothers are less likely to complete high school, and have lower earning power in their careers. Children born to teens are 50% more likely to repeat a grade, are less likely to complete high school, and perform lower on standardized tests than children of older mothers.

There was a higher percentage of births to teen mothers in the First Things First Navajo/Apache Region (13%) in comparison to the state overall (9%) in 2012.

Immunization Rates

Immunization requirements help to prevent a number of serious and sometimes fatal diseases in young children including hepatitis B, polio, measles, mumps, rubella, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (whooping cough), influenza, and varicella (chickenpox).

- When parents were asked in a survey whether their child was up to date on their vaccines, there was a statistically significant decline from 88% reporting yes in 2011, to 84% in 2013.
- However, only about half (57%) of children ages 19 through 35 months in the First Things First Navajo/Apache Region had their required vaccinations in 2012, according to the Arizona Department of Health Services.⁵

⁵ Immunization data are from the Arizona State Immunization Information System (ASIS). ASIS-based coverage level estimates are nearly always lower than actual coverage levels given the challenges in determining a completion rate. Fragmented records, children relocating out of state before completing their immunization, and duplication of records are some reasons for these challenges.

Infant Deaths

The United States ranks very poorly in infant mortality when compared to other high income countries, 31 out of 37 countries in 2006.⁶ Further, there are large disparities in infant mortality based on race and ethnicity in the U.S. with African Americans and American Indians having the highest infant mortality rates.

Child mortality rates were higher in Apache and Navajo County than in Arizona as a whole in 2011.

- The infant mortality rates in the two counties have fluctuated since 2005 due to the relatively small number of births in each county. There were 8.4 to 8.5 deaths per 1,000 in each of the two counties in 2011, higher than the state at 5.9 deaths per 1,000 births.

Supporting Families

Top Needs for Families

- There was a statistically significant increase in the percentage of parents reporting that parenting classes were a top need in the region from 39% in 2011 to 47% in 2013.

Almost half of parents surveyed in 2013 felt that the most needed local services were child care (47%) and parenting classes/parent education (47%) followed by kindergarten preparation (27%).

Communicating with Parents

Most local parents get information on services and activities from family and friends.

- Parent survey respondents reported that they got important information about activities and services for their child and family from: friends and family members (67%), doctors/clinics (41%), the Internet (35%), and community agencies (24%) in 2013.
- There were statistically significant differences in the sources of information parents have used over the last several years. In 2013, parents relied more on doctors/clinics, the internet, community agencies, and child care workers and less on families and friends as compared to 2011.

Parent Knowledge of First Things First

Parent knowledge of First Things First in the Navajo/Apache Region is increasing.

- Seventy percent of parents surveyed in the region were “somewhat” or “very knowledgeable” about what First Things First did in their community in 2013, a statistically significant increase from 47% in 2011.

⁶ Singh, G.K., van Dyck, P.C. (2010). *Infant mortality in the United States, 1935-2007: Over seven decades of progress and disparities*. Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau, pp. 1-8. Rockville, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Executive Summary

The Yavapai Region Geography

The Yavapai Regional Partnership Council supports the needs of young children in the Yavapai First Things First Region. The Yavapai Region covers almost all of Yavapai County, plus some parts of southern Coconino County, as well as the Yavapai-Apache Nation. For the purposes of this report, the Yavapai Region was subdivided into nine geographic areas or communities, corresponding roughly to the Primary Care Areas (PCAs) in the region, defined by the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS). In addition, the Yavapai-Apache Nation forms the tenth community.

Population

According to U.S. Census data, the Yavapai Region had a population of 214,345 in 2010, of whom 12,704 (6%) were children under the age of six. Both the Yavapai Region and Yavapai County have a smaller proportion of households with children birth through five years of age (10%) than the state as a whole (16%). The Yavapai-Apache Nation had the highest percentage of households with children under six in the region (28%), followed by the Bagdad community (18%) and the Prescott Valley community (16%). The Sedona and Yavapai South communities had the lowest percentage of children under age six in the region, both having only five percent of households with young children in them.

In the Yavapai Region in 2010, over four-fifths (82%) of children birth to five years of age were living with at least one parent, with 23 percent living in a single-female headed household. Three communities in the region had a higher percentage of young children living with grandparents than the state including the Yavapai-Apache Nation (37%), the Yavapai South community (19%), and the Cordes Junction community (17%). The Yavapai Region and Yavapai County (both 17%) had a smaller percentage of children under the age of six living with a foreign-born parent than the state (29%). The Sedona community had a much higher percentage than any other community in the region, with 52 percent of children aged birth through five living with at least one foreign born parent.

Most (85%) of the adult population living in the region and county identified as White, not-Hispanic and almost two-thirds (63%) of the population of children aged birth through four living in the region and county were identified as White, not-Hispanic. The Sedona community (50%) had the highest percentage of Hispanic children ages birth through four years in the region.

Social and Economic Circumstances

There is variability across communities in the Yavapai Region in the degree to which families face economic challenges. The percentage of the population of children aged birth through five living in poverty in the Yavapai Region and Yavapai County (both 27%) is the same as the state as a whole. Two communities within the region have much higher childhood poverty rates than the others for which estimates are available, with 94 percent of young children in the Ash Fork community and 57 percent of young children in the Yavapai-Apache Nation estimated to be living in poverty. Three other communities

have a slightly higher percentage of children living in poverty than across the region or state; the Yavapai Northeast community (32%), the Prescott Valley community (31%) and the Chino Valley community (30%).

Due to the higher rate of economic disadvantage in some communities, many families may benefit from public assistance programs. The number of young children receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits has increased only slightly in the region and county between 2010 and 2012 (+2%). The communities of Ash Fork (+23%) and Cordes Junction (+24%) saw increases in participation of just under a quarter of the young child population, while the Bagdad community saw a decrease in SNAP participation among young children of 28 percent. Overall, 40 percent of young children in the region were receiving SNAP in 2012. Conversely, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) benefits have decreased for the region (-39%) and county (-41%) due in part to changes in legislation reducing the time limit on participation. In the beginning of 2012, 32 percent of young children in Yavapai County were participating in WIC, slightly more than the state rate of 29 percent. In addition, in 2012 in Yavapai County, 17 percent of all residents, and 26 percent of children under 18 years of age faced food insecurity (limited or uncertain access to food).

Educational Indicators

Educational attainment in the Yavapai Region is comparable to the state. Adults in the Yavapai Region (10%) are less likely to be without a high school diploma or GED than the state of Arizona overall (15%), but are also less likely to have a bachelor's degree or more (25% and 27% respectively). Adults in two communities contradict this pattern, with 49 percent of adults in the Sedona community and 30 percent in the Prescott community with a bachelor's degree or more. Forty-three percent of births in the region are to mothers with more than a high school degree.

Yavapai County 3rd graders performed slightly better than students statewide in both the math and reading AIMS tests in 2013, with a higher percentage of students passing in each subject (70% math, 80% reading) than the state (69% math, 75% reading). There was however, much variability across school districts in the region in both the math and reading AIMS scores. In addition, fewer three and four year olds in the region (30%) were estimated to be enrolled in an early learning setting than across the state as a whole (34%).

In the Yavapai Region there are 64 regulated child care providers (not including Head Start and Early Head Start), the majority of which are ADHS licensed centers. The region also has nine Head Start centers and six Early Head start sites. The Yavapai-Apache Nation also operates its own child care program. The total capacity for these providers is 4,844 slots, which means that almost two-thirds of the region's population of children aged birth through five are not being served in licensed or certified child care settings. First Things First Quality First scholarship funding is an asset in the region in increasing participation in early learning programs by addressing the barrier of affordability.

Health

Access to health care can be problematic for some communities in the Yavapai Region with seven of the region's 11 Primary Care Areas (PCAs) designated as "medically underserved" by the Arizona Department of Health Services. All of Yavapai County is also designated as a Mental Health Health Professional shortage area, and all but the Prescott and Prescott Valley PCAs are designated as Dental Health Professional Shortage Areas. The region is served however, by a number of hospitals and Federally Qualified Health Centers.

During 2012, there were 1,785 births in the region, which continued a downward trend from 2009. The percentage of women in the region receiving early prenatal care (83%) exceeded both the state average (79%) and the Healthy People 2020 target (78%). However, the percent of births with low birth weight have been increasing in the region, and in 2012 rose to the highest in four years (7.9%), as did the percent of pre-term births with a high of 10 percent in 2012. The percentage of births to teen mothers has fallen since 2009, with 10 percent of births to teen mothers in 2012, just above the state percentage (9%). PCAs with teen birth rates higher than the county (43.9/1,000) were the Yavapai-Apache Tribe PCA (76.6/1,000), the Ash Fork PCA (62.6/1,000), the Prescott Valley PCA (53.1/1,000) and the Yavapai-Northeast PCA (53/1,000). In the Yavapai Region in 2012, 12 percent of women reported smoking during pregnancy, much higher than for the state of Arizona as a whole (4%).

Indicators of young children's health status vary across the region. In the Yavapai Region, the percent of the population of young children (14%) uninsured exceeds the state (11%). In addition, Yavapai County is one of the areas in the state with high rates of personal belief exemptions for immunizations, leaving over 10 percent of children in child care and nine percent in kindergarten in the county not fully immunized, compared to only four percent for both across the state. In contrast, more women in Yavapai County report ever breastfeeding (90%) than across the state (67%), and fewer young children were overweight or obese in the county compared to the state. Likely impacting families in the region however, is the high age-adjusted mortality rate for drug-induced deaths in the county at 36.7/100,000, the highest for any county in the state.

Family Support

The number of children removed from their homes between the ages of birth and five has increased from 2011 to 2013, in the region (+30%), county (+31%) and state (+35%). The number of removals varies by area, with increases in the number of removals in four regional communities, decreases in another four, and no change in one other during the same time period.

The Yavapai Region is served by a number of parenting education and home visitation programs, provided in a variety of settings and by a variety of providers. An asset in the region is not only the existence of these services, but these providers ability to travel to communities removed from the population centers in the region, serving families who may not otherwise be able to access these resources. In addition, the Yavapai Regional Partnership Council is currently piloting a service

coordination effort in the western portion of the region to better meet the needs of the children and families with whom they work.

Conclusion

While the Yavapai Region faces some challenges to providing comprehensive, high quality early care and education, children's health care, and support for families with young children due to the diversity of its population and geographical spread of the region, the Yavapai Regional Partnership Council is committed to the ideal that all children in the Yavapai Region should arrive at kindergarten healthy and ready to succeed. The Council's commitment to service coordination work is helping to move the Yavapai Region closer to this goal.



FIRST THINGS FIRST

**Phoenix Regional Partnership Councils
Regional Needs and Assets Reports
Executive Summaries**

**Central Phoenix
North Phoenix
South Phoenix**

This executive summary incorporates key findings from Central, North and South Phoenix's regional needs and assets reports.

Executive Summary

THE CITY OF PHOENIX AND OUR YOUNGEST CHILDREN

The city of Phoenix is the sixth most populous city in the United States and is home to nearly 1.5 million people. The First Things First Board established three regions in the city of Phoenix: North, Central and South. This executive summary contains information about the city as a whole, and comparisons between the three First Things First Regions of Phoenix.

Based on 2010 census data, there were over 131,000 children from birth through 5 in the three combined First Things First Regions of Phoenix, with the largest number in the South Phoenix Region (52,303), followed by North Phoenix (45,008) and Central Phoenix (34,047).

Demographics

Types of Families

When looking at the types of families with children birth through 5, there were 52,627 married-couple families in Phoenix, 19,489 single female-headed families, and 9,776 single male-headed families in 2010.

- There was a higher percentage of married-couple families with children birth through 5 in the North Phoenix Region (67%), followed by the South (61%) and Central Phoenix Regions (58%) in 2010.

The Race and Ethnicity of Children

The children of Phoenix are culturally and ethnically diverse. When looking across the entire city, over half of children ages birth through 5 were identified as Hispanic or Latino (58%), followed by White (28%), African American (6%), Asian (3%), and American Indian (2%).

- The South Phoenix Region had the highest percentage children birth through 5 who identified as Hispanic or Latino (78%), followed by Central Phoenix Region (68%) and North Phoenix Region (35%).
- The North Phoenix Region had the highest percentage of children birth through 5 who identified as White (51%), followed by the Central Phoenix Region (18%) and South Phoenix Region (9%).

- The South Phoenix Region had the highest percentage of children birth through 5 who identified as African American (8%); the North Phoenix Region the highest percentage Asian (4%); and the Central Phoenix Region the highest percentage American Indian (3%).

The Top Languages in the City

The U.S. Census does not collect data about what languages are spoken by children under 5 years old, but when looking at children and adults five years and older, the majority of people in the city of Phoenix spoke either English (63%) or Spanish (31%), and the next top three languages were Arabic, African Languages, and Navajo.

- The region with the highest percentage of Spanish speakers was the First Things First South Phoenix Region (55%), followed by the Central Phoenix Region (37%), and the North Phoenix Region (15%).

The Economy Unemployment

The unemployment rate measures the number of people who do not have jobs and who have actively sought work within the past four weeks.

- There is good news in the area of unemployment in Phoenix City; it dropped from 11.2% in 2010 to 7.0% in 2013.

Income

One way to look at local incomes is to look at median family incomes, meaning half of families earned more than the median and half earned less. However, when looking at median incomes in the City of Phoenix, there was wide variation depending on the composition of the family. Married-couple families with children reported incomes of \$70,670 per year, while female single-headed families reported \$30,282 and male single-headed families \$41,999.

- Married-couple families were the most common type of family in the city, but their median incomes varied widely across the three regions depending on what school district area they lived in. Incomes ranged from a low of \$32,591 (Alhambra Elementary District Area in the Central Phoenix Region) to a high of \$98,640 per year (Paradise Valley Unified School District Area in North Phoenix Region).
- Single female-headed families were the next most common type of family with a range of incomes from \$9,795 (Phoenix Elementary School District Area in the Central Phoenix Region) to \$44,338 (Deer Valley Unified School District Area in the North Phoenix Region).

Poverty

Children who grow up in poverty are more likely to lack adequate food and basic health care; they are also at higher risk for experiencing crime and violence. They are at significant risk for dropping out of school early, poor academic performance, behavior problems in school, lower levels of literacy, and lower educational attainment.⁷ Arizona had the fifth highest child poverty rate in the nation in 2010, with 1 out of 4 children living in poverty.

- Child poverty varied widely across the three regions with almost half (48%) of children birth through 5 in the Central Phoenix Region lived in families in poverty, followed by 35% in the South Phoenix Region and 19% in the North Phoenix Region.

Food

When children lack of adequate food, they can experience poor physical and mental health, difficulty learning, increased school absences, and lower test scores. Households are classified as food insecure if one or more household members went hungry at least once during the year because the household could not afford enough food to eat.⁸

- One in 4 children (25%) under the age of 18 lived in food insecure households in Maricopa County in 2011.

Early Care and Education

The Early Childhood System

Quality child care helps children develop social and cognitive skills in preparation for school and life success.⁹ Child care, and in particular, subsidized care for low-income families, provides critical support for working families.

- The Central Phoenix Region had the capacity to serve the greatest percentage of children with parents in the work force through licensed care facilities. It is estimated that 52% of the Central Phoenix Region children ages 0-11 with parents in the labor force have access to licensed care, followed by 40% in the North Phoenix Region and 19% in the South Phoenix Region.
- The median daily cost of full-time child care in Maricopa County ranged from \$20.00 to \$42.50, depending on the age of the child and whether it was in-home based care or in a child care center in 2012.

⁷ Winsler, A., Tran, H., Hartman, S. C., Madigan, A. L., Manfra, L., & Bleiker, C. (2008). School readiness gains made by ethnically diverse children in poverty attending center-based childcare and public school pre-kindergarten programs. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 23(3), 314-329.

⁸ Feeding America. (2013). Map the Gap. Retrieved from www.feedingamerica.org/mapthegap.

⁹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. (2010). *Link between child care and academic achievement and behavior persists into adolescence*. Retrieved from <http://www.nichd.nih.gov>

Family Literacy and School Success

When families read to their infants and preschool children, children learn crucial skills such as how to recognize letters, words, and sounds. Young children who have these early literacy skills are more successful later in school and life.¹⁰ The First Things First Family and Community Survey assess family literacy and school readiness activities by interviewing parents and caregivers regarding the frequency of these activities in their home. Another way to assess children's long term school success is to look at third grade reading scores. Third grade reading scores are known to be correlated with high school graduation rates. The Arizona Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS) is the tool used to measure third grade academic proficiency in Arizona.

- Family and Community Survey respondents in the North Phoenix, Central Phoenix, and South Phoenix regions all reported engaging their child in literacy related activities less often than parents in the state as a whole in 2012. Less than half of parent respondents in each of the three regions reported that they read stories to their child/children 6 to 7 times in the past week.
- The North Phoenix Region had the highest reading scores: 65% to 87% of 3rd grade children in all of the school districts were meeting or exceeding the standard for AIMS reading, followed by the Central Phoenix Region (58% to 85%, depending on the school district), and the South Phoenix Region (54% to 73%) in 2013.

Children with Special Needs

It is crucial to have early identification of children's special needs so that children can get the support and opportunities they need to achieve success in school and in the community.¹¹ Developmental screenings including oral, vision, cognitive, and audio screenings are an important practice to ensure children's optimal growth. Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP) is an interagency system of supports and services for infants and toddlers with developmental delays or disabilities and their families. In addition to AzEIP, children who have developmental disabilities such as epilepsy, cerebral palsy, cognitive disabilities, and autism are eligible for services from the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD).

- Roughly 1% of children birth through 5 in each of the Phoenix Regions were receiving AzEIP services in 2009/10. The greatest number of children were served in the North Phoenix Region (509), followed by the Central Phoenix Region (420) and the South Phoenix Region (241).
- There were more children birth through 5 in the North Phoenix Region receiving DDD services (524), followed by the South Phoenix Region (496) and the Central Phoenix Region (384) in 2012.

¹⁰ Levy, B. A., Gong, Z., Hessels, S., Evans, M. A., & Jared, D. (2006). Understanding print: Early reading development and the contributions of home literacy experiences. *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology*, 93(1), 63-93.

¹¹ Steele, M.M. (2004). Making the case for early intervention for young children at risk for learning disabilities. *Early Childhood Education Journal*. 32(2), 75-79.

Access to Health Care and Health Insurance

Children who have health insurance learn better in school and miss fewer days of school.¹² Children who don't have health insurance are four times more likely to have delayed medical care and are more likely to be hospitalized for conditions that could have been treated by a primary care physician.¹³

- Approximately 13% of children in Maricopa County went without medical insurance in 2012, similar to 2011. Regional break-downs were not available.

Healthy Births

Women who receive adequate prenatal care are more likely to have better birth outcomes. Babies born to mothers who receive no prenatal care are three times more likely to be born at a low birth weight (less than 5.5 pounds), and five times more likely to die.¹⁴

- 81% to 86% of women in the three regions began prenatal care during their first trimester in 2012; however the percentages were lower in the Central Phoenix Region (81%), compared to the South Phoenix Region (83%) and the North Phoenix Region (86%).

Immunizations

Immunizations help to prevent a number of serious and sometimes fatal diseases in young children such as hepatitis B, polio, measles, mumps, rubella, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, influenza, and varicella (chickenpox).¹⁵

- The data regarding immunizations are likely an undercount and should be reviewed with caution.¹⁶ Based on data available, the First Things First South Phoenix Region had the largest percentage of children ages 19 through 35 months who had completed their vaccination schedule at 53%, followed by the Central Phoenix Region (40%), and the North Phoenix Region (39%) in 2012.

¹² Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (2004). Evaluation of the Santa Clara County Children's Health Initiative. *Brief Number 4*. Retrieved from <http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/publications/PDFs/CHIimproves.pdf>

¹³ American Academy of Pediatrics. (2010). *MediKids fact sheet*. Retrieved from <http://www.aap.org/advocacy/washing/MediKids-Fact-Sheet.pdf>

¹⁴ U.S. Department of Health Services, Maternal and Child Health Bureau (n.d.) A Healthy start: Begin before baby's born. Retrieved June 28, 2010 from <http://www.mchb.hrsa.gov/programs/womeninfants/prenatal.htm>

¹⁵ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (n.d.) Five Important Reasons to Vaccinate your Child. Retrieved from <http://www.vaccines.gov/>

¹⁶ Immunization data are from the Arizona State Immunization Information System (ASIS). ASIS-based coverage level estimates are nearly always lower than actual coverage levels given the challenges in determining a completion rate. Fragmented records, children relocating out of state before completing their immunization, and duplication of records are some reasons for these challenges.

Child Safety

In situations of abuse and neglect, children may be removed from parents' home by a child welfare agency and placed in foster care. Children may also enter the child welfare system due to parental abandonment, illness (physical or emotional), incarceration, AIDS, alcohol/substance abuse, and death. Severe behavioral problems in the child including chronic absenteeism may also result in foster care placement.¹⁷

- The South Phoenix Region had the greatest number of children birth through 5 living in foster care (653), followed by the Central Phoenix Region (477), and the North Phoenix Region (412) in 2012. This represented roughly 1% of children in each of the three regions.

Knowledge of Child Development

Parents provide the emotional and physical support that children need to succeed in school and life. Having a basic understanding of child development allows parents to provide the right kind of support at the right time.¹⁸

- The majority of parents and caregivers who participated in the Family and Community Survey in 2012 (73%-84%) in the First Things First Phoenix Regions understood that a child's first year has a major impact on school performance. Fewer parents (68%-78%) believed that a parent's emotional closeness with their baby can strongly influence their child's intellectual development. Yet, 26%-35% of parents in the First Things First Phoenix Regions understood that a parent can significantly impact a child's brain development prior to birth.

¹⁷ American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychology. (2014). Foster Care. Retrieved July 2014 from <http://www.aacap.org/>

¹⁸ The Child Development Institute. (n.d.). Home Page. *In Child Development Institute*. Retrieved 2012 from <http://www.childdevelopmentinfo.com>



FIRST THINGS FIRST

**Southeast Regional Partnership
Councils
Regional Needs and Assets Reports
Executive Summaries**

**Central Pima
North Pima
Pascua Yaqui Tribe
Santa Cruz
South Pima**

Executive Summary

Approach to the 2014 Report

The First Things First Central Pima Regional Partnership Council 2014 Needs and Assets Report presents the demographic, economic and social indicators that pertain to children birth through age five and their families and many assets that exist in the Central Pima region. The primary sources of demographic information are the 2000 Census, the 2010 Census, and two sets of estimates from the American Community Survey: data from 2007-2011 for poverty estimates and from 2008-2012 for additional socio-demographic updates. Most of the data from state agencies were provided by First Things First.

The regional boundary represented in this report reflects the swapping of two zip codes with the South Pima region that will occur in State Fiscal Year 2015 (July 1, 2014). The Central Pima region will assimilate zip codes 85730 and 85748 from the South Pima region; the South Pima region, in turn, will assimilate zip codes 85746 and 85757 from the Central Pima region. Furthermore, in State Fiscal Year 2015, the Central Pima region will consolidate with the North Pima region. These changes impact the number of families and children birth through age five in the region as well as specific assets.

The Central Pima Region

The Central Pima region encompasses a significant portion of the City of Tucson (the second largest city in Arizona) and the City of South Tucson. The region is urban and more densely populated than the contiguous North Pima and South Pima regions of First Things First. The City of South Tucson is a mile-square community just south of downtown Tucson that is completely surrounded by the City of Tucson. The Central Pima region has many cultural, educational and economic assets that attract families with young children, including major employers Raytheon Missiles Systems, the City of Tucson and Pima County governments, the University of Arizona, and numerous health care facilities.

Four public school districts serve children in this region: Amphitheater Public Schools, Flowing Wells Unified School District, Pima County Joint Technical Education District and Tucson Unified School District (TUSD). About 43 charter districts provide education for children of all ages. Altogether, the region has approximately 83 elementary or primary schools, both regular public and charter schools.

Demographic Overview

- According to the 2010 Census, the total population of the First Things First Central Pima region was 447,618. There were 12,708 families with children birth through age five and 33,500 children birth through age five in the region.¹⁹

¹⁹ Population counts published in the Regional Needs and Assets reports may vary from those provided by First Things First. First Things First's population methodology is based on 2010 Census Blocks while Donelson Consulting utilized the 2010 Census Zip Code Tabulation Areas; see Appendix E for a description of the geographies used to define the region and communities within the region.

- The population of the region grew by 2.3 percent between 2000 and 2010. The population of Pima County grew by 16.2 percent during that time period. The number of families with children birth through age five in the Central Pima region decreased by 10.3 percent and the number of children birth through age five decreased by 4.7 percent.
- Within the region, the localities with the highest numbers of children birth to age five were 85705 (Flowing Wells) with 4,904, 85713 (includes South Tucson) with 4,542, and 85710 (whose center is located at the crossroads of Pantano and Broadway) with 3,632. Among inhabited zip codes, 85701, which includes downtown Tucson, had the lowest number at 325.
- The 2010 Census identified 5,950 families with children birth through age five headed by a single parent, which is 46.8 percent of all families with children in that age group. It also identified that 4,071 of those families were headed by a single mother, which is 32.0 percent of all families with children in that age group.
- Regarding ethnicity, the 2010 Census reported that 55.3 percent of children birth through age five in the Central Pima region were Hispanic. Regarding race, 58.3 percent were White, 6.2 percent were African American, 3.5 percent were American Indian, 2.1 percent were Asian American, and 29.9 percent were some other race alone or multiple races. There are slightly more Hispanic children birth through age five in the Central Pima region than in Pima County (52.7 percent) and more than in Arizona as a whole (44.9 percent).
- According to the 2008-2012 American Community Survey (ACS), linguistic isolation was experienced by 8.8 percent of the population ages five and older in Pima County and by 11.2 percent in Tucson.

Median Income and Poverty Rates

- In Pima County, the estimated median family income from the ACS 2008-2012 was \$58,437, a decrease of about 4.7 percent from 2000 when adjusting for inflation. In Tucson, the median family income was estimated to be \$47,021, a decrease of about 8.4 percent from 2000 when adjusting for inflation.
- Single parent households with their own children under 18 had much lower median income. The median income was estimated to be \$32,443 in Pima County and \$28,388 in Tucson among male householders with no wife present. The median income of female householders with no husband present was estimated to be \$24,015 in Pima County and \$21,769 in Tucson.
- In Arizona, Pima County and the Central Pima region, poverty rates for the general population have increased since 2000. Poverty in Arizona increased from about 13.6 percent in 2000 to about 16.2 percent in recent years (according to the ACS 2007-2011 estimates). In Pima County, the rates increased from 14.0 to 17.4 percent during the same time period. In the Central Pima region, the rates increased from about 17.5 percent to about 20.7 percent.
- A similar trend occurred for children birth through age five, though the rates were higher than for the population at large. In Arizona, the poverty rates increased from 20.5 percent in 2000 to about 24.2 percent in more recent years. In Pima County the rate increased from 21.2 percent to 25.7 percent. In the Central Pima region, the rate increased from 25.1 percent in 2000 to 31.5 percent in recent years. That is, nearly one out of three children in this age group is estimated to live below poverty in the region.

- According to the ACS 2008-2012, 13.0 percent of married couple families with children under five years old lived in poverty in Tucson. This was true for 30.4 percent of single male headed households and 53.2 percent of single female headed households.
- Poverty rates for children birth through age five varied by community in the Central Pima region based on ACS 2007-2011 estimates. The zip codes in the region with the highest concentration of children estimated to live in poverty were 85711 (53.0 percent), 85713 (48.4 percent), and 85705 (40.9 percent).

Working families with young children and Unemployment rates

- According to the ACS 2008-2012, in Pima County, 59 percent of children birth through age five lived with two parents, and of those, 53 percent had both parents in the workforce (n=22,595). Approximately 41 percent of children birth through age five lived with one parent, and of those, 77 percent had that parent in the workforce (n=22,476). These estimates show that about 45,071 children birth through age five in Pima County require some form of child care and education. Child care and education providers are also needed for children of non-working parents who are attending school or seeking employment.
- Employment rates have improved in Arizona and Pima County since the economic recession started in 2007. There has been a steady decrease in unemployment rates between January 2010 and January 2014. During that time period, Arizona's unemployment rate decreased from 10.8 percent to 7.5 percent. Pima County's rates followed a similar trend: 10.2 to 6.9 percent. Tucson's unemployment rate also decreased during the five-year period, from 11.1 percent to 7.3 percent. South Tucson's rates decreased but unemployment remained high in January 2014 at 12.7 percent.

Enrollment in Supplemental Nutrition Programs and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)

- The participation of families with children birth through age five in the Food Stamp Program to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) increased in recent years. Between July 2010 and January 2012, the percent of families receiving benefits in Arizona and Pima County increased by over 5 percent and the percent of children birth through age five receiving benefits increased by 3.5 percent. In the Central Pima region, the percent of families receiving benefits increased by 1.6 percent; and the percent of children birth through age five receiving benefits increased by 3.6 percent. In January 2012, about 11,913 children in the Central Pima region received SNAP benefits.
- Enrollment in Women, Infants and Children Program (WIC) decreased moderately at the state, county and regional levels. Children ages birth through four years old receiving the benefit decreased by 5 percent in Arizona, 7 percent in Pima County and 5 percent in the Central Pima region. In January 2012, 8,667 children in the inhabited zip codes in the region received WIC benefits.
- The enrollment of families with children birth through age five in Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) decreased by about one third (36 percent) in the Central Pima region between July 2010 and January 2012 compared to 45 percent in Arizona and 29 percent in Pima County. The number of children birth through age five receiving benefits in the Central Pima Region decreased from 1,318 in July 2010 to 976 in January 2012. Observed decreases are due in part to changes in legislation reducing the time limit on participation.

Education

- Estimates from the 2008-2010 ACS show that 36 percent of adults 25 years and over in Pima County had a high school diploma or less; this was the case for 41 percent of adults in Tucson. In Tucson, about 35 percent had some college or an associate's degree and 24 percent had a bachelor's or an advanced degree.
- In Tucson, according to the 2008-2010 ACS, 44 percent of new mothers giving birth in the past six months were unmarried and 30 percent of those had less than a high school diploma. About 31 percent had a high school diploma, 35 percent had some college or an associate's degree and 4 percent had a bachelor's, graduate or professional degree. Of the 56 percent who were married, 15 percent had less than a high school diploma. About 22 percent had a high school diploma, 37 percent has some college or associate's degree and 26 percent had a bachelor's, graduate or professional degree. The Central Pima Regional Partnership Council is funding numerous educational support programs for families with young children and new mothers in the region.

Health

- Estimates from the ACS 2008-2012 for Arizona, Pima County and Tucson show that about 89 percent of children under six in Arizona, 91 percent in Pima County and 90 percent in Tucson had health insurance.
- From April 2010 to April 2014, the number of people enrolled in AHCCCS (Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System) in Pima County decreased by 7.9 percent.
- The number of children ages birth to eighteen years old enrolled in KidsCare between April 2010 and April 2013 increased in Arizona by 4.7 percent and Pima County by 1.5 percent.
- According to AHCCCS reports about its enrollees, in 2010, 67.9 percent of infants under 16 months funded under KidsCare completed at least six or more well child visits. Among infants funded under Medicaid, the completion rate was 64.1 percent in 2010. In 2010, 75.9 percent of children ages three to six funded under KidsCare completed well child visits. Among children funded under Medicaid, the completion rate was 67.7 percent in 2010.
- The total number of births in the region in 2012 was 5,750. About 10.7 percent of births were to teen mothers (down from 13.0 percent in 2010). Births to unwed mothers were 52.9 percent, a slight increase over previous years. About 61.9 percent of the births were funded through AHCCCS, about the same as in previous years. In response to the high proportion of teens giving birth, the Central Pima region is providing support and education to teen parents through Teen Outreach Pregnancy Services (TOPS) and Nurse Family Partnership nurse home visitation in addition to other home visitation programs.
- Child immunization rates in the Central Pima region in 2012 were about 72.2 percent among children ages 12 to 24 months for series 3:2:2:2 and 53.6 percent among children ages 19 to 35 months for series 4:3:1:3:3:1, as reported by the Arizona State Immunization Information System

(ASIIS) through the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS). Completion rates must be interpreted with caution, however, due to challenges in calculating the rates.²⁰

- In 2012, 151 children in the inhabited zip codes in the Central Pima region were screened for services through the Division of Developmental Disabilities; 376 children were served, including children who had been screened during previous years. Over 17,000 service visits occurred among these children, demonstrating the intense dosage of the services provided.

Early Childhood Education and Child Care

- Regulated child care and education providers include ADHS licensed centers, ADHS certified group homes, and Department of Economic Security (DES) certified family homes. Unregulated providers are those that are not licensed or certified by any agency. There were 390 providers in the region listed in the DES Child Care Resource and Referral database in December 2013. Among regulated providers, 205 were ADHS licensed centers; 2 additional ADHS licensed centers were located on the Davis-Monthan military base; 40 were ADHS certified group homes; 120 were DES certified family homes. Twenty-three were unregulated providers. Approximately 83 percent of the regulated providers were contracted with DES to provide services to children whose families were eligible to receive child care subsidies.
- The maximum authorized capacity of the providers was about 19,743 slots for children birth through age 12.
- If one assumes that 80 percent of maximum authorized capacity is used for children birth through age five, licensed and certified providers in the Central Pima region had slots for an estimated 15,794 children in this age group in December 2013. However, enrollments on a typical day are known to be far lower. Based on the total capacity used by providers and recommended ratios reported in the 2012 DES Market Rate Survey, a reasonable estimate of the number of children birth through age five enrolled on a typical day in the Central Pima region was approximately 8,892.
- The First Things First Central Pima Regional Partnership Council is supporting the expansion of high quality early centers and education placements by providing funding for strategic business planning, licensing and certification. Examples of Central Pima Regional Partnership investments in this area are the continuing Expansion of Quality Infant and Toddler Care, the expansion of providers enrolled in Quality First, and the Pre-Kindergarten Scholarship Program.
- Among the providers in the Central Pima region, 23 were nationally accredited centers, 16 were Head Start programs, and 75 were enrolled in the region's Quality First program.
- Across Arizona, the licensed capacity of providers was higher than the number of students typically enrolled. In the 2012 DES Market Rate Survey, licensed centers stated that their typical enrollment was about 55 percent of their total capacity. Among the homes interviewed, enrollment was typically about 82 percent of their total capacity. This may be explained in part by centers keeping ratios and group sizes smaller to maintain quality and by the high cost of care for many families.
- In 2013, the average cost of full-time care across all providers in the region ranged from \$125 per week for infant care to \$123 per week for the care of four- to five-year-olds. Infant care in licensed

²⁰ ASIIS-based coverage level estimates are nearly always lower than actual coverage levels given the challenges in determining a completion rate. Fragmented records, children relocating out of state before completing their immunizations, and duplication of records are some reasons for these challenges.

centers was \$163 per week on average, compared with \$134 per week for four- to five-year-olds. In DES certified homes, infant care cost \$118 per week on average as did care for four- to five-year-olds.

- In the Central Pima region, the number of families eligible to receive the DES Child Care Subsidy decreased from 2,314 in January 2010 to 1,928 in January 2012, a decrease of 20 percent. Of the families eligible for benefits in 2012, 92 percent received the benefits.
- DES has maintained a priority wait list for the subsidy. In July 2012, 615 families and 794 children birth through age five in the Central Pima region were on the list.
- The Central Pima Regional Partnership Council is supporting strategies that provide child care and education scholarships to low-income families, expending substantial funds in this area. The scholarships are disbursed through providers participating in the Quality First program and through additional quality preschool programs in a variety of settings due to the wait list to join the Quality First program. This effort is ensuring that children throughout the region are able to enroll in high quality education and care programs that will prepare them to succeed in kindergarten and beyond.
- The lack of professionalization of the early child care and education field as well as low pay and low retention rates compared to other divisions of the education sector and other professions are well known and continue to persist.
- The First Things First Central Pima Regional Partnership Council is addressing this through cross-regional strategies designed to improve the knowledge and professional skills of the early education workforce as well as improve their retention. The Community-Based Professional Development Early Care and Education Professionals strategy, also known as Great Expectations for Teachers, Children and Families, brings subject matter experts on Developmentally Appropriate Practice to participants in a cross-regional collaboration focusing on multiple Communities of Practice, or cohorts of peer learning communities and provides access to college credit. The Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (T.E.A.C.H.) program and Professional Career Pathway Project provide scholarships for higher education and credentialing. The REWARD\$ program provides monetary compensation to participants towards additional educational attainment and commitment to continuous employment at a qualified early care and education setting.

Supporting Families

- The Central Pima Regional Partnership Council determined that the highest priority in the region in State Fiscal Years 2013 and 2014 was supports and services to families. In order to address this, the Regional Partnership Council implemented a combined strategic approach to provide comprehensive education, health and support services including in-home parenting education (home visitation), community-based parenting education, and family literacy workshops. To carry out these services, the Central Pima Regional Partnership Council provides funds and collaborates with the United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona Family Support Alliance.
- Families receive in-home support to assist them as they raise their young children through multiple home visitation and support services offered by community organizations such as Amphitheater Public Schools, Casa de los Niños, Child and Family Resources, Easter Seals Blake Foundation, Make Way For Books, Marana School District, Parent Aid, Sunnyside School District and The Parent Connection. Home educators provide guidance and support on the following topics: child

development; peer support for families; resource and referral information; health-related information; and child and family literacy. Numerous grantees in the region work in partnership to provide these coordinated services.

- Community-based parenting education provides educational and support services in community locations such as libraries and community centers on topics including child development, child health and safety, early language and literacy development, and social-emotional development of the child. Agencies including The Parent Connection, Parent Aid, Amphitheater School District, Marana School District, Make Way for Books work together blending both community-based and home-based parent education and support.
- Support and education for teen parents is provided by Teen Outreach Pregnancy Services (TOPS) in a community-based setting while in-home parent education is offered through several different programs that also reach out to pregnant and parenting teens. The intent is to offer programs that best fit the needs of families, including teen families, with a varying range of intensities.
- Hard to reach families, with a specific emphasis on refugees, are supported through the Well-Being Promotion Program to provide health care coordination services and supports.

Public Awareness, Community Outreach, Coordination and Collaboration

Since 2008, significant progress has been made in building an early care and education system in the Central Pima region. The Central Pima Regional Partnership Council has employed multiple overlapping strategies and activities involving parent outreach, public awareness and collaboration with numerous organizations, school districts, coalitions and community stakeholders. Some of the highlights of the Central Pima Regional Partnership Council's efforts include:

- Supporting parent and caregiver information and education on child health, development and early literacy through a variety of community-based activities and materials and the use of a Parent Awareness and Outreach Coordinator. These approaches are intended to increase public awareness on the importance of early childhood development and health through participation in community events and support parent and caregiver knowledge the dissemination of materials.
- Partnering with the North Pima and South Pima Regional Councils, as well as the Pascua Yaqui Tribe and Tohono O'odham Nation Regional Partnership Councils, in a cross-regional joint communication plan that includes media, printed material and support of two Parent Awareness and Community Outreach Coordinators to conduct grassroots outreach.
- Partnering with the regional councils named above in The Community-Based Professional Development for Early Care and Education Professionals Strategy (also known as Great Expectations for Teachers, Children and Families). Grantees work in partnership with program administrators, center directors and owners of early care and education programs to identify and implement professional development targeting the needs for staff within core competency areas. The lead grantee, United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona, in partnership with several sub-grantees continues to build a comprehensive and seamless professional development system in Pima County, which includes articulation agreements between Pima Community College and University of Arizona and University of Arizona-South.

- In State Fiscal Year 2013, the Central Pima, North Pima and South Pima Regional Partnership Councils partnered to issue a joint Request For Grant Application (RFGA) for home visitation services. As a result, two awards were issued to the United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona Family Support Alliance and the Sunnyside Parents As Teachers Collaborative, designed to increase the coordination and cohesiveness of family support services in the Southern Arizona region.

Conclusion

The major challenges for the First Things First Central Pima region continue to be the economic disparities of the region's population and high number of young children and their families requiring support. All of the 33,500 children birth through age five in the Central Pima Region require services in health, education and other areas. Poverty rates are high and have increased in recent years.

Regional and local data show the continued need for high quality regulated care. Central Pima's regulated (licensed and certified) providers have the capacity to care for approximately 47 percent of the region's population of children birth through age five. Access to quality care is improving yet varies by community. The number of families eligible to receive the DES Child Care Subsidy continues to decrease. At the same time, the cost of care continues to be prohibitive for many families. The lack of sufficient and affordable regulated care suggests that families turn to kith and kin care. Unregulated care can compromise optimal child development when there is a lack of formal education and training among child care providers.

The Central Pima Regional Partnership Council has addressed these needs by employing multi-pronged, long-term strategies in the region to coordinate services and build capacity for early childhood care, education, and support services. These include the package of strategies under Quality First, and the Pre-Kindergarten Scholarship Program and others that are considered to be creative and successful ways to build trust among community members and provide crucial services in neighborhoods. The Central Pima Regional Partnership Council is also responding to the needs of families by providing in-home family supports, community-based parenting education, and strategic coordination of existing family support services.

The Central Pima Regional Partnership Council alone cannot address all of the needs documented in this report, many of which are structural deficits in the social service and educational systems. However, since 2008, the Central Pima Regional Partnership Council has conducted careful strategic planning that strived to be responsive to the region's high needs in a balanced and feasible way. The Regional Partnership Council's approach has been to build on the existing community resources and infrastructure and to partner or collaborate with numerous community agencies and organizations. The Central Pima region's funded strategies and partnerships have demonstrated a commitment to a long-term sustainable approach for creating an early childhood care and education system. This is clearly evident by the assets documented in this report and by their funding plans for State Fiscal Years 2014 and 2015.

Executive Summary

This report highlights key population, socioeconomic, health and economic indicators that pertain to children birth through age five and their families in the North Pima region. A comprehensive list of demographic indicators specific to each zip code is available in Part Two of this report (the Zip Code Fact Box Resource Guide).

The North Pima Region Geography

The North Pima region has a diverse geography that includes 14 inhabited zip codes with metropolitan, retirement, suburban and rural areas. It includes the Catalina Mountains and the Northern Foothills section of Tucson. The northwest portion of this region -- especially the towns of Marana and Oro Valley -- experienced rapid growth in recent years.

Population

The 2010 Census reports that the population of the First Things First North Pima region was 265,545. This is 19 percent higher than the population of 222,661 reported in the 2000 Census, showing the region's strong growth.

- The number of children birth through age five for the North Pima region in 2010 was 15,361, up 7 percent from 14,332 reported in the 2000 Census. Children in this age group currently comprise 6 percent of the regional population.²¹
- Approximately two thirds of children born in the North Pima region in 2012 were white (67 percent), significantly more than both the Pima County rate of 43 percent and state rate of 45 percent, as reported by the Arizona Department of Health's Vital Statistics Office. As for ethnicity, the region's proportion of Hispanic/Latino children was much lower than that of the county and state. Hispanic/Latino births made up 23 percent of all North Pima births in 2012, while Hispanic/Latino births in 2012 represented 45 percent of all Pima County births and 39 percent of all births statewide.
- The number of births in the North Pima region increased slightly between 2010 and 2012, according to the Arizona Department of Health's Vital Statistics Office. In both 2010 and 2011, 2,250 children were born in the region; 2,320 children were born in 2012.

Social and Economic Circumstances

- Poverty disproportionately impacts young children in the North Pima region, Pima County and statewide, according to the 2007-2011 ACS. Approximately 6 percent of the general population in

²¹ Population counts published in the Regional Needs and Assets reports may vary from those provided by First Things First. First Things First's population methodology is based on 2010 Census Blocks while Donelson Consulting utilized the 2010 Census Zip Code Tabulation Areas; see Appendix E for a description of the geographies used to define the region and communities within the region.

the North Pima region lived in poverty, compared to 17 percent in Pima County and 16 percent in the state. In contrast, approximately 12 percent of children birth through age five lived in poverty in the North Pima region. In Pima County, 27 percent of children in this age group endured poverty, as did 26 percent of children in this age group throughout the state.

- Child poverty for children birth through age five in the North Pima region has increased over time. The 2007-2011 American Community Survey estimated the regional early childhood poverty rate at 12 percent, which is a six percent increase over the rate of 6 percent reported in the 2000 Census.
- According to the 2008-2012 ACS, 42 percent of mothers in Pima County and 44 percent of mothers in Tucson were unmarried, more than the state average of 38 percent. Among unmarried mothers in Pima County, 29 percent had less than a high school diploma compared to 11 percent of married mothers.

Early Childhood Education and Child Care

- In Pima County, the 2008-2012 ACS reported that 53 percent of children birth through age five living with both parents had both parents in the workforce (22,595) and 77 percent of children living with one parent had that parent in the workforce (22,476 children). These children with working parents, about 45,071, need some type of child care. Child care may also be needed for the children of non-working parents who are trying to find employment or who are attending school.
- Regulated child care and education providers include ADHS licensed centers, ADHS certified group homes, and DES certified family homes. Unregulated providers are not licensed or certified by any agency. The FTF North Pima region had 127 early care and education providers in December 2013 registered with the Child Care Resource and Referral database, a 13 percent increase over the 111 providers registered in December 2011. Among regulated providers in 2013, 89 were ADHS licensed centers, 11 were ADHS certified group homes, and 19 were DES certified family homes. In addition, 8 providers were unregulated homes.
- Capacity among providers has increased recently, as they are able to care for substantially more children than reported in the 2012 Needs and Assets Report. The maximum authorized capacity of all early care and education providers in December 2013 was about 11,398 compared to the 8,136 slots that were reported to be authorized in December 2011. If one assumes that 80 percent of that capacity is used for children birth through age five, licensed and certified providers in the North Pima region had slots for an estimated 9,118 children in this age group in December 2013. That is, licensed and certified providers had the capacity to provide care for 59 percent of the 15,361 estimated children birth through age five in the region. This is a substantially higher than the 42 percent reported in the 2012 Needs and Assets Report.
- Due to the economic recession and declines in state revenues, the state legislature reduced many family support programs including child care subsidies. From January 2010 to January 2012, the number of families eligible for the child care subsidy decreased by 17 percent throughout both the state and county and by 15 percent in the North Pima region. In response to the cuts, the North

Pima Regional Partnership Council is expending funds on providing scholarships to children through Quality First enrolled providers.

- Quality First (QF) is one of the cornerstone systemic strategies of First Things First to improve access to high quality early care and education settings for children birth through age five. As of December 2013, there were 31 QF enrolled providers in the region.
- The average cost of full-time care across all providers in the region in December 2013 ranged from \$154 per week for infant care to \$138 per week for the care of four-to-five-year-olds. Infant care in licensed centers was \$195 per week on average, compared with \$157 per week for four-to-five-year-olds. In DES certified homes, infant care cost \$134 per week on average, compared to \$128 per week for four- to five-year-olds.

Family Supports

- In the North Pima region, 85 children, or less than one percent (0.6 percent) of the 15,363 children birth through age five, received TANF (or cash assistance) benefits. This proportion is lower than that of Pima County (3 percent) and the state (2 percent). TANF enrollments have declined across the state in recent years due to state legislative actions to restrict program benefits.
- In the North Pima region, Pima County and Arizona, the proportion of children receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits in January 2012 was significantly higher than for TANF benefits. Approximately 5,267 children birth through age five were receiving nutritional assistance in the North Pima region in January 2012, or 34 percent of the children in this age group. In Pima County, 42 percent of children in this age group received the SNAP benefit, as did 40 percent of these children statewide in January 2012.
- In January 2012, 1,668 children birth through age four were enrolled in the Women, Infants and Children Program (WIC) program in the North Pima region. This represents 80 percent of the 2,096 children who were eligible for the program.
- The North Pima Regional Partnership Council has been implementing a combined strategy of in-home parenting education (home visitation) and community-based parenting education in order to increase service accessibility for families in collaboration with the community partners it funds to provide these services.
- The North Pima Regional Partnership Council has implemented multiple service coordination and collaboration strategies, both within the region and cross-regionally with other FTF councils. These strategies seek to inform the greater community of the importance of early childhood education, health and development, increase the capacity and infrastructure for early childhood education and

care, deliver parent education and family support services to families of young children and deliver innovative professional development for early care and education professionals.

Health

The North Pima region has slightly more positive prenatal health indicators than Pima County and the state. Data from the Arizona Department of Health's Vital Statistics Office show that the region's 2012 pre-term birth rate, at 8 percent, is slightly less than the rate of 9 percent for the county and state. Approximately 3 percent of pregnant mothers in the region in 2012 reported smoking, slightly less than the 4 percent in the county and state. In 2012, fewer than 25 mothers (less than one percent) in the region lacked prenatal care, similar to the county and state rates of 1 percent.

Indicators relating to family structure and poverty put the North Pima region in a better position than the county and state. Arizona Department of Health's Vital Statistics for 2012 reveal that in the North Pima region, 27 percent of mothers giving birth were not married compared to 44 percent for the county and 45 percent for the state. The North Pima region had a much lower rate of births to teen mothers (5 percent in 2012) than the county (9 percent) and state (9 percent). The region's share of publicly funded births through AHCCCS, at 30 percent, was much lower than the county rate of 52 percent and the state rate of 53 percent. Completion rates must be interpreted with caution, however, due to challenges in calculating the rates.²²

Immunization rates for the North Pima region in 2012 were similar to those of the county and slightly higher than the state average. Approximately 73 percent of children in the North Pima region completed immunizations for the 12-24 month series, compared to 74 percent in the county and 69 percent in the state. About 54 percent of children ages 19-35 months in the region completed the immunization series in 2012, compared to 55 percent for the county and 48 percent for the state. Completion rates must be interpreted with caution, however, due to challenges in calculating the rates.

Conclusion

The North Pima region is made up of diverse communities whose families with young children vary in their capacities, resources and needs. Despite affluence in communities like the Catalina Foothills, the data presented in Part Two of this report (the Zip Code Fact Box Resource Guide) show significant variation in terms of need on a range of indicators throughout the North Pima region. Children and families in unincorporated rural communities such as Rillito, Catalina and Picture Rocks have significant socio-economic needs.

²² Immunization data are from the Arizona State Immunization Information System (ASIS). ASIS-based coverage level estimates are nearly always lower than actual coverage levels given the challenges in determining a completion rate. Fragmented records, children relocating out of state before completing their immunization, and duplication of records are some reasons for these challenges.

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In response to this challenge, the North Pima Regional Partnership Council over the past six years has sought to fund strategies to coordinate services and build capacity for early childhood care, education and support services. Through partnering with service delivery organizations, the North Pima Regional Partnership Council has sought to create a seamless system of services for families and children that builds trust among community members and provides crucial services, especially in the more remote places of this region. The council's funding strategies and partnerships demonstrate an ongoing commitment to impact the care, health and educational needs of children birth through five years of age in the North Pima region.

Executive Summary

The following key findings mirror the main sections of the report used to inform the First Things First Pascua Yaqui Tribe Regional Council's decision making process: Demographics, Early Childhood System, Health, Family Support, Communication and Public Information, and Systems Coordination. Continued high need based on economic and other indicators combine with increased opportunities and coordination to characterize the results.

Demographics, Economic and Educational Indicators

- Approximately 63% of children ages birth to 5 live in households headed by single mothers and 46% of children under 5 live at or below the poverty level.
- Unemployment remains high (23%) and annual incomes continue to be moderate to low (approximately \$28,000-\$29,000). A self-sufficiency wage in Pima County for one adult and two children is \$46,813.
- Increasing numbers of grandparents living with their grandchildren are responsible for their care (65% in 2012 compared to 53% in 2010 and 43% in 2000).
- Numbers of young children enrolled in nursery/preschool have decreased in recent years (39% in 2012, down from 44% in 2010). Rates are higher than for Pima County (36%) or Arizona (34%).

The following table summarizes selected indicators of child well-being.

Table 1: Selected Indicators of Child Well Being 2010-2012 for Pascua Yaqui, Pima County and Arizona

AREA	INDICATOR	ACS 2010	ACS 2011	ACS 2012
Pascua Yaqui	Percentage of Children under 5 Living at or below Poverty Level (<100% FPL)	46.0%	45.4%	46.0%
	Percentage of Children Aged Birth to 5 Living in Male Householder Family	8.0%	1.2%	1.4%
	Percentage of Children Aged Birth to 5 Living in Female Householder Family	53.8%	61.2%	62.6%
	Percentage of Grandparents Living with Own Grandchildren Who Are Responsible for Their Care	52.6%	57.2%	65.2%
	Percentage of Children Aged 3-4 Enrolled in Nursery School/Preschool	43.5%	42.6%	38.8%
Pima County	Percentage of Children under 5 Living at or below Poverty Level (<100% FPL)	26.7%	27.9%	29.3%
	Percentage of Children Aged Birth to 5 Living in Male Householder Family	9.6%	9.4%	8.8%
	Percentage of Children Aged Birth to 5 Living in Female Householder Family	24.4%	24.6%	25.2%
	Percentage of Grandparents Living with Own Grandchildren Who Are Responsible for Their Care	48.6%	45.5%	44.2%
	Percentage of Children Aged 3-4 Enrolled in Nursery School/Preschool	34.2%	37.1%	36.1%
Arizona	Percentage of Children under 5 Living at or below Poverty Level (<100% FPL)	24.6%	25.8%	27.1%
	Percentage of Children Aged Birth to 5 Living in Male Householder Family	8.1%	8.5%	9.0%
	Percentage of Children Aged Birth to 5 Living in Female Householder Family	20.7%	21.4%	22.4%
	Percentage of Grandparents Living with Own Grandchildren Who Are Responsible for Their Care	43.6%	42.6%	41.5%
	Percentage of Children Aged 3-4 Enrolled in Nursery School/Preschool	34.2%	34.5%	33.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Early Childhood Development and Health

- Ili Uusim Mahtawapo (Pascua Yaqui Head Start), a key community asset, serves between 138 and 150 children each year. Recent assessments showed over 90% of the Tribe’s kinder-bound children were ready for kindergarten.
- The number of children whose families receive support for child care through Pascua Yaqui Children’s Services has decreased in recent years (from 73 in 2010 to <25 in 2012) partly due to decreased availability of funding. The cost of care has risen as reflected in child subsidies of \$288 per month per child. Average daily costs for center care can be as high as \$36.80 for full-time infant care (ranging from \$15.00 to \$36.80).

Professional Development and Family Support

- First Things First The Pascua Yaqui Tribe Regional Partnership Council funding supports professional development opportunities and scholarships for home care providers and other early childhood educators. The Regional Council also funds home visitation and community based parent education offered in New Pascua through partnership agreements with Tribal departments.
- The new Education Building and its associated programs, including the Dr. Fernando Escalante Community Library and Resource Center, are seen as major assets for the community.

- Parents/grandparents completing a family survey report high levels of confidence in their capacity to support child cognitive development, safety, health and well being. They also read stories with their children four days a week and tell stories/sing songs with them five days of every week.

Communication, Public Information, and System Coordination

- Strong partnerships with the local KPYT radio station, the *Yaqui Times*, and other Pima County Regional Partnership Councils created many venues for outreach to the community.
- Opportunities for additional outreach and education may be indicated from parent/grandparent responses to a survey that indicate ongoing need for child development knowledge and awareness: Approximately one-third of the responses indicated beliefs that children under 1 year of age do not respond to parent emotion and that capacity for learning is set from birth and not amenable to change. Some parents/grandparents also believe that television can provide language development equivalent to one-on-one attention from family members.
- System coordination activities have increased in the past several years and include First Things First supported projects (e.g., Quality First scholarships to support children attending a nearby Tucson Unified School District preschool program) as well as examples from other Tribal areas (e.g., Ili Uusim Hiapsi—Project LAUNCH, a federally funded program).

Executive Summary

The Santa Cruz Region Geography

The Santa Cruz Regional Partnership Council supports the needs of young children in the Santa Cruz First Things First Region. The Santa Cruz Region has many of the same boundaries as Santa Cruz County, with the exception that the zip code that includes the community of Amado is assigned to the Pima South Region, and two zip codes extending into Pima and Cochise County are assigned the Santa Cruz Region. The majority of the population in the Santa Cruz Region lives in Nogales and Rio Rico.

Population

According to U.S. Census data, the Santa Cruz Region had a population of 47,545 in 2010, of whom 4,436 (9%) were children under the age of six. Both the Santa Cruz Region and Santa Cruz County have a greater proportion of households with children birth through five years of age (21%) than the state as a whole (16%). This is primarily due to the high number of households with children under six years of age in the Nogales and Rio Rico zip codes; in the rest of the region, there are relatively few households with young children.

In 2010 in the Santa Cruz Region, 74 percent of children birth to five years of age were living with at least one parent, with 26 percent living in a single-female headed household. The region and county (22%), and all but one of the zip code areas in the region, (Tumacacori), had a higher percentage of young children living with grandparents than the state (14%). Three areas had a quarter or more of the young children in their communities living with grandparents; Patagonia (31%), Nogales (25%) and Tubac (25%).

Likely due to proximity to the border, almost half of the young children in the region and county (49%) were living with at least one foreign-born parent, higher than the percentage across the state as a whole (29%). Most of the adult population living in the region (78%) identified as Hispanic and almost all (93%) of the population of children aged birth through four living in the region were identified as Hispanic. In contrast, two areas in the region had roughly three-quarters of children through age four identified as White, not-Hispanic; Sonoita (77%) and Elgin (72%). Rates of linguistic isolation, where all adults in the home speak English less than very well, were higher for the region and county (22% for both) than the state (5%), and higher still in the Nogales area (35%). This supports the need for services and resources to be available in Spanish and English throughout the region.

Social and Economic Circumstances

Many families across the Santa Cruz Region face economic challenges. The percentage of the population of children aged birth through five living in poverty in the Santa Cruz Region and Santa Cruz County (37% for both) is higher than the state as a whole (27%). In two areas in the region where estimates are available, this percentage is even higher, with 61 percent of young children living in poverty in Patagonia

and 51 percent in Nogales. Unemployment rates in Santa Cruz County and the city of Nogales are much higher than the state as a whole. In addition, fewer children living with two parents in the region and the county have both parents in the labor force (23%) compared to the state (32%).

Due to this higher rate of economic disadvantage, many families in the region may benefit from public assistance programs. The number of young children receiving Nutrition Assistance (SNAP) benefits has increased in the region and county (+5%) between 2010 and 2012, more than across the state in the same period (+2%). Overall, 49 percent of young children in the region were receiving SNAP in 2012. In the beginning of 2012, 51 percent of young children in Santa Cruz County were also participating in WIC, higher than the state rate of 29 percent. In Santa Cruz County in 2012, 36 percent of children under 18 years of age faced food insecurity, the third highest county rate of food insecurity in the state, suggesting the need for additional food supports.

Compared to the rest of the state, the Santa Cruz Region lags behind in the educational attainment of its adults. Over one-quarter of adults in the region (28%) don't have a high school diploma or GED, compared to 15 percent across the state of Arizona overall. In addition, less than half (42%) of births in the region are to mothers with more than a high school degree. These factors may limit employment opportunities for many in the region, and early literacy opportunities for some children.

Early Childhood Education and Child Care

The need for additional early literacy opportunities in the region can be evidenced in a number of ways. First, Santa Cruz County 3rd graders performed less well than students statewide in both the math and reading AIMS tests, with a slightly lower percentage of students passing in each subject (65% math, 73% reading) than the state (69% math, 75% reading). In addition, only 18 percent of three and four year olds in the region are estimated to be enrolled in an early learning setting, compared to 34 percent across the state. Finally, less than one-quarter of the region's population of children aged birth through five are being served in licensed or certified child care settings. Although the need for early learning opportunities in the region remains large, the Santa Cruz Regional Partnership Council is funding child care scholarships through Quality First to address the barrier of affordability that many families in the region face, and home visitation and Family Resource Centers to promote these early learning opportunities outside of child care settings.

Health

While access to health care can be problematic for the Santa Cruz Region with all of Santa Cruz County designated as a "Federally Medically Underserved Area", and access to specialty medical and mental health services cited as key needs, the region is served by a Federally Qualified Health Center with locations in Nogales, Rio Rico and Patagonia, which may help to make general medical and dental services more accessible for some in the region.

During 2012, there were 668 births in the region, which continued the downward trend from 2009. The percentage of women in the region receiving early prenatal care in 2012 (71%), fell below the state average (79%) and the Healthy People 2020 target (78%), but showed an increase since 2009. In contrast to this improvement, the percentage of births with fewer than five prenatal care visits increased to 16.5 percent in 2012. While the percentage of low birth weight births increased from 2011 (6.9%) to 2012 (7.5%), there has been a decrease overall from 2009 when 10 percent of births in the region were low birth weight births. Births to teen mothers have risen somewhat since 2009, with 16 percent of births in the region to teen mothers in 2012. One area consistently meeting the Healthy People 2020 targets and state rates, are the very low numbers of women reporting smoking during pregnancy, at only one percent in 2012.

Family Supports

The number of children removed from their homes between the ages of birth and five has decreased from 2011 to 2013, in the region (-13%) and county (-11%). This is contrary to the pattern in the state, which has seen a 35 percent increase in removals of young children between the years 2011 and 2013.

The Santa Cruz Region is served by a number of parenting education programs, provided in a variety of settings, covering a variety of topics. In addition, families throughout the region can take advantage of home visiting programs and Family Resource Centers, which provide both in-home and community-based parent-education supports. These programs are assets in the region, increasing the availability and accessibility of early literacy supports and programs for families with young children in the region.

Conclusion

While the Santa Cruz Region faces challenges to providing comprehensive, high quality early care and education, children's health care, and support for families with young children due to the diversity of its population and geographical spread of the region, the Santa Cruz Regional Partnership Council is committed to the ideal that all children in the Santa Cruz Region should arrive at kindergarten healthy and ready to succeed. The Council's commitment to family support and early literacy strategies is helping to move the region closer to this goal.

Executive Summary

This report highlights key population, socioeconomic, health and economic indicators that pertain to children birth through age five and their families in the South Pima region. A comprehensive list of demographic indicators specific to each zip code is available in Section Two of this report (the Zip Code Fact Box Resource Guide).

The South Pima Region Geography

Located in the far eastern, western, and southern boundaries of Pima County, the South Pima region is expansive, covering 5,632 square miles. The southern boundary borders Mexico at the sparsely populated towns of Lukeville in the far western part of the region and at Sasabe, southwest of Tucson. Its northern boundary reaches up to Speedway Boulevard in east Tucson. The geography is diverse, encompassing 16 inhabited zip codes, many small rural towns and isolated communities and a few highly urban and suburban areas.

Population

- The 2010 Census reported that the population of the First Things First South Pima region was 265,545. This is 49 percent higher than the population of 181,773 reported in the 2000 Census.
- The number of children birth through age five in the South Pima region reported by the 2010 Census was 23,474, up 39 percent from 16,946 reported in the 2000 Census. Children in this age group comprised 8.7 percent of the regional population.¹
- Approximately four in ten children born in the South Pima region in 2012 were White (41 percent). This is slightly less than the rates for Pima County (42 percent) and the state (45 percent), according to the Arizona Department of Health's Vital Statistics Office. As for ethnicity, the region's proportion of Hispanic/Latino children has been increasing. Hispanic/Latino births made up 49 percent of all South Pima births in 2010 and 50 percent of all births in 2012. These rates exceeded those of the county and state: Hispanic/Latino births in 2012 represented 44 percent of all Pima County births and 39 percent of all births statewide.

¹ Population counts published in the Regional Needs and Assets reports may vary from those provided by First Things First. First Things First's population methodology is based on 2010 Census Blocks while Donelson Consulting utilized the 2010 Census Zip Code Tabulation Areas; see Appendix E for a description of the geographies used to define the region and communities within the region.

- The number of births in the South Pima region declined slightly over the three-year period from 2010 and 2012 according to the Arizona Department of Health's Vital Statistics Office. Births for the South Pima region decreased from 3,650 in 2010 to 3,620 in 2011 and to 3,550 in 2012.

Social and Economic Circumstances

- Poverty disproportionately impacts young children in the South Pima region, Pima County and statewide, according to the 2007-2011 American Community Survey (ACS). Approximately 13 percent of the general population in the South Pima region and 17 percent in Pima County lived in poverty, as did 16 percent across the state. In contrast, approximately 19 percent of children birth through age five lived in poverty in the South Pima region. In Pima County, 27 percent of children in this age group endured poverty, as did 26 percent throughout the state.
- Child poverty for children birth through age five in the South Pima region has decreased in recent years, according to the 2007-2011 American Community Survey estimates, in contrast to the trend in Pima County and the state. In the South Pima region about 19 percent lived below poverty compared to the 2000 Census rate of 26 percent. The county's child poverty rates for this age group increased from 21 to 27 percent over the same time period compared with the state rate, which increased from 21 to 26 percent.
- According to the 2008-2012 ACS, 42 percent of mothers in Pima County and 44 percent of mothers in Tucson were unmarried, more than the state average of 38 percent. Among unmarried mothers in Pima County, 29 percent had less than a high school diploma compared to 11 percent of married mothers.

Early Childhood Education and Child Care

- In Pima County, the 2008-2012 ACS reports that 53 percent of children birth through age five living with both parents had both parents in the workforce (22,595) and 77 percent of children living with one parent had that parent in the workforce (22,476 children). These children with working parents, about 45,071, need some type of child care. Child care may also be needed for the children of non-working parents who are trying to find employment or who are attending school.
- Regulated child care and education providers include Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) licensed centers, ADHS certified group homes, and Department of Economic Security (DES) certified family homes. Unregulated providers are not licensed or certified by any agency. The number of providers in the South Pima region changed in 2013 as a result of the swapping of two zip codes with the Central Pima region in addition to potential changes due to demand

factors. There were 285 providers registered with the Child Care Resource and Referral database in December 2013.

- The maximum authorized capacity of all care and education providers in December 2013 was about 6,857. If one assumes that 80 percent of that capacity is used for children birth through age five, licensed and certified providers in the South Pima region had slots for an estimated 5,486 children in this age group in December 2013. That is, licensed and certified providers had the capacity to provide care for about 23 percent of the 23,474 children birth through age five in the region.
- Due to the economic recession and declines in state revenues, the state legislature reduced many family support programs including child care subsidies. The number of families eligible for the child care subsidy decreased by 17 percent in the state, 17 percent in Pima County and 16 percent in the South Pima region from January 2010 to January 2012. In response to the cuts, the South Pima regional Partnership Council is expending funds on providing scholarships to children through Quality First enrolled providers.
- Quality First (QF) is one of the cornerstone systemic strategies of First Things First to improve access to high quality early learning and care settings for children birth through age five. As of December 2013, there were 76 QF enrolled providers in the region (based on the State Fiscal Year 2014 regional boundary).
- The average cost of full-time care across all providers in the region in December 2013 was \$132 per week for infant care compared to \$123 per week for the care of four- to five-year-olds. Infant care in licensed centers was \$148 per week on average, compared with \$126 per week for four- to five-year-olds. In DES certified homes, infant care cost \$120 per week on average, compared to \$118 per week for four- to five-year-olds.

Family Supports

- In the South Pima region, 720 children, or approximately 3 percent of the 23,474 children birth through age five, received Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) cash assistance benefits. This proportion is similar to that of Pima County (3 percent) and slightly higher than that of Arizona (2 percent). TANF enrollments are low and have declined in recent years because of state legislative actions to restrict program benefits.
- In the South Pima region, Pima County and Arizona, the proportion of children receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits in January 2012 was much higher than for TANF benefits. Approximately 11,093 children birth through age five were receiving nutritional assistance in the South Pima region in January 2012, or 47 percent of the children in

this age group. In Pima County, 42 percent of children in this age group received the SNAP benefit, as did 40 percent of these children statewide in January 2012.

- In January 2012, 5,690 children birth through age four were enrolled in the Women, Infants and Children Program (WIC) program in the South Pima region. This represents 86 percent of the 6,602 children who were eligible for the program.
- The South Pima regional Partnership Council determined that supports and services to families was the highest priority need in the region in fiscal years 2013 and 2014. In order to address this need, the council implemented a combination of strategies in collaboration with partners that deliver comprehensive education, health and support services, including in-home parenting education (home visitation) and community-based parenting education, family literacy workshops and oral health screening and information.
- The South Pima regional Partnership Council has implemented multiple service coordination and collaboration strategies, both within the region and cross-regionally with other FTF councils. These strategies seek to improve and streamline service delivery and follow up processes for families while eliminating duplication of services, coordinate community outreach to inform the greater community on the importance of early childhood education, health and development, increase the capacity and infrastructure for early childhood education and care, and deliver innovative professional development for child care and education professionals.

Health

- The South Pima region outperforms the state and county on some indicators of prenatal health. The region had a much lower rate of low-birth weight infants, 1 percent compared to 7 percent for the county and state. Approximately 3 percent of pregnant mothers in the region reported smoking, less than the 4 percent in the county and state.
- The South Pima region has somewhat lower risk factors for childhood health and stress than the state. The region had a lower proportion of unwed mothers compared to the county and state. In the South Pima region in 2012, 42 percent of mothers giving birth were not married compared to 45 percent for the county and the state. The region's share of publicly funded births in 2012, at 50 percent, is slightly less than the county rate of 52 and the state rate of 53 percent.
- Immunization rates are slightly higher for the South Pima region than for the county and Arizona. Approximately 75 percent of children in the South Pima region completed immunizations for the 12-24 month series, compared to 74 percent in the county and 69 percent in the state. About 58 percent of children ages 19-35 months in the region completed the immunization series in 2012,

compared to 55 percent for the county and 48 percent for the state. Completion rates must be interpreted with caution, however, due to challenges in calculating the rates.²³

Conclusion

The major challenges for First Things First South Pima region are its geographic dispersion, economic disparities of the region's population, and state level cuts to social and health services.

Given these challenges, the South Pima Regional Partnership Council over the past six years has sought to build and fund multi-pronged, long-term strategies to coordinate services and build capacity for early childhood care, education and support services. Through partnering with service delivery organizations, the South Pima Regional Partnership Council seeks to create a seamless system of services for families and children that builds trust among community members and provides crucial services in the small rural towns of this diverse region. The Regional Partnership Council's funded strategies and partnerships demonstrate an ongoing commitment to impact the care, health and educational needs of children birth through five years of age in the South Pima region.

²³ Immunization data are from the Arizona State Immunization Information System (ASIS). ASIS-based coverage level estimates are nearly always lower than actual coverage levels given the challenges in determining a completion rate. Fragmented records, children relocating out of state before completing their immunization, and duplication of records are some reasons for these challenges.



FIRST THINGS FIRST

**West Regional Partnership Councils
Regional Needs and Assets Reports
Executive Summaries**

**Cocopah
Colorado River Indian Tribes
Hualapai Tribe
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Yuma**

Executive Summary

The Cocopah Region Geography

The Cocopah Indian Tribe is a federally-recognized, sovereign tribe located in the most southwestern corner of the state, 13 miles south of Yuma and along the Colorado River. The Cocopah (Kwapa), also known as the River People, have historically lived along the lower Colorado River and delta. They are descendants of the Yuman-language speaking people that occupied the lands along the Colorado River. The current Cocopah Reservation is comprised of three noncontiguous regions: East, North and West Reservations.

Population

The boundaries of the First Things First Cocopah Tribe Region match those of the Cocopah Reservation. The population of the region, which includes both tribal and non-tribal members who reside on the reservation, is about 817 people according to the US Census, with 65 being children under the age of six. This, however, includes residents who are non-tribal members who live in an RV resort in the North Reservation, many of whom are winter residents. Nearly two-thirds (62%) of the young children live with one or both parents, about one third (32%) live with other relatives (like grandparents) and an estimated six percent live with nonrelatives.

Social and Economic Circumstances

Almost three-quarters (72%) of the children under the age of six in the Cocopah Tribe Region live in poverty. The median income of the American Indian population in the region is less than half of the median income for all families in the state of Arizona. Low adult educational attainment and a high unemployment rate are among the main challenges faced by community members in the region.

Educational Indicators

According to the American Community Survey estimates, 29 percent of the American Indian adults (25 and older) in the Cocopah Tribe Region do not have a high school diploma or GED. The region's unemployment rate in 2013 (36%) was substantially higher than that of the state (8%) and has continuously increased since 2009 (when the rate was 28%).

Supporting tribal members in pursuing their education is a high priority of the Cocopah Education Department, which offers a wide range of resources to families in the region, including advisors who work closely with community children in grades K-12. Financial support and incentives for students are also available through the Cocopah Education Department. In addition, a strong truancy law and the availability of a truancy officer helps track children's school attendance closely. Residents in the region who want to strive towards their GED certificate can get support from the Cocopah Vocational Training Center located on the West Reservation.

Early care and education opportunities for young children in the Cocopah Tribe Region are available through the tribally-operated Cocopah Day Care and Cocopah Head Start, which enroll a high proportion of the three and four year old children in the region. There is no infant care available within the reservation boundaries and parents must travel 5-15 miles to the nearest child care facility for very young children.

Health

Health care services to residents from the Cocopah Tribe Region are available through the Indian Health Services Fort Yuma Service Unit and the Cocopah Wellness Center. Between 2009 and 2012 there were 51 births to women from the Cocopah Tribe Region. Fewer than half of the mothers in the region started prenatal care during their first trimester, and ten percent of the births in 2012 were preterm. Over the 2009-2012 four-year span, an average of 16 percent of births were to teenaged mothers.

Indian Health Service (IHS) records indicate that an estimated 77.8 percent of children 19 to 35 months of age in the region are up-to-date on their immunizations and 55 percent of children ages 2 to 5 are overweight or obese. Also according to IHS data, about 45 percent of the young children in the region do not have third-party insurance coverage.

Early identification of children with special needs continues to be an important need in the community. Young children with developmental delays may not be identified until they enter kindergarten.

Family Support

Key informants as well as parents and caregivers agree that a strength of the region is the opportunity families have to raise their children in a small, safe community, where children grow up around family members and can learn about their Native culture.

Conclusion

There is good collaboration among the different tribal departments that provide services to families with young children in the region as well as with other outside agencies. These coordinated efforts are reflected in caregivers' perceptions that in the Cocopah Tribe Region all members are "working together for the well-being of our children."

Executive Summary

The Colorado River Indian Tribes Region Geography

The Colorado River Indian Tribes (CRIT) Region encompasses a unique and diverse area. The Colorado River Indian Tribes include four distinct Tribes - the Mohave, Chemehuevi, Hopi, and Navajo. The Colorado River Indian Reservation contains lands in both the State of Arizona and the State of California; however, 84 percent of the land and 81 percent of the population live on the Arizona portion of the reservation. This portion of land constitutes the core of the First Things First Colorado River Indian Tribes (CRIT) Region. The primary community in the CRIT Region is Parker, Arizona, which is located on a combination of Tribal land, leased land that is owned by CRIT and land owned by non-tribal members. The CRIT Region serves both Tribal members and non-members on the Arizona portions of the Colorado River Indian Reservation and in the Town of Parker.

Population

About 35 percent of the population of La Paz County—and 60 percent of the county's young children—live in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region. In 2010, there were 7,077 people living on the Arizona part of the reservation, of whom 739 were children under the age of six. Most of the children live in or near the town of Parker, but some live in the Poston area, or farther south. About three-quarters of these young children live with one or both parents, with 37 percent living in a single-female headed household. Forty-two percent of children under six in the region live in poverty and 54 percent of young children in the region receive Nutrition Assistance (SNAP) benefits.

Thirty-six percent of adults in the region identify as Hispanic (36%), non-Hispanic White (33%), and American Indian (27%), highlighting the ethnic diversity of the CRIT Region. Half of children ages birth to four living in the CRIT Region were identified as Hispanic, and most other children were identified as American Indian (42%). About one-third of residents speak Spanish at home, while two percent speak a Native language at home.

Social and Economic Circumstances

Forty-two percent of children under six in the region live in poverty and 54 percent of young children in the region receive Nutrition Assistance (SNAP) benefits.

Health

The State of Arizona has designated the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region as a medically underserved area. There is no labor and delivery unit in the region. Although mothers in the region are more likely to be teen-aged than mothers statewide, their babies are less likely to have low birth weights. However, rates of preterm births have increased over the past few years. One in four young children in the region were identified as having untreated tooth decay, and 16 percent are obese.

Educational Indicators

There are four licensed or certified childcare providers in the region, including Head Start and Blake Preschool Program. A to Z Therapies provides early intervention services and Head Start and Blake Preschool Program provide services to preschool-aged children with special needs.

The Colorado River Indian Tribes Head Start is the largest provider of early childhood education services in the region, serving 68 percent of children ages 3-4 in the region. Many services are offered to children enrolled in Head Start and their families through the program, including developmental and health care screenings and services, oral health screenings, mental health assessments, and family education services.

Third graders in CRIT region did not perform as well as students statewide in both the math and reading portions of Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS), and the high school graduation rate in the district is lower than it is statewide. These factors have led to concerns in the community about ways to engage children and families in school and in continuing education.

Conclusion

An asset of the Colorado River Tribes Region is the culturally diverse, yet often cohesive, nature of the region. Families report appreciating the opportunity to raise their children where "everyone knows everyone." Leveraging the unique opportunities for cross-community collaboration and resource sharing in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region can help those in the community respond creatively to the challenges they may face and to support the health, welfare and development of the families and young children who live there.

Executive Summary

The Hualapai Tribe Region Geography

The Hualapai Tribe is a federally-recognized tribe. The 992,463-acre reservation is located in northwest Arizona. One hundred and eight miles of the northern boundary is the middle of the Colorado River. The Hualapai reservation, established in 1883, encompasses about one million acres, which lie on part of three Arizona counties: Coconino, Yavapai, and Mohave. Most residents live in the Tribe's capital, Peach Springs, located along US Route 66. Geographically, the boundaries of the First Things First Hualapai Tribe Regional Partnership Council area essentially match those of the reservation.

Population

According to U.S. Census data, the Hualapai Tribe had a population of 1,335 in 2010, of whom 197 (15%) were children under the age of six. According to data provided by the Hualapai Enrollment Department, in 2013, there were 225 enrolled members under the age of six, of which 143 resided on the reservation. The Hualapai Tribe Region had a higher proportion of households with children birth through five years of age (34%) than all Arizona reservations combined (26%) or the state as a whole (16%). About 36 percent of the region's young children live with relatives other than their parents. This proportion is higher than the statewide average (16%) but lower than the average for all of Arizona's reservations (46%). In addition, over half (51%) of young children in the region live in single-female headed households, more than all Arizona reservations (45%) and the state (26%). A quarter of the region's children under six live in their grandparent's household, less than all reservations in Arizona combined (40%) but more than the state (14%).

Social and Economic Circumstances

A high unemployment rate and limited job opportunities are among the main challenges faced by community members in the region. Unemployment on the Hualapai Tribe Reservation averaged 24 percent in 2013, the same as all Arizona reservations combined, but much higher than the Arizona average of eight percent. The unemployment rate in the region has decreased slightly since 2009, when it was 27 percent. Limited employment opportunities are also related to the low educational attainment in the region: 36 percent of the region's adults do not have a high school education, or GED, which is required for employment with the Tribe. In addition, more than half (52%) of the region's children under six live in poverty, which is nearly double the rate in Arizona as a whole (27% in poverty).

Due to this higher rate of economic disadvantage, many families in the region may benefit from public assistance programs. In 2012, 57 percent of young children participated in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and 11 percent participated in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

Educational Indicators

Third graders in the region performed less well than students statewide in both the math and reading AIMS tests, with a lower percentage of students passing in each subject (16% math, 38% reading) than the state (68% math, 75% reading). The percentage of 3rd graders passing the reading test has increased from 29 percent in 2011 to 38 percent in 2013.

Child care in the region is available through the Hualapai Child Care program. In the fall of 2013 and spring of 2014 the program underwent an important transformation from an exclusively home-based provider program to a center-based program. The Hualapai Day Care Center opened on March 16, 2014 and has the capacity to serve a total of 60 children ages six months to 12 years, and as of June 2014, was serving nine children under the age of six. In addition, the Hualapai Tribe operates a federally regulated Tribal Head Start program. With 57 three and four year old children enrolled, the Head Start Program has a very high reach among this population (83% of the preschool-age children in the region are enrolled in the program).

As it is the case in many rural areas, there are limited professional development opportunities for early childhood education staff in the region. Community colleges such as Northland Pioneer College, Rio Salado College, Mohave Community College and Yavapai College offer a variety of degrees in early childhood education to professionals in the Hualapai Tribe Region, some of which are available as online degrees. The Hualapai Tribe Regional Partnership Council also supports professional development opportunities in the region through two T.E.A.C.H. scholarships.

Health

Health care is available to community members at the Indian Health Services Peach Springs Health Center and the Hualapai Health Education and Wellness Department. Prenatal care and education services are provided by these two agencies through a contracted Ob/Gyn physician and the Maternal and Child Health Program, respectively. In 2012, about 72 percent of expectant mothers in the region receive early (first-trimester) prenatal care. Although this is higher than the 64 percent for all Arizona reservations combined, it does not meet the Healthy People 2020 target of 78 percent. The rate of teen births is high for the region, with 117.9/1,000 females aged 19 and younger giving birth. The rates for all Arizona tribes (69.8/1,000) and the state of Arizona (50.1/1,000) are much lower.

There are generally high rates of adequate immunizations among young children, and oral health care for the youngest children in the region is also good. Childhood obesity has been identified as a problem for children in the region, however. The combined proportion of young children receiving care by the Indian Health Service (IHS) who are overweight or obese (50%) is substantially higher than that of children enrolled in the Hualapai Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program (38%), but very similar to the percent of Hualapai Head Start children who are overweight or obese (52%).

Conclusion

In addition to those cited above, other assets were identified in the Hualapai Tribe Region, including good access to oral health care coupled with the involvement of the Peach Springs Health Center in the IHS Early Childhood Caries (ECC) Collaborative; active language and culture preservation programs; partnerships among agencies such as WIC and Maternal and Child Health; high rates of preschool education and high rates of immunization. By leveraging these substantial strengths, the Hualapai Tribe can continue to support young families and can help assure that “the community’s children” enter kindergarten healthy and ready to learn.

Executive Summary

The La Paz/Mohave Region Geography

The La Paz/Mohave Regional Partnership Council supports the needs of young children in the La Paz/Mohave Region. The La Paz/Mohave Region consists of the two counties of La Paz and Mohave, excluding three reservation areas (Colorado River Indian Tribes, Hualapai, and Kaibab), but including the Arizona portion of the Fort Mojave Indian Tribe reservation. For the purposes of this report, the La Paz/Mohave Region was subdivided into 10 geographic areas, including all communities within the region. The majority of the population in the La Paz/Mohave Region lives in Mohave County in and surrounding the cities of Bullhead, Lake Havasu and Kingman.

Population

According to U.S. Census data, the La Paz/Mohave Region had a population of 211,436 in 2010, of whom 13,397 (6%) were children under the age of six. Both the La Paz/Mohave Region and La Paz and Mohave Counties have a smaller proportion of households with children birth through five years of age (10%, 9%, and 11% respectively) than the state as a whole (16%). The Colorado City-Centennial Park area has the highest percentage of households with children under six in the region (68%), followed by the Arizona part of the Fort Mojave Indian Tribe (17%). The Parker Strip-Cienega Springs area, the Quartzsite-Ehrenberg area, and the Salome-Bouse-Wenden area have the lowest percentage of children under six in the region, all having only five percent of households with those young children in them.

In the La Paz/Mohave Region, 80 percent of children birth to five years of age are living with at least one parent, with 26 percent living in a single-female headed household. Six areas in the region have a higher percentage of young children living with grandparents than the state (14%) including the Dolan Springs-Golden Valley area (24%), the Parker Strip-Cienega Springs area (20%), the Fort Mohave-Mohave Valley-Topock area (19%), the Littlefield-Beaver Dam area (18%), the Bullhead City area (16%), and the Quartzsite-Ehrenberg area (15%). La Paz County has the same percentage of children under the age of six living with a foreign-born parent as the state (29%), while only 16 percent of young children in the La Paz/Mohave Region and 15 percent of young children in Mohave County are living with a foreign-born parent.

Most (84%) of the adult population living in the region and counties identified as White, not-Hispanic and almost two-thirds (65%) of the population of children aged birth through four living in the region and county were identified as White, not-Hispanic. Three areas in the region had more than half of children through age four identified as Hispanic; the Littlefield-Beaver Dam area (59%), the Salome-Bouse-Wenden area (57%), and the Quartzsite-Ehrenberg area (53%).

Social and Economic Circumstances

Many families across the La Paz/Mohave Region face economic challenges. The percentage of the population of children aged birth through five living in poverty in the La Paz/Mohave Region (37%) is higher than the state as a whole (27%). La Paz County has an even higher percentage of the young population living in poverty at 44 percent, while Mohave County is similar to the region at 36 percent. Unemployment rates in La Paz and Mohave County and the three large cities in Mohave County are slightly higher than the state as a whole. In addition, Mohave County has the highest percentage of very low income renters classified as housing-cost burdened renters (83%), compared to 79 percent across the state as whole, and 55 percent in La Paz County.

Due to this higher rate of economic disadvantage, many families in the region may benefit from public assistance programs. The number of young children receiving Nutrition Assistance (SNAP) benefits has increased in the region between 2010 and 2012 (+4%), while the percentage in La Paz County has dropped (-4%). Overall, 54 percent of young children in the region were receiving SNAP in 2012. Conversely, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) benefits have decreased for the region and both counties. Observed decreases may be due in part to changes in legislation reducing the time limit on participation. In the beginning of 2012, 39 percent of young children in Mohave County were participating in WIC, higher than the state rate of 29 percent. In La Paz County, 17 percent of all residents, and 31 percent of children under 18 years of age faced food insecurity. In Mohave County, 18 percent of all residents, and 30 percent of children under 18 years of age faced food insecurity. La Paz County has the fifth-highest percentage of children facing food insecurity, and Mohave County has the sixth-highest percentage across the counties in Arizona.

Educational Indicators

Compared to the rest of the state, the La Paz/Mohave Region lags behind in the educational attainment of its adults. Adults in the La Paz/Mohave Region (17%) are more likely to be without a high school diploma or GED than the state of Arizona overall (15%), and more than a quarter of adults in La Paz County do not have a high school diploma or GED (26%). Just one-third of births in the region are to mothers with more than a high school degree. These factors may limit employment opportunities for many in the region, and early literacy opportunities for some children.

Mohave County 3rd graders performed slightly better than students statewide in both the math and reading AIMS tests, with a higher percentage of students passing in each subject (72% math, 79% reading) than the state (69% math, 75% reading). La Paz County 3rd graders did not perform as well as students statewide in both math and reading, with a lower percentage of students passing in each subject (58% math, 65% reading). There was however, much variability across school districts in the region in both the math and reading AIMS scores.

In the La Paz/Mohave Region there are 67 regulated child care providers, the majority of which are ADHS licensed centers. At the end of 2011 there were 86 regulated child care providers in the region,

compared to 67 at the beginning of 2014. The percentage of the population of children aged birth through five in the region served in licensed or certified child care settings ranges from 16 to 20 percent, reflecting that roughly four-fifths of the region's population of children aged birth through five are not being served in licensed or certified child care settings. Many of the families previously in center-based care reportedly turn to the more affordable option of home-based childcare, which can be both regulated and unregulated care, and can vary greatly in terms of quality. First Things First funded preschools and Quality First scholarship slots are assets in increasing participation in early learning programs by addressing the barrier of affordability.

Health

Access to health care is problematic for the La Paz/Mohave Region with all of La Paz County and all but the Bullhead City and Lake Havasu City Primary Care Areas in Mohave County designated as "medically underserved" by the Arizona Department of Health Services, all of the region designated as a Mental Health Professional shortage area, and much of the region as a Dental Health Professional Shortage Area. The newly formed Oral Health Coalition in the La Paz/Mohave Region may help to address the latter area of need.

During 2012, there were 1,750 births in the region, which continued a downward trend from 2009. The percentage of women in the region receiving early prenatal care (83%) exceeded both the state average (79%) and the Healthy People 2020 target (78%). The percentage of births to teen mothers 17 years of age and younger in 2012 was 4.4 percent in Mohave County and 2.9 percent in La Paz County, an increase from the previous year for Mohave County, but a decrease for La Paz County. Averaged over ten years, infant mortality rates for La Paz (8.7/1,000) and Mohave (7.5/1,000) Counties exceeded the state rate (6.5/1,000) and Healthy People 2020 target (6.0/1,000). In the La Paz/Mohave Region in 2012, 14 percent of women reported smoking during pregnancy, much higher than the state of Arizona (4%), and the highest percentage for the region since 2009.

In the La Paz/Mohave Region, the percent of the population of young children (14%) uninsured exceeds the state (11%). Some areas had much higher percentages of young children uninsured such as the Dolan Springs-Golden Valley area (47%) and the Littlefield-Beaver Dam area (43%). Mental health services and services for children with special needs were consistently cited as the greatest health care needs for young children in both counties by key informants. The need for substance abuse treatment resources was also a common refrain, which is supported by high rates of alcohol-induced deaths in the region. For women only in 2012, the age-adjusted mortality rate for alcohol-induced deaths for the state was 7.7/100,000, but 54.9/100,000 in La Paz County, the highest for any county in the state.

Family Support

The number of children removed from their homes between the ages of birth and five has decreased from 2011 to 2013, in the region (-17%), La Paz County (-36%) and Mohave County (-21%). This is contrary to the pattern in the state, which has seen a 35 percent increase in removals of young children

between the years 2011 and 2013. The number of removals varies by area, with increases in the number of removals in four regional areas, and decreases in another six during the same time period. In La Paz County, approximately eight percent of youth indicated that they currently had an incarcerated parent, and 29 percent indicated that they had a parent who had previously been incarcerated. That nearly a third of youth in La Paz County have had a parent incarcerated highlights a potential need for resources for these children.

The La Paz/Mohave Region is served by a number of quality parenting education and home visitation programs, provided in a variety of settings and by a variety of providers. The Home Visitation Collaboration and the newly hired Home Visiting Coordinator is helping to coordinate and streamline these services and referral processes to best serve the families with young children in the region.

Conclusion

While the La Paz/Mohave Region faces challenges to providing comprehensive, high quality early care and education, children's health care, and support for families with young children due to the diversity of its population and geographical spread of the region, the La Paz/Mohave Regional Partnership Council is committed to the ideal that all children in the La Paz/Mohave Region should arrive at kindergarten healthy and ready to succeed. The Council's commitment to system building and system coordination work is helping to move the La Paz/Mohave Region closer to this goal.

Executive Summary

The Yuma Region Geography

The Yuma Regional Partnership Council supports the needs of young children in the Yuma First Things First Region. The Yuma Regional Partnership Council provides services to the communities located in Yuma County, including the Arizona portion of the Quechan Tribe of Fort Yuma Indian Reservation. The region does not include the tribal lands of the Cocopah Tribe Indian Reservation. For the purposes of this report, the Yuma Region was subdivided into the Central, Southern and Eastern areas. The majority of the population in the Yuma Region lives in the Central area including Yuma and Fortuna Foothills.

Population

According to U.S. Census data, the Yuma Region had a population of 195,011 in 2010, of whom 17,992 (9%) were children under the age of six. Both the Yuma Region and Yuma County have a larger proportion of households with children birth through five years of age (20% for both) than the state as a whole (16%), although there is some variability across parts of the region. The Southern area of the region had a third of households with one or more young children in them, compared to 18 percent in the Southern area, and only 12 percent in the Eastern area.

In the Yuma Region, over three-quarters (77%) of children birth to five years of age are living with at least one parent, with 24 percent living in a single-female headed household. Across the region, 14 percent of young children were living in their grandparent's household. A large portion of children in the region are living with at least one foreign born parent; 43 percent of young children in the Yuma Region and Yuma County are, while 57 percent of young children in the Eastern area and 56 percent in the Southern area of the region are living with at least one foreign-born parent.

Over half (54%) of the adult population living in the region and county identified as Hispanic and over three-quarters (76%) of the population of children aged birth through four living in the region and county were identified as Hispanic. Almost all children aged birth to four years in the Southern area (98%) were identified as Hispanic. The Southern area also had the highest percentage of linguistically isolated households (32%), compared to 12 percent for the Yuma Region, and eight percent for both the Central and Eastern areas of the region.

Social and Economic Circumstances

In the Yuma Region and all three areas of the region, just under 30 percent of children aged birth through five years live in poverty. Unemployment rates in San Luis are substantially higher than in the city of Yuma or Yuma County. In addition, the percentage of housing units with housing problems is highest in the Southern area of the region (53%) compared to the Central area (35%) and Eastern area (25%). The number of young children served through homelessness services in Yuma County has increased between 2011 and 2014.

The number of young children receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits has increased in the region between 2010 and 2012, with the exception of the Eastern area which has seen a decrease. Conversely, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) benefits have decreased, again with the exception of the Eastern area, which has seen an increase. In the beginning of 2012, 37 percent of young children in Yuma County were participating in WIC, higher than the state percentage of 29 percent. Food insecurity remains a large problem in Yuma County, with 24 percent of all residents, and 40 percent of children under 18 years of age facing food insecurity in 2012. Yuma County had the highest percentage of children facing food insecurity, and the second-highest percentage of all residents facing food insecurity of all the counties in Arizona in 2012.

Educational Indicators

Adults in the Yuma Region (28%) are more likely to be without a high school diploma or GED than the state of Arizona overall (15%), and more than half the adults in the Southern area do not have a high school diploma or GED (52%). This is a significant challenge to the economic well-being of families in the Yuma region.

The proportion of 3rd graders in Yuma County passing the standardized math (64%) and reading (68%) AIMS was slightly lower than students across the state as a whole (69% and 75% respectively), although there was great variability across school districts in the region.

In the Yuma Region there are 151 regulated child care providers, the majority of which are DES certified or registered home providers. The region also offers 11 WACOG Head Start options, five Chicanos Por La Causa (CLPC) Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Centers, and two CLPC Migrant Early Head Start Programs. All of these programs have extensive wait-lists. Of the child care options available in the region, only one is available in the Eastern area. The total capacity of early care and education providers in the region for 2013 was 5,449 children, representing approximately 30 percent of children aged birth through five years of age in the Yuma Region.

Health

All of Yuma County has been designated as “medically underserved” by the Arizona Department of Health Services, all of the region has been designated as a Mental Health Care Health Professional shortage area, and much of the region as a Dental Health Professional Shortage Area. Children in the Eastern and Southern areas of the region have the benefit of mobile health services as well as promotora-based services, and children across the region can receive free preventive dental services and education through the Yuma First Smiles program.

During 2012, there were 3,111 births in the region, which continued a downward trend from 2009. The percentage of women in the region receiving early prenatal care (66%) fell below the state average (79%), with particularly low averages in the Yuma-West (48%), San Luis (49%), Somerton (54%) and

Dateland (58%) Primary Care Areas. The percentage of births to teen mothers in the region (14%) also exceeded the state (9%) in 2012. The percentage of births covered by AHCCCS or IHS in the region (62%) was also higher than the state as a whole (55%).

In the Yuma Region, the percent of the total population (21%) and the population of young children (14%) uninsured exceeds the state (17% and 11% respectively). The Eastern area had the highest percentage of young children uninsured of the three regional areas (25%).

While key informants voiced the top health care need of the region as services and resources for children with special needs, improved coordination of programs and providers for the birth through three year old age group has been seen in recent years in the region. Improved access to mental and behavioral health services were seen as a particular need.

Family Support

Removals of children aged birth through five years from their homes have increased 120 percent between 2011 and 2013, while the state has only seen a 35 percent increase. The region is served by a single domestic violence shelter, and additional services and resources for families dealing with this issue were seen as needed.

The Yuma Region is served by a number of parenting education and home visitation programs as well as an expansive library system that is seen as a vital resource, particularly for families far removed from the city of Yuma. The degree of coordination and communication among providers serving young children and their families in the region was seen as improving by key informants, but as still in need of improvement by families in the region.

While the Yuma Region faces some challenges to providing comprehensive, high quality early care and education, children's health care, and support for families with young children due to the diversity of its population and geographical spread of the region, the Yuma Regional Partnership Council is committed to the ideal that all children in the Yuma Region should arrive at kindergarten healthy and ready to succeed. The Council's commitment to supporting collaboration and expanding opportunities for young children and support for their families is helping to move the region closer to this goal.



FIRST THINGS FIRST

**Regional Partnership Councils
Regional Needs and Assets
Requests for Extension**

Coconino

Gila River Indian Community

Navajo Nation

San Carlos Apache

Tohono O'odham Nation

White Mountain Apache Tribe



FIRST THINGS FIRST

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Paula Stefani
Debbie Winlock

September 9 , 2014

Janice L Decker, Chair
First Things First Board
4000 North Central Avenue, Suite 800
Phoenix, Arizona 85012

Dear Chair Decker,

I am writing to request additional time beyond the deadline for submission of the 2014 Coconino Regional Needs and Assets Report to the First Things First Board.

The Needs & Assets Report has been completed; however, the Regional Council requests additional time for the Havasupai Tribe and the Kaibab Band of Paiute Indian Tribe to complete their review and endorsement of the final report before state board approval and publication and dissemination of the report. The Havasupai Tribal Council has begun the report review process but has not yet formally endorsed the report. Once the Havasupai Tribal Council endorses the report, the Kaibab Band of Paiute Indian Tribe will need to review and endorse the report as well. Due to the extensive Havasupai data contained in the report, the report will not be shared with others until the Havasupai Tribal Council's endorsement of the report. The Hopi Tribe did not agree to participate in the 2014 Needs and Assets project, so we do not need to obtain the Hopi Tribal Council's endorsement for this report.

It is expected that the Needs and Assets report will be approved by the Coconino Regional Council no later than October 20, 2014, so we anticipate the FY14 Needs and Assets Report will be available for your consideration at the January 2015 meeting. For this time extension request, we appreciate your consideration of the circumstances within our unique region with its multiple tribes.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,

Kevin Brown, Chair
Coconino Regional Partnership Council with its multiple tribes.



FIRST THINGS FIRST

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Vice Chair

Dale Enos

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Priscilla Antone
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Kim Franklin
Emily Warburton
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Dr. Debora Chadwick

August 25, 2014

Chair Janice Decker
First Things First
4000 North Central Avenue, Suite 800
Phoenix, AZ 85012

RE: Needs and Assets Report Extension Request, Gila River Indian Community Regional Partnership Council

Dear Chair Decker,

On behalf of the Gila River Indian Community Regional Partnership Council, I am writing to request an extension for the submission of the 2014 Needs and Assets Report. I include the following as a brief update on the work:

- Data collection has been conducted by the U of A, in collaboration with the Regional Director, First Things First Evaluation Division, and various local and statewide partners. Final data collection is being conducted in the first weeks of September. It has taken a longer than anticipated amount of time to access data from some sources, and an overall time delay has resulted.
- Once received from the contractor, the report will be presented to Gila River Indian Community's Education Standing Committee and the Health and Social Standing Committee. Each committee will be asked to consider forwarding the report on to the full Tribal Council.
- The Gila River Indian Community Tribal Council will review and, pending any recommendations, approve the Needs and Assets report.
- The FTF Gila River Indian Community Regional Partnership Council expects to be presented with the needs and assets report during their October meeting. At that time they will discuss use of the new information to inform the FY16-18 strategic plan and discuss opportunities for use of the report with partners within the Gila River Indian Community.

Once the Tribal Council and Regional Council approve the report, it will be submitted to the State Board. The Regional Council is proud of the data collection, reporting and drafting process and the use of this resource toward the benefit of the children and families of the Gila River Indian Community. We appreciate in advance your consideration of this request for an extension.

Sincerely,

Melissa Madrid, Chair
Gila River Indian Community Regional Partnership Council



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48 West Highway 264
Quality Inn Office Complex
Post Office Box 2449
Window Rock, Arizona 86515
www.azftf.gov

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Vice Chair

Grace Boyne

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Amelia Black
Rhonda Etsitty
Valonia Hardy
Paula Seanez
Dawn Yazzie

September 25, 2014

Janice Decker, Chair
First Things First
4000 North Central Avenue, Suite 800
Phoenix, Arizona 85012

RE: Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council 2014 Needs and Assets Report

Dear Chair Decker:

On September 9, 2014, the Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council met, discussed, and approved the following recommendation: Request for an extension for the submission of the 2014 Needs and Assets Report to the First Things First Board.

The Regional Council needs additional time to obtain approval from the Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President (OPVP) to collect and use public tribal data regarding young children and their families in the Navajo Nation, Arizona. The Navajo Nation OPVP is aware that the Regional Council received resolution approvals from the governing boards of tribal departments whose data will be utilized in the 2014 Regional Needs and Assets report.

Upon acknowledgement and authorization by Navajo Nation OPVP, the Regional Partnership Council will work with Univeristy of Arizona, Norton School to facilitate the completion of the final report for submission to the State Board on January 20 – 21, 2015.

The Regional Council intent is to ensure the report summarizes information to make it more accessible and useable for the Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council future planning purposes. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Harry Martin, Chair
Navajo Nation Regional Partnership Council



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2250 Highway 60, Suite K
Miami, Arizona 85539
Phone: 928-425-8172
Fax: 928-425-3129
www.azftf.gov

September 25, 2014

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Vice Chair

Flora Talas

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Mary Bendle

Teri Gallenstein

Louis Lorenzo

Nolita April Noline

Delphine Rodriguez

Elliott Talgo, Sr.

Sabrina Tuttle

Janice Decker, Chairwoman
First Things First Board
4000 North Central Avenue, Suite 800
Phoenix, Arizona 85012

Dear Chairwoman Decker,

I am writing to request a deadline extension for the submission of the San Carlos Apache 2014 Regional Needs and Assets Report to the First Things First Board.

The Regional Council needs additional time for the completion of the final report and to allow the San Carlos Apache Tribal Council time to review and approve the report for publication and dissemination. The Tribal approval process is as follows: First Things First submits the final draft report and Tribal Resolution and then goes before the Tribe's Education Committee and Attorney General. Upon approval from this Committee, First Things First will go before the full Tribal Council for approval of the final draft report and Tribal Resolution. Given the remaining steps, the Regional Council anticipates a board submission deadline of December 1, 2014.

The Regional Council remains very excited about the data collection, reporting and drafting process and its ultimate benefit to the children and families of the San Carlos Apache Region. We appreciate in advance your consideration of the unique circumstances surrounding the request for an extension and look forward to your response. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Vernon Poncho, Chair
San Carlos Apache Regional Partnership Council



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310 South Williams Boulevard, Suite 106
Tucson, Arizona 85711
Phone: 520.628.6694
Fax: 520.747.1029
www.azftf.gov

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Mildred Manuel

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Janine Prewitt

Dionne Ramon

Ben Standifer

Kymberlii Tenario

Vacant

Vacant

September 2, 2014

Chair Decker and Members of the Board
First Things First
4000 North Central Avenue, Suite 800
Phoenix, AZ 85012

RE: Tohono O'odham Nation Needs and Assets Report

Dear Chair Decker and Members of the Board,

On behalf of the Tohono O'odham Nation Regional Partnership Council, I am writing to request a deadline extension for the submission of the Needs and Assets Report to the First Things First Board. I am also pleased to provide you a brief update on the work that has been done in relation to the Regional Needs and Assets Report:

Under advisement of the Tohono O'odham Nation's Education Department Executive Director and First Things First Liaison Victoria Hobbs, the Regional Partnership Council delayed the start of data collection for the 2014 Regional Needs and Assets report. The delayed start allowed for review of the inclusion of the School Readiness Indicators, determination of what data could be used under current agreements toward completing the 2014 Regional Needs and Assets report and that additional approval would be needed in order to provide data for each indicator. It is expected that the approval for data usage, subsequent work and Regional Partnership Council action will be completed in SFY 2015.

The Regional Council is proud of the data collection, reporting and drafting process and the use of this resource in benefiting the children and families of the Tohono O'odham Nation. Once the Tohono O'odham Nation approves publication of the report, the Regional Partnership Council will submit the final report to the State Board. We appreciate in advance your consideration of the circumstances surrounding the request for an extension, respect of the sovereignty of the Tohono O'odham Nation, and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Mildred Manuel, Chair
Tohono O'odham Nation Regional Partnership Council



FIRST THINGS FIRST

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Vice Chair

Dawnafe Whitesinger

Members

Aletha "Shine"

Burnette

Michael Gaffney

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Nikina Whitaker

Kathleen Wynn

Vacant

Vacant

Vacant

4700 West White Mountain Boulevard, Suite B1
Lakeside, Arizona 85929
Phone: 928.532.5041
Fax: 928.532.5053
www.azfff.gov

August 29, 2014

Janice Decker, Chair
First Things First
4000 N. Central Avenue, Suite 800
Phoenix, AZ 85012

RE: White Mountain Apache Tribe Regional Partnership Council SFY 2014 Needs and Assets Report

Dear Chair Decker,

On behalf of the White Mountain Apache Tribe Regional Partnership Council, I am writing to request an extension of time for the submission of the SFY2014 Needs and Assets Report to the First Things First Board. The Regional Council is requesting the additional time extension so the final approval process with the White Mountain Apache Tribal Health Board and the White Mountain Apache Tribal Council can be completed.

The Regional Council met, considered and approved the SFY2014 Needs and Assets Report on August 4, 2014. The Tribal approval process requires that the final draft Needs and Assets Report be submitted and reviewed by the Tribal Health Board and upon their approval First Things First staff will present the final draft report to the White Mountain Apache Tribal Council for consideration and final approval. This process cannot be completed before September 29, 2014. It is anticipated that the SFY2014 Needs and Assets Report will be finalized and can be submitted to the State Board at the December 2014 board meeting.

The Regional Council is proud of the data collection, reporting and drafting process and the use of this information will be useful to the Regional Council, as well as the children and families of the White Mountain Apache Tribe. We appreciate in advance your consideration of the unique circumstances surrounding the request for an extension of time. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Laurel Endfield,
Chair

White Mountain Apache Tribe Regional Partnership Council