



Office of the Director

150 N. 18th Avenue, Suite 500
Phoenix, Arizona 85007-3247
(602) 542-1025
(602) 542-1062 FAX
Internet: www.azdhs.gov

JANICE K. BREWER, GOVERNOR
WILL HUMBLE, INTERIM DIRECTOR



July 22, 2011

Dr. Pamela Powell
First Things First Program Committee Chair
First Things First Board
4000 N Central Ave, Suite 800
Phoenix AZ 85012

Dear Pam:

We regret to inform you that we will not be able to attend the August First Things First (FTF) Program Committee Meeting. Unfortunately, we both will be out of town. In lieu of our attendance, we would like to provide you and the Program Committee members with a brief explanation of the Health Advisory Committee recommendations to be considered by the FTF Program Committee and the FTF Board.

Background: Healthy Child Development: What's Important

Young children's healthy growth and development is critical to their long-term health and success. Brain research has identified the first years of life as critical ones to the actual wiring of the brain and the development of lifelong abilities and patterns of response. During the early years, there is a complex interplay between a child's environment and the child's developing brain. Factors affecting healthy growth and development in the early years include:

- Genetic predispositions and conditions
- Healthcare services to address clinical health issues and concerns
- Other services to support the social, emotional, language and cognitive development of the child; and, most important
- Family and community environments that protect nurture and guide a child's growth and development

Recommendations

From the understanding that maintaining and promoting health is a complex structure of activities, requiring many overlapping and interlinked approaches to assure health is achieved, the FTF Health Advisory Committee supports:

- 6 Roles for FTF in the area of Health
- 12 Goals aligning with the Roles
- Key Indicators for each Goal including 10 in the Better Off category
- 2 priority roles in the area of Health

The FTF Task Force recommended and listed Role 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***, as a priority role. The FTF Health Advisory Committee agrees with this recommendation and also recommends to the FTF Program Committee and FTF Board a second priority role in the area of Health. The FTF Health Advisory Committee strongly supports the addition of Role 3, ***Access to Quality Health Care Coverage and Services- Collaborate with partners to support improved nutrition and increased age/developmentally appropriate physical activity levels among young children***, as a priority role as well.

Role 2 is fairly comprehensive in addressing access to health care services, pre-natal care and health insurance but falls short in addressing any preventive and community health services. Adding Role 3 as a priority gives FTF a unique opportunity to address both the need for health care and the concrete ways that we can support health and wellness, thereby reducing future need.

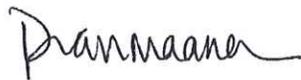
The FTF Health Advisory Committee is excited to have two priority roles to recommend that together, are comprehensive in focus; addressing both preventive and access to health care services. We look forward to our next steps that include identifying benchmarks for these health roles, assisting regional councils in fully understanding these health roles and how they might assist their communities in addressing the health roles recommended today.

Again, we regret we are not able to be present to deliver this summary in person. We hope between this letter and staff, all your questions can be addressed fully and you will support the FTF Health Committee recommendations.

Sincerely,



Jeanette Shea
Co-Chair
FTF Health Advisory Committee



Pat VanMaanen
Co-Chair
FTF Health Advisory Committee