

2008

# NEEDS AND ASSETS REPORT



 **FIRST THINGS**

**Yuma**

Regional Partnership Council



# Yuma

## Regional Partnership Council

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### 2008 Needs and Assets Report

Submitted in accordance with ARS 8-1161. Each regional partnership council shall submit a report detailing assets, coordination opportunities and unmet needs to the board biannually. The regional partnership council's needs and assets assessment shall be forwarded to the board for final approval no later than September 1 of each even-numbered year, beginning in 2008. The board shall have discretion to approve or reject a council's assessment in whole or in part or to require revisions. The board shall act on all needs and assets assessments no later than October 1 of each even-numbered year, beginning in 2008.

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# Contents

<b>First Things First – A Statewide Overview</b>	<b>1</b>
<hr/>	
<b>The Yuma Regional Partnership Council</b>	<b>2</b>
<hr/>	
Overview of Region: Yuma .....	2
<b>Summary of Regional Findings on Child and Family Indicators</b>	<b>5</b>
<hr/>	
Regional Population Growth .....	5
Regional Race and Ethnicity Characteristics.....	6
Race and Ethnicity Characteristics .....	6
Immigration Characteristics .....	6
Family Composition .....	6
Teen Parent Households .....	7
Employment and Income.....	8
Annual Income .....	8
Parent Educational Attainment .....	9
Healthy Births .....	9
Prenatal Care.....	9
Health Insurance Coverage and Utilization .....	10
Access to Medical Care .....	11
Oral Health for Special Needs Children.....	11
Child Safety.....	11
Child Mortality .....	12
Children’s Educational Attainment.....	12
School Readiness .....	12
<b>Current Regional Early Childhood Development and Health System</b>	<b>15</b>
<hr/>	
Summary of Regional Findings on Early Childhood System .....	15
Quality .....	15
Accredited Early Child Care Centers .....	15
Number of Children Enrolled in Early Care and Education Programs .....	16
Costs of Care.....	16
Early Intervention .....	17
Challenges for Early Intervention.....	17
Additional Indicators Addressed Under This Priority .....	17
Family Support .....	18
Parent Knowledge About Early Education Issues .....	19

Professional Development ..... 20

    Child Care Professionals’ Certification and Education ..... 20

    Professional Development Opportunities..... 20

    Compensation and Benefits..... 21

Public Awareness and Education Efforts about Early Childhood Education .....21

System Coordination Discussion.....21

    Additional Indicators of Interest to the Yuma Regional Partnership Council  
 ..... 21

**Conclusion - Synthesis of Findings on Regional Child and Family Indicators and Early Childhood System** **23**

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**Appendix** **25**

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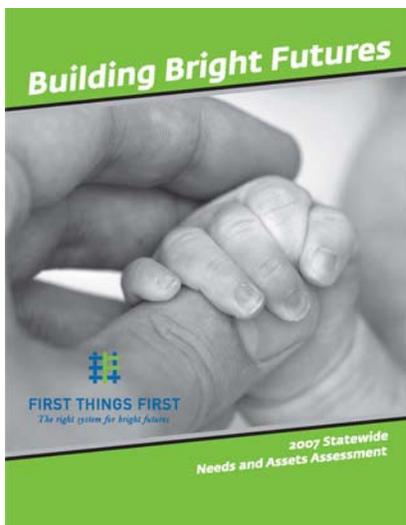
Citations for resources used and extant data referenced ..... 25

## First Things First – A Statewide Overview

The mission of First Things First (FTF) is to ensure that a child entering school does so healthy and ready to succeed. The governance model of First Things First includes a 12 member State-level Board of whom nine are appointed by the Governor. The governance model also includes Regional Partnership Councils comprised of eleven members each who are appointed by the FTF State Board (Board). The model combines consistent state infrastructure and oversight with strong local community involvement for the planning and delivery of services.

First Things First has responsibility for planning and implementing actions that will result in an improved statewide system for optimal early childhood development and health. The 31 Regional Partnership Councils represent a voluntary governance body responsible for planning and implementing at the local level. The Board and Regional Partnership Councils work together with all sectors of their communities to ensure that a comprehensive, high quality, culturally sensitive early childhood development and health system is put in place for children and families to accomplish the following:

- Improve the quality of early childhood development and health programs
- Increase access to quality early childhood development and health programs
- Increase access to preventive health care and health screenings for children through age five
- Offer parent and family support and education concerning early child development and literacy
- Provide professional development and training for early childhood development and health providers
- Increase coordination of early childhood development and health programs and public information about the importance of early childhood development and health.



In January 2007 First Things First (FTF), released the report *Building Bright Futures*, Arizona's first statewide needs and assets assessment of the current state of early childhood in Arizona. The report provided data on the need to improve early childhood education practice and capacity. It highlighted existing resources or assets currently available to support early childhood efforts. It also identified opportunities for creating a comprehensive early childhood improvement plan for the state of Arizona. Local councils which are made up of early childhood development and health stakeholders (parents, pediatricians, early childhood educators, business persons, etc.) are to conduct a community-level needs and assets assessment every two years. This document is the first of these community-level needs and assets assessment reports produced by the Yuma Regional Partnership Council for the Yuma Region.

## The Yuma Regional Partnership Council

Members of the Council have expressed their belief that the best place for learning to occur, especially in the first two years of life, is in the home, provided by family members who love that child. One member states, “Our emphasis should be one of educating, and backing up, the parents and grandparents, and foster parents, that are raising infants and young children. We need to ensure that all of our 0 to 5 year old children in Yuma County have access to medical care. With all of the assets already in place, this may not be too hard to do.”

The Council is charged with partnering with the community to provide families with opportunities to improve their children’s educational and developmental outcomes. By investing in young children, the Regional Council and its partners will help build brighter futures for the Region’s next generation of leaders, ultimately contributing to economic growth and the Region’s overall well being.

In the fall of 2008, the Council will undertake strategic planning and set a three-year strategic direction that will define the initial focus for achieving positive outcomes. The local Regional Council’s strategic plan will align with the Statewide Strategic Direction approved by the FTF Board in March 2008. To effectively plan and make programming decisions, the Council must first be fully informed of the current status of children in the Yuma Region. This report serves to inform the council in designing a local strategic road map and in identifying priority areas in which to focus efforts and resources.

### Overview of Region: Yuma

The Yuma Region is geographically characterized by vast stretches of desert with a small number of population centers in proximity to the Colorado River.

#### Map of Yuma County, Arizona



(Yuma Region Boundaries Coincide with Yuma County Boundaries)

The greater region's main economic sectors are agriculture, tourism, military, and government. It is also significant for its interstate and international trucking and as a site for two major military installations: Yuma Marine Corps Air Station and Yuma Proving Ground. The area's mild winter climate is a draw for many seasonal visitors. All of these factors contributed to a 67 percent increase in the city's (Yuma) population from 1990 to 2006. The southern communities of the Region are predominantly Hispanic. The communities in the eastern section of the Region are surrounded by farms but are also the site for numerous retiree and winter visitor RV parks and golf and other leisure sites in support of these populations.





## Summary of Regional Findings on Child and Family Indicators

In this report, the status of the well being of children and families in the Yuma Region is considered by a review of indicators or factors that describe local early childhood development and health. The indicators included in this section are similar to indicators highlighted in the statewide needs and assets report ([http://azecdh.gov/ecdh/News/FTF\\_Fina\\_TEXT20.pdf](http://azecdh.gov/ecdh/News/FTF_Fina_TEXT20.pdf)).

- The population of children in the Yuma Region has experienced enormous growth since 2000, with children under the age of five representing almost one out of every three new residents in the area.
- Sixty-eight percent of the state's Hispanic families currently live at or below the federal poverty level.
- Immigrant families are more likely to have both parents intact in the household as compared to native Arizona born Hispanic families.
- A local focus group expressed concern for the increase in numbers of grandparents taking care of grandchildren.
- Slightly more than a third of Yuma County women who gave birth to infants from 2002 to 2006 report they did not complete high school, which is at least 10 percentage points less than their counterparts across the state and nationally. Research continues to demonstrate the link between a young child's success in school with their parents' previous school experience.

### Regional Population Growth

From 2000 to 2006, the overall population of the Yuma Region increased by 17 percent.<sup>1</sup> With this overall increase in population came significant growth in the number of children aged 0-5, as the total number of children in this age range in the Region grew by 33 percent as compared to 26 percent for the state as a whole.

#### Population Growth (all ages)

	2000	2006	% Change
<b>Yuma County</b>	160,026	187,555	+17%
<b>Arizona</b>	5,020,782	6,115,505	+22%
<b>U.S.</b>	273,648,273	301,621,157	+9%

US Census (2000) and PEP estimates

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.yumadata.com/PopulationDemographics.html>

### Population Growth for Children Ages 0-5 Years

	2000	2007	% Change
<b>Yuma County</b>	12,717	16,862	+33%
<b>Arizona</b>	381,833	480,491	+26%
<b>U.S.</b>	19,137,974	20,724,125	+8%

Sources: U.S Census (2000) and PEP estimates

## Regional Race and Ethnicity Characteristics

### Race and Ethnicity Characteristics

The following table shows births by racial/ethnic group for Yuma County. The largest percentage of births in 2006 occurred among Hispanic families (74 percent), followed by births to White Non-Hispanic families (21 percent). The Yuma Region had 30 percent more births to Hispanic mothers, than the Arizona rate.

#### Births by Mother's Race/Ethnic Group (2006)

	White Non-Hispanic	Hispanic or Latino	Black or African American	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian or Pacific Islander	Unknown
<b>Yuma County</b>	21% (696)	74% (2,497)	2% (56)	1% (41)	2% (59)	<1% (5)
<b>Arizona</b>	42% (43,013)	44% (44,862)	4% (3,864)	6% (6,364)	3% (3,136)	<1% (803)

Source: ADHS Vital Statistics, 2006.

### Immigration Characteristics

Data reveal that the immigration status of Yuma County residents differs from the rest of Arizona. Given the proximity to the U.S.-Mexico border and the high percentage of Hispanic births (74 percent), there are more immigrant families in the Yuma Region. Statewide, 30 percent of all children have at least one foreign-born parent. Those children born to immigrant families are themselves likely to be citizens if they are born in the United States. Citizenship status allows children to qualify for public benefits such as AHCCCS and KidsCare (publicly financed health insurance for low-income children) that are generally off limits to non-citizens. Nonetheless, citizenship status does not guarantee that young children are able to access services. Even though more young children in the Region are likely to be citizens, the citizenship status of their parents may affect their access to services. National studies suggest that many eligible "citizen children" with non-citizen parents are unaware of services or afraid of the potential consequences as a result of accessing services.

## Family Composition

In the Yuma Region, the majority of children live in households with two parents. The county and city of Yuma have similar or slightly lower percentages of single parent families with children birth-18 years of age that is reported for state and national averages.

### Makeup of Households with Children Birth-18 Years of Age for Selected Arizona Cities

City	Married Couple Households	Male Headed Household without Wife	Female Headed Household without Husband
Avondale	64%	2%	34%
Chandler	71%	9%	19%
Gilbert	74%	7%	17%
Glendale	61%	10%	27%
Mesa	70%	8%	22%
Peoria	71%	11%	18%
Phoenix	63%	10%	26%
Scottsdale	68%	9%	22%
Surprise	82%	3%	15%
Tempe	65%	9%	25%
Tucson	55%	10%	33%
Yuma	70%	3%	27%
Arizona	65%	9%	24%
County	Married Couple Households	Male Headed Household without Wife	Female Headed Household without Husband
Apache	63%	5%	31%
Cochise	65%	8%	26%
Coconino	61%	4%	34%
Maricopa	67%	9%	23%
Mohave	55%	15%	27%
Navajo	57%	13%	27%
Pima	62%	10%	27%
Pinal	63%	12%	23%
Yavapai	63%	8%	25%
Yuma	66%	6%	28%

Source: American Community Survey (2006)

### Teen Parent Households

Babies born to teen mothers are more likely than other children to be born at a low birth weight, experience health problems and developmental delays, experience abuse or neglect and perform poorly in school. Without strong family or community support, teen mothers and their children are more likely to be poor. The children of teen parents are at higher risk of not completing school and repeating the cycle of teen parenthood.<sup>2</sup>

### Percentage of Children Born to Teen\* Mothers

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Yuma County	15%	16%	17%	16%	17%
Arizona	13%	12%	12%	12%	12%
U.S.	11%	10%	10%	10%	Not Available

\*Teen defined as 19 years of age and under. Sources: American Community Survey, National Center for Health Statistics, ADHS Vital Statistics

### 2006 Household with Children under 18 Headed by Grandparents

County	Percent of households with children under 18 led by grandparents
Apache	4%
Cochise	3%
Coconino	4%
Maricopa	1%
Mohave	2%
Navajo	5%
Pima	2%
Pinal	3%
Yavapai	<1%
Yuma	2%

Source: American Community Survey (2006)

## Employment and Income

The May 2008 unemployment rate in Yuma County is more than 13 points greater than Arizona's rate and more than 12 points higher than the national. The variance in the unemployment rate is attributed to the agricultural seasonal work in the area.

### Unemployment Rates

	May 2007	April 2008	May 2008
Yuma County	17.2%	11.2%	17.8%
Arizona	3.6%	3.9%	4.4%
U.S.	4.5%	5.0%	5.5%

Source: Arizona Dept. of Commerce, Research Administration (June, 2008)

### Annual Income

In 2006, Arizona's median household income was reported to be just over \$47,000 per year. It is important to note that the median income of Yuma County in the same year was \$37,457. According to Syndicate Pay Scale Data 2008, overall cost of living in Yuma is 3% higher than the national average.

### Yuma County Median<sup>3</sup> Annual Income (per year- pretax)

	2003	2004	2005	2006
Yuma County	Data Not available	Data Not available	\$35,956	\$37,457
Arizona	\$40,762	\$41,995	\$44,282	\$47,265
U.S.	\$43,564	\$44,684	\$46,242	\$48,451

Source: American Community Survey(2006)

<sup>3</sup> The median, or mid-point, is used to measure income rather than taking the average, because the high income households would skew the average income and artificially inflate the estimate. Instead, the median is used to identify income in the middle of the range, where there are an equal number of incomes above and below that point so the entire range can be represented more reliably.

## Parent Educational Attainment

According to data reported from 2002 to 2006, almost 35 percent of mothers who gave birth in Yuma County had less than a high school diploma, 15 percentage points higher than Arizona's state average over the same period of time.

### Percentage of Live Births by Educational Attainment of Mother

		2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
<b>Yuma County</b>	No H.S. Degree	36%	36%	35%	33%	34%
	H.S. Degree	37%	36%	38%	39%	39%
	1-4 yrs. College	20%	19%	20%	20%	19%
<b>Arizona</b>	No H.S. Degree	20%	21%	20%	20%	20%
	H.S. Degree	29%	29%	29%	29%	30%
	1-4 yrs. College	32%	32%	32%	33%	33%
<b>U.S.</b>	No H.S. Degree	15%	22%	22%	Data Not Available	Data Not Available
	H.S. Degree	31%	Data Not Available	Data Not Available	Data Not Available	Data Not Available
	1-4 yrs. College	21%	27%	27%	27%	27%

Sources: Arizona Dept. of Health Services, Vital Statistics; American Community Survey. (Numbers do not add to 100% since any education beyond 17 years and unknowns were excluded)

## Healthy Births

### Prenatal Care

Yuma Region cities and towns have wide variation in the percentage of mothers who, in 2006, received prenatal care in the first trimester. Mothers living in Tacna (75 percent), Roll (70 percent), and Yuma (65 percent) had relatively higher rates of prenatal care. Mothers living in San Luis (45 percent), Dateland (40 percent), and Gadsden (34 percent) had lower rates of receiving prenatal care. Birth data also show that accessing prenatal care early occurs less often in the Yuma Region compared to Arizona or the rest of the US. According to Arizona Department of Health Services, Health and Vital Statistics Report, 2006, 60.6 percent of Yuma county women giving birth began care in the first trimester compared to 77.7 percent for the state and 83 percent for pregnant women delivering in the US.

**Selected Characteristics of Newborns and Mothers, Yuma County (2006)**

Community	Total Births	Teen Mother (</=19yr)	Prenatal Care 1 <sup>st</sup> Trimester*	No Prenatal Care	Public \$	LBW<2500*	Unwed Mothers
Dateland	10	0	4	0	9	0	3
Gadsden	18	6	6	2	16	0	11
Hyder	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
Roll	10	1	7	0	9	0	2
San Luis	585	124	271	56	440	33	275
Somerton	335	60	201	15	238	20	163
Tacna	8	2	6	0	6	1	4
Wellton	41	7	24	2	35	2	20
Yuma	2,346	354	1,515	91	1,365	139	992
<b>Totals</b>	<b>3,354</b>	<b>554</b>	<b>2,034</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>2,119</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>1,470</b>

\* First trimester prenatal care serves as a proxy for births by number of prenatal visits and births by trimester of entry to prenatal care. Low Birth Weight (LBW) serves as a proxy for preterm births (<37 weeks). Source: Arizona Department of Health Services/Division of Public Health Services, Arizona Vital Statistics. < 2500 grams (the equivalent of 8 ounces)

**Health Insurance Coverage and Utilization**

The chart below shows children enrolled in AHCCCS or KidsCare – Arizona’s publicly funded low cost health insurance programs for children in families with incomes at or below 200 percent of Federal Poverty Level. As the chart shows, 4,602 children (ages 0-5) were enrolled in AHCCCS or KidsCare in Yuma County in 2007.

**Publicly Funded Health Insurance Enrollment, 2004–2007**

	AHCCCS				KidsCare				Total Children Under Six Enrolled In AHCCCS or KidsCare			
	'04	'05	'06	'07	'04	'05	'06	'07	'04	'05	'06	'07
<b>Yuma County</b>	3,909	4,374	4,293	4,299	192	225	256	303	4,101	4,599	4,549	4,602
<b>Arizona</b>	87,751	102,379	95,776	96,600	6,029	7,397	8,699	9,794	93,780	109,776	104,475	106,394

Source: AHCCCS, Enrollment data is for calendar year, representing children enrolled at any time during the calendar year in AHCCCS or KidsCare. The child is counted under the last program in which the child was enrolled.

Health coverage is not the only factor that affects whether or not children receive the care that they need to grow up healthy. Other factors include: the scope and availability of services that are privately or publicly funded; the number of health care providers including primary care providers and specialists; the geographic proximity of needed services; and the linguistic and cultural accessibility of services. For Yuma County, all of the factors may potentially play a large role, given that much of the Region is rural and given the number of immigrant and linguistically isolated households in the Region. A local Pediatrician reports, “The care provided by Sunset, our nationally qualified Family Health Center, is significant, especially for those patients they treat on a sliding scale, as is the Yuma Regional Medical Center School Based Health Program which treats school age children without health insurance from Head Start through 8<sup>th</sup> grade, and their younger siblings.”

## Access to Medical Care

While a variety of factors ultimately influence access to health care, health coverage does play an important role in ensuring that children get routine access to a doctor or dentist's office. For example, the chart below shows that for children under age five enrolled continuously in AHCCCS in Yuma County, 78 percent received at least one visit to a primary care practitioner (such as a family practice physician, a general pediatrician, a physician's assistant, or a nurse practitioner) during the year in 2007. These numbers suggest that other barriers to care exist that prevent significant numbers of children from receiving well child care even though they have coverage. These barriers may include parents' inability to leave work to take children to routine well child care, doctors offices that are not open during evening or weekend hours, and/or lack of transportation resources even though AHCCCS will pay for transportation to well child and other health care visits.

### Percent of Children (ages 12-months – 5 years) Continuously Enrolled in AHCCCS Receiving One or More Visits to a Primary Care Practitioner

	Yuma County	Arizona
2005	78%	78%
2006	79%	78%
2007	78%	78%

\*Data only available at the county level. Source: AHCCCS. Note: Continuously enrolled refers to children enrolled with an AHCCCS health plan (acute or ALTCS) 11 months or more during the federal fiscal years 2005, 2006, 2007

## Oral Health for Special Needs Children

Access to oral health care is even more challenging for families with special needs children. According to a statewide Health Provider Survey report released in 2007, a large majority (78 percent) of Arizona dental providers surveyed in 2006 (N =729 or 98 percent of all AHCCCS providers) said they did not provide dental services to special needs children because they did not have adequate training (40 percent), did not feel it was compatible with the environment of their practices (38 percent), or did not receive enough reimbursement to treat these patients (19 percent).

## Child Safety

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In 2005 Arizona ranked 36<sup>th</sup> out of the 50 states, with child abuse and neglect a leading reason for the state's poor ranking. In the following year, Arizona's Child Fatality Review Board issued its annual report for 2005, which showed that 50 Arizona children died from abuse or neglect. Contributing factors in these death included caretaker drug/alcohol use (31 percent), lack of parenting skills (31 percent), lack of supervision (27 percent), a history of maltreatment (20 percent), and domestic violence (15 percent). Only 11 percent of the children who died had previous Child Protective Services involvement.

**Child Abuse Reports, Substantiations, Removals, and Placements for Yuma County\***

	Oct 2003 through Mar 2004	Apr 2004 through Sep 2004	Oct 2004 through Mar 2005	Apr 2005 through Sep 2005	Oct 2005 through Mar 2006	Apr 2006 through Sep 2006	Oct 2006 through Mar 2007	Apr 2007 through Sep 2007
<b>Number of reports received</b>	517	502	466	464	471	408	404	425
<b>Number of reports Substantiated</b>	NA	NA	NA	NA	44	38	38	23
<b>Substantiation rate</b>	NA	NA	NA	NA	9%	9%	9%	5%
<b>Number of new removals</b>	82	85	104	86	87	99	101	90

\*All data taken from Arizona Department of Economic Security Child Welfare Reports. Discrete data for “number of reports substantiated” not available prior to Oct. 2005-Mar. 2006. Child Welfare Reports do not provide county-level data for number of child in out-of-home care on the last day of reporting period. Data for number of reports received drawn from Child Welfare Report tables labeled “Number of Reports Responded to by Type of Maltreatment and County.”

**Child Mortality**

Leading causes of death among infants (n = 19) in Yuma County during 2006

1. **Natural causes in the first thirty days following the birth** 56 percent
2. **Congenital Malformations (heart and brain)** 26 percent
3. **Pre-term and Low birth-weight** 11 percent
4. **Maternal complications** 11 percent

## Children's Educational Attainment

### School Readiness

One assessment that is used frequently across Arizona schools is the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS). The DIBELS is used to identify children's reading skills upon entry to school and to measure their reading progress throughout the year. The DIBELS often tests only a small set of skills around letter knowledge without assessing other areas of children's language and literacy development such as vocabulary or print awareness.

#### Basic Early Literacy as Measured by DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills)

SFY 2006-2007 Kindergarten DIBELS AZ Reading First Schools						
	Beginning of the Year			End of the Year		
	% Intensive	% Strategic	% Benchmark	% Intensive	% Strategic	% Benchmark
<b>AZ Reading First Schools</b>	52	35	13	10	12	78
<b>Yuma County</b>						
<b>Crane Elementary School District</b>	50	35	15	10	8	82
<b>Gadsden Elementary School</b>	62	33	6	10	11	79
<b>Harvest Preparatory Academy</b>	48	39	13	11	7	82
<b>Somerton School District</b>	46	38	15	<1	2	98
<b>Wellton Elementary District</b>	33	49	18	12	27	61
<b>Yuma Elementary District</b>	55	32	13	6	7	87

\*From the DIBELS assessments available, there were six school districts reporting within the Yuma Regional Partnership Council.

For clarification on Intensive, Strategic and Benchmark categories please go to the following Web site:

<http://www.opi.mt.gov/pdf/superintendent/kindergarten/DIBELSKindergarten.pdf>



# Current Regional Early Childhood Development and Health System

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## Summary of Regional Findings on Early Childhood System

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In 2006, the Yuma Region's fee-paying child care facilities included, 36 licensed centers, 20 small group family child care homes, 224 approved family child care homes, and 5 unregulated homes registered with Child Care Resources and Referral.<sup>4</sup> The approved capacity for early care and education programs (including licensed centers, group homes, approved family child care homes, providers registered with the Child Care Resource and Referral) is 5,239 children. The average number of children served was 3329.<sup>5</sup> It is important to note that in Yuma County most of the care of young children 0-5 years takes place in informal or unregulated settings including "kith and kin" (friends and relatives) providers.

The costs of care across group homes, licensed centers, and in-home care differ dependent upon the setting. For example, the cost of care for infants is \$19.89 per day in a group home, \$22.33 per day in licensed centers, and \$17.00 per day for in-home care. Costs for infant care are generally higher than that for toddlers and preschoolers, which is consistent with state and national norms. Certified homes are slightly less expensive than licensed child care sites.

There are many resources available to help support families and young children, but no systemic data have been collected to measure how well these resources are known or accessed by parents in the Yuma Region. Providers and parents have suggested that the system of education and care for young children could better facilitate sharing of information that can help parents navigate through the system effectively.

## Quality

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This report presents for the Yuma Regional Partnership Council an initial snapshot of quality in the Region through the nationally accredited organizations approved by the Arizona State Board of Education.

### Accredited Early Child Care Centers

An example of an National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accredited program is the Gadsden Elementary School District's San Luis preschool. This preschool has an inclusion model which serves both typical and special program students within the same learning environment. This program has some parent education and parent volunteer opportunities within the school as well as a home component that supports the development of early literacy skills within the home environment. In the Yuma Region, 21 of the 36 licensed child care and preschool programs have been accredited which is a reflection of the strength quality early childhood education has in the community.

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<sup>4</sup> ADES Child Care Market Rate Survey 2006.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

**Yuma County: Number of Accredited Early Care and Education Centers**

	AMI/AMS	ASCI	NAC	NAEYC	NECPA	NAFCC Homes
<b>Number of Accredited Centers</b>	0	0	1	8+ 12 Head Start	1	0

Sources: NAEYC, AMI, AMS, ASCI , NAC, NECPA, NAFCC, lists of accredited providers.

AMI Recognition Schools List

AMS Accredited Montessori Schools List <http://www.amshq.org/schoolExtras/accredited.htm>

ADHS Licensed Child Care List <http://www.azdhs.gov/als/childcare/>

ACSI Schools and Accredited Schools <http://www.acsi.org/web2003/default.aspx?ID=1630&>

NAC Accredited Centers <http://www.naccp.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=1&subarticlenbr=78>

NAEYC [http://www.naeyc.org/academy/search/Search\\_Result.asp](http://www.naeyc.org/academy/search/Search_Result.asp)

NAFCC Accredited Family Child Care Providers <http://nafcc.fmdatabase.com/fmi/iwp/cgi?-db=accreditationsearch.fp7&-loadframes>

NECPA <http://www.necpa.net/AccreditedPrograms.htm>

\*Source: Arizona Department of Health Services list of Licensed Child Care Centers

**Number of Children Enrolled in Early Care and Education Programs**

The table below presents the number of children enrolled in early care and education programs by type in the Yuma Region. These numbers do not account for children cared for in unregulated care, by kin, or who are in need of care but do not have access to it. Identification of methodologies and data sets related to unregulated care and demand for early care and education are a priority for the future.

**Yuma County: Number of Children Enrolled in Early Care and Education Programs by Type**

	Licensed centers	Group homes	Approved family child care homes	Providers registered with the Child Care Resource and Referral	Total
<b>Approved capacity*</b>	3845	229	1143	22	5239
<b>Average daily reported number served</b>	2137	20	981	2	3329

Source: DES Child Care Market Rate Survey 2006

\*Capacity refers to the total capacity of a physical site and does not necessarily reflect the size of the actual program in that site.

**Costs of Care**

The table below presents the average cost for families, by type, of early care and education. These data were collected in the Department of Economic Security’s Market Rate Survey. In the Yuma Region, child care rates are most expensive for licensed centers when compared with other settings. Rates for the care of infants is the highest and the rate for this population, as for other child populations, differs by type of care. For example, the cost of infant care is \$22.33 per day for a licensed center compared with \$19.89 per day for group homes, \$18.69 per day for certified homes, \$17.00 per day for in-home care, and \$13.92 per day for alternately approved homes.

**Costs of Early Care and Education in Yuma Region**

Setting Type & Age Group	Yuma County (2006)
<b>Group Homes</b> • Infant • Toddler • Preschooler	\$19.89 per day \$19.79 per day \$19.79 per day
<b>Licensed Centers</b> • Infant • Toddler • Preschooler	\$22.33 per day \$20.43 per day \$19.79 per day
<b>In-Home Care</b> • Infant • Toddler • Preschooler	\$17.00 per day \$17.80 per day \$17.80 per day
<b>Certified Homes</b> • Infant • Toddler • Preschooler	\$18.69 per day \$18.49 per day \$18.39 per day
<b>Alternately Approved Homes</b> • Infant • Toddler • Preschooler	\$13.92 per day \$13.56 per day \$13.16 per day
<b>Unregulated Homes</b> • Infant • Toddler • Preschooler	\$17.60 per day \$17.60 per day \$17.60 per day

\*\*Assumes full-time enrollment

Sources: 2006 DES Market Rate Study; 2008 rates were obtained from SWI ECE Centers; survey results conducted with 48 randomly selected ECE centers in the Region

**Early Intervention**

**Challenges for Early Intervention**

There are many challenges for Arizona’s early intervention. Speech, physical and occupational therapists are in short supply and more acutely so in the Yuma Region. Families and health care providers are frustrated by the tangle of procedures required by both private insurers and the public system. These problems will require the combined efforts of state and regional stakeholders to arrive at appropriate solutions.

**Additional Indicators Addressed Under This Priority**

The Yuma Regional Partnership Council requested information regarding young children birth through five years with special needs. A focus group of key community informants was held to gain information and insights about the Yuma Region’s assets and needs for this child population and their families. The following chart identifies information provided by group participants and depicts community strengths and opportunities.

**Yuma Region Focus Group Conversation on Young Children With Special Needs**

Current Assets to Support Children with Special Needs	Current Gaps for Addressing Children with Special Needs
The lines of communication between agencies have opened up and agencies are coming together on behalf of children with special needs	More specialized professionals, including therapists, pediatric speech therapists, pediatric occupational therapists, and pediatric physical therapists are needed.
The professional community (including; pediatricians, developmental specialists, and others) is caring and committed to the special needs population	There can be a nine month waiting list for a child to receive a speech therapist
Screening services are available through the /Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP)	Reductions are needed in the AzEIP caseloads to allow workers to more effectively service more children and families
Children’s Rehabilitative Services (CRS) has provided specialists to treat seriously medically vulnerable children	Parent education on child development and strategies for strengthening healthy development are needed
Yuma Regional Medical Center (YRMC) now has a Level II neonatal unit, which enables Yuma County to provide care to preemie babies within the community	Better integration between the assessment and service provision process is needed to ensure that once a diagnosis is made, families have access to resources and services
The Arizona School for the Deaf and Blind and the Yuma County Nurse Home Visiting Program provides services	Parent support and culturally-competent outreach services to help parents feel able to acknowledge their child’s needs and access appropriate services are needed
There are support groups for parents of children with Autism or Down Syndrome	Families may not get correct and consistent information from the different responsible systems and this can delay needed treatment
The Public Health Services District, the School District preschool programs for children with special needs provide coordinated and comprehensive services.	Increased overall funding for all aspects of services that benefit children with special needs
	The eligibility requirements for most services disqualify children whose parents are not income eligible
	Laws and policy that stipulate the 0-3 age range need to be addressed in order to provide continuity of care for children 0-5

Source: Focus Group with Key Informants, Yuma, Arizona (June 24, 2008)

**Family Support**

In the Yuma Region, there is a wide array of programs providing support to families. For example Healthy Families Arizona and Promoting Safe and Stable Families provide a variety of support services and parent education. In 2006 – 2007, Healthy Families Arizona served 131 families beginning during the prenatal period and continuing through age five in Yuma County with home visitation, referral, and case management.

Yuma County has a number of community-based agencies and programs that have provided various educational materials to families. School and library programs offer a wealth of resources to increase parent knowledge and education. These efforts include classes, Web sites, handouts, and brochures. The Yuma County Library

District offers children’s story times, puppet shows, a summer reading program, and the Teddy Bear picnic. The Cradle to Kinder, School Readiness Partnership, collected community resources and information which is now made available on the Yuma United Way’s Snap 211.com Web site.

### Parent Knowledge About Early Education Issues

When asked, child care professionals continually report that families need more and better information around quality child care<sup>6</sup>. Parents seem fairly perceptive of their need for more information. During focus groups conducted in June 2008, members of the Yuma County community came together and discussed ideas for strengthening family supports and addressing current gaps in providing the kind of support parents and caregivers will find meaningful.

### Yuma Region Caregivers Focus Group Conversation on Early Childhood Education and Health Care

Current Assets to Support Family Care	Current Gaps for Supporting Family Care	Recommendations for Improving Future Conditions
<p>The community includes a wide range of people and services that support this population, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP)</li> <li>• Children’s Rehabilitative Services (CRS)</li> <li>• AHCCCS</li> <li>• Local pediatricians</li> <li>• Kool Smiles – mobile dental program</li> <li>• Community Intervention Associates, mental health program</li> <li>• Arizona’s Children Association – The KARE Center</li> <li>• Head Start Programs</li> <li>• Private child care and preschools</li> <li>• Parks and Recreation (sports and arts programs)</li> <li>• Community Legal Services</li> </ul>	<p>The following outlying communities need more access to needed services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wellton</li> <li>• Roll</li> <li>• Dateland</li> <li>• Tacna</li> </ul> <p>Children in foster care settings often have to wait for up to 4 months before receiving mental health services</p> <p>Foster parents need better access to information on their child’s background and medical history</p> <p>Grandparents face challenges, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being uninsured</li> <li>• Lack of current child development information</li> <li>• Access to services for the children in their care due to the caregivers’ legal status</li> <li>• Lack of transportation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the funding for programs that support family care</li> <li>• Provide flexible funds for emergency situations to purchase cribs, car seats, strollers, formula, and diapers.</li> <li>• Develop a resource directory focused on young children 0-5 yrs.</li> <li>• Strengthen early childhood education collaboration with health services, like the Kool Smiles mobile dental program</li> <li>• Address the population of young children whose parents do not qualify for programs such as Head Start and Title 19, and yet cannot afford to pay for the programs themselves</li> <li>• Provide caregiver support groups</li> </ul>

Source: Focus Group with Key Informants, Yuma, Arizona (June 24, 2008)

6 Whitebook, M., Howes, C., & Phillips, D. *Who cares? Child Care Teachers and the Quality of Care in America, 1989*, Oakland, CA: Child Care Employee Project.

## Professional Development

### Child Care Professionals' Certification and Education

The percentages of teachers and teacher's aides in the Region possessing a Child Development Associate (CDA) degree are well above the rates of the state as a whole. However, there remains a need for professional development programs for those who care for children with special needs. Current barriers to child care and early education providers seeking professional degrees include the fees needed to enroll and the time demands for attending these courses. Weekend, on-line, and evening courses are needed as well as scholarship support to help defray the costs of the required courses.

### Child Care Professionals' Educational Background

Degree Type	Yuma 2007		Arizona* 2007		U.S.** 2002	
	Teachers	Assistants	Teachers	Assistants	Teachers	Assistants
No degree	51%	81%	61%	82%	20%	12%
CDA	24%	20%	9%	7%	N/A	N/A
Associates	36%	15%	15%	8%	47%	45%
Bachelors	8%	3%	19%	7%	33%	43%
Masters	5%	<1%	6%	<1%		

Source: Compensation and Credentials Report, Center for the Child Care Workforce – Estimating the Size and Components of the U.S. Child Care Workforce and Caregiving Population report, 2002.

\* Arizona figures were determined by using the statewide average from the Compensation and Credentials report.

\*\*U.S. figures had slightly different categories: High school or less was used for no degree, Some college was used for Associates degree, and Bachelors degree or more was used for Bachelors and Masters degree

### Professional Development Opportunities

In the Yuma County area, Arizona Western College provides a variety of education and certification programs designed to meet the needs of individuals interested in pursuing careers in early childhood education, or who are currently employed at preschools, child care centers, extended day programs, or other programs or agencies that focus on early childhood education and development. These varied pathways enable Arizona Western College to address the needs of those students who have the resources and wish to continue their education at the university level as well as those students who need the credentials of a two-year degree.

Northern Arizona University's Yuma campus provides classes, training and child care so that education students can earn a Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education. Arizona State University now offers an on-line early childhood program to address the new certification requirement. Students in the program may either obtain an early childhood endorsement and/or earn a Master's degree. Tracking of personnel training and qualifications is also available through the S\*CCEEDS Program that is provided through the Association for Supportive Child Care.

Local group home care providers who have completed locally offered trainings that qualify them for their certification report being unable to obtain their certificate because they do not have the fee for the certificate or the \$1,000.00 required as start-up insurance coverage.

## Compensation and Benefits

As the chart below shows, salaries are higher for teachers, assistants, teacher directors and administrators from 2004 to 2007 in Yuma County.

### Average Wages for Child Care Professionals in Yuma

		2004	2007
<b>Teacher</b>	Hourly Wage	\$9.65	\$11.30
<b>Assistant Teacher</b>	Hourly Wage	\$7.16	\$7.96
<b>Teacher/ Director</b>	Hourly Wage	\$16.63	\$12.43
<b>Admin/ Director</b>	Hourly Wage	\$21.04	Data not Available

Sources: 2004 and 2007 data is from A Decade of Data: The Compensation and Credentials of Arizona’s Early Care and Education Workforce

## Public Awareness and Education Efforts about Early Childhood Education

Yuma Region has a wealth of dedicated, competent, and passionate community members who deeply care about early child education and health care and want to strengthen Yuma County’s efforts on these issues. The Region has a network of innovative and quality early child education programs, health care services, and family and child services that serve the Region’s diverse populations and diverse communities.

The Region’s relationship with local media in the area of early child development provides an important vehicle for information sharing and knowledge-building that can help create conditions for a community of parents, business, faith-based groups, educators, health care, and social service providers in regard to the health and development needs of young children.

## System Coordination Discussion

The Yuma Regional Partnership Council in Collaboration with the Cradle to Kinder and Yuma County Association for the Education of Young Children hosted an Early Childhood Development and Health Stakeholder Strategic Planning Session to inform the local Regional Partnership Council members regarding priorities. The second ranked priority for the stakeholders was system coordination.

### Additional Indicators of Interest to the Yuma Regional Partnership Council

Additional areas of interest for the Regional Partnership Council members include:

- incorporating early childhood development and health care information from the Quechan tribe into the Yuma County community needs and assets report and strategic planning efforts
- information on the young children of immigrant (documented and/or undocumented) parents
- information on young children who are not in early childhood education programs
- the number of children who are on waiting lists for therapeutic services that would address their identified special needs
- the number of children who do not qualify for programs, for example children who do not qualify for subsidy and their parents cannot afford to pay for care



## Conclusion - Synthesis of Findings on Regional Child and Family Indicators and Early Childhood System

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**W**ith an ever growing and diverse population, Yuma agencies, early child education professionals, and health care providers recognize the need to collaborate and better coordinate local resources to provide parents and families with a cohesive and comprehensive service array that optimizes opportunities for Yuma County children's healthy development. The area of professional development for practitioners that serve children with special needs was identified as an emerging issue in the Yuma Region.

It is important to note that over the years, health care for Yuma County children has been improved. Child immunization rates are well-above the state rate and health care coverage has increased. The Region's higher rates of teen pregnancy, higher rate of unemployment, and lower annual income are factors to take into consideration as new programs are developed and implemented.

It is also important to note that there is significant successful infrastructure in the community that would foster the integration of optimal child development in health, one example being that Yuma Regional Medical Center (YRMC) uses a professional development approach for its nursing and radiological staff that may be a model for early child care and education practitioners and therapists who desire to work with special needs children. The approach encourages employees' career exploration and pays for its nursing and radiological staff to continue their education in return for promising to work at the center for five years after their education has been completed.

Citizens of the Yuma Region are grateful for the opportunity to recommend how best to address the needs of young children within the Region. Stakeholders look forward to the collaborative work ahead that will result in children of the Region entering school healthy and ready to succeed.



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