

Arizona Early Childhood Model System

Vision

All Arizona children by the time they are five years old have a solid foundation for success in school and in life because we have worked together to create a family centered, comprehensive, collaborative, and high quality early childhood system that addresses the child’s development, health, and early education.

The Child

The early childhood system addresses the child’s:

- Development (Physical, Cognitive, Speech and Language, and Social-Emotional)
- Health (Physical, Mental, Oral, Nutritional)
- Early Education

System Partners

- Arizona’s young children and their families
 - Arizona communities, including Tribal communities
 - Faith-based communities and their programs
 - Community health organizations and providers including physicians, nurses, dentists and therapists
 - Early care and education organizations and providers, including those who provide early intervention and address special needs
 - Family support organizations and providers, including home visitors
 - Public and private transportation organizations and providers
 - K-12 educators and administrators
 - Those who educate providers, including colleges and universities
 - Researchers
- Community agencies
 - Foundations/philanthropy
 - Advocacy organizations
 - Policy makers at the federal, state and local levels
 - State agencies, notably First Things First and its Regional Councils, Department of Economic Security, Department of Education, Department of Health Services and AHCCCS
 - Professional associations
 - Business community
 - Media
 - Elected Officials

System Elements

- Leadership
- Governance
- Adequate and secure funding
- Qualified and well-paid workforce
- Standards of practice and a means for monitoring them
- Needs/asset assessment, research/evaluation, and planning/development based on findings
- Technology support
- Public awareness and support
- Coordination among those involved in the early childhood system

Foundational Elements

- Basic survival elements (food, water, air, shelter)
- Safety and security (nurturance, protection from physical threat, psychological safety)
- Family health promotion and health care for women and men, including services that contribute to healthy birth

System Characteristics

- Child and family centered – the system will focus on the child and family, recognize that each child and family is unique, and be developed and implemented in a manner that facilitates their engagement in the system; the system will be driven by Arizona’s families
- Strength based – the system will be built and implemented in a manner that identifies, builds on, and strengthens the many assets of Arizona’s children and families, their cultures, and their communities
- Comprehensive – the system will address all aspects of child development and health
- Scalable – the system can be implemented throughout the state and for all families, resources permitting
- Outcome focused – goals will be clear and measurable
- Effective – outcomes for children and families, as well as the functioning of the system, will be measured and desired results will be achieved
- Accountable – the system will be transparent, subject to ongoing monitoring and evaluation, and responsive to Arizona’s children, families, and the communities of which they are an integral part
- Well funded – resources that are adequate to support the development and implementation of the system will be dedicated to this purpose
- Sustainable – as the system is developed and implemented, consideration will be given to sustaining the system over time
- Collaborative – agencies at all levels, organizations, and individuals involved in the development, funding, implementation, and utilization of the system will help to design, evaluate, and continually improve it
- High quality – the system will be designed, developed, and implemented with recognition of lessons learned from research, evaluation, and experience; the system will seek to meet or exceed standards of good practice in all aspects
- Inclusive and respectful – the system will encompass all Arizona’s children and will honor their individuality while promoting their inclusion in the system
- Equitable – all children, families, and communities will be considered in the assessment of assets and needs and in systems planning and implementation
- Flexible – the system will change as conditions and requirements change
- Clear – while broad in scope and complex in undertaking, the system will be easy to understand and explain
- Seamless – the system will involve many agencies, organizations, and individuals who work together so that services, supports, and funding for them are well-articulated and wrap around the family in a coherent way
- Community based – like children and families, communities are unique; the system recognizes, supports, and builds on the key role communities play in early childhood development and health
- Widely known – Arizonans will have an accurate understanding of the system, how it works, and its goals
- Publicly supported – Arizonans will support public policies that foster early childhood development and health
- Developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive – the system will promote the creation of and support for services that address the unique needs and preferences of each child and family within the context of their culture and community
- Available and accessible to families – the system will encompass services and supports for families **in all communities** throughout Arizona and will function in a manner that overcomes barriers to utilization of these services and supports
- Affordable – the system will develop and provide services and supports that Arizona’s families can afford to access when they are needed
- Innovative and Arizona specific – the system envisioned will not be a replication of another system, but will incorporate lessons learned from others and be designed with an understanding of Arizona’s unique assets and conditions; it will be inspired by a commitment to Arizona’s children and families and serve as a model for other states

				Actual indicators will be developed and available for future review	
System Outcomes	In order for the System Outcomes in Column 1 to be achieved, the following conditions must be met	In order to create these conditions in Column 2, FTF could play the following roles	If FTF plays the role described in Column 3, these are the objectives that FTF would be working toward	Example Short to Mid-term Indicators of Success	Example Mid to Long-term Indicators of Success
1. All children have access to high quality, culturally responsive early care and education that promotes their optimal development.	A. There is a comprehensive early care and education system that is aligned both across the spectrum of settings and with the full continuum of the educational system.	1. Early Care and Education System Development and Implementation - Convene partners and provide leadership in the development and implementation of a comprehensive early care and education system that is aligned both across the spectrum of settings and with the full continuum of the educational system.	a) There is a clear plan for the early care and education system that describes the system, aligns programs and services across all types of settings and with the full continuum of the educational system (P-20), and defines roles and responsibilities of those involved in its implementation.	A comprehensive early care and education system plan is completed, agreement reached, and an implementation plan is followed.	X% of programs at X level of quality X% of children attending early care attend programs at X level of quality X% of early care and education programs cost less than the X% of the median family income X% of children are at X level of Kindergarten readiness
			b) Agencies and organizations involved in early care and education have a common understanding of the system and share ownership in ensuring access to for all children to high quality, culturally responsive early care and education.		
			c) Funding for early care and education is identified and aligned to eliminate gaps and prevent unnecessary duplication.	A coordinated children's budget with adequate fiscal support is in place.	
			d) Early care and education programs and services are identified and aligned.	A comprehensive early care and education system plan is completed, agreement reached, and an implementation plan is followed.	
	B. There are health, safety, and quality standards for early care and education; support for attaining the standards; and a process for monitoring them.	2. Quality Early Care and Education Standards, Curriculum, and Assessment - Convene partners, provide leadership, and provide funding for the development and implementation of quality standards for early childhood care and education programs and related curricula and assessments.	e) Monitoring for system programs is aligned and coordinated among early care and education agencies and organizations.	Provisions for coordinated monitoring of early care and education programs are in place.	
			a) Uniform quality standards have been identified and adopted for all early care and education programs in Arizona.	Quality standards are implemented across all early care and education programs.	
			b) Curricula and assessments that are aligned with quality standards are in use in early care and education programs throughout Arizona.	Curricula and assessments that are aligned with quality standards are used by all early care and education programs.	



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	C. Arizona has enough high quality, culturally responsive, affordable early care and education programs and settings to meet the needs of children and families in all communities throughout the state. D. Children and families have access to high quality, culturally responsive, affordable early care and education programs where they live and work. E. Families have a choice of schedules (part-day or full-day, part-year or full-year), type of provider, and type of setting.	3. Quality, Access, and Affordability of Regulated Early Care and Education Settings - Convene partners, provide leadership, and provide funding for increased availability of and access to high quality, regulated, culturally responsive, and affordable early care and education programs.	c) There is an integrated data system for early care and education.	Resources, timelines and coordination required to collect, disseminate and interpret data are identified.	
			a) More regulated early care and education programs attain a rating of 3 stars or higher.	X% of regulated programs at level of quality	
			b) More families know about the importance of quality and of selecting early care and education programs that have attained a rating of 3 stars or higher.	X% of children attending regulated early care attend programs at X level of quality	
			c) More children are enrolled in early care and education programs that have attained a rating of 3 stars or higher.		
			d) There are more quality early care and education programs available to families across Arizona.	Ratio of regulated early care and education spaces at X level of quality to # of children whose families seek a quality program	
			e) Quality early care and education programs are affordable for all families.	X% of regulated early care and education programs cost less than X% of median family income	
		4. Quality of Family, Friend, and Neighbor Early Care and Education Settings - Convene partners, provide leadership, and provide funding to improve the quality of culturally responsive early care and education provided by family, friends, and neighbors.	a) Quality of care and education provided in family, friend, and neighbor settings is improved.	X% of unregulated early care and education programs at X level of quality	

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2. All children have access to high quality preventive and continuous health care, including physical, mental, oral, and nutritional health.	A. Arizona has enough high quality, affordable, comprehensive health care services to meet the needs of children and families in all communities throughout the state.	1. Supply of Health Care Services - Collaborate with partners to assess and expand the supply of high quality, affordable, comprehensive health care services.	a) More health care professionals are providing affordable, comprehensive services to young children and their families in remote and underserved areas of Arizona.	X% of Medically Underserved Areas/Populations increase the ratio of primary care physicians to population by X%	X% of children age 0-5 receive all recommended well child visits
	B. Children and families have access to high quality, affordable health care coverage and services, including services that contribute to healthy births.	2. Access to Quality Health Care Coverage and Services - Collaborate with partners to increase access to high quality health care services (including oral health and mental health) and affordable health care coverage for young children and their families.	a) More dentists across Arizona serve pediatric populations. b) More children across Arizona have access to preventive oral health services.	X% increase in patients 0-5 per year in X% of counties	X% of children age 0-5 receive all recommended oral health visits
			c) More families are aware of children's health insurance and how to enroll their children.	X% of children age 0-5 currently have health insurance that pays for part or all health care X% of children age 0-5 currently have health insurance that pays for part or all dental care X% of children age 0-5 currently have health insurance that pays for part or all mental/behavioral health care	X% of children age 0-5 are at normal body weight X% of children 0-5 who have been appropriately identified and receive early intervention services
	C. Families, those who serve young children and their families, and communities promote and support good nutrition and active lifestyles for Arizona's children.	3. Nutrition and Physical Activity - Collaborate with partners to support improved nutrition and increased age/developmentally appropriate physical activity levels among young children.	a) More early care and education programs incorporate good nutrition and increased age/developmentally appropriate physical activity into their programs for young children and their families	X% of regulated early care and education programs enrolled in Empower program	



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			b) More families are aware of the importance of good nutrition and age/developmentally appropriate physical activity and incorporate it into their daily routines.	X% of children 0-5 eat at least X servings of vegetables on an average day X% of children age 0-5 were physically active (at least 60 minutes) X days in the last week	
	D. Health care for young children is coordinated via a medical and dental home.	4. Medical and Dental Homes - Collaborate with partners to increase access to medical and dental homes for young children and their families.	a) Medical and dental homes are available to young children and their families across Arizona.	X% of children 0-5 have a dentist or place they regularly go for oral health care X% of children 0-5 have a physician or place they regularly go for health care	
	E. All children are provided access to early periodic screening and diagnosis to identify physical, mental, and developmental health issues and, if necessary, follow-up treatment/services are provided.	5. Early Screening and Intervention – Collaborate with partners to increase awareness of and access to a continuum of information, support, and services for families and their children who have or are at risk of having developmental, physical, and/or mental health issues.	a) Resources for information, support, and early intervention services (including screening) that promote early childhood development, identify developmental variation/concerns, connect families with community resources, and/or provide appropriate intervention services are readily available to families throughout the state.	# of resources available for early screening and intervention	
			b) More early intervention professionals have specialized training in working with young children and their families.	% of early intervention professionals with specialized training	
3. All families have the information, services, and support they need to help their children achieve	A. Families receive high quality, diverse, and relevant information and education on the importance of the early years, child development, health, and early education in a variety of formats	1. Information and Education for Families - Convene partners, provide leadership, and provide funding for the development and coordinated dissemination of high quality, diverse, and relevant information and education on the importance of the early	a) More families who want or need assistance have access to timely and appropriate information and education to increase their competence and confidence to ensure their children enter school healthy and ready to succeed.	X% of families understand appropriate behavior for a child age 0-5 X% of families understand the importance of the early years	X% of children are at X level of Kindergarten readiness X% of families



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their fullest potential.	B. Families have easy access to information on the quality and availability of programs and services.	years, child development, health, early education, and related resources for families, providers, partners, and the public	b) More families have the information they need to select quality programs that meet their needs and preferences.	% of families report they have access to information necessary to select quality programs	understand appropriate behavior for a child age 0-5
			c) Agencies and organizations working with young children and their families provide culturally responsive, accurate, and timely information in a coordinated manner to families.		X% of families understand the importance of the early years
	C. Families have access to a variety of high quality, culturally responsive, and affordable services, supports, and community resources, which promote their child's development (physical, cognitive, speech and language, and social-emotional) and health.	2. Supports and Services for Families - Convene partners, provide leadership, provide funding, and advocate for development, enhancement, and sustainability of a variety of high quality, culturally responsive, and affordable services, supports, and community resources for young children and their families.	a) More families who want or need assistance have access to a continuum of services, supports, and resources in their communities across Arizona to increase their competence and confidence to ensure their children enter school healthy and ready to succeed.	X% of families are satisfied with the availability and quality of early childhood services	X% of families read to their child 0-5 daily
			b) More families have access to the knowledge, skills, and resources to assist their children with emergent literacy and language development.	X% of families indicate that services meet the needs of their family	X% of families sing or tell stories to their child age 0-5 daily
			c) Family services and supports that lead to effective parenting are delivered in accordance with standards of practice.	X% of families read to their child 0-5 daily	X% of families are satisfied with the availability and quality of early childhood services
			d) Family services and supports are planned, developed, funded, and delivered in a coordinated manner that best meets the needs and preferences of families and leverages available resources.	X% of families sing or tell stories to their child age 0-5 daily	
			e) More families are involved in the development and provision of family services and supports.	A quality standard of practice for family services and supports is in place and used	X% of families indicate that services meet the needs of their family
				A comprehensive family service and support plan is completed, agreement reached, and an implementation plan is followed	
				# of family representatives involved in development of a comprehensive family service and support plan	



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4. All early childhood education and health professionals are well prepared, highly skilled, and compensated commensurate with their education and experience.	A. Arizona has enough culturally diverse early childhood professionals working in a variety of capacities to meet the needs of Arizona's children and families in all communities throughout the state. B. Early childhood professionals meet specified educational/professional development requirements and continue their professional development throughout their careers. C. There are sufficient educational opportunities to meet the needs of early childhood professionals throughout Arizona. D. Early childhood professionals throughout Arizona have access to the education and ongoing professional development required to work in the setting of their choice and facilitate their professional growth.	1. Professional Development System - Convene partners, provide leadership, and provide funding for the development and enhancement of an early childhood professional development system that addresses availability, accessibility, affordability, quality, and articulation.	a) There is comprehensive and well-articulated professional development system within Arizona.	A comprehensive early childhood professional development system plan is completed, agreement reached, and an implementation plan is followed	X% of early childhood teachers have X level of education
			b) More early care and education professionals have access to ongoing education and training to meet their professional development requirements and goals across Arizona.	Ratio of available community-based education courses and community college courses that articulate to bachelor degree programs compared to demand for such courses	X% of early childhood assistant teachers have X level of education
			c) More early care and education professionals across Arizona have degrees and/or credentials in early care and education.	% of early childhood professionals enrolled in coursework that leads to a degree	X% of early childhood directors have X level of education % or # of early childhood professionals entering the field X% of early childhood professionals remain in the field of early childhood for at least 5 years X% of early childhood



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	E. High quality professionals are recruited and retained in the early childhood system. F. Early childhood professionals are paid commensurate with other fields requiring similar education and experience.	2. Recruitment and Retention of Professionals in the Early Childhood System - Convene partners, provide leadership, and provide funding for the recruitment, adequate compensation, and retention of high quality, culturally diverse early childhood providers.	a) More high quality professionals are entering and remaining in the early education, child development, and health system across Arizona.	% or # of early childhood professionals entering the field	teachers have an annual income (full time) that is X% of the median family income
			b) More early care and education professionals across Arizona are compensated at a rate commensurate with other fields requiring similar education and experience.	X% of early childhood professionals remain in the field of early childhood for at least 5 years	% of early childhood professionals by race and ethnicity
			c) There are more qualified early care and education professionals who reflect the diversity of the community in which they practice.	X% of early childhood teachers have an annual income (full time) that is X% of the median family income	X% of health care providers with specialized training
	G. Arizona has sufficient numbers of health services providers of all types who have had specialized training in working with young children and their families.	3. Specialized Training for Health Services Providers - Collaborate with partners to provide funding and implement strategies for increasing the number of health services providers who have had specialized training in working with young children and their families.	a) More health services providers of all types have had specialized training in working with young children and their families across Arizona.	X% of early childhood professionals by race and ethnicity	X% of family support providers with specialized training
	H. Family support providers have the knowledge and skills required to work with young children and their families.	4. Specialized Training for Family Support Providers - Collaborate with partners to provide funding and implement strategies for increasing the number of family support providers who have knowledge and skills required to work with young children and their families.	a) More family support providers have had specialized training in working with young children and their families across Arizona.	X% of health care providers with specialized training	
				X% of family support providers with specialized training	



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5. The early childhood system is high quality, child and family centered, coordinated, integrated, and comprehensive.	A. Partners in the early childhood system have clearly defined and well understood roles and responsibilities; planning, program development, service delivery, data, and resources are coordinated among federal, state, tribal and local jurisdictions. B. Partners in the early childhood system work together to identify and attain the capacity required to build and sustain the system. C. Families of young children and other partners are involved in the design and evaluation of Arizona's early childhood system.	1. Early Childhood System Leadership - Convene partners, provide leadership, and provide funding for the conceptualization and implementation of a high quality, child and family centered, coordinated, integrated, and comprehensive early childhood system that includes clearly defined roles and responsibilities.	a) Arizona's comprehensive early childhood system (that goes beyond early care and education) is clearly described and roles and responsibilities of those involved in its implementation are defined.	A comprehensive early childhood system plan is completed, agreement reached, and an implementation plan is followed.	X% of children are at X level of Kindergarten readiness X% of families are satisfied with the availability and quality of early childhood services X% of families indicate that services meet the needs of their family
			b) Agencies and organizations involved in the early childhood system have a common understanding of the system and share ownership in its implementation. c) Funding for all aspects of the early childhood system is identified and aligned.		
			d) More programs serving young children and their families are using evidence-based practices. e) There are standards of practice for all child development, health, and education programs and more programs are operating in alignment with these standards.	Evidence-based standards of practice are implemented across all programs in the early childhood system.	
			f) Child development, health, and education providers are more effectively connecting families to the supports and services they need.	X% of families indicate that services meet the needs of their family	
			g) More families are involved in the development of policies and cross-system coordination activities.	# of family representatives involved in development of policies and cross-system coordination	
	D. There is a coordinated process in use for collecting, analyzing, and utilizing accurate and relevant data related to early childhood development, health, and education and results are used to guide decision making.	2. Coordinated Use of Early Childhood System Data – Convene and collaborate with partners to identify data needs and resources; define and carry out roles related to collecting, analyzing, and reporting data; and utilize data to design, develop, plan, and evaluate the early childhood system.	a) Data needed to inform and guide program and policy decisions at the state and local level are available, coordinated, and utilized.	Resources, timelines and coordination required to collect, disseminate and interpret data are identified.	

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	E. Early childhood programs, services, and resources are evaluated and results used to foster continuous improvement. F. The early childhood system as a whole is evaluated to determine if it is child and family centered, coordinated, integrated, and comprehensive and results are used to strengthen the system and guide future planning. G. Impact of the early childhood system on children and families is evaluated and results are used to guide policy development, public awareness messages, resource allocation, and future planning.	3. Early Childhood System Evaluation - Provide leadership in the evaluation of the early childhood system and collaborate with partners to utilize the results to foster continuous improvement of the system.	a) There is a comprehensive evaluation of the early childhood system and results are used for continuous improvement of the system.	A comprehensive plan for evaluating the early care and education system is completed, agreement reached, and an implementation plan is followed.	

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6. All Arizonans understand the importance of the early years and the impact of early childhood development, health, and education on Arizona's economy and quality of life and, as a result, substantially support early childhood development, health, and education both politically and financially.	A. Arizonans receive accurate and data-based information on the importance of the early years, the link between early childhood experiences and subsequent success in school and in life, and the impact of early childhood development, health, and education on the state's economy and quality of life. B. Faith-based communities, community-based organizations, foundations, businesses, and other partners demonstrate their support for early childhood development, health, and education and convey their support to elected officials and other policy makers. C. Elected officials and other policy makers actively support early childhood development, health, and early education.	1. Building Public Awareness and Support - Convene partners, provide leadership, and provide funding for efforts to increase public awareness of and support for early childhood development, health, and early education among partners, public officials, policy makers, and the public.	a) The public is aware of the benefits of investing in early childhood development, health, and early education. b) The public is committed to a unified early childhood policy agenda that benefits young children and their families. c) There is a strong, growing, and mobilized pool of early childhood champions in all sectors.	X% of Arizonans rank early childhood issues as important X% of Arizonans understand the importance of quality early childhood experiences for brain development X% of Arizonans understand the importance of quality early childhood experiences to success in school	X% of Arizonans rank early childhood issues as important X% of Arizonans understand the importance of quality early childhood experiences for brain development X% of Arizonans understand the importance of quality early childhood experiences to success in school X% of the funds identified as critical or necessary are available
	D. Resources required to develop and sustain the early childhood system are generated from public and private sources.	2. Early Childhood System Funding – Secure, coordinate, and advocate for resources required to develop and sustain the early childhood system.	a) Increase public and private funding to build and sustain the early childhood system.	X% of the funds identified as critical or necessary are available	