

LA PAZ/MOHAVE REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL
FUNDING PLAN
July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2012

Regional Needs and Assets

The La Paz/Mohave region spans Arizona's western border and is comprised of Mohave and La Paz Counties. The region covers more than 17,983 square miles. It includes communities that are diverse in size and demographics and geographically isolated within vast expanses of unpopulated public lands. Travel is a necessity in the region as services are concentrated in larger population centers such as Parker, Bullhead City, Kingman and Lake Havasu. In addition to these larger cities, the region includes smaller towns such as Bouse, Wenden, Salome, Colorado City, Beaver Dam, Dolan Springs, Quartzite, Golden Valley, Mohave Valley, Chloride, Kaibab, and Littlefield among others.

According to U.S. Census data, the population of children aged 0-5 in the region has undergone tremendous growth since the 2000 census; 46 percent compared to 26 percent for the state as a whole. Rapid growth in the birth to five population indicates communities will be challenged to provide quality early childhood development and health services. According to the 2000 US Census Report, the number of children in the region grew from 8,857 in 2000 to 12,883 in 2006.

Economic indicators from the U.S. Department of Commerce 2005 Bureau of Economic Analysis indicate that poverty is a significant issue in the region. The average wage in La Paz County is the lowest in the state at \$24,719 and Mohave County is fourth lowest in the state at \$28,406. Likewise, the employment-to-population ratios of 40 percent in Mohave County and 38 percent in La Paz County are substantially lower than the state average of 54 percent. Factors that contribute to low employment and wages in the region are a high proportion of retirees, limited educational attainment and remote locations that make it difficult to attract employers.

Family indicators show significant difference between communities in the region. Birth data from 2006 Arizona Vital Statistics reports show that 90 percent of mothers in Kingman received prenatal care in the first trimester while 60 percent of mothers in Quartzsite entered care in the first trimester. These variations also are shown in the data reported for immunizations and untreated tooth decay. Arizona Department of Health Services data from 2003 show that only 46 percent of two year olds received immunizations in Bullhead City, while 90 percent of two year olds in Parker were up to date on immunizations. Reports also show that 60 percent of 6 to 8 year olds in Colorado City have untreated tooth decay compared to 35 percent in Kingman.

Many families throughout the region do not have access to early childhood development and health services. A large number of children under age 5 in the region do not receive routine well child checks, even though they are enrolled in the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS). This suggests that families experience other barriers to care, such as physician and dentist shortages, and services that either do not exist in the region or are concentrated in larger communities. Other barriers may include lack of transportation and parents' inability to leave work during the time most services are offered. For families in remote areas, the cost in transportation, time away from work and out-of-state service costs

present substantial hardships that may result in delaying care or not receiving care when it would be most beneficial.

Families of nearly 1,700 children (11 percent) have placed their children in some type of fee-paying care and education program. This suggests fee-based child care settings may be under-utilized. The regulated early childhood care and education system in the region is estimated to be at 80 percent capacity, possibly because the majority of care for working families takes place in informal or unregulated settings. This may also indicate that many families cannot afford the cost of regulated child care facilities or that their children are cared for by family members (kith and kin care) either by choice or by necessity.

A survey of child care professionals implemented at the “Saddle Up for Child Care Conference” in June 2008 provided information regarding quality and satisfaction with early childhood services. Responses suggested a need for stronger collaboration between medical and mental health providers, a shortage of specialists/therapists to provide early intervention services, and lack of access to services for specialized disorders such as autism and aggression. Those surveyed indicated eligibility for many family support services are not clearly understood resulting in underserved children and families.

Mohave Community College, Northern Arizona University, Arizona Western College and the University of Phoenix are tremendous assets in the region. Between them, they offer five degree programs and two certificates in early childhood education, several of which are available online. Although many providers in the early care workforce are aware that a higher education degree is necessary to achieve and maintain high quality, they report difficulty accessing college coursework. Barriers include the cost of tuition, books and transportation and classes that are offered at inconvenient times and typically concentrated in larger communities.

The region is fortunate to have a public school system that touches every community in the region and schools that frequently serve as hubs for family supports that benefit children birth through age five. Bullhead City, Kingman, Lake Havasu, and Parker also have hospitals, community clinics, and libraries that serve children and families throughout the region. While these resources provide anchors in our larger cities and towns, many of our remote communities have scarce resources and virtually no access to specialized and preventative care. Increased access is needed in the following areas:

- Quality early care and education services
- Quality health care services for young children and families
- Early intervention services such as speech, occupational and physical therapy
- Professional development opportunities for the early childhood workforce
- Family support services such as parenting education and coordination of care.

In light of the region’s large geographic area, progress in these areas will require continued integration of services, collaboration to develop resources, and communication strategies to

reach and inform families in need. The La Paz/Mohave Regional Partnership Council will strive to work together with stakeholders to expand access to quality early childhood development and health services and create a system that better serves young children and families.

Prioritized Goals and Key Measures

Need: Access to quality early care and education

Goal #1: FTF will improve access to quality early care and education programs and settings.

Goal #3: FTF will increase availability and affordability of early care and education settings.

Key Measures:

- Total number of children enrolled and vacancies in regulated early care and education programs as a proportion of total population birth to age five
- Current cost of early care and education for families as a proportion of the median income for a family of four

Need: Access to preventive health care

Goal #4: FTF will collaborate with existing Arizona early childhood health care systems to improve children's access to quality health care.

Key Measures:

- Total number of children receiving appropriate and timely well-child visits
- Total number of children receiving appropriate and timely oral health visits

Need: Access to professional development opportunities

Goal #8: FTF will build a skilled and well prepared early childhood development workforce.

Key Measures:

- Total number and percentage of professionals working in early childhood care and education settings with a credential, certificate, or degree in early childhood development
- Total number and percentage of professionals working in early childhood care and education who are pursuing a credential, certificate, or degree

Need: Access to information and resources to support families

Goal #11: FTF will coordinate and integrate with existing education and information systems to expand families' access to high quality, diverse and relevant information and resources to support their child's optimal development.

Key Measure:

- Percentage of families with children birth through age five who report they are satisfied with the accessibility of information and resources on child development and health
- Percentage of families with children birth through age five who report they are competent and confident about their ability to support their child's safety, health and well-being
- Percentage of families with children birth through age five who report they maintain language and literacy rich home environments

Need: Coordination and communication of services for young children and families

Goal #13: FTF will lead cross-system coordination efforts among state, federal and tribal organizations to improve the coordination, integration and communication of Arizona programs, services, and resources for young children and their families.

Goal #15: FTF will expand public awareness of and financial and political support for early childhood development and health efforts in Arizona.

Key Measures:

- Total number and percentage of public and private partners' who report they are satisfied with the extent and quality of coordination between public, private, and tribal systems
- Percentage of families who report they are satisfied with the level of coordination and communication of among agencies serving their children

Need: Knowledge and information about the importance of early childhood development and health

Goal #15: FTF will expand public awareness of and financial and political support for early childhood development and health efforts in Arizona.

Key Measure:

- Percentage of Arizonans who report that early childhood development and health issues are important

Strategy Selection

The proposed strategies build on information from the Regional Needs and Assets Report and the Stakeholder Strategic Planning process conducted by the La Paz/Mohave Regional Partnership Council.

In August and September of 2008, the Regional Council collaborated with Hualapai Tribe Regional Partnership Council, the Colorado River Indian Tribe Regional Partnership Council and the BHHS Legacy Foundation on a region-wide strategic planning process. More than 155 partners from 68 organizations

participated in seven strategic planning sessions held in: Beaver Dam, Bullhead City, Kingman, Lake Havasu, Mohave Valley, Parker, and Quartzsite. Through this process, the Regional Council was able to establish relationships with partners and begin to understand regional priorities.

Stakeholders at each of the sessions were informed of FTF vision, mission and goals and were asked to prioritize FTF goals. Results from these sessions revealed significant differences between communities in the region. For example, Stakeholders in Mohave Valley indicate access to health care is most important; while Stakeholders in Quartzsite indicate the most important thing our Council can do is increase access to early care and education.

In order to be responsive to the diversity expressed by our Stakeholders and to meet the distinct geographic needs of the region, several of the strategies proposed in this plan are broadly defined. The Regional Council expects this will permit Stakeholders to propose a variety of innovative solutions that are truly community-based and locally-relevant.

The Regional Council has also proposed strategies that support the growth of comprehensive and coordinated early childhood system in Arizona. For example, the Council proposes to expand *Quality First!* and T.E.A.C.H. in and to participate in a cross-regional advocacy campaign.

The Regional Council will continue the strategic planning process for the next two years, as we evaluate our progress and develop further understanding of the various communities that make up our large region. Results from the RFGA process and data from our first year of implementation will inform future strategy development and funding priorities.

The following seven strategies have been identified to address our goals and key measures at this time:

1. Expand or establish new quality early care and education programs for children age birth to five throughout the region.
2. Expand or establish new programs to support children's access to quality health care services including prenatal care, oral healthcare, and early childhood mental health services throughout the region.
3. Expand access to T.E.A.C.H. Arizona throughout the region.
4. Expand or establish new programs that improve access to professional development opportunities throughout the region.
5. Expand or establish new programs that support parents and caregivers in their ability to promote their children's optimal development and health.
6. Develop an evidence-based plan to improve the coordination, integration and communication of programs, services, and resources for young children and their families.
7. Educate and mobilize the public around a call to action to raise early childhood development and health as a top priority and increase investment and policy that supports young children.

Need	Goal	Key Measures	Strategy
Access to quality early care and education	<p>Goal #1: FTF will improve access to quality early care and education programs and settings.</p> <p>Goal #3: FTF will increase availability and affordability of early care and education settings.</p>	<p>Total number of children enrolled and vacancies in regulated early care and education programs as a proportion of total population birth to age five</p> <p>Current cost of early care and education for families as a proportion of the median income for a family of four</p>	<p>Expand or establish new quality early care and education programs throughout the region for children age birth through five. Provide grants to increase the number of children enrolled in quality early care. Grantees must be accredited through an AZ recognized national accreditation system OR agree to participate in <i>Quality First!</i> in the second or third year of operation. The strategy also includes a pilot study of cost reduction and support strategies.</p>
Access to preventive health care	<p>Goal #4: FTF will collaborate with existing Arizona early childhood health care systems to improve children’s access to quality health care.</p>	<p>Total number of children receiving appropriate and timely well-child visits</p> <p>Total number of children receiving appropriate and timely oral health visits</p>	<p>Expand or establish new programs to support children’s access to quality health care services including prenatal care, oral health care, and early childhood mental health throughout the region. Stakeholders will be invited to submit specific approaches to implement this strategy. Preference will be given to research-based approaches.</p>
Access to professional development opportunities	<p>Goal #8: FTF will build a skilled and well prepared early childhood development workforce.</p>	<p>Total number and percentage of professionals working in early childhood care and education settings with a credential, certificate, or degree in early childhood development</p> <p>Total number and percentage of professionals working in early childhood care and education who are pursuing a credential, certificate, or degree</p>	<p>Expand access to T.E.A.C.H. by funding an additional 40 scholarships in the region. T.E.A.C.H. stands for Teacher Education and Compensation Helps. The program serves ECE professionals already employed in ECE programs. The program includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuition scholarships and support • Education leading to CDA and AA • Increased compensation, bonus or raise • Commitment/contract to the program

Need	Goal	Key Measures	Strategy
<p>Access to professional development opportunities</p>	<p>Goal #8: FTF will build a skilled and well prepared early childhood development workforce.</p>	<p>Total number and percentage of professionals working in early childhood care and education settings with a credential, certificate, or degree in early childhood development</p> <p>Total number and percentage of professionals working in early childhood care and education who are pursuing a credential, certificate, or degree</p>	<p>Expand or establish new programs that improve access to professional development opportunities. In order to create stepping stones that lead to career advancement, the Regional Council will invite Stakeholders to submit specific approaches that meet the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research-based • Linked with quality standards • Lead to continuing education units • Include service obligations
<p>Access to information and resources to support families</p>	<p>Goal #11: FTF will coordinate and integrate with existing education and information systems to expand families' access to high quality, diverse and relevant information and resources to support their child's optimal development.</p>	<p>Percentage of families with children birth through age five who report they are satisfied with the accessibility of information and resources on child development and health</p> <p>Percentage of families with children birth through age five who report they are competent and confident about their ability to support their child's safety, health and well-being</p> <p>Percentage of families with children birth through age five who report they maintain language and literacy rich home environments</p>	<p>Expand or establish new programs that support parents and caregivers in their ability to promote their children's optimal development and health. Stakeholders will be invited to submit specific approaches to implement this strategy. Preference will be given to approaches that are research-based and can demonstrate positive outcomes for our most vulnerable and/or disenfranchised families. Specific approaches include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy for our vulnerable and disenfranchised populations • Home visitation programs • Early language and literacy programs

Need	Goal	Key Measures	Strategy
<p>Coordination and Communication of services for young children and families</p>	<p>Goal #13: FTF will lead cross-system coordination efforts among state, federal and tribal organizations to improve the coordination, integration and communication of Arizona programs, services, and resources for young children and their families.</p> <p>Goal #15: FTF will expand public awareness of and financial and political support for early childhood development and health efforts in Arizona.</p>	<p>Total number and percentage of public and private partners' who report they are satisfied with the extent and quality of coordination between public, private, and tribal systems</p> <p>Percentage of families who report they are satisfied with the level of coordination and communication of among agencies serving their children</p>	<p>Work with Stakeholders to research and develop an evidence-based plan to improve the coordination, integration and communication of programs, services, and resources for young children and their families. The Council will explore ways to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Establish mechanisms throughout the region to align and coordinate the service delivery network for children age birth through five and their families 2) Educate and inform parents, caregivers and the community about early childhood development and health and the services and supports available in the region.
<p>Knowledge and information about the importance of early childhood development and health</p>	<p>Goal #15: FTF will expand public awareness of and financial and political support for early childhood development and health efforts in Arizona.</p>	<p>Percentage of Arizonans who report that early childhood development and health issues are important</p>	<p>Educate and mobilize the public around a call to action to raise early childhood development and health as a top priority and increase investment and policy that supports young children.</p>

Strategy 1: Expand Access to Quality Early Care and Education

The La Paz/Mohave Regional Partnership Council will expand or establish new quality early care and education programs throughout the region for children age birth through five.

Access to child care is a great need through-out our large region. Some of our communities currently have no regulated child care. Without support for infrastructure, it will be difficult to bring quality child care to these communities. Other communities have sufficient capacity to serve children and ECE programs that are under-utilized.

Furthermore, many children and families living in the region experience tremendous need. In Colorado City, 28% of families with children under the age of 5 live in poverty (income below 100% of the Federal Poverty Level). In Lake Havasu, Kingman, Bullhead City and Parker, the figures range from 7 to 11 percent. Low income status may create barriers for families to have access to high quality early care and education. The average annual cost for an infant in full-time center care in Arizona is almost \$8,000. Full-time infant care in a family child care home is \$6,250. Full-time care for a 4 year old in center or home care is about \$6,400. This is 12% of the median family income of an Arizona married couple with children under age 18.

DES may provide Child Care Assistance for families participating in various DES programs. In those cases where there is an income eligibility requirement, family income cannot exceed 165% of the federal poverty level. It is generally recognized that 200% of FPL constitutes low-income. There are a number of low-income families who do not qualify for child care subsidy (either because their income is above 165% of FPL or because they are not DES participants) and, therefore, have difficulty affording quality child care. There are also situations when a child who no longer qualifies for DES subsidy leaves a quality center for a less expensive setting when the subsidy is no longer available.

In order to address the diversity in the region, the Council will consider a variety of approaches **to increase access and affordability to quality care**. First, the Regional Council, through an RFGA, will invite early care and education providers the opportunity to submit proposals to expand or establish new early care and education programs. These may include, but are not limited to:

Planning Grants: New or existing early care and education providers who are considering expanding enrollment to serve age groups not being served may apply for a planning grant to determine feasibility of construction and business sustainability. The planning grant can be used to conduct strategic planning, which may include business consultation to complete a business plan and market analysis. It may also be used to complete architectural drawings.

Accessibility Grants: New or existing early care and education providers who are considering expanding enrollment may apply for an accessibility grant if the addition of such care requires construction, renovation or purchase of facilities. The accessibility grant can be used for construction, land or building purchase or remodeling a child care center or family home. The applicant must have a 50% secured match in order to obtain this grant.

Quality Supplements: New or existing early care and education providers who expand care may apply for quality supplements to offset the higher cost of providing quality care. The purpose of this grant is to directly offset the increased cost of providing quality care so that charges to families remain affordable. An example of a quality supplement may include a center or home will receive \$10 per day for each new infant or toddler slot that has filled. These must be new infant and toddler slots.

Second, in order to improve the Regional Council's understanding of how best to increase access and affordability to quality early care and education in the region, the Regional Council will participate in a cross-regional pilot study of multiple cost reduction and support strategies to inform future strategy development. The Council will work in partnership with the FTF evaluation division and an external contractor(s) to design and implement the pilot study. The RFGA will stipulate that the contractor(s) be responsible to the Regional Councils for frequent updates of progress. They will also be required to gain a working understanding of the region to assure the best possible results and fidelity to the study. In order to address the distinct geographic needs of the region, a **minimum of three regionally located centers or homes** will be selected.

The Regional Council may determine that additional funds are necessary to increase the number of centers/homes or families/children participating in the project. The estimated cost of participation includes:

- Financial assistance to create and/or expand access to quality ECE programs
- The administration of the pilot study and distribution of financial support
- Interviews with community members to establish need/demand as well as impact

In addition to the actual distribution of vouchers, scholarships, or financial supports to families or centers/homes participating in the project, additional analyses will be conducted. Ongoing analyses with families and stakeholders in the community will determine:

- What cost reduction or support strategy can most effectively reduce cost as a barrier to quality care for families in this community?
- What is the impact of the cost reduction or support strategy on parent perceptions of quality?
- What is the impact of the cost reduction or support strategy on access to early care and education in the community?

As efforts to improve the quality of early care and education are implemented in the region, additional attention will need to be paid to how quality interacts with affordability of care, and how strategies can best be designed to support families, especially low income families that chose quality care. In order to make sure grantees continue to move toward quality early care and education, grantees will be required to meet the following criteria:

- Accredited, or in the process of becoming accredited, through an AZ recognized national accreditation system OR
- Participating in **Quality First!** OR
- Participating in a demonstrated, recognized quality improvement program (AZ Self-Study, Tucson Hands-on Quality, Head Start PRISM, VSUW Professional Development Model) **and** commit to enrolling in **Quality First!** within 2 years OR
- Commit to enrolling in **Quality First!** within 1 year.

To support programs funded through this strategy, the Regional Council will also fund additional programs to enroll in **Quality First!**.

<p>Goals:</p> <p>FTF will improve access to quality early care and education programs and settings.</p> <p>FTF will increase availability and affordability of early care and education settings.</p>	
<p>Key Measure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of children enrolled and vacancies in regulated early care and education programs as a proportion of total population birth to age five. • Current cost of early care and education for families as a proportion of the median income for a family of four. 	
<p>Target Population:</p> <p>All children birth to age five in the region. Emphasis will be on areas lacking quality child care options and expanding services to reach populations not currently being served.</p>	
<p>Proposed Service Numbers:</p> <p>With the decision to move forward with this broad strategy, we are not able to determine service numbers at this time. The Council will establish service numbers based on review of proposals and final awards.</p>	
	<p>SFY2010 July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010</p>
<p>Proposed Service Numbers</p>	<p>TBD</p>
<p>Performance Measures SFY 2010-2012</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of new childcare slots available in regulated early care and education settings for children age birth to five • Number of proposed new licensed child care settings /actual service number • Number of proposed new certified home care settings /actual service number • Number of child care settings expanding to provide infant and toddler care/actual service number • Total number of children age birth to five served 	
<p>How does this strategy build on the service network that currently exists?</p> <p>This strategy will build on our assets by grants for planning, accessibility and quality improvements. It will also provide coaching and mentoring to support grantees in moving toward quality early care and education. It will encourage currently operating programs and centers to expand their services to include age groups not currently being served. A requirement for receiving FTF funding will be accreditation through an AZ recognized national accreditation system or enrollment in Quality First! in the second or third year of the grant cycle. This will provide new and existing ECE settings with the supports needed for continuous quality improvement.</p>	

Budget Justification:

The decision was made to allocate 26% of regional funds to this strategy.

\$251,896 – Planning, Accessibility and Quality Grants to ECE programs

\$300,000 – Participation of at least three regionally located centers in the pilot study, at a cost of approximately \$100,000 per program

\$150,000 – Enrolling grantees in ***Quality First!***

The estimated cost to the region of enrolling grantees in ***Quality First!*** will range from:

Home: \$22,300

Small Center: \$28,600

Medium Center: \$31,000

Large Center: \$36,000

Strategy 2: Expand Access to Preventive Health Care

The La Paz/Mohave Regional Partnership Council will expand or establish new programs to support children's access to quality health care services including prenatal care, oral healthcare, and early childhood mental health throughout the region.

Routine, preventive healthcare is great need in our communities. A large number of children under age 5 in the region do not receive routine well child checks, even though they are enrolled in the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS). This suggests that families experience other barriers to care, such as physician, dentist and mental health provider shortages, and services that either do not exist in the region or are concentrated in larger communities.

Family indicators also show significant differences between communities. Birth data from 2006 Arizona Vital Statistics reports show that 90 percent of mothers in Kingman received prenatal care in the first trimester while 60 percent of mothers in Quartzsite entered care in the first trimester. These variations also are shown in the data reported for untreated tooth decay. Arizona Department of Health Services data from 2003 show that 60 percent of 6 to 8 year olds in Colorado City have untreated tooth decay compared to 35 percent in Kingman.

In order to address the distinct geographic needs of the region, the Regional Council will expand or establish new programs to support children's access to quality health care services including **prenatal care, oral healthcare, and early childhood mental health** throughout the region.

The Regional Council will invite Stakeholders to submit proposals to address access to quality health care services for young children and families. Specific approaches to implement this strategy include, but are not limited to:

- Outreach to enroll children and families in affordable insurance
- Innovative approaches to address health workforce shortages in medically underserved areas
- Partnerships that expand access to services in non-traditional settings, including homes, public schools, early care and education settings, and mobile health care
- Raise public awareness of the importance of routine preventive healthcare.

In order to maximize our limited resources, the Regional Council will NOT fund direct healthcare. Approaches to implement this strategy will be required to build on current funding streams, including public and private insurance and existing federal and state sources for billing. We will not replace existing funding streams.

Applicants funded through this strategy will be required to demonstrate:

- Evidence that the proposed approach will increase the number of routine health services for children birth to five, including prenatal care, well-child checks, oral health visits, and/or mental health services.
- How the proposed approach will be sustainable
- Provide the Regional Council with a Coordination and Communication Plan

Goal:	
FTF will collaborate with existing Arizona early childhood health care systems to improve children’s access to quality health care.	
Key Measures:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of children receiving appropriate and timely well-child visits. • Total number of children receiving appropriate and timely oral health visits. 	
Target Population: All children birth to age five in the region.	
Proposed Service Numbers:	
With the decision to move forward with this broad strategy, we are not able to determine service numbers at this time. The Council will establish service numbers based on review of proposals and final awards.	
Proposed Service Numbers	SFY2010 July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010
	TBD
Performance Measures SFY 2010-2012	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of expectant mothers receiving prenatal care in the 1st trimester. • Number of expectant mothers receiving appropriate and timely prenatal care. • Number of children age birth to five receiving appropriate and timely well child visits. • Number of children age birth to five receiving appropriate and timely oral health visits. • Number of children age birth to five receiving appropriate and timely mental health services. 	
How does this strategy build on the service network that currently exists?	
This strategy will build on our assets by providing grants to support community-based and locally-relevant approaches to increase access to routine, preventative health services. Approaches to implement this strategy will be required to build on existing assets and current funding streams, including public and private insurance and existing federal and state sources for billing. First Things First funds will NOT be used to replace existing funding streams.	
What are the opportunities for collaboration and alignment?	
The broad nature of this strategy allows Stakeholders to collaborate in a variety of innovative and creative ways to increase access to health care services in the region. They will be encouraged to partner to bring services to underserved areas and to utilize facilities currently available in the community. Additionally, in order to promote collaboration and alignment, the Regional Council will require a Coordination and Communication Plan from every grant applicant.	
SFY2010 Expenditure Plan for Proposed Strategy	
Population-based allocation for proposed strategy	\$701,896

Budget Justification:

The decision was made to allocate 26% of regional funds to this strategy. The strategy is expected to include multiple awards, but may include a single award.

La Paz/Mohave Regional Partnership Council
REGIONAL COUNCIL ALLOCATION: \$2,695, 430

Strategy 3: Expand Access to T.E.A.C.H.

The La Paz/Mohave Regional Partnership Council will provide higher education scholarships to early care and education professionals working in programs not enrolled in *Quality First!* through the expansion of T.E.A.C.H. in our region.

There is considerable evidence of the need for increased opportunities for professional development in the region. In the La Paz/Mohave Region, 68% of teachers and 89% of assistant teachers have no degree. This is a higher percentage of teachers without degrees than the state level and is considerably higher than the national level. In addition, the Council implemented a survey at the June 2008 "Saddle Up for Child Care" conference sponsored by the Department of Economic Security (DES) and the Association for Supportive Childcare (ASCC) in Laughlin, NV. One hundred and twenty-three early childhood educators responded to the survey. The need for additional further education was explicitly stated (in an open-ended/write-in question) by 31% of the respondents.

The Regional Partnership Council recognizes the need to support the professional development of the early care and education workforce. The key to quality child care is linked to the education and stability of the early childhood workforce. The preparation and ongoing professional development of early educators is a fundamental component of a high quality early learning system. There is extensive body of research showing that the education and training of teachers and administrators is strongly related to early childhood program quality and that program quality predicts development outcomes for children.

Seven state-funded programs will be enrolled in *Quality First!* in our region. These programs will have access to T.E.A.C.H. Arizona. The Regional Council wants to expand T.E.A.C.H. to ECE programs not yet enrolled in *Quality First!* The Council will coordinate with the T.E.A.C.H. program to address the diverse needs of students in our communities and accommodate students through distance learning and/or additional funding to support computer and travel expenses.

Benefits to children:

Higher quality and more capable professionals; improved care; better developmental outcomes.

Benefits to families:

Early childhood professionals who remain with their programs and continuously advance their skills and knowledge are better able to build relationships with children and families and to foster their growth and development.

Benefits to programs and staff:

Support and financial assistance for ongoing professional development and educational pathways for staff leading to higher quality and better retention.

The Regional Council recognizes and supports all four elements of the scholarship program:

Scholarships - The scholarship usually covers partial costs for tuition and books or assessment fees. Many scholarships require that the recipient receive paid release time and a travel stipend.

Education - In return for receiving a scholarship, each participant must complete a certain amount of education, usually in the form of college coursework, during a prescribed contract period.

Compensation - At the end of their contract, after completing their educational requirement, participants

are eligible to receive increased compensation in the form of a bonus (ranging from \$100 to \$700) or a raise (4% or 5%). The T.E.A.C.H. Arizona Administrative Home will establish the formulas for each.

Commitment - Participants then must honor their commitment to stay in their child care program or the field for six months to a year, depending on the scholarship program that Arizona designs.

Support can include tuition, fees, materials and supplies associated with the course and the course activities, travel costs (gas or transportation fare), students' own child care costs, substitute staffing, study and class preparation time, tutorial services and advisement. Compensation can include: stipends and reimbursements, rewards, awards, bonuses for education completion and retention initiatives.

Goal: FTF will build a skilled and well prepared early childhood development workforce.

Key Measures:

- Total number and percentage of professionals working in early childhood care and education settings with a credential, certificate, or degree in early childhood development
- Total number and percentage of professionals working in early childhood care and education who are pursuing a credential, certificate, or degree

Target Population: Professionals working with children birth to age five in early childhood care and education settings in the region.

Proposed Service Numbers	SFY2010 July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010
	Approximately 40

Performance Measures SFY 2010-2012

- Number of professionals with credentials/certificates working in early care / Proposed service #
Number of professionals with credentials/certificates working in early care / Actual service #
- Number of professionals pursuing credentials/certificates in early childhood/Proposed service #
Number of professionals pursuing credentials/certificates in early childhood/Actual service #
- Number of degreed professionals in early care/ Proposed service #
Number of degreed professionals in early care/ Actual service #
- Number of professionals pursuing degree in early childhood/Proposed service #
Number of professionals pursuing degree in early childhood/Actual service #

How does this strategy build on the service network that currently exists?

This strategy capitalizes on T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Arizona. T.E.A.C.H. is a strategy benefiting children, families and programs by addressing workforce under-education which negatively impacts the quality of early care and education. The Regional Council is building on the infrastructure elements established by the FTF Board with *Quality First!*, T.E.A.C.H. to improve the quality of early care and education in La Paz and Mohave Counties.

What are the opportunities for collaboration and alignment?

The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Arizona program will provide the system infrastructure to implement this

strategy including an administrative home, payment system, model agreements with colleges/universities, and evaluation. The Regional Council will partner with the administrative agent to provide financing for additional scholarships that meet the specific needs of our region.

SFY2010 Expenditure Plan for Proposed Strategy

Population-based allocation for strategy	\$144,400
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Budget Justification:

\$64,000 – Approximately 40 additional T.E.A.C.H. scholars in our region, assuming the estimated cost per scholarship is \$1,600 per year.

\$80,000 - Additional supports, including computer support, mileage, release time, substitute teachers, and/or bonuses.

La Paz/Mohave Regional Partnership Council
REGIONAL COUNCIL ALLOCATION: \$2,695, 430

Strategy 4: Expand Access to Professional Development

The La Paz/Mohave Regional Partnership Council will expand or establish new programs that improve access to professional development opportunities in the area of early childhood education.

The Regional Council recognizes that quality child care is linked to the education and stability of the early childhood workforce. The preparation and ongoing professional development of early educators is a fundamental component of a high quality early learning system. There is extensive body of research showing that the education and training of teachers and administrators is strongly related to early childhood program quality and that program quality predicts development outcomes for children.

Furthermore, statistics show there is a high rate of turnover in the early care and education field. Research shows that offering training opportunities for career advancement will help to recruit and retain staff. Creating stepping stones that allow early care and education professionals to choose their own path will inspire them to continually develop their professional abilities. As a result, individuals who take the initiative to increase their education and training may be rewarded with increased compensation and the satisfaction of knowing they are providing children and families with the best care possible.

Many avenues to high quality professional development need to be available in the region – from community-based training for those beginning the journey toward their CDA, to the need for accessible, relevant, high-quality, ongoing continuing education opportunities for those who have degrees, licenses, or credentials that they need to maintain through continuing education.

Community based trainings have the potential to entice and encourage professionals who have been away from school for some time or who have never been engaged in formal schooling to return to the classroom or to enter the classroom for the first time. For that reason, the Council is especially interested in partnerships, contracts and/or agreements with higher education institutions to offer credit hours for community-based trainings.

The Regional Council will invite Stakeholders to submit specific approaches to implement this strategy. Preference will be given to proposals that are: 1) Evidence-based; 2) Clearly linked with quality standards; 3) Lead to continuing education units, and 4) Include contracts/service obligations. Specific approaches may include, but are not limited to:

- Approaches that increase LOCAL access to ECE coursework through distance learning
- Scholarships that recruit new ECE professionals into the field
- Scholarships for professionals employed by programs unwilling/unable to participate in T.E.A.C.H.
- Scholarships in ECE not currently available through T.E.A.C.H. (BA, MA)
- Community-based training that leads to continuing education units

Goal: FTF will build a skilled and well prepared early childhood development workforce.

Key Measures:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number and percentage of professionals working in early childhood care and education settings with a credential, certificate, or degree in early childhood development • Total number and percentage of professionals working in early childhood care and education who are pursuing a credential, certificate, or degree 	
<p>Target Population:</p> <p>Professionals working with, or interested in working with, children birth to age five in the region.</p>	
<p>Proposed Service Numbers:</p> <p>With the decision to move forward with this broad strategy, we are not able to determine service numbers at this time. The Council will establish service numbers based on review of proposals and final awards.</p>	
<p>Proposed Service Numbers</p>	<p>SFY2010 July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010</p>
	<p>TBD</p>
<p>Performance Measures SFY 2010-2012</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of professionals with credentials/certificates working in early care / Proposed service # Number of professionals with credentials/certificates working in early care / Actual service # • Number of professionals pursuing credentials/certificates in early childhood/Proposed service # Number of professionals pursuing credentials/certificates in early childhood/Actual service # • Number of degreed professionals in early care/ Proposed service # Number of degreed professionals in early care/ Actual service # • Number of professionals pursuing degree in early childhood/Proposed service # Number of professionals pursuing degree in early childhood/Actual service # • Number of community-based trainings that lead to continuing education units or college credit 	
<p>How does this strategy build on the service network that currently exists?</p> <p>This strategy will build on our assets by providing grants to support community-based and locally-relevant approaches to increase access to professional development opportunities. Grantees funded through this strategy will be encouraged to utilize facilities for multipurpose use and to partner in order to expand professional development opportunities already available in the region to serve additional communities.</p>	
<p>What are the opportunities for collaboration and alignment?</p> <p>The broad nature of this strategy allows Stakeholders to collaborate in a variety of innovative and creative ways to increase access to professional development in the region. In order to promote collaboration and alignment, the Council will require a Coordination and Communication Plan from every grant applicant.</p>	
<p>SFY2010 Expenditure Plan for Proposed Strategy</p>	
<p>Population-based allocation for strategy</p>	<p>\$388,686</p>

Budget Justification:

The decision was made to allocate 20% of the regional allocation to Professional Development strategies. \$388,686 is the amount left over after spending \$144,400 to expand T.E.A.C.H. in the region.

This strategy is expected to include multiple awards, but may include a single award.

Strategy 5: Family Support

The La Paz/Mohave Regional Partnership Council will expand or establish new programs that support parents and caregivers in their ability to promote their children's optimal development and health.

Family support is a great need in our communities. A survey of child care professionals implemented at the "Saddle Up for Child Care Conference" in June 2008 suggested eligibility for many family support services are not clearly understood resulting in underserved children and families.

The Regional Council recognizes that Family support is the foundation for enhancing children's positive social and emotional development. Children who experience sensitive, responsive care from a parent perform better academically and emotionally. Beyond the basics of care and parenting skills, children benefit from positive interactions with their parents (e.g. physical touch, early reading experiences, and verbal and visual communications). Children depend on their parents to ensure they live in safe and stimulating environments where they can explore and learn.

In order to address the distinct geographic needs of the region, the Regional Council will invite Stakeholders to submit a variety of proposals to enhance family support that are both evidence-based and relevant to the community served. Specific approaches to implement this strategy include, but are not limited to:

- Advocacy for our vulnerable and disenfranchised populations
- Home visitation programs
- Early language and literacy programs

Preference will be given to approaches that are research-based and applicants who can demonstrate positive outcomes for our most vulnerable and/or disenfranchised families.

Goal: FTF will coordinate and integrate with existing education and information systems to expand families' access to high quality, diverse and relevant information and resources to support their child's optimal development.

Key Measure:

- Percentage of families with children birth through age five who report they are satisfied with the accessibility of information and resources on child development and health.
- Percentage of families with children birth through age five who report they are competent and confident about their ability to support their child's safety, health and well-being
- Percentage of families with children birth through age five who report they maintain language and literacy rich home environments

Target Population:

All families with children birth to age five in the region. The Council is especially interested in supporting vulnerable and disenfranchised children and families, including children with special needs and families involved with substance abuse, family violence, and the court system.

Proposed Service Numbers:

With the decision to move forward with this broad strategy, we are not able to determine service numbers

at this time. The Council will establish service numbers based on review of proposals and final awards.			
Proposed Service Numbers	SFY2010 July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010	SFY2011 July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011	SFY2012 July 1, 2011 - June 30, 2012
	TBD	TBD	TBD
Performance Measures SFY 2010-2012			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of families served • Number of identified improvements to family support programs • Percent of families that report satisfaction with family support services after receiving them • Increase knowledge and awareness of family support programs 			
How does this strategy build on the service network that currently exists?			
This strategy will build on our assets by providing grants to support community-based and locally-relevant approaches to access to services that support families.			
What are the opportunities for collaboration and alignment?			
The broad nature of this strategy allows Stakeholders to collaborate in a variety of innovative and creative ways to increase access to services that support families in the region. In order to promote collaboration and alignment, the Regional Council will require a Coordination and Communication Plan from every grant applicant.			
SFY2010 Expenditure Plan for Proposed Strategy			
Population-based Allocation for strategy		\$701,896	
Budget Justification:			
The decision was made to allocate 26% of the regional allocation to family support strategies. This strategy is expected to include multiple awards, but may include a single award.			

Strategy 6: Coordination and Communication

The La Paz/Mohave Regional Partnership Council will work with Stakeholders to develop an evidence-based plan to improve the coordination, integration and communication of programs, services, and resources for young children and their families.

Given the distinct geographic needs of this large, diverse region, improved coordination and communication of early childhood development and health services is a critical need. The region covers more than 17,983 square miles. It includes communities that are diverse in size and demographics and geographically isolated within vast expanses of unpopulated public lands. Travel is a necessity in the region as health services and social services are concentrated in larger population centers such as Parker, Bullhead City, Kingman and Lake Havasu.

A survey of child care professionals implemented at the “Saddle Up for Child Care Conference” in June 2008 suggested a need for stronger collaboration between early childhood development and health providers in the region. While there are numerous programs available to young children and families in some communities within the region, other communities have virtually no services or supports. Stakeholders report services are often fragmented and families are largely unaware of services available in neighboring communities.

The La Paz/Mohave Regional Partnership Council will explore ways to partner with Stakeholders to improve coordination and communication of services in two ways:

- Establish mechanisms throughout the region to align and coordinate the service delivery network for children age birth through five and their families.
- Educate and inform parents, caregivers, professionals and the community about early childhood development and health and the services and supports available in our communities.

This strategy is “unfunded” for this fiscal year. The Regional Council will work with Stakeholders to research and develop an evidence-based plan that will support the state-wide effort to create a comprehensive and coordinated early childhood development and health system.

<p>Goals: FTF will lead cross-system coordination efforts among state, federal and tribal organizations to improve the coordination, integration and communication of Arizona programs, services, and resources for young children and their families.</p> <p>FTF will expand public awareness of and financial and political support for early childhood development and health efforts in Arizona.</p>	
<p>Key Measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number and percentage of public and private partners who report they are satisfied with the extent and quality of coordination between public, private, and tribal systems • Percentage of families who report they are satisfied with the level of coordination and communication among agencies serving their children 	
<p>Target Population:</p> <p>The general public as well as public and private partners in early childhood health and development.</p>	
<p>Proposed Service Numbers:</p> <p>We are not able to determine service numbers at this time. The Council will establish service numbers based on completion of the evidence-based plan.</p>	
<p>Proposed Service Numbers</p>	<p>SFY2010 July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010</p>
	<p>TBD</p>
<p>Performance Measures SFY 2010-2012</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of partners satisfied with quality of coordination and communication/Strategic target • Number of families represented at Regional Partnership Council meetings • Percent of people who know what FTF is/strategic target 	
<p>How does this strategy build on the service network that currently exists?</p> <p>This strategy seeks to improve the current network that exists for early childhood development and health by working with Stakeholders to develop an evidence-based plan to improve the coordination and communication of services in our region.</p>	
<p>What are the opportunities for collaboration and alignment?</p> <p>The broad nature of this strategy allows Stakeholders to collaborate in a variety of innovative and creative ways to better coordinate, integrate and communicate services in the region.</p>	
<p>SFY2010 Expenditure Plan for Proposed Strategy</p>	

Strategy 7: Cross-Regional Advocacy Campaign

The La Paz/Mohave Regional Partnership Council will collaborate with the State Board on a cross-regional advocacy campaign that will expand public awareness of and financial and political support for early childhood development and health efforts in Arizona. By partnering with other Regional Partnership Councils and the FTF Board, the Council will be better able to mobilize the public and create the political will necessary to make early childhood development and health one of Arizona’s top priorities.

Specifically the Regional Council will focus on the following:

- Engage families, community organizations, business, faith-based organizations, and medical institutions in community mobilization efforts to promote early childhood development and health in the region.
- Advocate for public policy change and increased resources on behalf of young children and families.

The Regional Council recognizes the importance and effectiveness of working across regions with the FTF Board, speaking with one unified voice for young children to mobilize the community around a call to action. The Council will determine the mechanisms most appropriate for this region to deliver the messages as developed from the statewide communications plan, raising the community’s awareness, and enlisting individuals as champions for early childhood development and health.

Furthermore, communications is among the most powerful strategic tools to inspire people to join the early childhood development and health movement, convince policymakers, foundations and other leaders to prioritize the issues, and urge the media to accord it public attention. Every choice of word, metaphor, visual, or statistic conveys meaning, affecting the way these critical audiences will think about our issues, what images will come to mind and what solutions will be judged appropriate to the problem. Communications defines the problem, sets the parameters of the debate, and determines who will be heard, and who will be marginalized. Choices in the way early child development is framed in general must be made carefully and systematically to create the powerful communications necessary to ensure that the public can grasp the recommendations of early childhood experts and the policies proposed.

The Regional Council acknowledges that the development of this strategy in full is not complete and is committed to working with the Regional Councils and FTF Board to further define the advocacy and mobilization effort. The Regional Council believes that this strategy is critical to the success of FTF in order to sustain services and supports for children and families over time.

Goals:

FTF will expand public awareness of and financial and political support for early childhood development and health efforts in Arizona.

Key Measures:

- Percentage of Arizonans who report that early childhood development and health issues are important

Target Population: This strategy will target the region’s entire population. Upon completion of the strategy development, the target groups (business, faith-based, health professionals, etc...) will be determined and will be the initial focus of the awareness campaign. Service numbers and performance measures will be set after the strategy is developed in partnership with the Regional Councils and the Board.

Proposed Service Numbers	SFY2010 July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010	SFY2011 July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011	SFY2012 July 1, 2011 - June 30, 2012
	TBD	TBD	TBD
Performance Measures SFY 2010-2012 TBD			
How does this strategy build on the service network that currently exists? The Council will build on existing partnership, including our local Arizona Early Education Funds (AEEF) Partnership and the Association for Supportive Child Care (ASCC), among others, to mobilize the public around early childhood issues.			
What are the opportunities for collaboration and alignment? The Council will partner across regions and collaborate with the State Board to implement this strategy.			
SFY2010 Expenditure Plan for Proposed Strategy			
Population-based Allocation for strategy	\$26,656		
Budget Justification: The decision was made to allocate 1% of regional funding for this strategy. \$26,656 – Cross-regional advocacy and mobilization campaign (1% annually)			

Summary Financial Table for SFY 2010 (July 1, 2009-June 30, 2010)

Revenue	
Population Based Allocation SFY2010	\$2,695,430
Expenditure Plan for SFY2010 Allocation	
Strategy 1 - Access to ECE Programs	\$701,896
Strategy 2 - Access to Health	\$701,896
Strategy 3 - Expand T.E.A.C.H.	\$144,400
Strategy 4 - Professional Development	\$388,686
Strategy 5- Family Support	\$701,896
Strategy 6 - Coordination & Communication	\$0
Strategy 7 - Advocacy Campaign	\$26,656
Needs & Assets Report	\$30,000
Subtotal of Expenditures	\$2,695,430
Fund Balance (undistributed regional allocation in SFY2010)*	\$0
Grand Total (Add Subtotal and Fund Balance)	\$2,695,430

**Building the Early Childhood System and Sustainability –
 Three Year Expenditure Plan: July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2012**

**I. Building the Early Childhood System and Sustainability – Three Year Expenditure Plan:
 July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2012**

Revenue	FY 2010	FY 2011 (estimated)	FY 2012 (estimated)	Total
Population Based Allocation	\$2,695,430	\$2,419,887	\$2,177,898	\$
Fund Balance (carry forward from previous SFY)	N/A	\$	\$	
Expenditure Plan				
Expenditure Plan	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	Total
Strategy 1	\$701,896	\$	\$	\$
Strategy 2	\$701,896	\$	\$	\$
Strategy 3	\$144,400	\$	\$	\$
Strategy 4	\$388,686	\$	\$	\$
Strategy 5	\$701,896	\$	\$	\$
Strategy 6	\$0	\$	\$	\$
Strategy 7	\$26,656	\$	\$	\$
Regional Needs & Assets	\$30,000	\$	\$	\$
Subtotal Expenditures	\$2,695,430	\$	\$	\$
Fund Balance* (undistributed regional allocation)	0	\$	\$	
Grand Total	0	\$	\$	
Budget Justification:				
The Council anticipates strategies and funding priorities will change in years two and three as a result of				

lessons learned from the RFGA process and data collected from our first year of implementation. For that reason, we have elected to not budget for years two and three at this time.

Request for Discretionary Funds

The La Paz/Mohave Regional Partnership Council has identified three recommendations for discretionary funding that will address service gaps and expand capacity to serve children and families.

1. Expand strategy #2, access to health care, to increase the number of therapists and specialists, including occupational therapists, physical therapists, and speech language development therapists, providing services to children under the age of five years through tuition reimbursement and stipends. There is a severe shortage of therapists in the region. Children identified through early screening often do not receive necessary services because they are unable to access therapists. \$283,000 will fund the recruitment effort and provide 4 stipends to entice therapists to do internships in rural communities, followed by 4 tuition reimbursements for a three year service commitment in our rural communities.
2. Expand strategy #1, access to quality early care and education, by providing larger capital improvements for purposes of expansion and/or remodeling of facilities to increase capacity. Many of our rural communities lack infrastructure that can be utilized for child care without significant capital investment in building improvements. These are the communities that currently have no child care available and without initial support for infrastructure will be challenged to meet this need.
3. Expand strategy #6, coordination and communication, by investing in technology to bring people together through web-based meetings. The La Paz/Mohave region covers more than 17,983 square miles. The Council and Stakeholders struggle to connect and engage across our large region. An investment of \$150,000 will permit the purchase of equipment to bring people together through video-conferencing. This will benefit our school districts, community colleges and early childhood development and health professionals by allowing virtual meetings and trainings to reach more people. The cost estimate includes the LifeSize equipment for 5 "HUBS" and monitors, as well as maintenance and extended warranties.

The Council has not yet identified private dollars to support this work. The Regional Council plans on utilizing a development specialist to convene key stakeholders in the community in early 2009 to discuss opportunities that exist for private funding and develop a resource development plan for the region. It is important to note that current resources in the community and the economic forecast do not indicate that financial support will be available to meet the anticipated costs of these necessities.