

Gila River Indian Community Regional Partnership Council

Allocations and Funding Sources		SFY13	Board Approvals, 1/17-18, 2012 SFY13 Strategies and Amounts
FY Allocation		\$964,266	
Population Based Allocation		\$602,937	
Discretionary Allocation		\$225,068	
Other (FTF Fund balance addition)		\$136,261	
Carry Forward From Previous Year		\$455,265	
Total Regional Council Funds Available		\$1,419,531	
Strategies	Proposed Allotted		
Home Visitation	\$328,016	Approved	
Parent Education Community-Based Training	\$100,650	Approved	
Native Language Enrichment	\$62,539	Approved	
Summer Transition to Kindergarten	\$115,652	Approved	
Family, Friends & Neighbors	\$50,000	Approved	
Pre-Kindergarten Scholarships	\$100,000	Approved	
Quality First (<i>statewide</i>)	\$36,112	Approved	
Child Care Health Consultation (<i>statewide</i>)	\$5,040	Approved	
Quality First Child Care Scholarships (<i>statewide</i>)	\$151,441	Approved	
Scholarships TEACH (<i>statewide</i>)	\$13,200	Approved	
Conference Scholarships (<i>FTF Directed</i>)	\$16,000	Approved	
Community Awareness (<i>FTF Directed</i>)	\$2,100	Approved	
Media (<i>statewide</i>)	\$3,900	Approved	
Statewide Evaluation (<i>statewide</i>)	\$30,119	Approved	
Proposed Allotment Total:	\$1,014,769		
Total Unallotted:	\$404,762		



**GILA RIVER INDIAN COMMUNITY
REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL**

**Regional Funding Plan
Three Year Strategic Direction
SFY 2013-2015**

GILA RIVER INDIAN COMMUNITY REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL

**Regional Funding Plan
Three Year Strategic Direction
SFY 2013-2015**

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Section I.

Regional Allocation Summary

Funds Available State Fiscal Years (SFY) 2012- 2015

Gila River Indian Community Regional Partnership Council

Allocations and Funding Sources	2012	2013	2014	2015
FY Allocation	\$947,043	\$964,266	\$966,194	\$969,817
Population Based Allocation	\$618,758	\$602,937	<i>(fy14 and fy15 allocations are estimates only, for purposes of planning)</i>	
Discretionary Allocation	\$230,033	\$225,068		
Other (FTF Fund balance addition)	\$98,252	\$136,261	\$966,194	\$969,817
Carry Forward From Previous	\$526,721	\$455,265	\$404,762	\$356,187
Total Regional Council Funds	\$1,473,764	\$1,419,531	\$1,370,956	\$1,326,004

Section I.

II A. SFY 2012 Regional Partnership Council Priorities

For 2012 planning, Gila River Regional Partnership Council reviewed the strategies from years prior while they consider direction for SFY 2013. The Regional Council planning was conducted from August to November 2010 across 6 meetings. The Gila River Regional Partnership Council committed to over 20 hours of strategic planning that included the prioritization of indicators and strategies. The Regional Council ended the process by holding one additional planning meeting to complete final review and approval of the prioritized strategies. The 2012 Regional Funding Plan reflected the Regional Council's commitment to the strategic and system development work conducted thus far. The following priorities were adopted and incorporated into the Regional Council's work:

- **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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **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.

Section II.

Review of SFY 2012 Funding Plan

II A. SFY 2012 Regional Partnership Council Priorities

The Gila River Regional Partnership Council began their FY2012 strategic planning process in August of 2010, with a discussion on community needs and assets and progressed to a conversation about the scope and scale of their current strategies. As a first step, the Regional Council re-examined their vision, goals, priorities, and the Region's needs and assets report. In FY 2012 planning, the needs and assets discussion unveiled the following three priorities: family support, access to quality care, and health. The Gila River Regional Partnership Council prioritized strategies around these three priority areas. Combined, they created a continuum of care for children and held to the Council's vision of building and sustaining an early childhood system in partnership with the Gila River Indian Community Tribal leadership.

To ensure that the mission and vision of the Regional Partnership Council were achieved, the Council prioritized two goal areas: family support and quality and access to child care. The Council used the pyramid model to illustrate its priority goal areas. The pyramid model assisted in facilitating informed discussion on both the scope of the strategic plan, and the likely impact of the collective strategies in the plan. Universal, targeted and intensive strategies were included in the Regional Council's SFY 2012 Funding Plan with fifty-five percent of the Regional Council's funding being dedicated to universal strategies within quality, access and professional development. The Council chose to allocate heavily to these universal strategies in order to impact a large number of children. The remaining forty-five percent was allotted to targeted and intensive strategies supporting families. Through the Region's needs and assets report and community forums, the Gila River Regional Council determined that family support and access to high quality early childhood programs for all children will continue to be the highest prioritized value for the Region. The Gila River Indian Community Regional Partnership Council firmly believes that family support and access to quality care is critical in supporting parents in nurturing their children, and better preparing children for school and life.

In SFY 2012, the Gila River Regional Partnership Council implemented four strategies to support families in the region. The strategies include home visitation, teen parent education, native language acquisition and food security. These strategies work together with existing home visitation, teen parent support and native language programs funded by the Federal and Tribal government. Also, it was extremely important for the Gila River Regional Partnership Council to address system building within family support strategies in the region. Tribes have a long history of working with the federal government to fund family support programs but little work has been done to build systems within Tribal communities. This has led to a silo effect in funding and programing. Through community forums and key informant interviews, it was found that many programs do not work together to provide a continuum of care for families. To this point the Regional Council created an unfunded coordination strategy in their SFY 2012 funding plan which would be implemented by the regional director. The Council's coordination strategy focuses on bringing family support programs together to network, share ideas, discuss enrollment criteria, and compare target service units for each program. Over the past year family support programs have met, established relationships, and begun working with the region's prenatal clinic. These relationships have led to a shared referral form. Work sessions with the Tribal Council's Education and Health/Social Standing Committees have forwarded discussions about the scope and scale of family support programs across the region. In addition, a universal referral form has been created, which all tribal programs can access on the Tribe's website.

The Region's second priority area was investing in quality and access of early learning programs. Across the Region there was an extreme need for access to quality early care centers especially in the region's far eastern and western areas. The Gila River Indian Community is a rural community with, high unemployment, limited transportation to and from services, and limited number of early care centers.

There are approximately 2,556 children 0-5 living in the region but only 489 early care slots available. Across the region all centers are full and the waiting list for early care remains constant at around 300 children. Therefore, in SFY 2012 the Regional Council chose to invest heavily in quality and access through four strategies which include summer transition to kindergarten, Quality First scholarships, school based pre-k and family, friend and neighbor support. Each of the Council's strategies increased the scope and scale of existing federally and tribally funded early care and education programs within the Gila River Indian Community, and took into account the 80 percent of children in the region who have little to no access to formal early care settings.

In addition, to the region's four quality and access strategies, the Regional Partnership Council felt it was important to address professional development of providers working with children birth through age five. The Council collaborated with the South Phoenix Regional Partnership Council to double Gila River's investment in T.E.A.C.H. scholarships within the region. The South Phoenix Regional Council paid for four T.E.A.C.H. scholarships which were made available to teachers in the underserved western area of Gila River Indian Community. This combination of funding to professional development impacts 66 percent of the professionals who lack early childhood credentialing in the region. The South Phoenix Regional Partnership Council has chosen to continue cross regional professional development within their funding plans into SFY 2013/14/15.

In SFY 2012, the strong relationship between the South Phoenix and Gila River Regional Partnership Councils continued to grow through collaboration within the family, friend and neighbor (FFN) program which increased the impact of FFN support in the Gila River Region by 33 percent. Both Regional Councils share similar demographics around FFN care and therefore both Councils have chosen to invest in a similar strategy to support FFN providers. South Phoenix invested additional dollars in family, friend and neighbor to support Gila River Indian Community's western most area which lacks formal care settings for children. This investment highlights the long history of communal childrearing responsibly between the two regions. It is widely understood that children from the Gila River Indian Community traverse the boundaries of both regions in order to access services. The collaborative quality, access and professional development strategies of both the South Phoenix and Gila River Regional Partnership Councils provide greater access and quality to children and early care programs within the Gila River Indian Community.

Over the past three years, as the Gila River Regional Partnership Council became more knowledgeable about the region and as more data became available, the Council revised the combination of strategies it has identified to address the prioritized needs of the region, adding new strategies to address gaps in services that became evident as the original strategies were implemented. As they began planning for the next three year funding cycle, it was with a greater understanding of the region and a stronger vision of an early childhood system for the region.

II B. SFY 2012 Strategies and Units of Service Review

Gila River Indian Community Units of Service by Strategy

Strategy Description	Fiscal Year 2012	
	Targeted Units	Contracted
Home Visitation Strategy		
Number of families served	90	90
Parent Education Community-Based Training Strategy		
Number of participating adults	30	40
Native Language Enrichment Strategy		
Number of books distributed	0	40
Number of children served	206	275
Number of home and/or center based providers	4	4
Number of participating adults	0	100
Number of participating professionals	20	18
Food Security Strategy		
Number of food boxes distributed	360	360
Quality First Child Care Scholarships Strategy		
Number of children receiving scholarships	25	25
Summer Transition to Kindergarten Strategy		
Number of children served	120	30
Number of participating adults	120	30
Family, Friends & Neighbors Strategy		
Number of home based providers served	30	30
Pre-Kindergarten Scholarships Strategy		
Number of FTF-funded pre-K children	20	20
Number of private/public partner pre-K sites receiving support	0	0
Number of public school pre-k sites receiving support	1	0
Recruitment – Stipends/Loan Forgiveness Strategy		
Number of participants receiving Stipends and/or Loan Forgiveness	1	0
Number of therapists receiving loan forgiveness	0	0
Number of therapists receiving stipends	1	0
Scholarships TEACH Strategy		
Number of professionals receiving scholarships	4	4
Conference Scholarships Strategy		
Number of professionals receiving scholarships	200	0
Coordination Strategy		
No Service Units	0	0
Media		
No Service Units	0	0
Community Awareness		
No Service Units	0	0
Statewide Evaluation		
No Service Units	0	0
Needs and Assets		
No Service Units	0	0

Notes:

Scholarships TEACH: The Scholarships TEACH strategy has Target Service Numbers which reflect the strategy targets of “additional TEACH. The Contracted Service Numbers include the “additional TEACH” in addition to the Service Numbers funded through the regionally funded Quality First package. Therefore, for many regions, the Target Numbers will appear lower than the Contracted Numbers.

Conference Scholarships: The Conference Scholarship strategy is a FTF directed strategy and therefore the actual service numbers do not immediately enter the PGMS system and do not reflected up to date Units of Service in the document.

II C. SFY 2012 Funding Summary Review

SFY 2012 Gila River Indian Community Funding Plan Summary		
Allocations and Funding Sources	2012	
FY Allocation		\$947,043
Population Based Allocation		\$618,758
Discretionary Allocation		\$230,033
Other (FTF Fund balance addition)		\$98,252
Carry Forward From Previous Year		\$526,721
Total Regional Council Funds Available		\$1,473,764
Strategies	Allotted	Awarded
Home Visitation	\$328,016	\$327,972
Parent Education Community-Based	\$100,650	\$100,091
Native Language Enrichment	\$62,539	\$62,539
Food Security	\$10,000	\$10,000
Summer Transition to Kindergarten	\$115,652	
Family, Friends & Neighbors	\$50,000	\$50,000
Pre-Kindergarten Scholarships	\$100,000	\$100,000
Recruitment – Stipends/Loan	\$14,600	
Quality First Child Care Scholarships	\$165,931	\$165,931
Scholarships TEACH	\$13,992	\$13,200
Conference Scholarships	\$16,000	
Coordination (<i>unfunded</i>)		
Media	\$3,900	\$3,900
Community Awareness	\$2,100	\$2,100
Statewide Evaluation	\$30,119	\$30,119
Needs and Assets	\$5,000	\$4,998
Total	\$1,018,499	\$870,850
Total Unallotted/Unawarded/Unexpended	\$455,265	\$147,649

II D. Review of Progress

Through the 2010 Needs and Assets Report, the Regional Council found that the Gila River Indian Community has one of the highest rates of teen pregnancy in Arizona; in some areas, unemployment reached 46 percent; and approximately, 40 percent of children under six were not living with either parent but with another related person. Additionally, all early care and education centers are full with waiting lists, but only 19 percent of children 0-5 are cared for in formal child care settings. This means 80 percent of children in the region must seek care outside of the community or are cared for by family, friends or neighbors.

The Gila River Indian Community is considered an urban Tribal Community which stretches from Tolleson to Coolidge. Although the Gila River Indian Community is in close proximity to the Phoenix and Chandler areas, the region is mostly rural, where access to services such as child care and early education programs, is limited. For parents living in remote and underserved areas of the region, distance presents a huge barrier to accessing child care and other family support services. Building upon Gila River Indian Community's existing early care and education and family support services has been the focus of the Regional Council's strategic planning and implementation efforts over the past three years.

The Home Visitation, Community-Based Parent Education, Native Language Early Literacy and Food Security strategies all work together to create a comprehensive family support network of services when combined with other, non-FTF funded family support services within the Community. Teen parent education and case management is targeted and more intensive with a smaller number of families participating. The Regional Council has been successful in building upon an existing evidence-based national teen parent education model at the local high schools which also works in collaboration with both Early Head Start and the regions Quality First center to provide child care to children of teen parents. Home visitation offers medium intensity parent education through in home family support services utilizing the Parents as Teachers, and Healthy Start models which expand on programs already operating within the Community. The Native Language Early Literacy program offers community and center based native language early literacy programs which incorporate children, teachers, parents, and grandparents in early literacy trainings. These training are aimed at promoting literacy rich environments both in the home and in centers. Lastly, families facing food insecurity had access to food boxes which were available through a grantee located within the Community. The food and nutrition strategy also offered linkages to other community based family support services so families were offered multiple supports.

The Gila River Regional Partnership Council has also been successful in building capacity of family support programs within the region through coordination and collaboration efforts. The Regional Council believes that in order for family support programs to be successful, programs must serve at least 50 percent of their target population. In the Gila River Indian Community, approximately 64 percent of families with children 0-5 are living at or below the federal poverty (table 1). The Regional Council would like to serve 50 percent of these children through the combination of FTF and non-FTF funded home visitation programs. To this end, in the spring of 2010 the Regional Council began convening family support partners to work towards coordination and collaboration goals. Through ongoing coordination and collaboration efforts it has been found that approximately 527 children and families are served by some type of home visitation program. This number represents almost 79 percent of target service numbers for the region (see Table 2). This collaborative partnership has allowed for development of a networking system for information sharing among programs, discussion and reduction of duplication of services and development of a shared mission for all home visitation programs within the region.

Table 1. Families with children 0-5 living at or below poverty

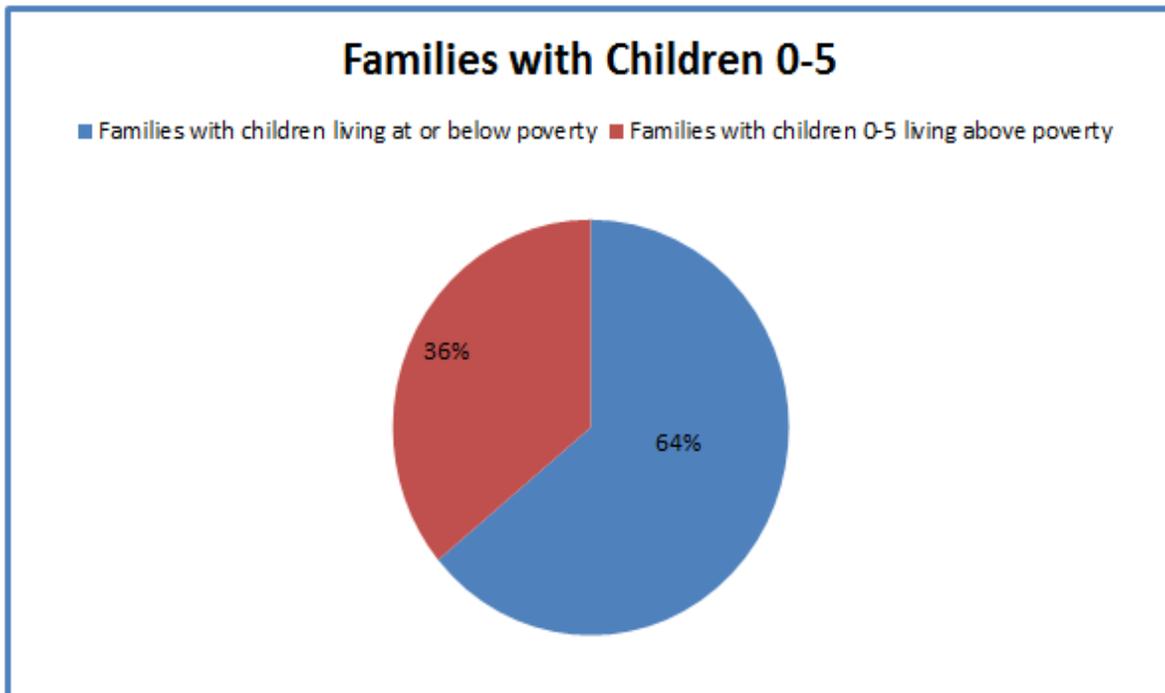
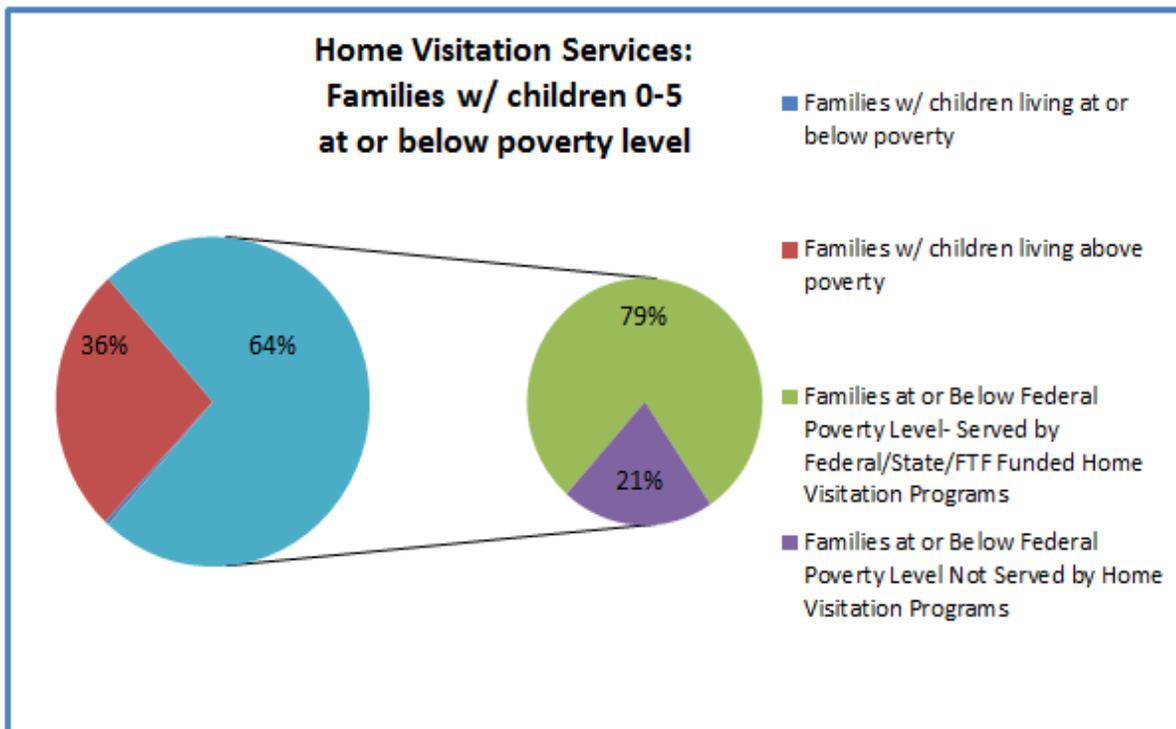


Table 2. Families with children 0-5 living at or below poverty receiving home visitation services



The Regional Council's early care and education strategies represent a weaving of four strategies to increase the capacity of early care. The first strategy was child care scholarships which were, and continue to be available to both teen and working parents. Second, was the expansion of quality pre- k experiences to children who have never been in early care through the region's summer transition to kindergarten strategy. In the fall of 2011 schools in the Region welcomed 285 kindergarteners. By increasing funding to this strategy, the Regional Council brought the strategy to scale in SFY 2012 allowing nearly all four year old children who have been on the waiting list for early care to have the opportunity to participate in a summer transition to kindergarten program. The third strategy, expansion of pre-k slots, was new to SFY 2012 funding plan. The strategy created 20 school based pre-k slots in SFY 2012. Finally, due to a reduction in centers throughout the region and a historical utilization of kith and kin care, a significant number of children continue to be cared for by family friends and neighbors. To this point, the Regional Council believed it was important to support the 80 percent of children in family, friend, and neighbor care in the region by enhancing the quality of care provided by those individuals through outreach and training. Additionally, through cross regional collaboration with the South Phoenix Regional Partnership Council, family friend and neighbor trainings were expanded by 33 percent in SFY 2012 within the Gila River Region. All strategies were evaluated based on whether they met the needs found in the 2010 Regional Needs and Assets Report. All four strategies built on each other by increasing quality, access and affordability to regulated early care settings, and encouraged family, friend, and neighbor providers to move toward licensing.

To further build the capacity of the early care and education system for young children, the Regional Council created educational opportunities for early childhood, and health professionals, as well as educational opportunities for parents and grandparents. The Council's native language enrichment and conference strategies are aimed at capacity building both for professionals and parents in the Community. The third strategy in this goal area increases capacity of early care staff through the T.E.A.C.H. scholarship program. Currently there are 6 T.E.A.C.H. Scholarships available in the Gila River Region with only 1 T.E.A.C.H. scholarship being utilized. The low utilization rate of T.E.A.C.H. in the region can be attributed to the closing of an early care center in SFY 2011 which employed 3 T.E.A.C.H. scholars. When the center closed in the fall of 2012 those TEACH scholars became ineligible. T.E.A.C.H. is actively recruiting additional scholars throughout the region.

After thoughtful examination of the region's health system, the Regional Council found many services exist to support young children. Hospitals in the region offer a continuum of care beginning with prenatal services, and follow up care, to pediatric services offered at a new pediatric clinic located within the region. Although the council has allotted funding to the recruitment of a developmental pediatrician over the past three years, the strategy has not been implemented due to capacity issues. The Regional Partnership Council will re-examine the vitality of this strategy during their SFY 2013 fund plan development.

The goal of the Gila River Regional Council is to continue building an early childhood system while supporting families and children through a continuum of care across goals contingent upon family needs. As the system is built around early childhood development and health, the Regional Council believes **three** items are key for both program and system building to be successful in the region. First, the Regional Council believes reaching at least 50 percent of target population over the course of three years is critically important. Second, the Regional Partnership Council is aware of the need to begin communication and collaboration across programs to start the process of system building thus increasing support for families who fall in different levels of the service delivery model. Actualizing this type of collaboration and participation is not easy. To this end, the FTF Family Support Consortium was created in January of 2010. The group meets quarterly and brings home visitation and parent education programs together. The intent of the Consortium is to increase understanding of services offered by programs, reduce duplication of services, and increase collaboration through shared vision. To support coordination the Regional Council created an unfunded coordination strategy during their SFY 2012 funding plan session. Lastly, the Regional

Council believes that in order to have system development truly occur the Regional Council must begin dialog, with community leaders and policy makers of the Gila River Indian Community. This dialog will increase policy alignment and system building within Tribal boundaries. In 2012, the Regional Council began discussions with Tribal Council leaders through work sessions. The aim of the work sessions were to inform Tribal leadership about the system of early childhood within the region which it is hoped will aid in their decisions around Tribal and Federal funding and support of early childhood.

The Gila River Regional Partnership Council is committed to creating a system around young children in the Gila River Indian Community. The Regional Council also recognizes and honors the fact that the Gila River Indian Community is a sovereign nation with a governance structure which the early childhood system must work within and build upon. Additionally, because the Gila River Indian Community is a rural community with many underserved areas it is more costly and challenging to serve all areas of the region without collaboration and partnerships. Many areas lack the infrastructure already established in Phoenix and Chandler. Therefore, over the past three years the Regional Council worked to nurture relationships between both Tribal leaders and neighboring Regional Partnership Councils to build upon the Region's assets from a strength based, sustainable approach.

SFY 2012 continues to be a year filled with strong community commitment and Tribal support for the Gila River Regional Partnership Council. The Council prioritized family support and access to quality early care as the focus of their next three years. System development around family support and access to quality child care has begun. Partnerships with the Gila River Indian Community Tribal Council are in place which will inform policy makers as well as the Gila River Regional Partnership Council. Through partnerships with and across the Region, the Regional Partnership Council has been successful in establishing the following strategies: Home Visitation; Teen Parent Education; Native language Enrichment; Summer Transition to Kindergarten; Family Friend and Neighbor; Pre-Kindergarten Scholarships; Quality First; Quality First Scholarships; TEACH; Center-based and other professional development strategies. These accomplishments provide a solid infrastructure upon which to continue building an early childhood system that meets the needs of all children birth through five in the Gila River Region.

Section III.

Three Year Strategic Direction: SFY 2013-2015 Regional Funding Plan

The Gila River Regional Partnership Council began their FY2013 strategic planning process in August of 2011, with a discussion around the vision for children in the region; a review of Needs and Assets; a prioritization of indicators and strategies; and ultimately a critical review of the scope and scale of their current strategies. An overarching value of the Council was to include the ongoing and collective guidance from Tribal leadership as the Council framed their strategic plan. Foundational discussions including scope and scale, and the Regional Council’s strong understanding of their Needs and Assets Report, laid the groundwork for a system building dialog with the Gila River Indian Community Tribal Council. The council recognized a similar value in gaining perspective from other community stakeholders. As a result, additional insight was gleaned from joint coordination meetings with State and Federal partners currently providing early care education and health programs within the Region. For Gila River, the spectrum of early childhood development and health services includes partnerships with tribal, state and federal entities.

To include all levels of service, the Gila River Indian Community Regional Partnership Council conducted planning activities to become fully informed of existing assets, needs and aide in context to the First Things First indicators. The Regional Council is fully invested in building an early childhood system. System building is complex and requires not only infrastructure and capacity but also policy alignment and coordination. It was with this thoughtful perspective that the Gila River Regional Partnership Council developed their SFY13 funding plan.



During the Gila River Indian Community Regional Partnership Council’s strategic planning process, the Regional Council re-examined their vision, goals, priorities, and the Regions needs and assets report. The

Regional Council continues to work towards tying services together both within and across goal areas, as well as work towards identifying partnerships which are needed to reach target populations within strategies and geographic locations.

After assessing the Regional Council’s SFY 2012 strategies, it was determined that strategies need time to take hold and build capacity and therefore most would remain in SFY 2013. Additionally, through continued partnerships with the South Phoenix Regional Council, the Gila River Regional Council has doubled access to Quality First programing in the Region, and four TEACH scholarships continue to be available for teachers in the westernmost area of the Gila River Indian Community. Gila River Regional Council’s 2013 Funding Plan reflects the Council’s commitment to the strategic and system development work conducted thus far. The following priorities were re-examined and incorporated into the Regional Council’s work: 1.) Supports and Services for Families, 2.) Quality, Access, and Affordability of Regulated Early Care and Education Settings, 3.) Access to Quality Health Care Coverage and Services, 4.) Professional Development System, 5.) Building Public Awareness and Support.

In addition to re-examining Regional priorities the Council examined School Readiness Indicators which were established by the State Board in August of 2011. The Gila River Regional Partnership Council selected the following indicators from the Board approved school readiness indicators.

School Readiness Indicator
#/% children demonstrating school readiness at kindergarten entry in the development domains of social-emotional, language and literacy, cognitive, and motor and physical.
#/% of children enrolled in an early care and education program with a Quality First rating of 3-5 stars.
#/% of children enrolled in an early care and education program with a Quality First rating of 3-5 stars.

To ensure that the Regional Partnership Council’s mission and vision are achieved, the pyramid model was used in developing the SFY 2013 - 2015 funding plan. The pyramid model assisted in facilitating informed discussion on both the scope of the strategic plan, and the likely impact of the collective strategies in the plan. Strategic planning involved Regional Council meetings where Council members identified strategies, target service numbers, and target populations. Data, narrative and financial reports were used to examine current strategies and their effectiveness in addressing the prioritized needs. Information on strategies funded by other regional councils was also provided to regional council members allowing them to explore the range of possibilities for addressing the needs.

Regional Partnership Council Strategic Planning Process



Strategic Approach to System Building

The Gila River Regional Partnership Council both selected regional priorities and strategies which build upon the first three years of strategic planning. The need for programs and services to support families with young children was identified as the highest priority need, followed closely by increasing access to quality early care settings. Health related needs were also a concern, but the Council lacked adequate time and data to make informed decisions on health-related strategies for SFY 2013. Lastly, the Council deemed professional development and public awareness as important.

The strategic planning process involved selection of indicators and strategies which aligned with established prioritized needs. As strategies were identified, the Regional Council considered the nuances of specific target populations, geographic locations, available infrastructure or lack of it and level of impact desired.

Provide family support, parent education and prevention services to families

The Regional Council believes that Home Visitation and Teen Parent Education Community-Based Training strategies will increase parent knowledge about early literacy, increase the percentage of mothers who receive prenatal care, and serve the health needs of children unable to access comprehensive health care. The Council made this decision based on the discussion about family support programs available for children birth through age five in the Region. According to Gila River Indian Community needs and assets data and community input, it was clear that there continues to be a need to provide family support services and coordination of those services in the Gila River Region.

Gila River's third family support strategy focuses on increasing native language early literacy within the region's early care centers, and incorporates family engagement into the implementation of this model. The intent of the strategy is to promote literacy-rich environments in the classroom and the home through professional development and family engagement activities that incorporate native language. The first three years of native language early literacy implementation has been successful, but has had less impact than originally anticipated. In SFY 2010, it was the intent of the Regional Council to ensure that all children enrolled in early care settings received high quality native language enrichment. To date, FTF-funded native language early literacy programs are reaching approximately half of the children in early care settings. The Council will be evaluating this strategy as data becomes available to determine how to leverage the additional funding streams needed in order to increase capacity of this strategy.

Increase access to quality early care settings

In order to build a sustainable early care and education system throughout Arizona, building the capacity of high quality early care and education programs is funding priority. The Regional Partnership Council decided to fund and expand Quality First, including Child Care Scholarships and T.E.A.C.H., in SFY 2013 and beyond. The Regional Council is committed to supporting high quality settings for children through the new Quality First model. The Regional Council believes that Quality First will support programs by raising the level of quality through the support of a coach/mentor, quality improvement grants, professional development scholarships, and scholarship assistance to local low-income families.

The Regional Council will also continue cross-regional collaboration with the South Phoenix Regional Council to provide two Quality First slots to centers located in the westernmost part of Gila River Indian Community, which includes the Tolleson and Laveen areas. This collaboration will double the Region's Quality First commitment and bring the percentage of centers participating in Quality First throughout the Region to 44 percent.

In SFY 2012, the Regional Council made a decision to use carry forward funds in the SFY 2011, 2012 and 2013 Funding Plan to expand the availability of early care and education programs through the Pre-Kindergarten Scholarships strategy. This strategy builds on the existing limited infrastructure in the region to expand access to quality early education at local elementary schools.

The Gila River Regional Council is working to leverage funding and create an adequate number of Pre-Kindergarten Scholarships through ongoing dialog with Community partners and Tribal leadership. It is envisioned that the Gila River Indian Community Tribal Council will invest a 50/50 match in this strategy to make high-quality school-based pre-k available throughout the region and bring the number of three and four year olds on the region's pre-k waiting list down. A proposal has been submitted to Gila River's Education Standing Committee by local schools to leverage existing FTF Pre-Kindergarten Scholarships funding in SFY 2013. The proposal "has the potential" to create comprehensive school-based pre-k for the

region's four elementary schools through a 50/50 match with the Tribe. The proposal has been reviewed and supported by the Tribe's Education Standing Committee on December 12, 2011. The proposal will now go to the Tribe's Government and Management Standing Committee in January for review and possible approval. The Council is very excited about the possibility of leveraging and aligning multiple funding streams to expand the availability of preschool and potentially serve all pre-k children on current waiting lists. This will not only build capacity, but will also expand early education quality across the region through funding from the Gila River Regional Partnership Council and partnerships with the South Phoenix Regional Partnership Council and Gila River Indian Community Tribal Council.

Summer Transition to Kindergarten was established by the Gila River Regional Partnership Council in SFY 2010 and was intended to support a portion of the 300 children on the region's waiting list who had been unable to access formal early care and education settings prior to kindergarten. This strategy began as a pilot and has grown to capacity in SFY 2012, allowing all elementary schools in the region to implement a Summer Transition to Kindergarten program. The strategy provides a summer preschool experience to five year old children who will enter kindergarten in the fall.

Last in the continuum of early care and education within the Gila River Region is the Family, Friend and Neighbor (FFN) strategy, which was added to the region's funding plan in SFY 2011. The region's Needs and Assets Report indicates that there is a significant need to support families, friends and neighbors caring for young children. Although the Council's FFN strategy took additional time to develop and implement, the strategy has strong community support and it is anticipated that the strategy will provide vital support to the 80 percent of young children who are unable to access child care before kindergarten. Family, Friend and Neighbor is a piece in the Quality, Access and Affordability continuum and will build capacity of the early care providers who care for the majority of the region's young children.

Professional Development

The Gila River Regional Partnership Council has made a significant investment in improving the quality of programs for young children through their understanding that research indicates that high quality early learning programs are much more likely to impact a child's readiness for school. T.E.A.C.H. and conference scholarships add to the quality and access continuum by enabling early care and health professional's opportunities to build their knowledge around early childhood. Research indicates that educational level of the staff is strongly correlated to early education quality. Through T.E.A.C.H. and conference scholarship strategies, the Regional Council is looking forward to the improvement of the quality of care for young children in the region.

Building Public Awareness and Support.

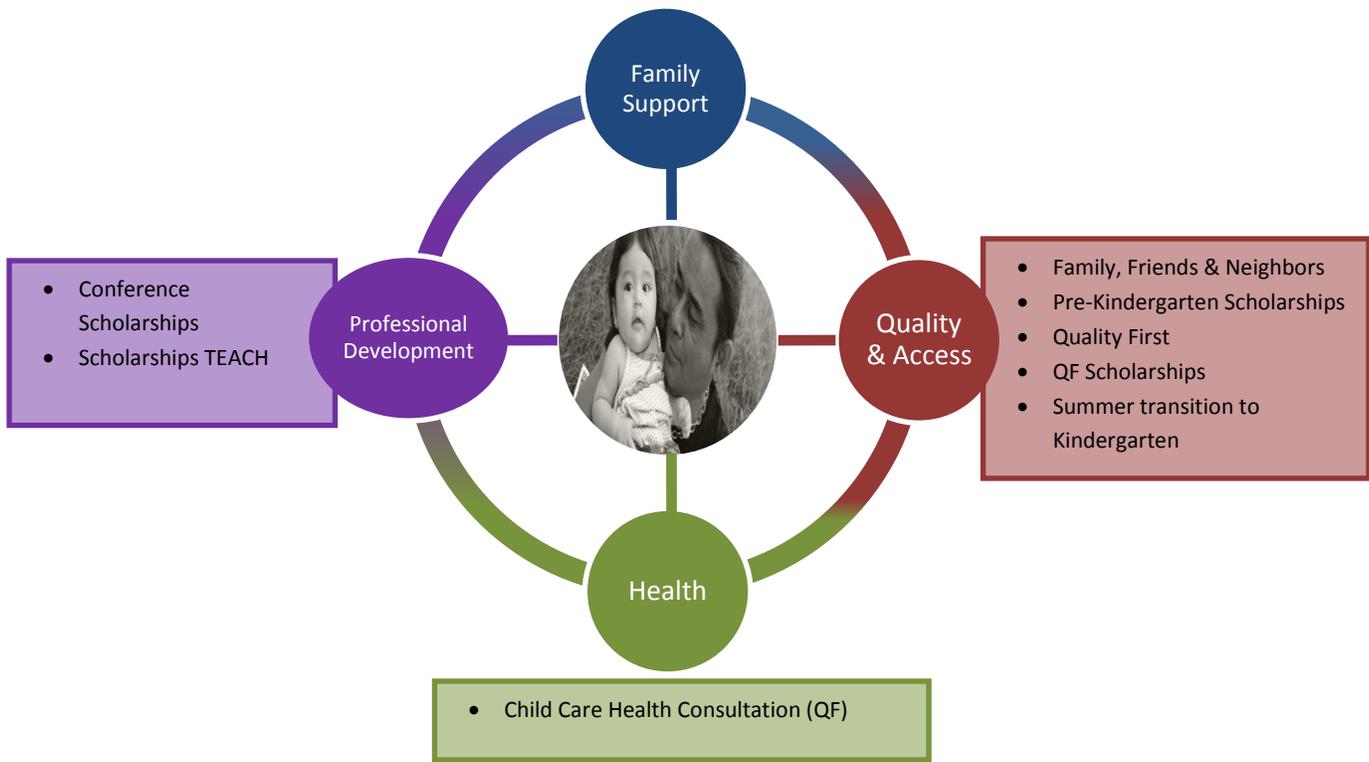
Building public awareness remains an overarching need in the region. The Regional Council has worked to increase knowledge around early childhood over the past three years through investments in media, community outreach, and earned media. There has been a noticeable increase in knowledge around the importance of early childhood within the region by elders, the Tribal Council, parents, k-12 educators, health professionals, social services departments and the court system. Though the Regional Council has invested less than one percent of its budget in building public awareness and support, the region made great gains through this investment. Therefore, the council has chosen to keep media and conference scholarship budgets constant for the next three years unless additional needs are identified.

The Regional Council hopes to empower and support the health and education of young children through strategies addressing family support, access and affordability, professional development, and awareness. This approach provides a continuum of care and caters to the unique needs of our Region's families with young children. As the Gila River Indian Community Regional Partnership Council works to improve the early

childhood development and health system, the Regional Council maintains that three items are key for both program and system building to be successful. First, the Regional Council believes reaching at least 50 percent of target populations over the course of three years is critically important. Second, the Regional Partnership Council is aware of the need to begin communication and collaboration across programs in order to build the system and system increase support for families throughout all levels of the service delivery model. Third and possibly most important, it is critical that consistent policy around early childhood within the region is supported. The Regional Council has focused on system-building through meetings with the Gila River Indian Community Education and Health/Social Standing Committees to review the early childhood system infrastructure and development within the pyramid model, which have led to a greater understanding of the early childhood system within the region by leadership and policy makers. With the support of the Regional Partnership Council, early childhood remains a strong priority for the Tribal Council of the Gila River Indian Community. This will serve to strengthen the sustainability, capacity, and strength of the early childhood system to better serve the young children of Gila River Indian Community, now and in the future.

**Gila River Indian Community Early Childhood System
First Things First and Tribal Government Working Together
State Fiscal Year 2013- 2015**

- Home Visitation
- Native Language Enrichment
- Parent Education Community Based Training



Section III B.

Strategic Plan for SFY 2013 – 2015

Regional Priorities, Selected FTF Indicators and Priority Roles, and Strategies to Achieve Outcomes

Regional Priority to be addressed	School Readiness Indicators Correlated to the needs and priority roles	FTF Priority Roles in the Early Childhood System	SFY 2013-2015 Strategies
<p>Lack of family support services including parent education, preventive health, dental, vision, hearing services; early literacy, targeting families with children birth through five.</p> <p>Limited access to quality, affordable early care and education</p> <p>Limited knowledge and information about the importance of early childhood development and health</p>	<p>1. #/% children demonstrating school readiness at kindergarten entry in the development domains of social-emotional, language and literacy, cognitive, and motor and physical</p> <p>2. #/% of children enrolled in an early care and education program with a Quality First rating of 3-5 stars</p> <p>10. % of families who report they are competent and confident about their ability to support their child’s safety, health and well being</p>	<p>1. Supports and Services for Families</p> <p>2. Quality, Access & Affordability of Regulated Early Care and Education Settings</p> <p>3. Building Public Awareness and Support</p> <p>4. Access to Quality Health Care Coverage and Services</p> <p>Leadership Priorities</p> <p>5. Early Care & Education System Development and Implementation</p> <p>6. Quality Early Care and Education Standards, Curriculum and Assessment</p> <p>7. Early Childhood System Funding</p>	<p>Home Visitation</p> <p>Parent Education Community-Based Training</p> <p>Native Language Enrichment</p> <p>Summer Transition to Kindergarten</p> <p>Family Friend and Neighbor</p> <p>Pre- Kindergarten Scholarships</p> <p>Quality First (including CCHC, CC Scholarships, TEACH) *</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional Quality First Childcare Scholarships - Additional Scholarships TEACH <p>Conferences Scholarships (FTF Directed)</p> <p>Community Awareness</p> <p>Media</p> <p>Statewide Evaluation</p> <p>(*) Indicates new strategy for this Regional Partnership Council</p>

Section III C.

Strategy Descriptions including Target Populations and Funding Level

Strategy: Home Visitation			
<p>Strategy Home visitation provides voluntary in-home services for infants, children and their families, focusing on parenting skills, early physical and social development, literacy, health and nutrition. An evidence based home visitation program connects families to resources to support their child’s health and early learning.</p>			
<p>Strategy Narrative Comprehensive, evidence based home visitation programs provide participating families of infants and toddlers with information and education on parenting, child development and health topics while assisting with connections to other resources or programs as needed. A variety of evidence based models exist to address the spectrum of universal needs to targeted or specialized needs of particular populations such as first time parents, teen parents, families at-risk for abuse-neglect, and low income families.</p> <p>Home Visitation is one of three family support strategies of the Gila River Indian Community Regional Partnership Council. Home visitation works in combination with the teen parent education strategy to improve parent knowledge. The family support strategies put forth by the Gila River Regional Partnership Council have directly impacted over 500 families in the region. Additionally, coordination and collaboration efforts led by FTF grantees have increased the quality of services families receive from family support agencies across the region.</p>			
<p>Target Population Description Home visitation will provide parenting education services for up to 90 families in the region. The intent is to build upon programs existing within the region. Enrollment of new families will focus on “at risk” populations within the community and include infants, toddlers and women who are pregnant. It has been found that 79 percent of families in the region have access to home visitation services.</p> <p>The Regional Council voted to maintain the funding and target service unit for the Home Visitation strategy from SFY 2013 through SFY 2015.</p>			
Target Service Units	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15
Number of families served	90	90	90
Funding Level	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15
Home Visitation	\$328,016	\$328,016	\$328,016

Strategy: Parent Education Community Based Training			
Strategy Description Provides classes on parenting, child development and problem-solving skills.			
Strategy Narrative Research indicates that community based education programs who involve both parents and their young children in a series of classes demonstrate a positive impact upon outcomes. Parent Education programs have the highest impact with families of older toddlers and young preschoolers (2.5 years through 3 years of age) as families may naturally begin to seek out opportunities outside of their home environments to reduce isolation. Infants and toddlers, themselves, benefit from the new experiences and environments that community based programming can offer. The critical element in any parent education program is that parents and families have opportunities to practice newly learned skills with support from parent educators. For these reasons the Gila River Regional Partnership has chosen to focus on Teen Parent education as a part of the larger continuum of family support within the context of an early childhood system. The purpose of teen parent education is to build parent’s capacity and skills so they can support the healthy development of their child. Teen parent education, as a key component of a comprehensive early childhood system, enhances the relationship between the parent and child to foster the child’s positive social-emotional and language and literacy development and thus their readiness for school. This strategy can work with and build upon the other strategies implemented in the region and other community assets to address the need for comprehensive parent education and information. The teen parent education program works in combination with the regions home visitation strategy to improve parent knowledge. Additionally, coordination and collaboration efforts led by FTF grantees have increased the quality of services families receive from family support agencies across the region.			
Target Population Description The teen parent program is designed to service teen parents/families attending high school at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ira Hayes High School • Vechij Himdag Mashchamakud (VHM) High Schools- Regional alternative high schools with teen parents. <p>The strategy will fund 30 teen parents with children 0-5 years old, which include all teen parents attending the (2) high schools within the region.</p> <p>The Regional Council voted to maintain the funding and target service unit for the Teen Parent Education strategy from SFY 2013 through SFY 2015.</p>			
Target Service Units	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15
Number of participating adults	30	30	30
Funding Level	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15
Parent Education Community Based Training	100,650	100,650	100,650

Strategy: Native Language Enrichment**Strategy Description**

Provides materials, awareness and outreach to promote native language and cultural acquisition for the young children of Tribal families.

Strategy Narrative

Native languages throughout the state of Arizona are endangered. Many native languages have been passed from generation to generation orally, and with them, the stories, customs, and life of a people.

First Things First Native Language Enrichment strategies fund the training of early care and education (ECE) providers to support native language and cultural acquisition for the young children of Native American families in child care, early head start/head start or other group settings as part of the regular programming and curriculum. As providers are trained, they can work with children in the classroom or home care settings and provide family informational sessions or other family engagement activities.

Within the Gila River Region a native language enrichment program is currently being implemented in four Head Start Centers. The Culture Coordinator trains teaching staff on how to integrate the Akimel O'odham and Pee Posh languages and print into both everyday dialogue and visually throughout classes in the form of labeling of objects.

The outcomes which have been achieved through the Head Start Akimel O'odham and Pee Posh language and culture program are increased use of native language and song within the classroom setting. Parents are also highly involved in cultural activities such as outings, storytelling, dancing, and cooking.

Research indicates that programs who involve both parents and their young children in a series of classes demonstrate a positive impact upon outcomes. The Gila River's native language strategy has managed to create this type of family involvement within program. Parents and families have opportunities to practice newly learned native language skills and customs with their children during parent involvement activities at centers.

Gila River Regional Partnership Council's Native Language Enrichment strategy includes the following activities:

- Inform and educate ECE providers, parents and families on typical early language and emergent literacy development for children ages birth through five.
- Native language literacy coaching and instruction woven into the activities of all ECE program components; presented and practiced in contexts that are meaningful to families' lives and needs. It is critical that parents and families are taught to bridge classroom experiences to home environments with their own young children.
- Training for parents on how to be the primary teacher for and full partners in the education of their children.
- Actively engage parents in learning how everyday experiences can nurture the native language literacy development of their children.
- Support parents in maintaining native language and literacy-rich home environment i.e. children's books, print material, photos, magazines.
- Using a research-based curriculum and activities to promote native language learning in contexts which are relevant to the lives of the children and families.

The goal of this strategy is to increase the quality and diversity of relevant resources that support language and literacy development for young children and their families. This strategy works with other family support strategies to increase parent involvement in the early care system.

Target Population Description

The target population for this strategy is child care professionals, parents and children attending early care centers throughout the region. Throughout the region 485 children are enrolled in early care programs. Currently the Regional Councils Native Language strategy is reaching over 61 percent of children in early care settings. The Council believes reaching 50 percent of the regions children in child care is substantial and are thus pleased with the accomplishments of this strategy to date.

- 4 Head Start Programs throughout the Community.
- 20 Head Start Teaching Staff
- 296 Head Start Children 0-5 years old
- 200 Parents or Caretakers

The Regional Council voted to maintain the funding and target service unit for the Native Language Enrichment strategy from SFY 2013 through SFY 2015.

Target Service Units	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15
Number of participating professionals	20	20	20
Number of children served	206	206	206
Number of participating adults	100	100	100
Funding Level	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15
Native Language Enrichment	\$62,539	\$62,539	\$62,539

Strategy: Summer Transition to Kindergarten**Strategy Description**

Provides first time classroom experiences for children who are about to begin kindergarten, and information to their parents.

Strategy Narrative

The Gila River Regional Partnership Council recognizes the transition to kindergarten to be one of the most important milestones a child will experience.ⁱ Each year, 285 children enter kindergarten within the Gila River Indian Community. Additionally, due to the regions limited infrastructure some of the regions kindergarteners are forced to attend kindergarten outside of the region, in the communities of Laveen, Tolleson, Chandler and Coolidge. Unfortunately, more than half of Gila River Indian Community's children ages 3-5 do not attend an early childhood education program (Needs & Assets Report, 2010). Children with unmet educational experiences may find adjusting to the kindergarten setting more challenging than children who have attended early childhood education programs. In response, the Regional Council chose to fund short-term kindergarten transition programs throughout the Region

Typically, the basis of Summer Transition Programs is primarily on social-emotional development rather than academic preparation, these programs help children become familiar with a classroom setting and group norms, while engaging in a learning environment that is supportive of children's comprehensive development. Kindergarten transition programs also prepare families to engage in their child's education and support their child's learning at home.

High quality summer kindergarten transition programs, especially for children without previous classroom experience, help familiarize young children with the routines of a classroom setting and group activities, include family involvement activities, and provide opportunities for families and teachers to share expectations. These programs review basic concepts such as participating in a group, asking for help, and other rules and routines associated with beginning school. By learning classroom routines and socializing/interacting with other children, children enter kindergarten more prepared for school success.ⁱⁱ

The purpose of this strategy is to ensure children and families are more prepared for school-based activities upon entry into kindergarten. Families will receive support in understanding the processes of enrollment and partnership with their child's school, while children will become familiar with the activities of a classroom setting.

This strategy also recognizes the importance of the link between pre-kindergarten programs and kindergarten. The region's summer transition to kindergarten program works with existing elementary schools within the region giving opportunities to children who have never been in formal early care to experience the classroom they will enter in the fall.

Additionally the summer transition to kindergarten works with local health departments to ensure children receive the necessary hearing vision and dental screenings and immunizations prior to their first day of school. If follow-up is needed the school nurse makes referrals and follows the child. School nurses provide comprehensive coordination of health care for children in the summer transition program.

The Summer Transition to Kindergarten program and the related QA strategies provide a continuum of care which addresses the region's limited access to high quality, affordable early care and education programs for children in living in the Region. To date, all of the region's early care centers are full with waiting lists limiting the opportunity for quality center based experiences for young children in the region. The Summer Transition to Kindergarten and other QA strategies build on the existing federal and tribal funding within the region, which builds capacity.

Target Population Description

Summer Transition to Kindergarten will provide 120 school based summer transition slots for 4 year old children entering kindergarten every fall. Within the region 289 children entered kindergarten in the fall of 2011. Funding to this strategy will support approximately 67 percent of kindergarten eligible students who have not been able to access formal early care within the region. Funding to this strategy is sufficient to bring the strategy to scale in the region.

The Regional Council voted to maintain the funding and target service unit for the Summer Transition to Kindergarten strategy from SFY 2013 through SFY 2015.

Target Service Units	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15
Number of children served	120	120	120
Number of participating adults	120	120	120
Funding Level	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15
Summer Transition to Kindergarten	\$115,652	\$115,652	\$115,652

Strategy: Family Friend and Neighbor
<p>Strategy Description Supports provided to family, friend and neighbor caregivers include training and financial resources.</p>
<p>Strategy Narrative The goal of the Family Friend and Neighbor strategy is to provide support, training, resources and referral for unregulated providers caring for children in their homes in order to increase quality of care provided.</p> <p>The model will include the following components for delivery of this service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group meetings and trainings delivered in a series of sessions (14 weeks, for example) that will bring home-based providers together with qualified and experienced staff in a community setting to learn elements of quality care and safety. • Financial incentives to help purchase safety and quality improvement equipment/materials. <p>The strategy will include additional resources and financial supports for providers who wish to become certified or licensed.</p> <p>Although the number of children receiving family, friend or neighbor care is unknown because there is no existing source of data, one can look at the number of children from birth through five in the region and compare that to a reasonable estimate of the number of formal child care/education slots available. Information provided in the 2010 Gila River Needs and Assets Report estimates that licensed, certified and regulated providers have the capacity to provide care of about 19 percent of the children birth through five in the region. In 2008 quality and access was identified as a critical need within the region. The region has an estimated 2,556 children age 0-5 residing within its boundaries, with 485 of those children enrolled in early education child care settings. Currently, all 11 early education child care centers are full with some centers possessing waiting lists of up to three years.</p> <p>Based on this information, a reasonable conclusion is that the vast majority of children birth through age five are being cared for in the home and in unregulated kith and kin care (Gila River Needs and Assets Report 2010). National estimates suggest that as many as 60 percent of all children need child care due to parent's employment and of these, as many as 50 percent of children ages 5 and under are cared for in home-based settings.</p> <p>This strategy will add to the continuum of the early childhood system in the region, targeting a population that has not yet been specifically targeted through other strategies. In Arizona, home-based child care providers can legally care for 4 children for pay, with a maximum limit of 6 children under the age of 12, including their own. For these homes, there is no licensing or regulatory requirement; therefore, there is no mechanism or support system in place to assist these providers in creating high-quality environments for the children in their care. Child care provided by family, friend, and neighbor caregivers, which is typically home-based child care, is for the most part legally exempt from regulation and, is of growing concern to Gila River Regional Partnership Council to ensure that children are in healthy and safe places with quality care. Evidence suggests that training provided to home-based family, friend, and neighbor caregivers can result in positive outcomes for children. In a study including Arizona home-based providers, impact was noted in the following areas: 1) Safety in the home environment, particularly fire safety; 2) Establishing and maintaining a daily schedule for the children; 3) Encouraging providers to utilize the resources of their local library; 4) Developing a written formalized child care services agreement with parents, and 5) Increased knowledge regarding the Child and Adult Food Program.</p>
<p>Target Population Description The target population for this strategy is home child care providers (friends and family) who are already serving families with children 0-5; both regulated and legal unregulated. Funding will support (2) 14 week sessions which will reach approximately 30 home care providers.</p>

Additionally (1) FFN 14 week session will be provided with funding from the South Phoenix Regional Council. The 14 week FFN session will be delivered within the Gila River Indian Community's westernmost area which abuts the South Phoenix Region. Gila Rivers 2011 Needs & Assets Report, found this area to be underserved. This collaboration is a continuing effort to build a comprehensive system for families and children who historically have moved between the two regions.

The Regional Council voted to maintain the funding and target service unit for the Family Friend and Neighbor strategy from SFY 2013 through SFY 2015.

Target Service Units	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15
Number of home based providers served	30	30	30
Funding Level	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15
Family Friend and Neighbor	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000

Strategy: Pre-Kindergarten Scholarships			
Strategy Description Provides scholarships to quality preschool programs in a variety of settings to allow programs serve more children.			
Strategy Narrative Pre-kindergarten Scholarships provide funding and technical assistance for high quality, part- or full-time, classroom-based early education for children ages 3 and/or 4 years of age from low-income families (200 percent of Federal Poverty Level (FPL) or below). Children may be enrolled in public or private schools or community-based early care and education programs. This strategy supports those children who may not otherwise have access to high quality early care and education during the two years prior to their kindergarten entry. Inherent in this strategy is the principle that all families, regardless of income, children’s abilities or other factors, have the right to access a high quality early childhood program. This strategy also recognizes the importance of the link between pre-kindergarten programs and kindergarten, which is reinforced by a technical assistance/mentoring component designed to ensure the communication and connections between pre-kindergarten and kindergarten programs as they develop and implement a transition plan for children and their families. The program year for Pre-K may follow the school year or operate for 10 months. The Gila River Regional Partnership Council has identified access to high quality early education programs as one of the highest priority needs in the region. Developing the capacity to provide early education programs in rural areas has proven exceptionally challenging. After several other attempts to address this need, the approach that has proven most effective has been to work with Bureau of Indian Affairs schools and Tribal leadership to expand early childhood programs in underserved areas of the region through local schools. Local school provide an existing infrastructure upon which to build and through developing a relationship with Bureau schools and providing information to superintendents and school boards on the relationships between high quality early education programs and kindergarten readiness, all schools have supported inclusive early education programs for children ages three and four years of age. Although not currently noted within the Gila River Regional Funding Plan in SFY 2013, the Gila River Regional Council is proposing expansion of this strategy throughout the region through a 50/50 match with the Gila River Indian Community. This proposed partnership will take additional time this spring and the Regional Council will bring budget modifications to the State Board when agreements with the Gila River Indian Community Tribal council have been reached.			
Target Population Description Pre-kindergarten Scholarships will provide 20 school based pre-k slots for 3 and 4 year old children. Two of the five elementary schools within the region operate pre-k programs. This funding will allow 60 percent of the elementary schools in the region to operate a school based pre-k program. The Regional Council voted to maintain the funding and target service unit for the Pre-Kindergarten Scholarship strategy from SFY 2013 through SFY 2015. Although it should be noted that the Regional Council is working with the Gila River Indian Community Tribal Council on a 50/50 funding match for pre-k scholarship expansion and therefore additional funds for SFY 2013 may be allocated to Pre-Kindergarten scholarships later.			
Target Service Units	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15
Number of FTF-funded pre-K children	20	20	20

Number of private/public partner pre-K sites receiving support	0	0	0
Number of public school pre-k sites receiving support	1	1	1
Funding Level	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15
Pre-Kindergarten Scholarships	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000

Strategy: Quality First			
Strategy Description: Supports provided to early care and education centers and homes to improve the quality of programs, including: on-site coaching; program assessment; financial resources; teacher education scholarships; and consultants specializing in health and safety practices.			
Strategy Narrative			
<p>Quality First is Arizona’s voluntary quality improvement and rating system designed to improve the quality of early care and education so that young children can begin school safe, healthy and ready to succeed. Quality First does not duplicate or replace, but builds upon state licensing regulations, addressing multiple aspects of early care and education through research-based indicators of quality.</p> <p>The Gila River Regional Council is committed to this comprehensive approach to improving access to high quality early learning settings for children in the Gila River Indian Community region and will continue to support the State Funded Quality First center that is enrolled to date and has voted to expand Quality First in SFY2013. Improving the quality of early childhood programs requires a significant investment in commitment by the staff and leadership of a program as well as intensive, targeted, and meaningful supports. Quality First is designed to provide supports through eight program components: coaching, financial incentives, licensure fee assistance, Child Care Scholarships, T.E.A.C.H., scholarships, program assessment, assignment of Star Rating and specialized technical assistance. As programs improve their quality, there will be additional high quality options available for families. Also, the addition of regionally funded child care scholarships to this strategy will provide families with limited incomes the ability to select higher quality programs for their children.</p> <p>Quality First and the related strategies including child care health consultation, child care scholarships and T.E.A.C.H. will address the regionals limited access to high quality, affordable early care and education programs for children in living in the Region. Additionally, the Council is working directly with the Gila River Indian Community Tribal Council to address the limited space for early care and education within the region. System building takes time and the Regional Council is dedicated to ensuring it moves forward in the region through cross regional and Tribal partnerships.</p>			
Target Population Description			
There are 9 centers throughout Gila River Indian Community. In SFY13 the South Phoenix Regional Council will fund 2 Quality First centers and Gila River Regional Council will fund 2 Quality First Centers in the region. Overall this program will be reaching 44 percent of centers within the Gila River Region.			
Target Service Units - Quality First	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15
Number of center based providers served	2	2	2
Number of home based providers served	0	0	0
Funding Levels	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15
Quality First	\$36,112	\$36,112	\$36,112
Child Care Health Consultation	\$5,040	\$5,040	\$5,040
Scholarships TEACH	\$13,200	\$13,200	\$13,200
QF Child Care Scholarships	\$151,441	\$151,441	\$151,441

Target Service Units - Child Care Health Consultation	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15
Number of center based providers served	2	2	2
Number of home based providers served	0	0	0
Target Service Units - Scholarships TEACH			

Number of professionals receiving scholarships	8	8	8
Target Service Units - QF Child Care Scholarships			
Number of children receiving scholarships	25	25	25

Strategy: QF Child Care Scholarships (addition to QF package)

Strategy Narrative

The Gila River Regional Partnership Council will support working families who are facing economic challenges by developing a scholarship program that will assist families in retaining their young children in their current early care and education programs at a reduced cost. Because all centers within the region are full with waiting lists the Regional Council has allocated 5 scholarships which can be used by parents of children 0-5 who live in the region but must take their children to QF centers outside of the region, due to regional capacity issues.

Ideally, the Regional council would like to see all 300 children currently on waiting lists have access to high quality care. Unfortunately the region lacks infrastructure to complete this task. The Council is working directly with the Gila River Indian Community Tribal Council to address the limited space for early care and education within the region. System building will take time but the Regional Council is dedicated to ensuring it moves forward in the region through partnerships with leadership.

Target Population Description

In addition to the Child Care Scholarships available through the Quality First package within the Region the Regional Council has added funding to Quality First Child Care Scholarships outside of those in the Quality First Package. The Regional Council has added an additional 18 Child Care Scholarships for children living within the region with the intent that a portion be dedicated to children in each of the below criteria.

- a. Five scholarship slots will be allotted to teen parents attending local high schools. Scholarships provided to teen parents will provide high quality, stable early care for young children while teen parent(s) are completing high school.
- b. Five Scholarships will be available for children living in the region but attending QF centers outside of the community.
- c. The remaining 8 scholarships will be allotted to children attending a regional QF center for children 0-5 years old.

Strategy: Scholarships TEACH (addition to QF package)

Strategy Narrative

There is research evidence that higher levels of teacher education and qualification are tied to higher quality care and education. Further, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) is refining its conceptual framework for Early Childhood Professional Development, which identifies key principles of an effective professional development system.

The Gila River Regional Council believes improving the educational level of professionals who work with young children in the Gila River Indian Community will lead to better teaching methods and support for young children in centers. Improving the educational levels of teachers and teachers assistants support outcomes for young children who someday will lead the Gila River Indian Community.

Currently in the Gila River Region only one T.E.A.C.H., scholarship is being utilized. This is in part due to the closing of one regional child care center where three T.E.A.C.H. scholars were teaching in SFY 2011. At this time T.E.A.C.H. Arizona is working with local pre-k programs and early care centers to recruit teachers who need early childhood certification or associates degrees.

Target Population Description

Four T.E.A.C.H scholarships additional to QF funded T.E.A.C.H. will be available to any early childhood

teacher within the region. Approximately, 18 early childhood professionals within the region are in need of early childhood credentialing. The four additional TEACH scholarships will provide 22 percent of early care professionals within the region the opportunity to achieve credentialing and higher education.

Strategy: Conference Scholarships (FTF Directed)			
Strategy Description Increase knowledge and awareness about early childhood development and health issues by providing increased access to seminars and conferences within and across the region.			
Strategy Narrative The Gila River Indian Community is not geographically isolated but many parents and some early childhood education and health programs cannot currently afford to participate in training opportunities which exist just a few miles away. Fortunately there are opportunities for regional programs and agencies to participate in local events which promote early childhood awareness and education. The Regional Council sees an opportunity to reach out and build on current education and awareness outlets to increase knowledge around early childhood and health within the region. Opportunities for collaboration within and across regions are abundant, therefore the Regional Council will enhance professional development and parent education through community based training within the Region as well as allow for scholarships for professionals to attend in-state conferences. This strategy is aimed at capacity building both for professionals and parents in the community.			
Target Population Description Provides scholarships to conferences and training events for early education and health professionals through professional conference opportunities. Conferences: Approximately 50 early childhood professionals and 100 parents/caregivers will benefit from each conference. Target service numbers for in-community conferences is 300 professionals and parent/caregivers. This represents 100 percent of early childhood professionals and approximately 20 percent of parent caregivers. Health Professional Development Scholarships: Funding will support approximately 8 health professional scholars each year working at the regions two hospitals. Early Childhood Professional Development Scholarships: Funding will support approximately 8 early childhood professionals which represent 20 percent of early care professionals within the region.			
Target Service Units	SFY 13	SFY 14	SFY 15
Number of professionals receiving scholarships	311	311	311
Funding Level	\$16,000	\$16,000	\$16,000

Strategy: Community Awareness			
<p>Strategy Narrative The Gila River Regional Council identified the need to increase the level of awareness about early childhood health and development throughout the region. This strategy provides access to a variety of community-based activities and materials to increase public awareness on the importance of early childhood development and health through participation in community events, and the dissemination of educational materials.</p> <p>The Gila River Regional Partnership Council voted to maintain the allotment for Community Awareness for SFY 2013-SFY2015.</p>			
<p>Target Population Description Parents, educators, health providers, policy makers, and the general public throughout Gila River Indian Community.</p>			
Target Service Units	SFY 13	SFY 14	SFY 15
No target service units identified for this strategy			
Funding Level	SFY 13	SFY 14	SFY 15
Community Awareness	\$2,100	\$2,100	\$2,100

Strategy: Media			
<p>Strategy Description Increases public awareness of the importance of early childhood development and health via a media campaign that draws viewers/listeners to the ReadyAZKids.com web site.</p>			
<p>Strategy Narrative The Gila River Regional Partnership Council participates in the Cross-Regional Communications Media efforts with other Regional Partnership Councils in Maricopa County. Media efforts include purchasing television and radio spots, billboards, and other approved media buys.</p>			
<p>Target Population Description Parents, educators, health providers, policy makers, and the general public throughout Maricopa County.</p> <p>Funding level is reduced in SFY 2013-2015 due to budgeting restraints and support expansion of Quality First.</p>			
Target Service Units	SFY 13	SFY 14	SFY 15
No target service units identified for this strategy			
Funding Level	SFY 13	SFY 14	SFY 15
Media	\$3,900	\$3,900	\$3,900

Strategy: Statewide Evaluation			
Strategy Description Statewide evaluation includes the studies and evaluation work which inform the FTF Board and the 31 Regional Partnership Councils. Examples are baseline Needs and Assets reports, specific focused studies, and statewide research and evaluation on the developing early childhood system.			
Strategy Narrative First Things First has, and is growing, a multi-level system of research and evaluation strategies designed to be responsive to the informational needs of varied stakeholder groups, including the First Things First Board, Regional Partnership Councils, and Arizona citizens. The research and evaluation system is designed to provide both depth and breadth of high quality information, from collecting programmatic data to evaluating the overall impact of the First Things First Early Childhood System model. The system provides a framework for conducting statewide and regional studies centered on identifying current and changing needs of families and children birth to five, and the impact of programs and strategies across all First Things First priority areas. The First Things First research and evaluation system is a knowledge building system, designed to advance the understanding of needs, activities, and effectiveness. Individually and collectively, research and evaluation strategies generate data and findings which can be used to identify trends and changes in school readiness indicators and therefore to support strategic planning and decision-making which promotes the health and well-being of young children.			
Target Service Units	SFY 13	SFY 14	SFY 15
No target service units identified for this strategy			
Funding Level	SFY 13	SFY 14	SFY 15
Statewide Evaluation	\$30,119	\$30,119	\$30,119

Section III D. Proposed Funding Summary

 FIRST THINGS FIRST <i>Ready for School. Set for Life.</i>		FY 2013 - 2015 Gila River Indian Funding Plan Summary		
Allocations and Funding Sources	2013	2014	2015	
FY Allocation	\$964,266	\$966,194	\$969,817	
Population Based Allocation	\$602,937			
Discretionary Allocation	\$225,068			
Other (FTF Fund balance addition)	\$136,261	\$966,194	\$969,817	
Carry Forward From Previous Year	\$455,265	\$404,762	\$356,187	
Total Regional Council Funds Available	\$1,419,531	\$1,370,956	\$1,326,004	
Strategies	Proposed Allotment	Proposed Allotment	Proposed Allotment	
Home Visitation	\$328,016	\$328,016	\$328,016	
Parent Education Community-Based Training	\$100,650	\$100,650	\$100,650	
Native Language Enrichment	\$62,539	\$62,539	\$62,539	
Summer Transition to Kindergarten	\$115,652	\$115,652	\$115,652	
Family, Friends & Neighbors	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	
Pre-Kindergarten Scholarships	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	
Quality First	\$36,112	\$36,112	\$36,112	
Child Care Health Consultation	\$5,040	\$5,040	\$5,040	
Quality First Child Care Scholarships	\$151,441	\$151,441	\$151,441	
Scholarships TEACH	\$13,200	\$13,200	\$13,200	
Conference Scholarships	\$16,000	\$16,000	\$16,000	
Community Awareness	\$2,100	\$2,100	\$2,100	
Media	\$3,900	\$3,900	\$3,900	
Statewide Evaluation	\$30,119	\$30,119	\$30,119	
Total:	\$1,014,769	\$1,014,769	\$1,014,769	
Total unallotted/unawarded/unexpended:	\$404,762	\$356,187	\$311,235	

***Unallotted amounts:** Some unallotted amounts were intentionally created so the Gila River Regional Council would have funding available to leverage with the Gila River Indian Community's proposed 50/50 match for pre-kindergarten scholarships in SFY2013. Initial discussions with the Tribe occurred in December and a joint meeting with the Tribes Government and Management Committee has been proposed for January to establish strategic pre-kindergarten scholarship planning throughout the Gila River Indian Community. In January it is expected that the Gila River Indian Community Government Management Committee will commit to pre-kindergarten expansion for SFY 2013 and modify their existing 2013 Tribal budget to support the 50/50 match commitment of the Gila River Regional Partnership Council.

The 50/50 match timeline allows the Gila River Indian Community time in January- February to plan strategically across all schools while also giving Tribal leaders adequate time to modify the Tribal budget in February- March to support pre-k expansion in SFY 2013.
