



# FIRST THINGS FIRST

*Ready for School. Set for Life.*

## North Pima Regional Partnership Council

### Meeting Minutes

#### **I. Call to Order**

The Regular Meeting of the First Things First North Pima Regional Partnership Council was held on January 17, 2014 at Tanque Verde Unified School District-Board Meeting Room, 2300 North Tanque Verde Loop Tucson, Arizona 85749.

Chair Scott Ingram welcomed everybody and called the meeting to order at approximately 11:20 a.m.

Members Present:

Scott Ingram, Annabel Ratley, Sherri Rosalik, Amber Jones, Angela Hitt, Eliza Holland, and Jill Rosenzweig

Members Absent:

Naomi Karp

#### **II. Approval of the Minutes of the November 15, 2013 North Pima Regional Partnership Council Meeting**

A motion was made by Vice Chair Annabel Ratley that the North Pima Regional Partnership Council accept the meeting minutes, seconded by member Sherri Rosalik. Motion carried.

#### **III. Call to the Public**

None.

#### **III. Presentation on the Arizona Early Intervention Program**

Megan Wills, Associate Director, presented the Arizona Early Intervention Program and recent changes to the model. Ms. Wills provided contact information and a handout that summarized the program.

#### **V. First Things First Quality Assurance Report**

Michelle MacDonald, North Pima Regional Director, provided information about the quality assurance efforts and summarized a quality assurance site visit conducted on Professional Development for Early Care and Education Professionals Grantee, United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona.

#### **VI. Regional Consolidation: North Pima Regional Council Legacy Discussion**

The North Pima Regional Partnership Council members engaged in a discussion about strategies that have been funded by North Pima, successes and challenges the council has experienced, and what they would like to pass on to the members of the consolidated council.

#### **VII. Community Outreach and Awareness Report**

Lisette DeMars, Community Outreach Coordinator, gave an overview of community outreach activities that occurred in December 2013 and January 2014.

#### **VIII. Regional Director's Report**

Ms. MacDonald shared First Things First state and regional highlights, upcoming events, and provided the Regional Council with an updated expenditure data report and quarter 1 data.

**IX. General Discussion**

Member Jill Rosenzweig shared information about the event, Young Voice Counts, taking place on January 30, 2014 at the Jewish Community Center at 6:00 p.m.

**X. Call to the Public**

None.

**XI. Announcement of Next Meeting**

The next regular North Pima Regional Partnership Council meeting will be on February 21, 2014 at a location to be determined.

**XII. Adjournment**

A motion was made by member Amber Jones to adjourn the meeting, seconded by member Sherri Rosalik. Motion carried. There being no further business, Chair Scott Ingram adjourned the meeting at approximately 1:20 p.m.

Submitted By \_\_\_\_\_

Approved By \_\_\_\_\_

Dated this \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_.

DRAFT

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School Readiness Indicators

## **Pima County Cross-Regional Benchmarking Process**

### **Indicator 10 – Families Competent and Confident About Their Ability To Support Their Child’s Safety, Health and Well-Being.**

The committee met on February 4, 2014 to consider Indicator 10. Dr. Amy Kemp reviewed the data source, survey methodology and calculation of the overall indicator from 9 key measures, and the baseline data for Pima County and each Regional Council.

Indicator 10 is measured by the Family and Community Survey. This survey is conducted every three years by a sub-contractor of First Things First and was designed to provide information for Regional Partnership Councils on parent knowledge, skills, and behaviors related to their young children.

The survey contains over sixty questions, some of which were drawn from the national survey, *What Grown-Ups Understand About Child Development*<sup>1</sup>. The survey items explore multiple facets of parenting. There are questions on overall knowledge of the importance of early childhood, questions which gauge parent knowledge of specific ages and stages of development, parent behaviors with their children, as well as parent practices related to utilization of services for their families.

The Family and Community Survey is conducted, for non-tribal Regions, over the phone. Over 3700 parents with children 0-5 responded to the 2012 Family and Community Survey. In Pima County, 503 parents completed the survey. Parents were reached randomly via land-line as well as cell phone. Interviews began with demographic questions and based on information provided by parents on family income, ethnicity, and geography, the sample of parents was carefully balanced to ensure that the respondents reflected the diversity of Arizona and Pima County.

For the purpose of the development of the Indicator 10 composite score, a subset of nine items was selected. These nine items were selected because they encompass parent knowledge, parent self-report of their own levels of competency and confidence around the parenting of their young children, and parent behaviors, all of which are of key importance to support a young child’s safety, health and well-being. Five of the items selected are knowledge-based questions that directly assess a parent’s level of knowledge of key developmental areas. Two of the items selected specifically ask parents to rate their level of

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<sup>1</sup> CIVITAS Initiative, ZERO TO THREE, and BRIO Corporation, Researched by DYG, Inc. 2000. What Grown-ups Understand About Child Development: A National Benchmark Survey.



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## School Readiness Indicators

competency and confidence in their ability to support their child's learning, cognitive development, safety, health, and overall well-being. Lastly, two items inquire about parent behaviors around the key early literacy activities of reading, telling stories and singing songs with their children. Six or more responses (out of nine) meeting the cut point was the composite score criteria. The scoring was determined based on the national survey key and on early childhood development research and best practice.

### Committee Discussion Points:

The Committee discussed the fact that the Family and Community survey is self-report. They agreed that questions 6 and 7, which ask parents to report their competence and confidence directly, were likely to be positively skewed due to reporting bias. However, they agreed that utilizing a bank of nine survey questions to calculate overall competence and confidence was a good approach to tracking knowledge and skills over time.

The Committee noted the trends across Pima County and asked if there is a relationship between poverty and language and parent knowledge and behavior. Dr. Kemp noted that respondents could take the survey in Spanish or English and that while the full analysis of the 2012 Family and Community Survey data is anticipated for fall 2014, research findings and 2008 Family and Community Survey findings indicate strong differences in knowledge and supports needed as related to income and education.

They discussed the estimated number of parents who would need to be supported to attain competence and confidence by 2020 to attain a benchmark of 54% and 59%: 5,276 and 7,913, respectively. They agreed that the pool of parents in 2020 will be substantially different than in 2012. They agreed that a ten percent gain by 2020 would be attainable but based on the current level of outreach, collaboration and planning, they could be more aspirational. They agreed that large-scale changes will reflect the work of all early childhood partners, not just First Things First.

The Pima County baseline is 44% of Families Competent and Confident about Their Ability to Support Their Child's Safety, Health, and Well-Being.

The committee discussed benchmark goals of between 54% and 56%. They agreed that based on the current reach of FTF strategies alone (including Quality First, center-based literacy, home visitation, and parent education), they could confidently aspire to a 12 percent change of Families Competent and Confident



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## School Readiness Indicators

about Their Ability to Support Their Child's Safety, Health, and Well-Being. The Committee agreed on a 56% goal and a 12 percentage point improvement by 2020. This is slightly more aspirational than the state benchmark goal of 10 percent improvement. The Committee agreed that 56% was an attainable and aspirational goal for Pima County as a whole.

### Recommendations for Indicator 10:

56% Families Competent and Confident about Their Ability to Support Their Child's Safety, Health, and Well-Being by 2020 for public input.

### Suggested, Sample Motion

*I move the North Pima Regional Council, on behalf of the newly consolidated Pima North Region, approve the following draft benchmark for School Readiness Indicator 10 to be publically vetted: 56% of families will feel competent and confident about their ability to support their child's safety, health, and well-being by 2020.*

### Next Steps

Should the Regional Council approve moving forward with the School Readiness Indicator 10 benchmark to be vetted, the next step will be to elicit community/public comments at a public vetting session in Tucson on March 5, 2014 and through an Online Survey, March 13-28.

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH REPORT

February 2014 Pima Regions



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## January Outreach Activities

### United Way First Focus on Kids and Early Childhood Awareness Subcommittee (Champion) Networking Meetings

- January 8: City of Tucson Sentinel Building  
**Story Collecting: Nurse Family Partnership (NFP)**
- January 10: Jamie Thrush, Casa del los Niños  
**Event Preparation: Third Annual FTF Celebrates the  
Young Child Community Event**

### • January 13: First Things First Santa Cruz office Preparation for Early Childhood presentation at Greater Tucson Leadership Education Day

- January 17: Sam Leyvas

### Networking Meeting

- January 23: Monica Brinkerhoff, TUSD

### Speakers Training: Early Childhood Everyday

- January 29: Rosemary Leon, Pima County Health  
Department

### Networking Meeting

- January 29: John Dunshe, Kiwanis Club

### Community Forum on Keeping Children Safe and Healthy: Prevention, Child Care and CPS

- January 30: Jewish Community Center

### Educational Reinforcement Items distribution:

- January 22: Laura Churley, Casa de los Niños, Nurse  
Family Partnership.
- January 30: Rosemary Leon, Pima County Health  
Department, and Fania Bevill, Easter Seals Blake  
Foundation. These ERI's were distributed at South  
Pima Healthy Habits Fair 2/1/2014.

#### BENCHMARKS REACHED

**5 Networking Meetings**

**1 Speakers Trainings**

**1 Story**

**5 Supporters**

### Getting Engaged:

I asked SE Regional Champions why early education mattered to them and their communities. This is a sampling of what they shared:

*“The first five years of a child’s development are a crucial time. Early interventions and positive educational experiences help to ensure a smooth transition into kindergarten and continued success in school.”*

*Sherri Rosalik, Principal, Agua Caliente Elementary School*

*“Quality early care and education extends to the youngest people in our community the respect, support and opportunity to realize their full-est potential.”*

*Shannon Warren, Quality First Director, United Way*

*“Children are our future. Such precious and valuable beings, we all have a responsibility to help shape them. Let’s do our best to have them ready for their years to come.”*

*Dina Gutierrez, Supervisor, AMPHI School District, PAT*

**Lisette DeMars**

Community Outreach Coordinator/ Pima Regions

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Reyna was a junior at Pueblo High School when her mother invited a young man who was down on his luck to stay with them in their home, an environment ripe with challenge. Reyna soon found herself pregnant and almost immediately thereafter the relationship fell apart, leaving Reyna in a precarious situation with very little support. Reyna helps care for her large family, especially her very young siblings. She is the only English speaker and has helped her family weather constant challenges of legal status, finance, and family dynamics. In spite of the many challenges Reyna was a good student with aspirational educational goals. Fortunately for Reyna, her school nurse believed that with a little support Reyna would be able to graduate high school. The school nurse referred Reyna to Nurse Family Partnership (NFP), a program funded by First Things First, where Reyna met Jamie, her nurse and liaison through her pregnancy and her first two years of parenting.



Matching parents with trained home visitation providers who share information and offer support during a child's earliest years improves lives and yields positive returns on taxpayer investments.

Jamie's role in Reyna's life has been critical in helping empower Reyna to set a new path for herself, one different than the one she grew up on. With support from Jamie and NFP staff, Reyna has been able to keep on track with her educational goals. She graduated high school with honors in May 2012 and was a speaker at the commencement ceremony. Reyna has been a great mentor and resource to other teenage moms; they seek her out because she is knowledgeable and understanding. Reyna is a dedicated mother, she reads daily to her son, is warm and bonding with him, and is receptive to new ideas and suggestions. Reyna's confidence has been cultivated by the supports Jamie has helped connect her to, partners like: Teenage Parent High School, where Reyna was linked to a support network of other pregnant and parenting teens; the Lion's Club, who helped provide free

glasses and vision screenings to Reyna and her son; the Radisson Hotel, which has provided holiday meals and toys to Reyna and her family; and Great Beginnings, a program that provides assessment and therapeutic interventions to very young children exposed to traumatic experiences, which helped Reyna improve her family relationships. In addition, One Stop is helping Reyna look for funding opportunities so she can attend the Caregiver Institute.

Support is only that though, Reyna has had to do the heavy lifting, working exceptionally hard to accomplish her goals; she rode the bus to school every morning, even after her son was born, worked two jobs, and has had to navigate the complex process of obtaining her work permit and social security card for another two years. Reyna is focused on being the best mom she can be and on February 17th, two and a half years after enrolling in NFP and on her son's second birthday, Reyna will graduate. Her relationship with Jamie will likely continue, as for many NFP participants the relationship they have with their nurse is the longest healthy relationship that they have ever had.

With support from NFP Reyna has moved herself from a place of crisis to a place of stability, and from a cycle that hopelessly repeats itself to a new path; one with a much brighter future for herself and her son.

**Lisette DeMars**

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**North Pima  
Regional Director's Report  
February 21, 2014**

### ***Statewide Updates***

#### **First Things First January State Board Meeting**

- ❖ The January State Board meeting was held in Phoenix on January 22<sup>nd</sup>. All regional councils presented their funding plans to the State Board for approval, all of which the Board approved. Some of the other topics on the agenda were:
  - Partnering In Prevention and Early Intervention Presentation
  - Financial Update
  - Systems Approach Framework for First Things First Priorities Presentation
  - Cultural Responsivity Sub-Committee Recommendations

#### **Finance Committee Update Regarding Fiscal Year 16-18 Regional Allocations**

- ❖ The Discretionary Budget Committee made the following recommendations to the State Board during the December Board Meeting held in Tucson:
  - First, that the current method for distributing discretionary funding be maintained;
  - And second, that the State Board reconsiders its frontier definition to determine if additional regions meet that definition.
- ❖ In setting regional allocations, the Board has consistently combined base revenue with a draw down from the organizational fund balance. Since FY11, the Board has augmented total regional allocations with a fund balance draw down of approximately \$15 million a year.
- ❖ When we look at FY15 funding plans (last year of the current three year funding plan cycle), regions have committed \$44.5 million more in spending than that which was allocated as a base level of funding. This additional spending is supported entirely from regional carry forward.
- ❖ If programmatic spending continues as planned in FY15, it is fair to assume the regional fund balance will be eliminated by the end of FY16 (on average).
- ❖ One region will be in the position of having eliminated its fund balance by the end of FY15.
- ❖ The Finance Committee is considering several options regarding where to set and maintain balanced budgets, including:
  - Continue with the current policy and set budgets based on revenue coming in and have regional councils spend down their fund balances. Several regional councils will not be able to maintain service levels (strategies) across the three years (FY16-18) because they will spend down their fund balance and need to make adjustments accordingly in order to provide balanced budgets.
  - Increase the amount of revenue made available by the Board to the Program Budget which maintains the current spending/budgets proposed in the SFY15 funding plans through FY18. At which point all fund balances would be gone and spending adjustments would need to be made.
  - Set the budget at a lower level, below revenue, which essentially resets the regional allocations so regional councils know the funding level available across the three years and can appropriately plan for service delivery that can be sustained over three years.

### ***Regional Updates***

- ❖ **Quarters 1 and 2 Narrative Summary Report** attached to the packet for your reference.
- ❖ **Fiscal Year 2014 Expenditure Report** is attached to the packet for your reference.

### ***Upcoming Events***

- ❖ **Pima Grantee Meeting, February 24**, Catholic Community Services, 10-11:30am
- ❖ **United Way Business Breakfast, February 25**, Doubletree at Reid Park, 7am
- ❖ **Benchmark Public Vetting, March 5**, City of Tucson Resource Complex, 11am-12:30pm
- ❖ **Festival of Books, March 15-16**, University of Arizona



**North Pima Grantee  
Narrative Report Highlights –  
FY 2014 Quarters 1 and 2**

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**United Way of Tucson and Southern AZ — Great Expectations Professional Development**

**Successes:**

*Child & Family Resources, Inc. (Project BEST):*

- This year *Project BEST* is proud to announce that 100% of their cohort members are receiving college credit through the Program for Infant Toddler Care (PITC) course. For many members this is their first college course and with the added language barrier this is a huge achievement. When asked why they hadn't taken a college course before, many of them stated they simply didn't know how or what to do to make that happen or they didn't have anything offered at a convenient time or location before. Word about the CoP has been spreading and there is already a membership waitlist for next year.
- After spending the evening talking about responsive caregiving and the "responsive process" of watch, ask, adapt, an assistant director shared a story of successful implementation of the responsive process that happened with one of her teachers. She was working with a teacher that was having a difficult time with a new child in her classroom where there is a significant language barrier. The teacher shared with this assistant director the frustration she was having with not being "in tune" with this child and not knowing how she was ever going to be able to connect and understand him. The assistant director shared with her the responsive process and gave her some chances to use this strategy while she observed her. She was filled with excitement as she watched the teacher be more intentional about observing this child, asking him questions while using a lot of nonverbal communication, and adapting to what she thought his need was. The teacher's whole demeanor changed as she began to connect on a deeper level with this child. The teacher told the assistant director that she can now feel the relationship starting after a few very rough weeks. Not only was the relationship between the teacher and child enhanced, but so was the relationship with the teacher and assistant director as a result of this coaching. The assistant director couldn't wait to tell the cohort about the success when she got to class and reported feeling very empowered to not only provide better care to the children in her center, but to also provide better support to the teachers she works with.

*Early Childhood Development Group (Linking Leaders):*

- There have been some great connections made between cohort members in November. The original members are the biggest supporters and sometimes connect with our newer members without help from staff. Original members really understand the difference *Linking Leaders* can make. The CoP hosted a Saturday social event so members new and old could get to know each other. The event included activities that were suitable for all ages, thereby giving attendees new ideas to take back to the classroom that would be enjoyable for the children as well as the adults.

*Easter Seals Blake Foundation (Inspire Inclusion):*

- In September, members of the ECE 211 Class were given a tour of the inclusive child care center at Easter Seals Blake Foundation's Children's Achievement Center and had the opportunity to ask questions, try out materials and get ideas to bring back to their own classrooms. Many of the teachers shared that they had similar materials in their classrooms, but learned a new way to use them. The assistive technology that they were able to explore opened their eyes to how children with special needs can be better included in activities and how some of the technology explored would be great for children who do not have special needs. Many cohort members were excited to

have a chance to see other classrooms and schools and be able to bring ideas back to their classrooms. The tours of inclusive environments will continue throughout the semester to provide the hands on learning opportunities to spark wonderful conversation among students.

- A success this second quarter was the Conversation on Inclusion at Pascua Yaqui: “Red Flags in Development”. For several months now, Inspire Inclusion has worked hard to build a relationship with the Pascua Yaqui community. In December, they were able to provide a successful session for community members, parents, and teachers. This was a true conversation with active participation from the participants, sharing their own experiences and information unique to the community. Due much in part to the success of this event, they have already scheduled an additional conversation for next quarter and are working on creating a list of topics of interest with Yaqui home child care providers and educators.

#### Pima Community College (ENLACE):

- ENLACE is excited to announce that it experienced its first student member of the math cohort returning to the CoP now as a math coach herself! Esther Leyva-McGee was hired at the Tutor II level to support a cohort of students taking MAT089. Starting September 19, 2013, Ms. Leyva-McGee joined the existing coaches in offering supplemental instructional support, coaching, and tutoring to PCC early childhood students. As a student member of the first ENLACE math cohort, Ms. Leyva-McGee not only successfully completed her Early Childhood Associate’s degree, but she completed the entire mathematics course sequence at PCC that is required for a bachelor’s degree program in early childhood. The CoP coordinator shares, “Ms. Leyva-McGee is passionate about helping others to complete the mathematics requirements in early childhood associate degrees. She is equally passionate about how that translates into classroom practices, in supporting early educators to connect their mathematics knowledge learned as college students to their work with young children as early educators. Members of the original ENLACE math cohort report that it was the relationships with the instructor, the coaches ( tutors,) and each other that contributed to the successful completion rates students experienced in that cohort: MAT 086-100%, MAT 092-100%, MAT 122-75%, MAT 142- 100%. We know that the combination of mathematics knowledge and early childhood educator perspective that Ms. McGee possesses will be a strong support to early childhood students in their mathematics studies at PCC.”

#### Southern Arizona Association for the Education of Young Children (Las Familias):

- This second quarter, Las Familias coaching was offered to a team of teachers within a center-based program who sought assistance addressing the needs of a particular child in the classroom. The child exhibited behaviors that, at first glance, may have appeared to simply be disruptive and unsafe. However, following a close observation of the behaviors, insight into the possible reasons behind the behaviors supported a coaching session in which the teachers could then draw conclusions about the child’s needs. This allowed for deeper conversation and reflection about developmentally appropriate practice and how it can support the needs of this individual child. Developmentally appropriate strategies to assist the child in organizing himself were identified and supported the teachers in making informed decisions on how to organize the environment and be more proactive in addressing this child’s needs throughout the day. The sharing of information and resources with the child’s family lent itself to strengthening the overall support system for the child as well as the relationship between the teachers and family.

#### Tohono O’odham Community College:

- The start of the fiscal year proved promising for the Tohono O’odham CoP as session attendance rose from ten participants on May 18, 2013, to 44 participants on August 19, 2013. Thirty-nine

members are reported to have signed up which included all six Head Start center coordinators as well as several TO Head Start and child care center staff. The CoP Coordinator notes, "This means the content and experiences from our CoP are likely to reach throughout the community of (early childhood) educators on the Tohono O'odham Nation." The rise in attendance is attributed in part to the increase of accessibility to the scheduled session meetings as well as growing support from administration.

- August's presentation titled "Building Classroom Community" was presented by Karen McIlroy to the CoP. Ms. McIlroy also offers the TOCC ECE 228 course in which at least 25 CoP members are enrolled. The presentation included a literacy activity presented by Head Start Teacher Vivian Lewis as well, which was presented in both O'odham and English. Participants were very engaged and noted to have been both laughing and taking notes during the presentations.

#### Tucson Unified School District:

- The December 2 cross-district collaboration meeting for cohort members was a great success. The first cross-district meeting of the year provided an opportunity for teachers to gather and reflect on ideas and content they have been studying and using in their classrooms. The group was small, which provided more relationship building, a sense of intimacy, and connection among teacher from different school districts. During the session, teachers from South Pima region (Continental School District and Sunnyside School District), Central Pima region (TUSD), and North Pima region (Catalina Foothills School District) shared ideas and strategies related to ongoing child assessment and shared ideas to enhance their assessment processes. One teacher commented, "I've learned instructional strategies that others used to get information for documentation and how I can structure an activity to show me what I need to see (related to a child's development and learning)."
- The CoP Coordinator documents, "After her first coaching session, a cohort member shared with the Coordinator that she felt a renewed passion for her work that she hadn't felt in years. She stated that she was beginning to feel stagnant in her professional growth, but that through coaching she felt supported and a renewed sense of professionalism. One of the topics of coaching was how the teacher might integrate elements of emergent curriculum and use these classroom projects to support children's development and learning across domains. The projects will provide the teacher with a platform to use the teaching strategies that are described in CLASS (instructional support). The teacher also reported sharing the information she is learning with her teaching assistant. The work of GETCF is supporting district teachers who often feel isolated within their K-12 settings and is helping them improve the quality of their instruction."

#### University of Arizona - College of Education:

- UA has an undergraduate in her senior year who has worked her way through three CoPs. She was a preschool teacher and is a single mom. Then she joined Las Familias. Those coordinators encouraged her to take courses at Pima Community College. After completing course work at Pima she enrolled at the University of Arizona. She will graduate in May with a BA and certification in Early Education. The system is working!
- At the 21st International *Reconceptualizing Early Childhood Education (RECE)* Conference in Nairobi, Kenya, Sonya presented "Great Expectations for Teachers, Children and Families": Communities of Practice for Diverse Early Childhood Professionals. Session participants were very interested in this model of professional development and many sought out Sonya throughout the conference interested in how this model could be implemented in their international regions.

United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona (First Focus on Kids):

- Judy Jablon *Powerful Interactions* Seminars: Great Expectations sponsored a 2-day seminar presentation by Judy Jablon, co-author of *Powerful Interactions*. Day 1 (November 8, 2013) was geared towards the Coordinators of the CoPs and key staff; Day 2 (November 9, 2013) focused on cohort members and the general early childhood student/teacher community. On day 2, over 75 people attended and the level of enthusiasm was high, despite the fact that we had logistical problems. No one left early, and the presenter realized that the level of enthusiasm needed to be rewarded. Thus, she asked if she could come back in the spring. We are working on finding a date in April when Ms. Jablon will return.

**Collaborative Efforts:**

- Office of the Pima County School Superintendent: The County Superintendent has hired a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) specialist who is working with the Great Expectations grant director and members of the Pima Community College early childhood department to create developmentally appropriate STEM activities. On May 3, 2014, this collaboration will be part of a countywide early childhood STEM seminar for early childhood teachers. The seminar will feature Rebecca Klemm, Ph.D., an internationally known mathematics analyst who is developing materials and curricula for introducing numbers and mathematics concepts in children's earliest years. Dr. Klemm has agreed to stay in Tucson for the week of May 3-10, 2014, in order to work with the Communities of Practice (CoP's) in different venues. She is particularly interested in working with tribal early childhood teachers.
- Jeffrey Milem, Ph.D., Professor of Education Leadership, College of Education at the University of Arizona: Professor Milem's area of study is minority access to higher education. He is coauthor of a new report on the education status of minority children and adults in Arizona. He has agreed to work with the director of Great Expectations to host a community forum that will focus on the education status of minority populations in AZ, with an emphasis on people seeking access to higher education and/or degree completion, especially as that affects those seeking early childhood education degrees. We are looking at ways to include Luis Hernandez and Tucson, Tohono O'odham Nation, and Pascua Yaqui Tribe teachers and students as participants in the event. This event will take place in April or May 2014.
- United Way's Days of Caring (October 23 & 26, 2013): United Way's *Days of Caring* (DOC) is an annual event that united thousands of volunteers throughout Southern Arizona and allows them to donate their time and skills to local non-profit organizations in need. This year, several Great Expectations for Teachers, Children and Families (GETCF) partners hosted projects for DOC which resulted in cleaner, more organized and upgraded environments. For example, this year volunteers repainted an elementary school playground, planted trees outside a school and even put in a new sandbox for an early childhood care center that didn't have any real playground beforehand.

**Barriers and Solutions:**

- T.E.A.C.H./Pathways Scholarships: In September, many students in the *Inspire Inclusion* CoP ran into a roadblock in getting credit from Pima Community College. These students, who were not enrolled with Pathways, had to review their financial aid or T.E.A.C.H. status because ECE 211 is a year-long course and there are issues with payment and bonuses for year-long terms. *ENLACE* and *Las Familias* CoPs ran into similar barriers.
- New Database system: Several coordinators reported the extra time investment required by the new reporting system, and the various methods (better planning, delegating) they were implementing to address the barrier.

- Tohono O’odham Community College: Serving as an interim consultant while a Co-Coordinator position is created and then filled by Tohono O’odham Community College, Karen McIlroy has tackled entrenched institutional obstacles to students' progress in higher education. Many in the Early Childhood community have become discouraged by their TOCC experiences over the years. However, Karen is establishing education plans for the students in ECE and working with administrators to systematize procedures for students. As a result, a record number of Early Childhood professionals are attending classes.

### **United Way – Home Visitation**

#### **Successes:**

##### Marana PAT (North):

- We have had eight families enroll in the Home based component of our program that had learned about PAT while attending our community based Stay and Plays. We believe that Stay and Plays and supportive word of mouth from other enrolled families are our biggest referral source into our program.
- A father from one of our enrolled PAT families is a minister. He and his wife have enjoyed and value the program so much that he is spreading the word of PAT to his congregation. We have enrolled two new families into PAT due to his supportive efforts. This is the last year that his family will be enrolled in PAT, however they wish to keep promoting the program to families that they know will benefit from the support.
- We had a very large turnout of families at our October PAT field trip to the Marana Pumpkin Patch, largely due to the information that was shared with the Tucson Mom’s group. It was a great morning!
- Recently, a child having difficulty identifying colors was referred to his physician to be checked for color blindness, and the physician diagnosed the child appropriately. The parents have been educated on how to address the issues when he attends school and how to request accommodations in the classroom. The Parent Educator working with the family, prior to the referral to the physician, researched and found an appropriate screening tool for color blindness and administered the tool. The parents are very grateful.

##### Healthy Families:

- FSS has a family that, for several visits, MOB and FOB were on separate pages when it came to spanking baby. FOB said that spanking is what he grew up knowing and didn’t see an issue with using spanking for discipline. MOB was very much against spanking. After several visits of informing parents through GGK and continued use of problem talk (PT) and E-Parenting using empathy talk (ET), direct teaching/talk (DT), strategic modeling (SM) and teaching moment (TM), the parents came to an agreement of no spanking and no yelling at or around baby. FOB stated that he doesn’t want to parent by fear and wants to keep a strong bond with baby therefore he will not be using spanking with baby.

##### Make Way for Books:

- During the second quarter of fiscal year 2013-14 (October 1<sup>st</sup> through December 31<sup>st</sup>), 220 Early Literacy Kits for Infants were distributed to home visitation programs funded by First Things First in

North, Central, and South Pima regions. On November 6<sup>th</sup>, eleven home visitation specialists attended *Reading with Your Baby*, a two hour professional development workshop, featuring information on fostering language development and emergent literacy in infants.

**Collaborative Efforts:**

Marana PAT (North Pima):

- Last year we built a positive partnership with the Tucson Mom's group that has the majority of their membership in the Marana community. That relationship is going strong and we foresee even more collaboration efforts in the future. We also want to mention that we are receiving referrals in to our program from the Sunnyside PAT Collaboration and we appreciate that very much!
- We are happy to report we have received three referrals from the Sunnyside PAT collaboration and two of these referrals have resulted in enrollment into our program. Marana PAT has also attended quarterly PAT collaboration meetings.

**Barriers and Solutions:**

Healthy Families:

- Healthy Families, in collaboration with Child & Family Resources (CFR), Southwest Human Development (SWHD), and LeCroy & Milligan Associates (LMA), formed a HF Technology Taskforce to address technology-related challenges and barriers. The second meeting took place on August 14<sup>th</sup> at CFR Tucson via the WebEx (online meeting program). Darlene Lopez from LeCroy & Milligan Associates provided a brief overview of software that is being considered to help with data collection and maintenance challenges within the HF program. The software is Social Solutions and it is a Software Program Management System, and the ETO (Efforts to Outcome) aspect is particularly well-suited to our work. Darlene explained that several Healthy Families programs across the country are currently utilizing this system. The benefits and barriers of using this software were discussed, including the financial implications, which may very well turn out to be cost effective with long term benefits. The next steps will be to meet with the Social Solutions developer, and then have the HF Forms sub-committee to reconvene and begin looking at forms.
- We have begun negotiations with TMC (Tucson Medical Center) administrative staff regarding the Collaboration Agreement and hope that, very soon, every family giving birth being admitted to TMC will be offered the Healthy Families program. We would like to thank the administration at TMC for keeping an open door during this process so that our long-standing collaboration may continue to provide support to the families in our community.

**Sunnyside School District – Home Visitation**

**Successes:**

- At recent Amphitheater Elementary Open House events, we had great opportunities to speak with parents and staff regarding the Amphi Parents as Teachers program. Many Amphi teaching staff was already aware of the program and commented that they were happy the district and FTF have continued funding Parents as Teachers so we can ensure families that their children are ready for kindergarten. Fifteen families filled out information to have a follow up phone call to learn more about the program or to enroll. At this event, 6 families enrolled and 4 more will be having their first visits in October.

- Amphi PAT's yearly Water Safety event is one that reaches families, friends and neighbors. School age brothers and sisters attend the event with their younger siblings and always have a wonderful time. Parents learn the importance of water safety and enjoy free play time with their children in child size pools. Sprinklers are also provided at the site. Participants are given healthy snacks to enjoy while cooling down in the shade. We end each event by reading "Stewy the Duck Learns to Swim" and practicing our Stewy the Duck song (water safety rules sung to Twinkle Twinkle Little Star). This event grows each year and those who attend are given opportunities to start new friendships.
- Two years ago Juan and Manda, grandparents of triplets (two boys and a girl), began attending our Group Connection. They were seeking things in the community to do with their grandchildren as they cared for them throughout the day while the parents were at work. They came across our free and open to the community monthly groups for parents/caregivers and their children age 0-5. Grandma Manda shared with us right away that they had their hands full with the triplets and needed any guidance they could get. Each month Grandma and Grandpa regularly attended group connections, allowing the very shy triplets to socialize and have an opportunity to participate in activities that would prepare them for kindergarten. Grandma and Grandpa also enjoyed the information they were learning about early childhood development. They participated during parent discussion time by giving their own examples of difficult situations, asked questions on how to best parent during those difficult situations and offered advice when they became more confident that their parenting behaviors were valuable. In August, Grandma Manda called the Amphi PAT supervisor to let her know they would no longer be coming to group connections. The triplets, now four years old, are enrolled in preschool and are attending full time. Manda also shared with me her thoughts about Amphi PAT. She said, "You all made us feel welcome. You never once pointed out the things we were doing wrong. The staff you have is fantastic. We tried other play groups and ended up leaving the group early each time because we couldn't control the kids and felt uncomfortable. We were not asked at other groups if we needed help, we were just allowed to leave. We have learned so much during our time with you. It made taking care of the grandkids much easier. Thank you for being so willing to help anyone and never once making us feel uncomfortable. You helped us relax and realize parenting is still about taking time from your schedule and slowing down to the child's level of learning."
- The Martinez family has been enrolled since August 2011. Angelica and her son Andre have looked forward to our visits. Throughout, Angelica expressed that she would like her husband to participate more with the children's day to day activities and discipline. While she shared with him many of the activities resources and experiences PAT provides, the father remained somewhat disconnected. There was a growing concern regarding Andre's behavior. It was only during an incident where Andre acted out while visiting extended family that Mr. Martinez resolved himself to become more involved and available within the family. Angelica, always receptive to new resources, turned to me (the PAT parent educator) for information. I was able to refer her and her husband to a 12 week course on Positive Parenting offered by Casa de los Niño's. They enrolled in the classes. Angelica commented, "I've always shared with him all the things I've read and learned during our visits, and now, he's willing to learn together!"

- I've been working for over two years now with the Cajigas family. They are very family oriented. I have had visits with both parents, Teresa and Ruben. They have shared with me how important education is for their children. They want their children to be prepared for life and want them to grow up to be good citizens. At our last visit both parents were present. At the end of the visit, I asked them both how they thought the visit went. Ruben said, "It was good and we had fun!" As we were scheduling another visit for the following month, Ruben said, "Make sure the visit is on Friday, because I want to be here for it! In fact, I'm taking Friday off so I can be here for all the visits. It's important for me to be involved. I took today off so I could be here today." We scheduled for a Friday.
- A new family that I just started visiting in August surprised me. We had a visit with both parents; the father participated by phone. The Mom shared that her husband is in Mexico and couldn't be here, but he wants to be part of the visits. We conducted our visits as if he were there. He asked questions and made comments by phone. I took pictures of his son playing with blocks so that his wife can send them to him. We scheduled another visit, and again we will do the visit by phone with the Dad. Before I left, he said, "Thank you. It meant a lot to me to hear my son and wife playing together and knowing that my son is learning."
- One of our families who has a son with Downs Syndrome was very hesitant to bring him to the group connections. Mom told the parent educator that she was concerned that the other parents would feel uncomfortable because her son appears to be different. The PAT parent educator encouraged the mom and dad to attend one of the monthly events and see if they and their son enjoy themselves. Mom and dad came with their son. After it was over, the parents confided in the educator, telling her it was great fun and no one noticed anything unusual about their son. As a result of the parent educator's encouragement, the parents have brought their son to all of the group connections each month.
- Due to the support of one of our PAT parent educators who speaks Nepali, 7 children who are refugees were able to start preschool this quarter. The PAT parent educator translated for the families, increasing their understanding of the importance of a preschool experience and easing the transition process.
- A family with a child who was exhibiting delays in expressive language stated that they were concerned about seeking additional services for their child. After the PAT parent educator provided the family with information and support, the parents were able to initiate contact with the appropriate agency and now the child is receiving the needed services.
- Ines enrolled in the PAT Program in September 2012. In July 2013 Ines lost her husband and her 3 young boys lost their father. Ines took the next 3 months to sort things out. Upon her return to the PAT Program, the PAT parent educator suggested that she look into the Tu Nidito program which provides counseling for families that have experienced a death in the family. With the information and support she received from her PAT parent educator, Ines made an appointment, toured the facility and has an appointment for counseling for herself and for her children. She is thinking about the future for herself and her boys. With the help of the parent educator she has decided on a goal to take classes to improve her English, continue her education and eventually obtain a job. Ines said

“I realize that this is going to take time, but I want to work hard and be able to provide for my children. I am going to take it a day at a time. Right now my priority is my kids’ well-being”.

#### **Collaborative Efforts:**

- Continued collaboration with the Family Support Alliance partners including but not limited to: Nurse Family Partnership, Healthy Families, Arizona Early Intervention Program, Child Find Programs in Sunnyside School District, Amphi School District, Tucson Unified School District, Marana and Parent Connection Parents As Teachers.
- Parents as Teachers, is continuing to build collaboration with the PACE programs to ease the transition to school for our refugee families and their children.
- Parents as Teachers, has developed a new collaboration with Amistades Coalition which is referring families to our program since their program has ended.
- Collaboration with the United Way in Sahuarita and Green Valley will help us increase our outreach to families with special needs children in the more rural areas.
- Worked with the House of Neighborly Services in the city of South Tucson to hold Stay and Plays and provide outreach in that area.
- Continued collaboration with CPS resulted in one new referral of a family with a 1 month old. The PAT parent educator has been meeting with the family regularly and has attended a meeting with the mother, her CPS caseworker and her domestic violence counselor.
- Interagency collaboration with programs such as Smart Support which provides services in childcare facilities and the Nurse Family partnership continues to increase.
- A new collaboration is with Reachout, Dr. Sifontes and the White Elephant store. During this quarter Dr. Sifontes asked one of his patients (PAT participant) to contact her parent educator to conduct a presentation. The doctor mentioned he was amazed on the growth of the child’s development. A new collaboration with the White Elephant Store supports families in need by providing vouchers for the store.
- Cecilia Mendoza with the Tucson Fire Department will conduct safety classes for families as part of our Group Connection activities.
- Collaboration with the Pima County Health Dept. and their Parent Support Referral System will result in Amphi PAT listed as a recommended program for parents interested in receiving home visitation services.

#### **Barriers and Solutions:**

- Working with large families with multiple children under the age of 5 has been challenging when conducting assessments and meeting deadlines. The team is working on this challenge by teaming up and supporting each other. We also plan on using our intern and volunteer in supporting personal visits with multiple children. A language barrier continues to be a challenge. Support from their families and modeling has been used and an increase in parent child interaction has been observed.
- Lack of qualified applicants with a background in Early Childhood has been an obstacle for Amphi PAT in hiring a parent educator to serve families in North Pima. This has slowed our recruitment efforts in North Pima for the 2nd quarter.

#### **United Way – Community Based Parent Education**

##### **Successes:**

Marana PAT (North): As mentioned in our last quarterly report, we had expanded our program at the Geasa Marana Library and we have already seen positive growth in the attendance at that location. We

have currently served 16 unduplicated families at Geasa. The library staff is very happy with the increased attendance and this has added to the positive partnership between Marana PAT and Geasa Marana Library.

United Way/Family Support Alliance: The Family Support Alliance continues to facilitate free professional development workshops for those serving families in Southern Arizona. The Family Support Alliance is partnering with Pima County Parenting Coalition to continue to offer once a month professional development workshops. The following workshops were presented in the second quarter:

- October 2, 2013: Responding to Domestic Violence
- November 1, 2013: Reflective Supervision
- November 12, 2013: Affordable Care Act Info Session for Home Visitors & Family Support Workers
- December 3, 2013: Parenting for a Peaceful World

The December workshop was a particular success which exemplifies the nature of collaboration within the Family Support Alliance. When Teresa Brett with Families for Conscious Living, reached out to Kim Metz, Director of the Parent Connection and FSA member, Kim connected United Way and the Family Support Alliance to Teresa right away. Teresa was bringing Robin Grille from Australia to conduct workshops across the U.S. and let us know that he would be in Tucson and would be available to provide a free workshop to FSA. Robin Grille is a psychologist in private practice and a parenting educator with 20 years of experience. His articles on parenting and child development have been widely published in Australia; in the U.S., Robin has published two books. His expertise usually comes with a substantial speaking fee, but through the connection that Kim made, we were able to have this truly unique professional development opportunity gratis. We had a successful workshop for family support professionals on December 3 with overwhelmingly positive feedback from attendees.

The Family Support Alliance continues to utilize a Word Press blog and Facebook page for communicating to our partners and Family Support Alliance members about professional development opportunities in the community, resources for families, information about meetings, etc. From April to June the blog received 2,576 views while the Facebook page currently has 176 “likes” and had 1,521 views in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter. A new Pima County Parenting Coalition website has been created as an additional resource for parents and to advertise parenting classes and home visitation services in Pima County. The website is updated twice a month with new information on classes and services available. The website is [www.pimaparenting.org](http://www.pimaparenting.org).

The Parent Connection: A mom and her three year old son started attending group about two months ago. First time at group, the child would take toys away from others, push kids away, and scream very loud at his mom. He did not listen to mom when she tried to redirect him. As a result, during circle time the child crashed into another child in group while he was running in the middle of the circle. The mother was totally embarrassed and grabbed her son's hand and ran out of the room. After group, the educator came back to The Parent Connection and called mom; there was no answer and so a message was left on her answering machine. This educator also talked with The Parent Connection’s Director. They discussed the situation that had occurred at the Nanini Library Stay and Play that morning. The

director had already talked to mom earlier (mom had called in and wanted to apologize for her son's behavior.) She was invited to go back to the Stay and Play group the following week, and made a plan where the educator would work directly with her and her son, give her techniques on to how to help her son socialize with the other children, how to talk to her son, and how to let him know when it is time to go. The following week she came to group, the educator talked with her and she followed thru with how to help her son during group. This family has been coming back to group week after week. Mom and son both work as a team. Mom stays close by and directly interacts with him and redirects him when needed. Each time they attend group, they end up staying till the end. Mom continues to work with her son in redirecting his behavior and activities. They have both come to really enjoy Stay and Play!

Parent Aid: The ability to meet with a number of parents and staff from all over Pima County is always a great opportunity for Parent Aid. These events allow Parent Aid to educate parents about our program and the benefits it would have for them and their family. In addition, we continue making connections with organizations throughout Pima County, where we establish partnerships and create awareness of the various resources available to the many families that we work with.

Easter Seals Blake Foundation: A group was held at ESBF with a mix of families referred through various programs working with children and families such as Project Me Too.

Pima County Cooperative Extension: An evaluation conducted by LeCroy and Milligan showed statistically significant increases in both parent efficacy and parenting satisfaction from pre to post-survey for all participants completing a pre and post survey who attended a Brain Waves class over the past year.

We are pleased to offer free classes at the Northwest Medical Center Childbirth Center. Most classes offered require a payment by the parents to attend the class. Because of funding through First Things First, we are able to offer Baby Brain Waves to expectant parents for no charge.

I think it is important for the members of the FTF Regional Councils to know how our participants are reacting to the classes. We can show statistical growth, but it is very powerful when a parent describes in their own words what it meant to them to learn about specific topics covered during the Brain Waves workshop. For instance at classes held in the North Region last year participants commented, when asked what they will do as a result of this training:

"Understand the importance of positive reinforcement."

"Work more on routines."

"Take more time to understand children and be persistent in discipline."

"Explain more to a child and not always say no."

"Play more with my kids!"

"Change reaction to behavior."

“Say ‘no’ less.”

*Make Way for Books:* Make Way for Books provided the professional development workshop Book MAGIC for Babies, to educators at Teenage Parent High School on October 25 and October 30, and Book MAGIC at The Parent Connection on November 19. Additionally, Make Way for Books provided 200 books for families to take home to keep at Marana Parents as Teachers.

**Collaborative Efforts:**

*United Way/Southern Arizona Family Support Alliance:* United Way and the Family Support Alliance partners continue to participate in FTF regional coordination meetings. The Family Support Alliance is represented by Heather Friedman and Brittni Storrs on the Healthy Families Advisory Board, the executive committee of the Pima County Parenting Coalition, the Family Support Conference Planning Committee, and CPSA’s Birth to Five Workgroup. Heather and Brittni continue to represent the Family Support Alliance on the Statewide Strong Families AZ Home Visitation Task Force, the Strong Families AZ Professional Development subcommittee, the Statewide Home Visitation Conference planning committee, and FTF’s Family Support and Literacy Task Force.

*Casa de los Niños:* A meeting took place in October with staff at the Jewish Community Center. Specifics were discussed about the JCC hosting a Nurturing Parenting Series of ten classes starting in January 2014. The schedule and arrangements for child care and food were discussed and decided upon.

*The Parent Connection:* The Kirk-Bear Canyon playgroup is the only group held in the late afternoon and for this reason there are a few families who have “switch offs” during Stay & Play group because of work schedules. There is one young girl who begins Stay & Play with grandma and when mom gets off work she switches with grandma and finishes out Stay & Play. It had become apparent that the little girl behaved very differently with grandma than she did with mom. With grandma she was quiet, wanting to mostly sit on the floor and be read to. But when mom arrived she became very active, running around the room making lots of noise, not listening to direction, and not participating during circle time. Through observation, it became evident that most of the activity was to get her mother’s attention. Her mother works long hours and this was often the only time she had with her before dinner and bedtime. In addition, mom felt guilty that she was not able to be with her more often so disciplining was minimal. Over the past few months, this Parent Educator (PE) has been working with mom on being kind and firm. This PE is helping mom understand that her daughter needs to have boundaries. With some encouragement, she takes time out of her day (whether it be 15 minutes or an hour) to spend quality time with her daughter.

It is still a work in progress, but small steps have been made, and the child’s involvement in group activities has improved.

*Easter Seals Blake Foundation:* A connection was made with staff at Catalina Community Services expressing excitement at the hope of completing a group in quarter three with families in Catalina. We are planning a group in Catalina that will be held in winter and spring 2014.

*Pima County Cooperative Extension:* Northwest Medical Center will provide us with a location to regularly work with young fathers. We have found that having both parents attend classes provides

even more encouragement and support for engaging fathers in parenting roles. Mothers are often the “gate-keepers” to more father engagement.

### **Barriers and Solutions:**

*Pima County Cooperative Extension:* One continuing challenge is that participants attending our workshops come from ZIP Codes covering all Pima Regions. Having to report on a workshop based on the location of delivery does not reflect where participants are from. For instance, two participants at one of our Central Region classes in the past quarter were from North Region ZIP Codes.

*Casa de los Niños:* The new FTF Community Based Training Data Report is a challenge. The reporting instructions from FTF were not accurate and showed different completion rates than are actually required (65% vs. 75%). The report template sent by United Way also had the 65% completion rate, and we were then told the correct completion rate is 75%. This made it more challenging to complete the report and to report on the required numbers. A 75% completion rate has to be reported as 80% since there are ten classes in the Nurturing Parenting Series. It would be more reflective of actual participation if we reported on adults who completed 50-60% of the series. It is usually the same adults who complete 80% and 100%. During the telephone/web conference with FTF that took place in the fall, CBPE partners urged FTF evaluation staff to consider a completion rate lower than 75%. Unfortunately, this input was not recognized to date.

*The Parent Connection:* We noticed during this quarter that retention in many of our series classes was not what we were used to, so staff began to follow up with their “no shows” by phone or email to solicit feedback. Unfortunately, there wasn’t a common reason or pattern. In some cases, the class wasn’t a fit, but more often than not, there were legitimate reasons that prevented participants from completing the class like unexpected health issues and/or change in work schedules.

### **Child and Family Resources — Project MORE-Expansion**

#### **Successes:**

- We are off to a strong start this fiscal year with recruitment taking place in July and five providers signing up in August. I scaled back recruitment in September, signing up only one provider, as one of my current signees anticipates a quick transition to a small group home once she becomes DES certified due to her unique situation living in a rehabilitation community with many parents with children enrolled in the program. My current DHS small group home provider that is going through the licensing process with Project M.O.R.E.’s assistance is contemplating opening a second group home in the near future due to her long waiting list.
- We had a busy quarter working with five providers; two were certified, one was licensed and two disenrolled from the program due to personal issues. During this quarter, I made visits to several of my past providers and was excited and encouraged to see that all were at, or near, full licensed capacity and two of these were licensed small group homes!
- I am currently working with one provider who is completing the licensing process to become a small group home, with plans to open another group home in the near future. I contacted her through the Child & Adult Care Food Program database, as she was a DES certified home with a waiting list of sixteen children. She was unable, at that time, to start the process to become a DHS small group home due to financial constraints. With the help of Project M.O.R.E., she was able to enter into the licensing process, and at this writing, just successfully completed the process last week and is now a licensed group home! Another provider that is currently in the DES certification process, lives in a

large, closed, rehabilitation community where she plans to provide quality child care to the residents and their children while they are enrolled in treatment.

- This was an exciting quarter for Project M.O.R.E. as three providers successfully attained their certification/licensing. One of these providers is contemplating whether or not to now become a DHS licensed small group home because she is already operating at capacity with an anticipated waiting list. I am working with her closely as she is a bit overwhelmed by all of the paperwork associated with her new certification and joining the food program. Through collaboration with DES support specialist, we have been working with a Spanish speaking provider in Catalina who would like the support of Project M.O.R.E. as she enters into the DES certification process. As mentioned above, it has been exciting to visit and see many of the child care providers that Project M.O.R.E. has supported continuing to grow and thrive in spite of the many obstacles they face in this economy.
- Program implementation continues to evolve and become more effective each year. Currently, we are focusing on ways to further connect our rural providers through meeting location and day of the week changes to accommodate their busy schedules. I continue to be available to all current and past providers for any technical assistance they might need.

#### **Collaborative Efforts:**

- I continue to work closely with Quality First, as part of our Project M.O.R.E. application process requires that all applicants agree to apply to Quality First when applying to our program. Once one of our applicants is selected by Quality First and accepts, we work closely with the QF coach and the provider to further improve their program. In addition to that collaboration, I work closely with D.E.S. and D.H.S. to prepare our providers with as much information and knowledge as possible to insure a successful transition to a certified or licensed home. I meet monthly with the D.E.S. staff at Child and Family Resources to insure open communication and understanding of our programs, our clients' ongoing progress, and the scheduling of simultaneous visits; including pre-inspection and final inspection/certification/licensing.
- Our United Way Contractee continues to hold monthly community meetings with interested providers in North Pima County and reports regularly to me with her meeting agenda/topic, guest speakers and attendance report. This past quarter, we met to discuss themes for the upcoming meetings and to strategize ways to increase awareness and attendance. I have forwarded the North Pima County targeted zip code databases from Child Care Resource & Referral and Child & Adult Care Food Program to help with this effort to reach our current home providers in these rural areas.

#### **Barriers and Solutions:**

- The only challenge that I have encountered this quarter is monitoring the delicate monetary balance of recruiting, supporting new enrollees in our program, and predicting and preparing for financial and technical requests in the near future for growth of existing programs.

#### **Southwest Human Development – Mental Health Consultation/Smart Support**

##### **Successes:**

- The mental health consultant began in this classroom near the middle of August. A child had been identified initially when her teachers noted that she had a hard time paying attention in class. The consultant began supporting the teachers by observing during circle time, which was reported to be particularly challenging. He noted that the child was generally fidgeting around, touching her

neighbors, or looking at things in other parts of the room. She also sometimes got up and sat at a table near where she was sitting in the circle.

The consultant then began the process of wondering with the teacher about the potential origins of the child's inability to remain quiet, focused, and attentive while at school. Together they realized that child was able to sit quietly, focus, and successfully complete tasks while seated in much smaller group activities. With the help of the consultant the teacher realized the child was able to sit in small group because she had "something to do", whereas in large group activities she did not. Through further observation, the teacher and consultant noticed that "something to do" for this child involved physically doing things. Together, the teacher and consultant experimented with allowing the child to use different objects during circle time to gauge their effectiveness in helping her remain regulated.

Near the beginning of October a meeting was scheduled with the child's parents and teachers, where the teachers and consultant were able to share the results of these wonderings, observations, and strategies with the parents. The parents shared that at home the child could always be found drawing, and at times she was able to articulate the self-regulating reasons for her drawing, and who she was thinking of. The team explored the idea of incorporating such a drawing strategy into circle time activities (and perhaps elsewhere). As the family also reported that the parents are living apart and are in the process of a divorce, the team hoped this strategy may also strengthen the child's ability to remember her connections with both her parents, and to help soothe her, while at school. As the teachers agreed, the consultant will continue to visit the classroom regularly to support the teachers in using this and other strategies the team has identified as helping the child regulate herself during school and process her emotions about a difficult life change.

- This story is comes from a site which has been receiving consultation focused on a specific child for several months. Initially, the child was observed by the teachers and consultant to be strongly avoidant of group activities as well as other children. After consultation regarding strategies and interventions that addressed his core challenges, the child's teachers have, over the course of the last few months, worked to engage with him and encourage him to join in group activities. As a result of their efforts, he now consistently participates in group activities.

Recently, however, the consultant noted that during unstructured play the child would often look dejected and sad as well as almost exclusively play by himself. In thinking together with his teachers, the team realized that with several older siblings, he might be getting "lost between the cracks".

After further observation focused around this hypothesis, the consultant observed this child's attempt to engage another child in play and then quickly retreat when the other child rebuffed him. Through continued consultation and modeling with the teachers' permission, the child was able to achieve success in engaging another peer in play; one day he played with his newly acquired friend the rest of the play period outside. When the class returned inside the classroom that day, the child

appeared more alert and was smiling more in the circle time activities than he has ever been before. Through ongoing consultation, his teachers noted this change and expressed feeling that they could continue to help him approach and play with other children if they saw him hesitate or retreat. With the support of their consultant, these teachers now feel able to better understand this child's behavior, and use the skills they have learned to help support his needs.

**Collaborative Efforts:**

- Additionally, last quarter we inadvertently neglected to highlight an important meeting which took place on September 18<sup>th</sup>. Ginger Ward, Southwest's CEO, has been working closely with the Arizona Child Care Alliance (ACCA) to identify and support child care centers who are serving a large population of children who are in foster care. The September meeting included ACCA, SWHD and fourteen child care managers or owners of sites serving high populations of children in foster care. The providers described their challenges as well as their hopes for change in order to better meet the needs of these children. Smart Support is particularly invested in supporting these children through their child care and preschool caregiving relationships. We are often asked to provide consultation around the behavioral challenges of individual foster care children in classrooms and thus are able to influence caregivers to better understand the emotional experience of these children and the challenges to development that are presented by both the events that led to removal and the circumstance of removal. Through the September meeting, we heard numerous specific situations that providers are dealing with, and we were able to communicate how Smart Support can help. We are continuing to develop interventions for early care and education providers that specifically meet the needs of children in foster care.
- The North Pima region continues to engage in effective and consistent collaboration with other QIP specialists, particularly QF coaches. There is ongoing dialogue with QF coaches regarding goals, concerns, and progress at centers and the mental health consultant reports good relationships with these providers. In addition, the collaboration provides support for other members of the team to cope with shared challenges in effecting change at some centers. The consultant has interest in and some availability for networking, and has this quarter taken the opportunity to partner with the United Way in attending meetings for their Innovative Professional Development grant.

**Barriers and Solutions:**

- None Identified

# Placeholder