

2015

REGIONAL SNAPSHOT



PIMA NORTH  
REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL



FIRST THINGS FIRST

*Ready for School. Set for Life.*

# Why Early Childhood Matters

**Research shows that 80% of a child's brain is formed by age 3; more than 90% by age 5. Because of this rapid development, what happens to children in the early years lays the foundation for a lifetime.** Research has demonstrated that kids with quality early childhood experiences do better in school. They are more likely to advance into college and successful careers. They also tend to be healthier and demand less from the public welfare system.

On November 7, 2006, Arizonans made a historic decision on behalf of our state's smallest citizens. By majority vote, they made a commitment to all Arizona children 5 and younger: that kids would have the tools they need to arrive at school healthy and ready to succeed.

The voters backed that promise with an 80-cent per pack increase on tobacco products, so some reliable funding for early childhood services for our youngest children would be available.

The initiative also created the statewide First Things First Board and the 31 regional partnership councils that share the responsibility of ensuring that these early childhood funds are spent on strategies that will result in improved education and health outcomes for kids 5 and younger.



Not all children have the same needs; and voters designed First Things First to meet the diverse needs of Arizona communities. Decisions about which early education and health strategies will be funded are made by the 31 regional partnership councils made up of community volunteers. Each regional council member represents a specific segment of the community that has a stake in ensuring that our children grow up to be healthy productive adults, including: parents, tribal representatives, educators, health professionals, business leaders, philanthropists and leaders of faith communities. The regional councils study the challenges faced by children in their communities and the resources that exist to help kids in their area. Because of all these factors, the regional councils know best what their kids need.

**The Pima North region is made up of a diverse mix of sub-urban and rural communities in the central and northern portions of Pima County, including most of metropolitan Tucson, South Tucson, Oro Valley and Marana.**

## Regional Council Members

Jill Feldhausen	Marcia Klipsch
Marguerite Harmon	Ann Mastergeorge
Scott Ingram	Wade McLean
Dorothy Johnson	Annabel Ratley
Amber Jones	Sharon Taddeo

# A SNAPSHOT OF CHILDREN IN OUR REGION

## Demographics

**48,861**

Number of Kids Under 6 in Region

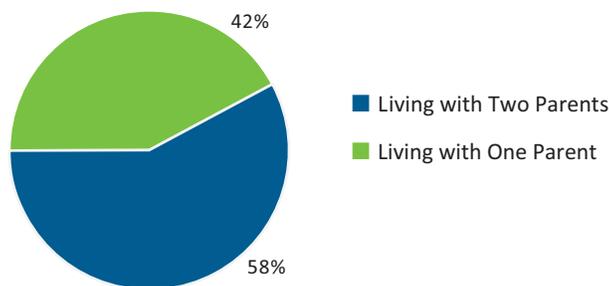
**18,863**

Number of Households with Kids Under 6

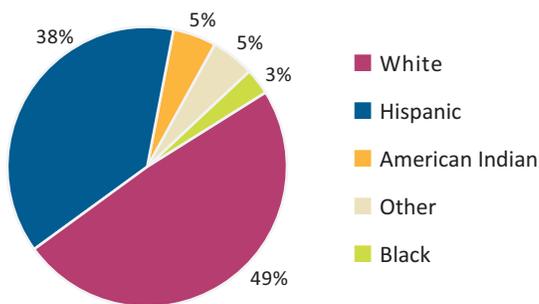
**12,304**

Number of Young Kids in Poverty

Living Arrangements of Kids Under 6 in Pima County



Ethnic Breakdown of Kids Under 6 in Pima County



## Education

**67%**

Percentage of 3- to 4-Year-Olds Statewide

Who Don't Go to Preschool

**26%**

Percentage of Pima County 3rd Grade Students Not Passing

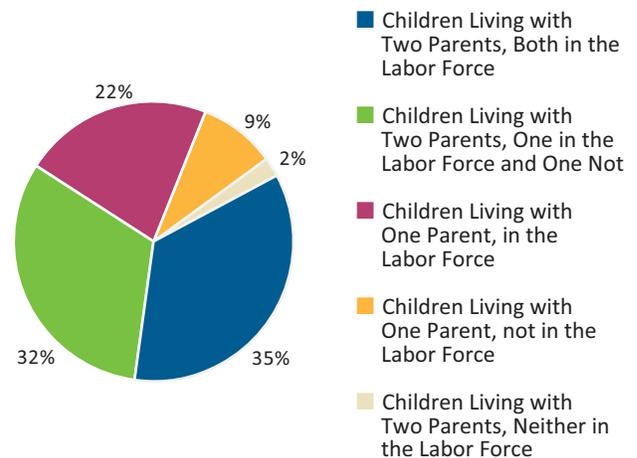
AIMS in Reading

## Economics

**\$56,808**

Median Family Income in Pima County

Employment Status of Pima County Parents with Young Kids



## Health

**7%**

Young Children in Pima County without Health Insurance

# OUR REGION'S PRIORITIES

Research regarding children 5 and younger in the Pima North region revealed the need for the following programs to promote optimal development and school readiness:

**Access to Quality Child Care:** Research shows that children exposed to high quality early education are more prepared when they enter kindergarten, do better in school, and are more likely to graduate and go on to college. The region has addressed the need for high quality early learning by funding strategies to improve the quality of child care in the region and expand the skills of early educators working with infants, toddlers and preschoolers. In addition, the region has funded scholarships that allow more children ages 5 and younger to access early learning programs.

**Professional Development:** Many children spend the day being cared for by adults other than their parents. The region funds a variety of professional development opportunities to expand the skills of those working with infants, toddlers and preschoolers, including scholarships to increase access to higher education for child care professionals to incentives to keep the best teachers working with our youngest kids. The Community-Based Professional Development strategy provides comprehensive professional development tied to college credit. Early childhood professionals gather within a learning cohort, in which they learn from experts in the field and then have opportunities to apply their learning in to practice.

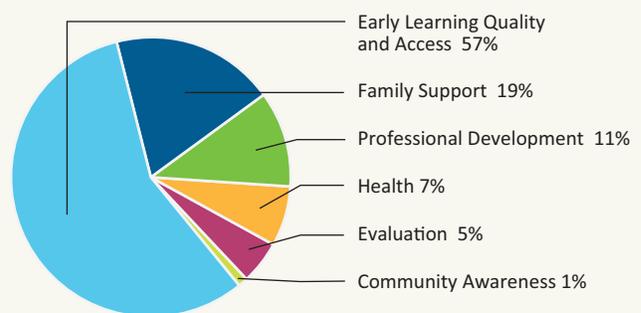
**Family Support:** The region recognizes parents as the first and most important teachers in their child's life, and funds a range of programs to strengthen families. The programs are voluntary and are offered in a variety of settings to best meet the needs of families – from community-based play groups for families who were interested in learning more about child development to in-home visitation from nurses for families who face multiple challenges.

**Community Outreach and Awareness:** Awareness of the importance of early childhood is crucial so that all stakeholders can do their part to support school readiness. The Community Outreach and Awareness strategy provides grassroots support and engagement to increase parent and community awareness of the importance of early childhood development and health.

## Financial Report

### ALLOTMENTS BY GOAL AREA – FY2015

Early Learning Quality and Access	\$7,953,690
Family Support	2,691,456
Professional Development	1,545,532
Health	946,140
Evaluation	686,279
Community Awareness	137,820
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$13,960,917</b>



# OUR REGION'S IMPACT

## Parents as Partners

Before she was a parent, Angie was a grade school teacher with a Master's degree in Educational Leadership. But a parenting education program taught her an important lesson: what school-aged children need to learn is very different than what preschool aged children need. "Don't skip ahead, or (kids 5 and younger) won't have the experiences they need to develop now and draw from later in life," Angie said. In fact, about 90% of brain development happens before kindergarten, and early experiences lay the foundation for success in school and in life.

Angie joined Marana Parents as Teachers when her daughter, Delaney, was 6 months-old. At first, Angie thought, "Do I really need to do this? I *studied* education. But there's so much I didn't know. (Now) I can have the information I need to make decisions and meet my children's needs."



## A Window to the World

At Outer Limits Preschool, teacher Mona Williams has changed the way toddlers see the world. Williams participated in a community-based professional development program called Great Expectations. One thing Williams learned in the nine month course was how important views to the outside are to a quality early learning environment, especially for infants and toddlers. Her classroom was being remodeled at the time, so she made the request to center director Bill Berk, who approved new windows.

"Before, a child would have to come to me and bring me over to the window to show me something. I would have to pick them up and hold them," Mona explained. "Now the children benefit from the windows all day long: they look at the birds, watch the rain, enjoy the light, we even draw on the windows with special markers."

The new environment encourages curiosity, language development, social and communication skills, and independence – skills that set a strong foundation for success in kindergarten and beyond.

**1,151**

FAMILIES ENJOY STRONGER, MORE SUPPORTIVE PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS

**7,312**

PARENTS, GRANDPARENTS AND CAREGIVERS ATTENDED VOLUNTARY CLASSES IN COMMUNITY-BASED SETTINGS ON TOPICS SUCH AS PARENTING SKILLS, CHILD DEVELOPMENT, LITERACY AND NUTRITION

**10,990**

PARENT KITS DISTRIBUTED

**1,640**

INFANTS, TODDLERS AND PRESCHOOLERS RECEIVED SCHOLARSHIPS TO ACCESS EARLY EDUCATION PROGRAMS

**120**

CHILD CARE CENTERS RECEIVED CONSULTATION TO BETTER SUPPORT YOUNG KIDS SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

\*Service numbers are from FY2013.

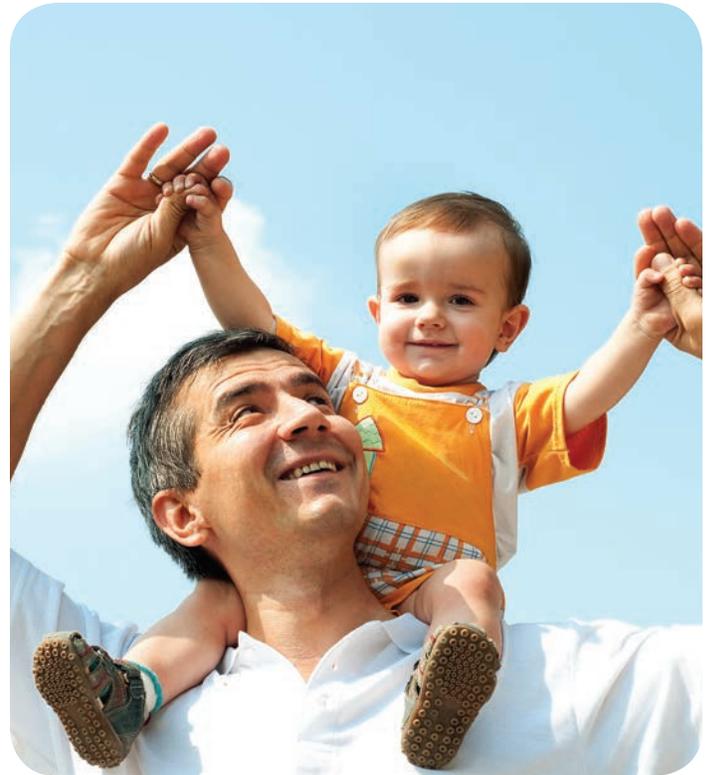
# MOVING FORWARD

The regional council is committed to improving outcomes for children across Southern Arizona. Relationships between regional councils and our community partners build the foundation upon which the early childhood system is built. Coordinated services help families gain the tools they need to get their young children ready for school and ensure they will experience lifelong success.

Collaboration between FTF regions in the southeast regional area is an important way to ensure ease of access to services and supports for families.

Professional development opportunities for early childhood educators improve quality in early education programs. With this knowledge, the five regions in Pima County embraced a professional development model which is now working across the county to provide ongoing learning opportunities for teachers and is tied to college credit. The regions look forward to continuing their support for this model and are excited to watch early care and education programs in the community improve their quality.

Regional council members will continue working together to streamline processes and improve the quality of and access to services for families to ensure that young children are ready for school and set for life.



## Grantees – FY2015

- Arizona Department of Economic Security
- Association for Supportive Child Care
- Casa de los Niños, Inc.
- Child and Family Resources, Inc.
- International Rescue Committee
- Make Way for Books
- Teen Outreach Pregnancy Services
- United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona

### Pima North Regional Partnership Council

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### JOIN THE CONVERSATION

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