



FIRST THINGS FIRST

Ready for School. Set for Life.

COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

2011 Check Tour

Each year, First Things First visits every region to present local communities with their next year's allocation of FTF tobacco tax funds. These events are community celebrations of the improved outcomes for young kids that have resulted from prior years' funding, as well as opportunities to re-commit to the critical task of getting our youngest children ready for school. Through November 18, events had been held with 23 FTF Regional Partnership Councils. The events included board members, regional council members, FTF staff, grantees, early childhood partners, public officials, media representatives (see Earned Media results below), parents, and, of course, children birth to 5 years old. While every event had its own distinct flavor, there were two commonalities: they all showed the deep support that young children have from adults in their neighborhoods and the successes that can be achieved when communities come together to make a difference for their youngest residents!

Earned Media/ Social Media

There were approximately 65 stories about FTF and/or its grantees in media statewide in the past two months. This earned media coverage has been the result of media outreach surrounding the 2011 Check Tour (see note above), the printing of Rhian's bi-weekly column in various Arizona Republic Community sections, and efforts by our regional and community outreach staff, as well as our grantees. The specific breakdown is:

- 16 check tour-related stories;
- Approximately 30 versions of Rhian's columns in various Republic community sections (topics included the FTF FY13 regional allocations, young children's oral health, and the link between early childhood development and our nation's military preparedness); and,
- 18 stories resulting from media activities by FTF Community Outreach staff and/or FTF grantees.

Our social media presence continues to grow. We have 2,080 fans on Facebook, up by more than 100 from the last Board update, and 167 people following First Things First on Twitter (up by 30 since the last report).

Community Outreach

Community outreach staff continues to engage in community presentations, meetings or events to build public awareness of early childhood. To date, they have secured more than 5,200 champions for Arizona's children – individuals who have committed to taking specific actions to help spread the word about the importance of early childhood and the role of FTF in getting young kids ready for school.

As indicated in our Year One Re-cap presentation, the community outreach team has taken a more disciplined approach to outreach and has focused on the K12 community the past few months. This has resulted in 137 meetings and presentations to K12 stakeholders in the past 2 ½ months alone. Even more impressive is that those activities have focused largely on the local educational leaders – governing

board members, superintendents, and principals– as well as teacher and parent liaisons who are critical to our efforts to spread the message on the importance of early childhood to the broader K12 community. As a result of the contacts made and the relationships being built, we noticed an increase in school officials attending our check tour events this year, and we have secured commitments from several school leaders to assist us with scheduling presentations to other education groups in the community and/or to place information about early childhood and FTF in their school/district publications. In addition, anecdotal information indicates that school officials are referring families and other stakeholders to the FTF website for additional information and resources on early childhood.

Paid Advertising

First Things First's fall media buy will end this month; a report on the impressions achieved will be included in the next update. Work continues to produce the next round of advertising, which will focus on the rapid brain development occurring in the first 5 years of life. That campaign will air beginning with our spring 2012 media buy.

FY13 Planning

FTF Communications staff is assisting regional partnership councils with their FY13 planning around community awareness, community outreach and media. Presentations have been conducted with regional councils in Navajo/Apache, NE Maricopa, and the SE regional area.

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