

2013  
ANNUAL REPORT



YUMA  
REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL



FIRST THINGS FIRST

*Ready for School. Set for Life.*

# Why Early Childhood Matters

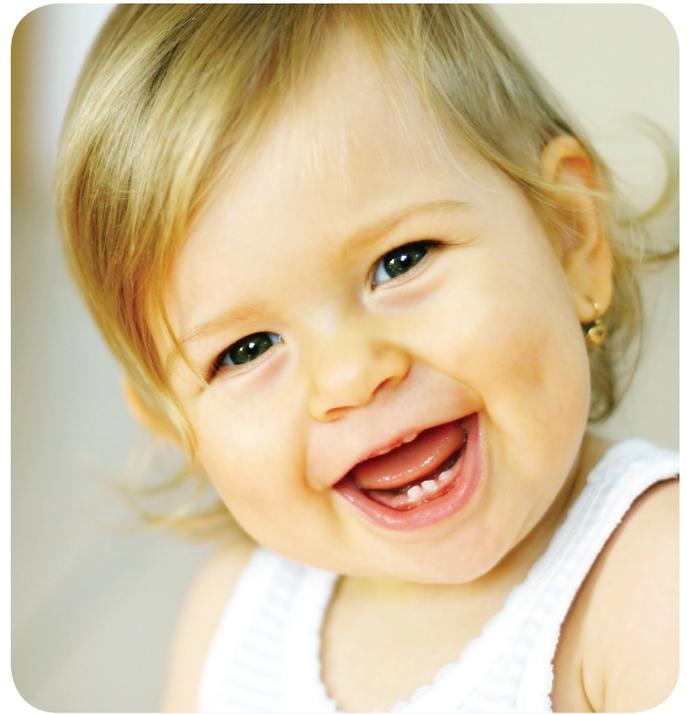
**Research shows that 80% of a child's brain is formed by age 3; more than 90% by age 5. Because of this rapid development, what happens to children in the early years lays the foundation for a lifetime.** Research has demonstrated that kids with quality early childhood experiences do better in school. 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 Yuma region includes greater Yuma County, including the tribal lands of the Quechan Indian Tribe within Arizona.**

## Regional Council Members

Rev. Darren Hawkins,  
*Chair*

Irene Garza,  
*Vice Chair*

Gloria Cisneros

Kimberly Fanning

Pilar Moreno

Ricardo Perez

Rebecca Ramirez

Laurie Gail Senko

Mary Beth Turner

Judy Watkinson

Mario Ybarra

## Tribal Leadership

### Tribal Council

Keeny Escalanti, *President*

# A SNAPSHOT OF CHILDREN IN OUR REGION

## Demographics

**17,983**

Number of Kids Under 6 in Region

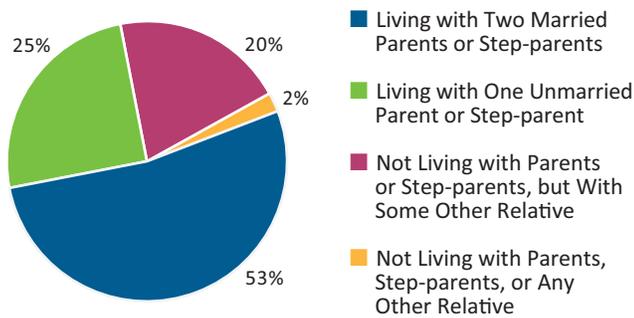
**9%**

Number of Households with Kids Under 6

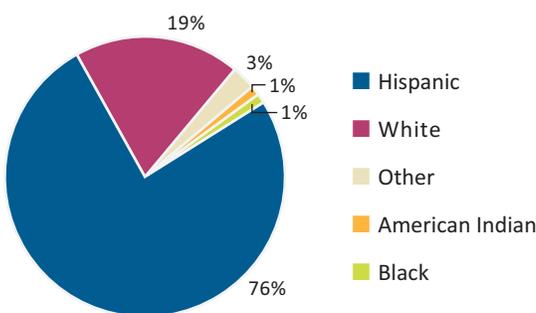
**31%**

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

**16-50%**

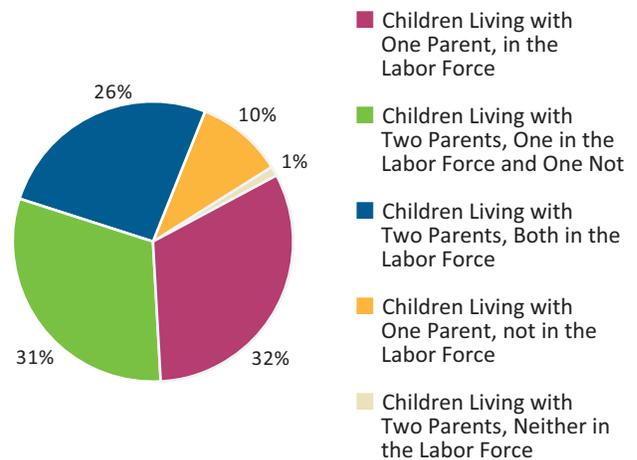
Percentage of 3rd Grade Students Not Passing AIMS in Reading (depending on district)

## Economics

**\$42,718**

Median Family Income

Employment Status of Parents with Young Kids



## Health

**15%**

Young Children without Health Insurance

**15%**

Percentage of Births to Teen Parents

# OUR REGION'S PRIORITIES

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

**Quality of and Access to Early Learning:** Research shows that children exposed to high quality early learning are more prepared for kindergarten, do better in school and are more likely to graduate and go on to college. The region supports child care centers and homes in their efforts to improve the quality of early learning programs, as well child care scholarships and preschool expansion programs to help more young children access early learning. An array of professional development opportunities exist for child care staff to expand their skills working with infants, toddlers and preschoolers. The region also provides training and support for relatives and neighbors caring for kids 5 and younger so that they feel more confident in their role as teachers of young children.



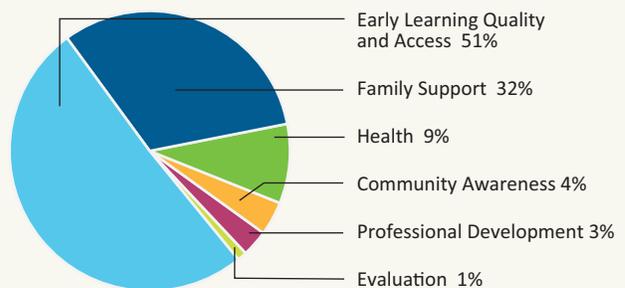
**Support for Children with Special Needs:** Children with special needs face greater challenges when it comes to school readiness. The region partners with parents by providing coaching and mentoring to increase parent capacity to support their children who may be at-risk for developmental delays. In addition, the region provides technical assistance and training to early care and education providers to increase their capacity to serve children with special needs, and provides incentives to encourage therapists to practice in the area so children get the support they need to start school prepared to succeed.

**Family Support:** Strong families are the cornerstone of strong communities. The region offers a continuum of voluntary programs that help build parents' confidence in their role as their child's first teachers. From community-based parent education to home visitation, parents get the support they want in ways that work best for them and their families.

## Financial Report

### EXPENDITURES BY GOAL AREA – FY2013

Early Learning Quality and Access	\$2,703,213
Family Support	1,705,849
Health	484,722
Community Awareness	183,333
Professional Development	174,008
Evaluation	28,712
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$5,279,837</b>



# OUR REGION'S IMPACT

## Parents Are Their Child's First and Best Teacher

Strong families are the cornerstone of strong communities. One of Yuma region's home visitation programs – run by Easter Seals Blake Foundation – partners with parents of kids 5 and younger so that they feel more confident in their role as their child's first teachers.

Through regular in-home visits, children are assessed to ensure healthy physical and brain development. Parents have the opportunity to increase their knowledge of early childhood, work on activities with their children to promote learning. In addition, families are connected to community resources to help them meet the specific needs of their family.



“The early years of life are crucial to a child's development” Supervisor Nohemi Ortega said. “Our goal is to provide parents the tools, support and encouragement they need to help their children learn, grow and develop to realize their full potential in life.”

## Smiling All the Way to School

Research shows that dental problems, when untreated, can cause speech delays in young kids and impair classroom learning and behavior later on. In fact, dental issues are the most frequent cause of school absences among young children.

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. In addition, the strategy works to increase the ability of local dental providers to serve young children, especially children with special needs.

“Childhood tooth decay is one of the most common preventable diseases” said Megan McNeece, a dental hygienist from University of Arizona Cooperative Extension. “Our goal is to bring knowledge to the parents and excitement to the children regarding oral health and the importance of establishing routine dental care and support their performance in school.”

**418**

FAMILIES ENJOY STRONGER, MORE SUPPORTIVE PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS

**998**

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

**4146**

ORAL HEALTH SCREENINGS ADMINISTERED TO CHILDREN

**4038**

FLUORIDE VARNISHES APPLIED TO PROTECT AGAINST TOOTH DECAY

**721**

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

**2408**

PARENT KITS DISTRIBUTED

# MOVING FORWARD

The Yuma Regional Partnership Council is committed to building an early childhood system that will address the needs of this rural community. The council understands that services to children and families must work in concert with each other in order to have the greatest impact. Effective collaboration is crucial from a financial and efficiency perspective; but, most importantly it reduces confusion among families and increases the likelihood that they will continue to participate in programs that benefit the health and education of their kids birth to 5 years old.

The council has identified several techniques to improve service coordination. Grantees are required to participate in grantee coordination meetings on a regular basis. The council also has hosted focus groups and engaged in community strategic planning to identify areas for collaboration amongst grantees and service providers from other agencies. In addition, the council participates in meetings with the Cocopah Regional Partnership Council to determine how the strategies of both councils align and can coordinate effectively.

These collaborations are crucial in the next step of building public-private partnerships that will maximize the early childhood resources in the Yuma community and allow more young children to enter kindergarten with the tools they need to be successful in school and in life.



## Grantees – FY2013

- American Academy of Pediatrics - AZ Chapter
- American Academy of Pediatrics – AZ Foundation
- Arizona Board of Regents for and on Behalf of Arizona State University for Eight, Arizona PBS
- Arizona Department of Economic Security
- Arizona Department of Education
- Arizona Department of Health Services
- Association for Supportive Child Care
- Central Arizona College
- Child and Family Resources, Inc.
- Easter Seals Blake Foundation – Tucson
- Pima County Health Department
- Southwest Human Development
- United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona
- University of Arizona Cooperative Extension
- University of Arizona Yuma Cooperative Extension
- Valley of the Sun United Way
- Yuma Community Food Bank
- Yuma County Public Health Services District

## Yuma Regional Partnership Council

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