

2013
ANNUAL REPORT



SANTA CRUZ
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 Santa Cruz Region includes Nogales, Rio Rico, Tubac, Patagonia, Carmen, Tumacacori, Sonoita and Elgin.

Regional Council Members

William Kirkpatrick, <i>Chair</i>	Veronica Santillo
Karen Woodford, <i>Vice Chair</i>	David Verdugo
Danna Gallardo	Lee Vellom
Karen Guilmette	Vacant
Anna Lepa	Vacant
Dr. Melisa Lunderville	

A SNAPSHOT OF CHILDREN IN OUR REGION

Demographics

4,436

Number of Kids Under 6 in Region

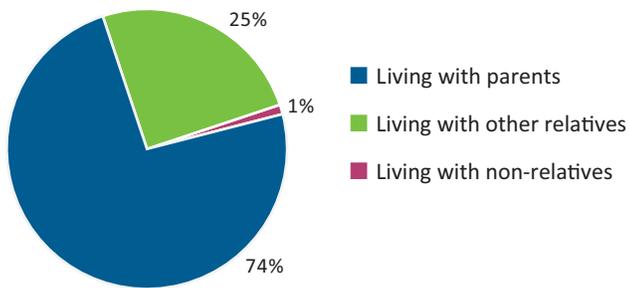
3,231

Number of Households with Kids Under 6

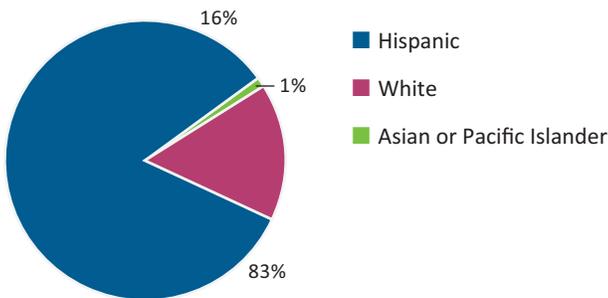
21%

Percentage of Young Kids in Poverty

Living Arrangements of Kids Under 6



Ethnic Breakdown of Kids Under 6



Education

80%

Percentage of 3- to 4-Year-Olds in Santa Cruz Who Don't Go to Preschool

27%

Percentage of 3rd Grade Students not Passing AIMS in Reading

Economics

\$40,933

Median Family Income

16%

County unemployment rate

Health

7%

Young children without Health Insurance

35%

Percentage of population enrolled in AHCCCS

OUR REGION'S PRIORITIES

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

Family Support – The region has a holistic approach to family support, providing programs in both community and home-based settings. Family Resource Centers embedded in local communities provide access to information and education on a variety of child development and health topics. When families want or need more intensive support, the Promotora program addresses child health, safety and early literacy during in-home visits. Child development and health are assessed, 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, young children often are left in the care of relatives or neighbors. These are often untrained individuals who may not be providing the supports and environment necessary to prepare kids for kindergarten success. The region has addressed this need by funding scholarships to allow more young children to attend early learning programs. The region is increasing the quality of those early learning programs by funding health specialists who work with child care providers to identify developmental concerns early on, and through scholarships to build the knowledge and skills of teachers working with infants, toddlers and preschoolers.

Health – There is limited access to oral health screenings and follow up care for young children. Many parents are unaware of the needs for oral hygiene in their young children. By bringing mobile units to sites where other services are rendered (pre-schools, WIC, etc.), children are gaining access to screenings and fluoride varnishes that prevent dental decay.

Public 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 kids in the Santa Cruz region. The regional council funds advertising, printed materials and other items that reinforce the message that the early years are critical.

Financial Report

EXPENDITURES BY GOAL AREA – FY2013

Family Support	\$740,298	
Quality and Access	204,363	
Health	195,312	
Professional Development	38,893	
Community Awareness	37,883	
Evaluation	32,151	
TOTAL	\$1,248,900	

OUR REGION'S IMPACT

Healthy Smiles, Brighter Futures

Dental issues when kids are young can lead to serious health and learning problems later on. Studies have found that untreated dental issues – which often start in early childhood – are among the leading causes of school absenteeism. When kids miss school, they can fall farther and farther behind. The Santa Cruz region's oral health strategy is designed to prevent tooth decay. Field clinics are set up at preschools, health centers and stores. Children get dental checkups and fluoride varnishes while parents learn the importance of taking care of their children's teeth.

"If a child has brown teeth that are half rotted out because of cavities before they get their permanent teeth in, this is laying the groundwork for some unhealthy teeth," said Rosie Piper, Health Promotion Manager for Mariposa Community Health Center, which administers the program. "I think a lot of parents don't realize how important it is to brush their children's teeth even if they're infants, so a lot of them are surprised."

Through FTF's support, thousands of kids 5 and under in Santa Cruz have received oral health screenings and fluoride varnishes. Because they are learning to take care of their teeth now, they will spend less time at the dentist and more time in the classroom.

Families Learn How to Support Kids' Learning at Home

School readiness can be a family affair. In early February 2013, more than 300 families in the Santa Cruz region spent a Saturday afternoon learning about the fun things they could do at home to help their young kids prepare for success in school and in life.

"Research tells us that most of a child's brain develops in the first five years of life," said Francisco Padilla, Regional Director of First Things First in Santa Cruz. "The experiences kids have in the early years lay the foundation for a lifetime of success."

First Things First created the event to bring families and community organizations together to support young kids. The day includes educational activities, practical parenting tips, information about the importance of play for young children, and early childhood and health resources in the community.

"The parents I heard from said they learned a lot that they could use at home with their children; they appreciated learning about their child's development and everyone enjoyed learning new activities to replicate at home," Padilla said.



116

CHILDREN HAVE ACCESS TO A HIGHER STANDARD OF CHILD CARE THROUGH QUALITY FIRST

3109

PARENTS, GRANDPARENTS AND CAREGIVERS ATTENDED VOLUNTARY CLASSES IN COMMUNITY-BASED SETTINGS ON TOPICS SUCH AS PARENTING SKILLS, CHILD DEVELOPMENT, LITERACY AND NUTRITION

4951

ORAL HEALTH SCREENINGS ADMINISTERED TO CHILDREN

420

PARENT KITS DISTRIBUTED

92

FAMILIES ENJOYED STRONGER, MORE SUPPORTIVE PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS

60

INFANTS, TODDLERS AND PRESCHOOLERS RECEIVED SCHOLARSHIPS TO ACCESS EARLY EDUCATION PROGRAMS

420

CHILD CARE CENTERS RECEIVED CONSULTATION TO BETTER SUPPORT YOUNG KID'S SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

2244

FAMILIES SERVED THROUGH THE LOCAL FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER

MOVING FORWARD

The regional council will continue its commitment to programs that improve educational and health outcomes for young kids in the Santa Cruz region, and look for new opportunities to expand those programs.

The region will partner with two additional child care centers to improve the quality of their early learning programs through Quality First.

In addition, the region will work with grantees to ensure that home visitation services reach families in smaller, under-served areas where families face great challenges with issues such as transportation and isolation.

The regional council also will continue to establish partnerships with public and private organizations to leverage our successes and maximize the resources available to help young kids in the Santa Cruz region arrive at school healthy and ready to succeed!



Grantees – FY2013

- Arizona Department of Economic Security
- Arizona Department of Health
- Child & Family Resources, Inc.
- Cochise College
- Mariposa Community Health Center
- Pima County Health Department
- Southwest Human Development
- The University of Arizona Santa Cruz Cooperative Extension
- United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona
- Valley of the Sun United Way

Santa Cruz Regional Partnership Council

1740 N. Mastick Way, Suite C
Nogales, AZ 85621

Francisco Padilla, Regional Director

Phone: (520) 761-3012 | Fax: (520) 761-3032

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Twitter: @AZFTF

Facebook: /AZFirstThingsFirst

www.readyazkids.com