

2013

ANNUAL REPORT



COCHISE
REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL



FIRST THINGS FIRST

Ready for School. Set for Life.

Why Early Childhood Matters

Research shows that 80% of a child's brain is formed by age 3; more than 90% by age 5. Because of this rapid development, what happens to children in the early years lays the foundation for a lifetime. Research has demonstrated that kids with quality early childhood experiences do better in school. They are more likely to advance into college and successful careers. They also tend to be healthier and demand less from the public welfare system.

On November 7, 2006, Arizonans made a historic decision on behalf of our state's smallest citizens. By majority vote, they made a commitment to all Arizona children 5 and younger: that kids would have the tools they need to arrive at school healthy and ready to succeed.

The voters backed that promise with an 80-cent per pack increase on tobacco products, so some reliable funding for early childhood services for our youngest children would be available.

The initiative also created the statewide First Things First Board and the 31 regional partnership councils that share the responsibility of ensuring that these early childhood funds are spent on strategies that will result in improved education and health outcomes for kids 5 and younger.



Not all children have the same needs; and voters designed First Things First to meet the diverse needs of Arizona communities. Decisions about which early education and health strategies will be funded are made by the 31 regional partnership councils made up of community volunteers. Each regional council member represents a specific segment of the community that has a stake in ensuring that our children grow up to be healthy productive adults, including: parents, tribal representatives, educators, health professionals, business leaders, philanthropists and leaders of faith communities. The regional councils study the challenges faced by children in their communities and the resources that exist to help kids in their area. Because of all these factors, the regional councils know best what their kids need.

The Cochise region includes all of the communities in Cochise County.

Regional Council Members

Melanie Rottweiler, *Chair*

Dr. Stephen Poling,
Vice Chair

Nancy-Jean Welker

Jane Strain

Michael Vetter

Marjorie Dailey

Charles Hoyak

Pastor Tommy Simson

Pastor Shawn Buckhanan

Dr. Kathleen Vedok

Danielle Brownrigg

A SNAPSHOT OF CHILDREN IN OUR REGION

Demographics

10,125

Number of Kids Under 6 in Region

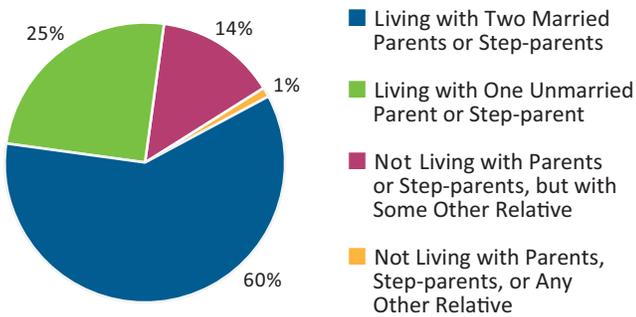
3,578

Number of Households with Kids Under 6

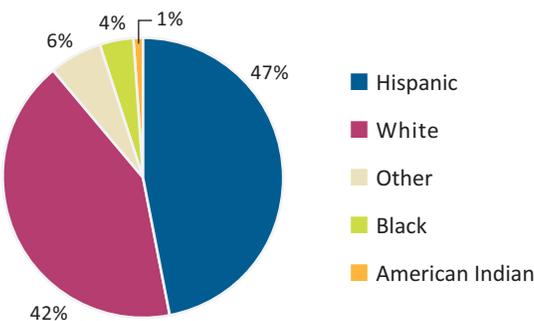
25%

Percentage of Young Kids in Poverty

Living Arrangements of Kids Under 6



Ethnic Breakdown of Kids Under 6



Education

67%

Percentage of 3- to 4-Year-Olds Statewide

Who Don't Go to Preschool

30%

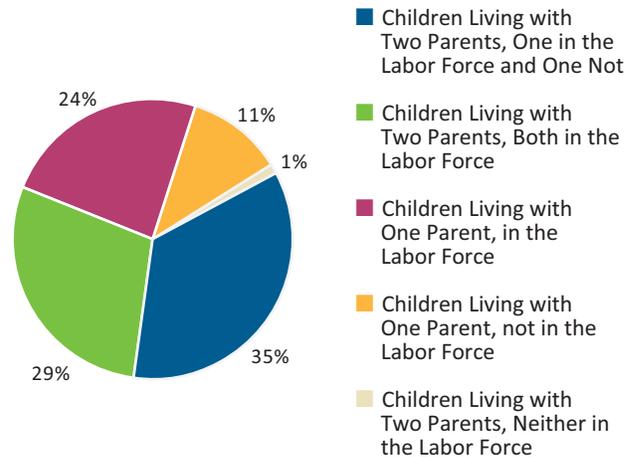
Percentage of 3rd Grade Students Not Passing AIMS in Reading

Economics

\$54,062

Median Family Income

Employment Status of Parents with Young Kids



Health

13.6%

Percentage of Children in the Southeastern Portion of the State That Lack Health Insurance

32%

Percentage of Children Ages Birth to 24 Months Who Do Not Receive Regular Immunizations

OUR REGION'S PRIORITIES

Research regarding children 5 and younger in the Cochise region revealed the need for the following programs to promote optimal development and school readiness:

Family Support: The Cochise Regional Partnership Council recognizes that strengthening families is crucial to helping young children grow in healthy ways. The council funds home visitation to support parents in their role as their child's first teacher. During regular home visits, child development and health are assessed; information is provided to parents on topics such as early literacy, nutrition and brain development; and, referrals for follow-up services are made as appropriate.

Quality of and Access to Early Learning: Due to the high cost of child care, many young children in the region may not have access to early education programs that prepare them for success in kindergarten and beyond. The council funds scholarships that allow infants, toddlers and preschoolers to attend early learning programs with child care providers committed to quality improvement. The council also funds scholarships to help teachers in those programs expand their skills working with kids 5 and younger.

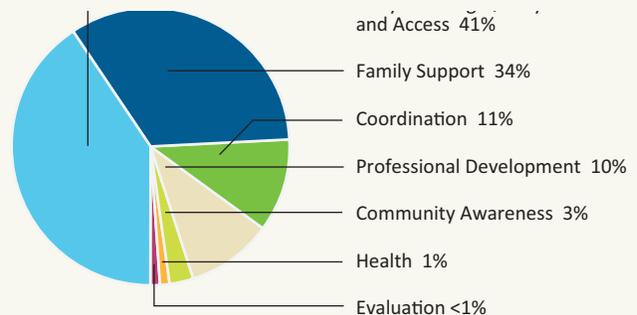
Health: Untreated tooth decay can cause speech delays in the early years and may contribute to school absences later on. The region funds screenings for children 5 and younger to detect decay, fluoride varnishes to prevent dental disease, and information to parents on the importance of oral health for young kids.

Community Outreach and Awareness: Awareness of the importance of early childhood is crucial so that all stakeholders – parents, community members and policymakers – can do their part to support school readiness for young children in Cochise County. The regional council funds advertising, printed materials and other items that reinforce the message that the early years are crucial.

Financial Report

EXPENDITURES BY GOAL AREA – FY2012

Family Support	\$569,119
Early Learning Quality and Access	1,423,878
Health	305,426
Community Awareness	77,176
Evaluation	64,982
TOTAL	\$2,440,581



OUR REGION'S IMPACT

Parents As Teachers

Parents As Teachers is a voluntary home visitation program that partners with parents to help them feel more confident in their role as the their child's first teacher. Through PAT, parents are coached and directly involved in working with their children to help prepare them for school in three focus areas: parent-child interaction, child development and family well-being.

One parent said of her experience with PAT, "This program has forced me, in positive ways, to expand my knowledge and research the best and most valuable resources to help my family. Ever since I heard about the potential for him to have a sensory processing disorder, it has been a concern of mine to get him where he needs to be."



Scholarships Help More Kids Access Early Learning

"If it weren't for the First Things First scholarship, my daughter would not be getting a high quality education," Jennifer McDowell said. "I am thankful every day that my daughter is well on her way to becoming such a well-rounded individual now as the direct result of the scholarship."

The scholarships are available to children who attend child care centers and homes in the region participating in Quality First, a signature FTF program through which providers can access resources to help them improve the quality of the early learning programs they provide and scholarships to help families afford early learning for their young kids.

The scholarships are crucial to families in the region, where the average yearly cost of child care for infants to 5-year-olds ranges from \$6,050 to \$5,800 (about 14 percent of gross family income).

Imagine Early Learning Center Director and regional council member Marge Dailey said, "The Quality First program is the best program to help facilitate learning."

238

FAMILIES ENJOY STRONGER, MORE SUPPORTIVE PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS

1886

ORAL HEALTH SCREENINGS ADMINISTERED TO CHILDREN

1755

FLUORIDE VARNISHES APPLIED TO PROTECT AGAINST TOOTH DECAY

31

CHILD CARE CENTERS AND HOMES OFFER CHILDREN A HIGHER STANDARD OF CHILD CARE THROUGH QUALITY FIRST

366

INFANTS, TODDLERS AND PRESCHOOLERS RECEIVED SCHOLARSHIPS TO HELP THEM ATTEND EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS

714

NUMBER OF PARENT KITS DISTRIBUTED

MOVING FORWARD

The Cochise Regional Partnership Council will continue its commitment to programs that improve educational and health outcomes for young kids within Cochise County, and look for new opportunities to expand those programs.

Based on the data and prioritized needs, the regional council will continue to design a strategic plan that builds on coordination, access to affordable high quality child care for the children of Cochise County, voluntary home visitation services to strengthen families with children birth to 3, and, oral health prevention and education programs.

The regional council will continue working with and connecting agencies and businesses throughout the entire county to build the system for young children and their families. The council will lead community conversations around coming together to leverage dollars through public-private partnerships to maximize the resources available to help young children within Cochise County arrive at school healthy and ready to succeed.



Grantees – FY2013

- Arizona Department of Health Services
- Easter Seals Blake Foundation
- Pima County Health Department
- Southwest Human Development
- United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona
- University of Arizona Cooperative Extension
- Valley of the Sun United Way

Cochise Regional Partnership Council

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