



# FIRST THINGS FIRST

*Ready for School. Set for Life.*

## Gila Regional Partnership Council

Allocations and Funding Sources	SFY13	
<b>FY Allocation</b>	<b>\$611,100</b>	
Population Based Allocation	\$333,261	
Discretionary Allocation	\$202,524	
Other (FTF Fund balance addition)	\$75,315	
<b>Carry Forward From Previous Year</b>	<b>\$353,103</b>	
<b>Total Regional Council Funds Available</b>	<b>\$964,203</b>	
Strategies	Proposed Allotments	Board Approvals, 1/17-18, 2012 SFY13 Strategies and Amounts
Quality First ( <i>Statewide</i> )	\$131,023	Approved
Scholarships TEACH ( <i>Statewide</i> )	\$36,300	Approved
Quality First Child Care Scholarships ( <i>Statewide</i> )	\$235,487	Approved
Child Care Health Consultation ( <i>Statewide</i> )	\$20,160	Approved
Parent Education Community-Based Training	\$145,000	Approved
Parent Outreach and Awareness	\$85,000	Approved
Developmental and Sensory Screening	\$5,000	Approved
Care Coordination/Medical Home	\$150,000	Approved
Community Awareness ( <i>FTF Directed</i> )	\$10,000	Approved
Media ( <i>Statewide</i> )	\$7,500	Approved
Statewide Evaluation ( <i>Statewide</i> )	\$16,648	Approved
<b>Proposed Allotment Total</b>	<b>\$842,118</b>	
<b>Total Unallotted</b>	<b>\$122,085</b>	



**GILA**  
**REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL**

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

**GILA REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL**

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

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SFY 2013 -2015 Regional Partnership Council Budget

**Section I.****Regional Allocation Summary**

Funds Available State Fiscal Years (SFY) 2012- 2015

**Gila Regional Partnership Council**

<b>Allocations and Funding Sources</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
<b>FY Allocation</b>	<b>\$614,212</b>	<b>\$611,100</b>	<b>\$612,321</b>	<b>\$614,618</b>
Population Based Allocation	\$342,005	\$333,261	<i>(fy14 and fy15 allocations are estimates only, for purposes of planning)</i>	
Discretionary Allocation	\$209,361	\$202,524		
Other (FTF Fund balance addition)	\$62,846	\$75,315	\$612,321	\$614,618
<b>Carry Forward From Previous</b>	<b>\$625,517</b>	<b>\$353,103</b>	<b>\$122,085</b>	<b>(\$13,812)</b>
<b>Total Regional Council Funds</b>	<b>\$1,239,729</b>	<b>\$964,203</b>	<b>\$734,406</b>	<b>\$600,806</b>

## **Section II.**

### **Review of SFY 2012 Funding Plan**

#### **II A. SFY 2012 Regional Partnership Council Priorities**

The vast, diverse and sparsely populated areas of the region continue to challenge the Regional Council in building a system for early childhood. The population of the region is estimated to be 52,199 with an estimated 2,964 children aged five and under. One of the challenges is that the county is often separated into Northern and Southern Gila County. Roosevelt Lake and a wide sparsely populated area divide the two areas of the county and often provide a barrier to effectively provide services across the region. Globe, Miami and Claypool are the major population areas of southern Gila while Payson is the major population area in northern Gila. These metropolitan areas offer the most services to support families and their young children. These areas have Head Start centers, child care services and a limited number of public school based pre-kindergarten classrooms. In contrast, the communities of Hayden/Winkelman, Pine/Strawberry and Tonto Basin have limited pre-kindergarten services for children. Hayden/Winkelman has a home based Early Head Start and Head Start program.

For SFY2012, the Gila Regional Council focused on continued development of the Early Childhood System being built and reevaluated priorities. Regional priorities were evaluated based on alignment with the overall First Things First, Arizona Early Childhood Task Force priority roles. Overall the strategic direction taken by the Regional Council aligned with the First Things First State Board priorities.

The Regional Council placed a high priority on family support. In SFY2012, the Regional Council continued to fund home visitation and Community Based Literacy. The target population for the home visitation was changed based on a review of the community needs to provide service to children birth to three. A greater emphasis was placed on targeting teen parents and grandparents raising grandchildren. Community Based literacy was expanded to reach 1,800 children and funding was approved to provide outreach to families in communities across the region. With this expansion approximately seventy-two percent of the region's eligible children will be able to participate. In SFY2012, a new Community Based Training program was added for Pregnant and Parenting Teens serving approximately fifty percent of teens giving birth.

Quality First and Quality First Scholarships remained a high priority in the region. The Regional Council supports four centers in addition to the one center and three homes supported by the state funded programs. The Quality First Scholarships have provided over 30 families in the region access to child care centers and homes as well as help stabilized the regions Quality First participating centers.

The Regional Council continues their strong commitment to professional development by supporting 11 regionally funded TEACH scholarships. Demands for these scholarships have been high and the region currently has a small waiting list.

Developmental and sensory screening remains a high priority of the Regional Council. While continuing to support developmental screening for the fiscal year, much discussion has occurred on ways to integrate this strategy with other regional strategies. Mental Health Consultation remained a priority and this strategy's implementation continued through a renewal of the agreement for SFY2012. Although Oral Health was identified in the SFY2012 funding plan as a priority, little progress has been made in finding a way to implement the program in the region. In prioritizing strategies based upon community needs, the Regional Council did not have sufficient funds to move forward with this strategy.

Media, community awareness and outreach continue to be important activities that the Regional Council supports to broaden understanding of the importance of early development.

#### **II B. SFY 2012 Strategies and Units of Service Review**

## Gila Units of Service by Strategy

Strategy Description	Fiscal Year 2012	
	Targeted Units	Contracted Units
<b>Home Visitation Strategy</b>		
Number of families served	25	25
<b>Parent Education Community-Based Training Strategy</b>		
Number of participating adults	75	75
<b>Community-based Literacy Strategy</b>		
Number of books distributed	21,000	21,600
Number of children served	1,800	1,800
Number of participating adults	1,800	900
<b>Quality First Strategy</b>		
Number of center based providers served	4	8
Number of home based providers served	0	0
<b>Quality First Child Care Scholarships Strategy</b>		
Number of children receiving scholarships	20	20
<b>Oral Health Strategy</b>		
Number of children receiving oral health screenings	300	0
Number of fluoride varnishes applied	300	0
Number of participating adults	0	0
Number of participating professionals	0	0
Number of prenatal women receiving oral health	0	0
<b>Developmental and Sensory Screening Strategy</b>		
Number of children receiving hearing screening	250	50
Number of children receiving screening	250	250
Number of children receiving vision screening	250	75
Number of children screened for developmental delays	250	250
<b>Child Care Health Consultation Strategy</b>		
Number of center based providers served	4	3
Number of home based providers served	0	0
<b>Mental Health Consultation Strategy</b>		
Number of center based providers served	10	5
Number of home based providers served	0	2
Number of people receiving tuition reimbursements	0	0
<b>Scholarships TEACH Strategy</b>		
Number of professionals receiving scholarships	11	19
<b>Community Outreach</b>		
No Service Units		
<b>Media</b>		
No Service Units		
<b>Community Awareness</b>		
No Service Units		
<b>2012 Evaluation</b>		
No Service Units		

Notes:

**Quality First Service Numbers:**

The Quality First strategy has Target Service Units of Homes and Centers. For this unique strategy, the Contracted Service Numbers will show as twice as much in comparison to the Targeted Service Numbers. This is due to implementation of the strategy through two service contracts (one for QF Coaching/Incentives, and a second for QF Assessments).

**Scholarships TEACH and Child Care Health Consultation (CCHC) Service Numbers:**

The Scholarships TEACH strategy have 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.

## II C. SFY 2012 Funding Summary Review

<b>FY 2012 Gila Funding Plan Summary</b>		
Allocations and Funding Sources	2012	
<b>FY Allocation</b>		<b>\$614,212</b>
Population Based Allocation		\$342,005
Discretionary Allocation		\$209,361
Other (FTF Fund balance addition)		\$62,846
<b>Carry Forward From Previous Year</b>		<b>\$625,517</b>
<b>Total Regional Council Funds Available</b>		<b>\$1,239,729</b>
Strategies	Allotted	Awarded
<b>Family Support</b>		
Home Visitation	\$85,000	\$85,000
Parent Education -Community Based Training	\$115,000	\$115,000
Community Based Early Literacy	\$85,000	\$85,000
<b>Quality and Access</b>		
Quality First	\$90,000	\$87,333
Quality First Child Care Scholarships	\$150,000	\$150,000
<b>Health</b>		
Oral Health	\$25,000	
Developmental and Sensory Screening	\$56,650	\$56,650
Mental Health Consultation	\$125,000	\$125,000
Child Care Health Consultation	\$16,000	\$12,000
<b>Professional Development</b>		
Scholarships TEACH	\$49,500	\$49,500
<b>Community Awareness</b>		
Community Outreach	\$47,500	-
Community Awareness	\$10,000	\$10,000
Media	\$15,328	\$15,328
<b>2012 Evaluation</b>		
Statewide Evaluation	\$16,648	\$16,648
<b>Total Allotted/Awarded/Expended:</b>	<b>\$886,626</b>	<b>\$807,459</b>
<b>Unawarded Totals</b>	<b>\$353,103</b>	<b>\$432,270</b>

## **II D. Review of Progress**

The Gila Regional Partnership Council is now in their third year of providing funding to implement services in the region. Building a system for early childhood in a vast, diverse and sparsely populated area has offered numerous challenges to the Regional Council. Implementation of programs has been slow since in many instances infrastructure building has been required to implement programs in relation to building a system for young children. The Regional Council has been successful in implementing all FY2012 strategies with the exception of Oral Health and Community Outreach. After careful consideration of the desired system for Early Childhood that the Regional Council wishes to sustain in the region, the Regional Council voted on November 18, 2011 not to move forward with these two strategies to allow additional carry forward to be used in FY2013.

In developing the FY2012 funding plan the Regional Council reflected on the results of SFY2010 and SFY2011. The challenges of implementing programs in diverse, sparsely populated rural areas were very clear. In the first funding year seventy percent of the allocation remained unspent at the end of the fiscal year. The Regional Council has worked diligently to revise strategies and develop a successful strategic plan. The money carried forward into SFY2011 and SFY2012 has provided a level of funding that is much more conducive to building infrastructure and beginning to bring the services to a scale that can make an impact on children's lives. The Regional Council's focus is now on system integration and bringing grantees and other partners together to work collaboratively to support the families of the region.

One of the challenges to building a comprehensive Early Childhood system in Gila County is providing services in the least populated communities of the region. After much discussion on universal and targeted approaches to service provision in SFY2012, the Regional Council opted for targeted approaches that would focus on the population centers of Payson and Globe/Miami areas. The programs that are focused more universally, to all families, are currently having a greater impact in the smaller communities. The Early Literacy program, for example, is one program designed to serve a broader spectrum of children that has been successful in reaching the smaller communities in the region. All libraries in the region have staff trained to conduct the early literacy program. Families and their children are participating across the region including the rural areas. This program is working really well in the rural communities. For instance, according to data provided by the grantee, Tonto Basin has 21 children enrolled with an estimate of 20 children living in the area. Other rural communities have over fifty percent of their eligible children enrolled. The Developmental, Hearing and Vision Screening programs have scheduled screening clinics in the smaller communities as well. While this program was slow to catch on in the rural communities, screening events are drawing larger numbers of children.

The Regional Council is very concerned about the mental health consultation strategy. The program has been in operation for over two years and is currently serving one center which indicates that it may not be an effective strategy for this region at this time. Most of the child care centers in the region are small. The combination of Quality First and Mental Health may be too much for programs to handle at this time.

In SFY2012, the Regional Council refined the target population for the Home Visitation strategy to serve families with children birth to three. The grantee continues to serve the targeted twenty-five families, although the first quarter SFY2011 report shows that the Grantee has only enrolled two new families, with three children indicating little effort to recruit the revised target families.

Early Literacy has been identified as a priority need for the region. Through a First Things First grant with the Gila County Library District in partnership with the Dolly Parton Foundation, the program has provided early literacy training and monthly books to over 1,000 of the region's young children in SFY2011, well exceeding the target of 879 children. At the end of first quarter FY2012, over 1,200 children were receiving monthly books in the mail. In addition, in FY2012, the target was expanded to 1,800 children. Outreach consultants were added to reach children that needed the program the most. These outreach components were implemented in every community in the region starting in late September 2011. It is anticipated that this strategy will reach over seventy-two percent of the region's children. The program has formed strong partnerships with other First Things First grantees, WIC Center, Head Start, Pre-kindergarten

classrooms, schools, child care centers and child care homes allowing the program to reach children served by those programs.

The Regional Council has held numerous meetings with statewide and regional stakeholders to implement the Oral Health Strategy. After two unsuccessful RFGA (Request for Grant Application) cycles a possible Government to Government agreement was explored. After many meetings and discussions, the Regional Council has determined that the funding available for this strategy will not allow for implementation at this time.

In SFY2011 and SFY2012, much progress has been made in enrolling centers and homes into the Quality First Program. The final selection for the regionally funded Quality First program is expected to occur in December 2011. The Quality First Scholarships continue to assist both families and the Quality First Centers and Homes in a challenging economic time.

The Regional Council has decided that one key to improving services in the region is through community outreach and collaboration. Community outreach and collaboration efforts will be directed towards building the infrastructure and community partnerships needed for future expansion of child and family programs across the region. For instance, First Things First staff and grantees have been instrumental in facilitating Early Childhood Network meetings and parent events in the Hayden/Winkelman area. First Things First is participating in Early Childhood Network groups in Globe/Miami as well as actively participating in other collaborative community partnerships in the Globe/Miami and Payson areas. Additionally, presentations and discussions have been held with community stakeholders across the region, including all of the large and small communities that comprise the region. These outreach and collaboration efforts will continue across the region with a focus in these small communities.

### **Section III.**

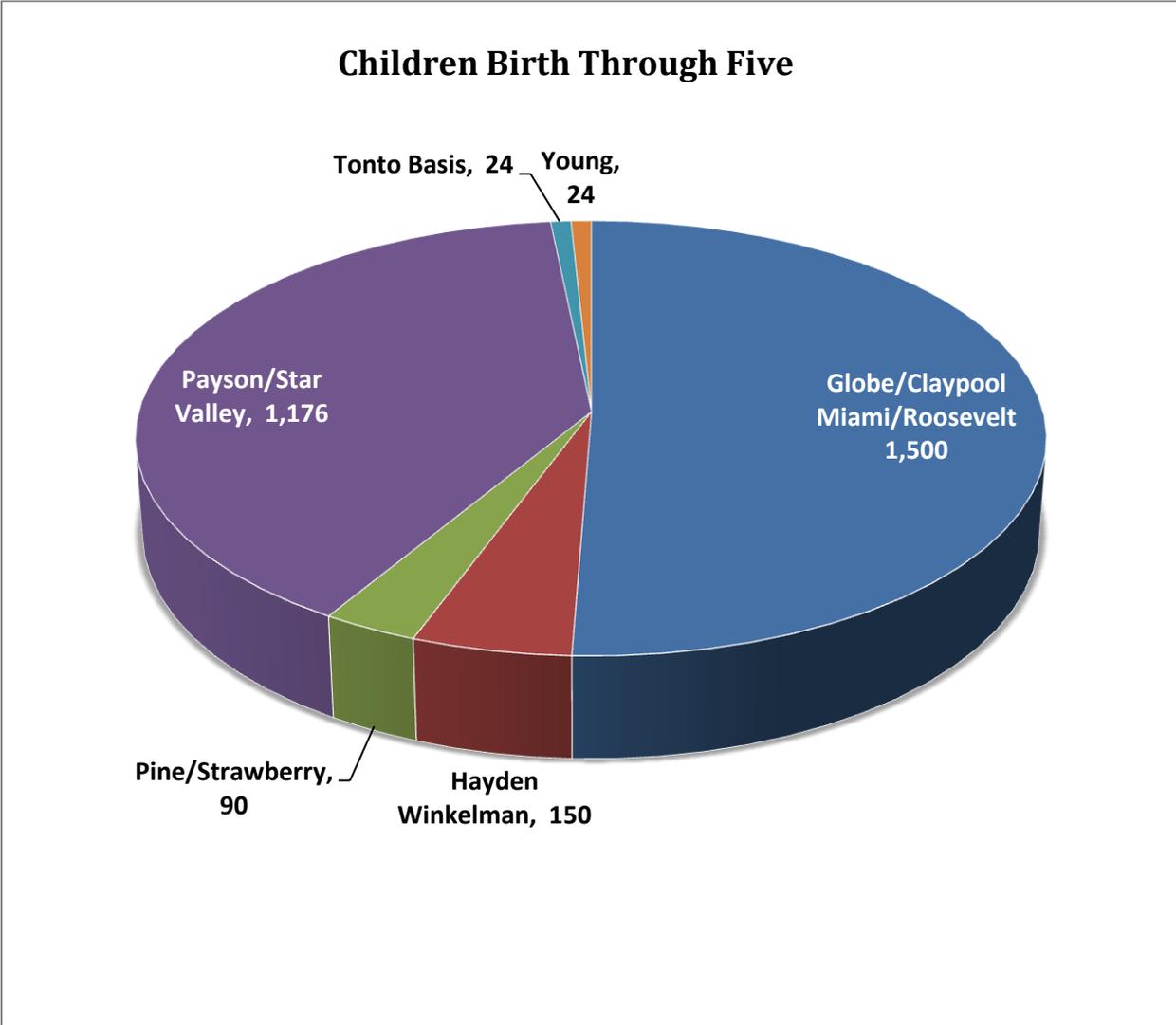
#### **Three Year Strategic Direction: SFY 2013-2015 Regional Funding Plan**

##### **III A. Overview**

Developing a system with both universal and target support for the region remains a priority for the region. In looking at the needs and assets of the area, the Regional Council looked closely at the number children living in the various communities of the region. While most of the population is concentrated in two major areas, the Regional Council also is concerned about the children located in the more rural portions of the region and is committed providing additional services in these areas.

Approximately fifty percent of the region's births occur in the Globe/Miami/Claypool area while approximately thirty-nine percent occur in the Payson/Star Valley area. The Hayden/Winkelman area in the far Southeast corner of the region accounts for approximately five percent of births and Pine/Strawberry in the far Northwest corner another three percent. Approximately one percent of the births are to families in the Tonto Basin/Roosevelt area along Roosevelt Lake. Approximately one percent of new births are to families in Young, a very isolated community nestled in the mountains accessible by unpaved mountain roads from either Payson or Globe.

Finding reliable data for children in the communities by age group is limited. Community based data from the 2010 census is beginning to be released, but age data by community is not available. It is helpful to look at numbers of children living in various areas of the region. Estimates in the chart below were obtained from birth data multiplied by six reflecting the year's birth through age 5. Although this may not be one hundred percent accurate, it provides approximate information that can be used in planning within the region. Several cities within the Gila region have adjoining borders. For simplicity purposes the following chart reflects the estimated numbers of children birth through five by these service area that combines one or more cities.



**Setting the Strategic Direction**

The Regional Council started working early on their strategic plan. In June 2011 the Regional Council held a full day retreat that focused on system building, a visioning process to look at what the future needs of the current young children would be as they become adults, a review of research on effective programs, school readiness and a general discussion about the early childhood system in the region. At their August 2011 meeting, the Regional Council members and stakeholders were provided with an overview including information, successes, challenges, testimonials and pictures from the currently funded program, in an effort to better understand the state of early childhood in the region and the impacts programs were having. All regional and state programs were represented including representatives from each component of the Quality First program. Each Regional Council member had time to meet with Health, Early Learning and Family Support grantees in small groups to allow them to ask questions and gain a better understanding of programs.

In September 2011, the Regional Council held a strategic planning workgroup in Payson and spent over four hours with representatives of the region discussing the needs of the area. At the October Regional Council meeting in Globe, community members were encouraged to participate in a second strategic planning session and assist the Regional Council in refining and prioritizing the needs identified in the two previous planning sessions. At their October, November and December meetings the Regional Council further refined priority needs of the region, identified school readiness indicators, discussed system building, scope and reach of services and how proposed strategies would enhance other segments of the Early Childhood System. How to effectively provide services across the region was a topic of much discussion at these meetings.

Five of the Regional Council members participated in a field trip to North County Clinic in Holbrook to gather information about the First Things First Navajo/Apache Regional Council funded Care Coordination strategy, the North Country Healthy Steps program.

As the Regional Council went through the process of identifying needs, they found that most of the needs had already been identified in previous strategic funding processes and in the Regional Needs and Assets reports. Building upon what has already been developed continues to be a priority for the Regional Council; however careful consideration was given to programs in determining whether they were in alignment with priority needs, school readiness indicators and achieving the desired outcomes. While many needs were identified during the planning process, the Regional Council realizes they cannot respond to everything and as a result, focused on the following as the most critical:

### **Early Learning**

1. Limited access to quality, affordable early care and education
2. Children are arriving at school with significant undiagnosed delays
3. Children are arriving at schools with limited language and literacy skills

### **Family Support**

1. High number of children are living in poverty
2. High number pregnant and parenting teens that lack the skills needed to raise successful children
3. High number of single and first time parents that lack the skills needed to raise successful children
4. High number of grandparents raising their grandchildren that lack support necessary to raise successful children
5. Limited access to parent education and information
6. Limited knowledge and information about the importance of early childhood development and health
7. High number of incarcerated parents
8. Large number of Parents with Drug and Alcohol abuse issues impacting their ability to parent

### **Other Considerations**

1. Small rural areas and the Tonto Apache Nation have limited access to First Thing First programs.

Based on these needs the Regional Council selected three School Readiness Indicators and corresponding goals to focus on in SFY2013. These were selected due to their alignment with the identified needs and overall strategic goals of the Gila Regional Council. The School Readiness indicators and their corresponding priority roles include:

#/% children demonstrating school readiness at kindergarten entry in the development domains of social-emotional, language and literacy, cognitive, and motor and physical

#### **Priority Roles**

Early Care and Education System Development and Implementation – Convene partners and provide leadership in the development and implementation of a comprehensive early care and education system that is aligned both across the spectrum of settings and with the full continuum of the education system.

Quality Early Care and Education Standards, Curriculum and Assessment – Convene partners, provide leadership, and provide funding for the development and implementation of quality standards for early childhood care and education programs and related curricula and assessments.

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.

#/% of children enrolled in an early care and education program with a Quality First rating of 3-5 stars

#### **Priority Roles**

Early Care and Education System Development and Implementation – Convene partners and provide leadership in the development and implementation of a comprehensive early care and education system that is aligned both across the spectrum of settings and with the full continuum of the education system.

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.

% of families who report they are competent and confident about their ability to support their child’s safety, health and well-being.

#### Priority Roles

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.

In addition to priorities linked to School Readiness Indicators, the Regional Council continues to focus on the two Parent Awareness priorities of “Building Public Awareness and Support” and “Early Childhood System Funding”. While limited amounts of funds have been set aside for these strategies the Gila Regional Council and staff have been very actively involved in building public awareness and support in the region through community networks, partnerships and working with policy makers.

The Gila Regional Council is aware that building an Early Childhood system requires the entire community. Building a comprehensive system requires coordinating resources from many sources working together. Funding and programs alone will never be successful in ensuring that every child is ready to learn when he enters kindergarten. What is required is to bring communities together to support families towards these goals. As part of this effort, the Gila Regional Council partnered with the Copper Basin Coalition, Youth Partnership, City of Globe, City of Miami and other community stakeholder to submit a letter of intent to participate in the Center for Future of Arizona Five Communities project. The proposal focuses on implementing a Cradle to Career approach to community building. While not selected as one of the Five Community Projects, discussions have opened up around continuing this effort without the outside support. Development of this proposal has resulted in meetings with key community stakeholders, school districts, cities, Economic Develop Board, churches, social organization to build collaborative efforts that will sustain this effort.

## **Strategic Approach to System Building**

### **System Building Impact**

While significant efforts have been made in building an early childhood system for the region, many challenges remain. The geographic area and sparse population results in inconsistent service provision and lack of infrastructure on which to build services. In addition, the cost of providing services across a vast geographic area is much greater than provision of services within a metropolitan area. In the first funding plan, the Regional Council felt that all services should be available in all communities in the region. In FY2012 the Regional Council recognized that the limited amount of funding available required a more targeted approach. In FY2013, the Regional Council is moving to implement more targeted approaches in the rural areas. This is now possible due to collaborative partners that have been established in these areas.

As the Regional Council reflected on the results of SFY2010, SFY2011 and preliminary data for SFY2012, the challenges of implementing programs in diverse, sparsely populated rural areas are clear. While much progress has been made in implementing the components of system building several concerns begin to arise that required the Regional Council to look carefully at program successes and barriers as well as to evaluate the need for some strategy revisions in order to develop a system that will move the school readiness indicators and benchmarks forward over time.

As stated before, the challenges in implementing programs in the region resulted in significant carry forward from FY2010 and 2011. With the majority of the programs fully operational now the unexpended funds are expected to

decrease significantly for FY2012 and in future years. Carry forward funds have helped move efforts to system building forward. However carry forward dollars have been decreasing and cannot be depended on the long term which results in a challenge in sustaining programs over time. This comes at a time when the Quality First Program is requiring a greater commitment of funding to maintain current levels. Due to concerns regarding sustaining efforts, the Regional Council voted to move \$72,500 in uncommitted FY2012 funds to carry forward to assist in stabilizing strategies and programs over the FY2013-2015 funding cycle. While these carry forward dollars will not be reflected in this plan, the Regional Council intentionally included this in the planning to ensure funds were available in future years to achieve the Regional Council's goals.

The following graphic depicts the programs included in the FY2013, 2014, 2015 funding plan



The Regional Council remains committed to building the early childhood system in the region using evidence based strategies with both targeted and universal approaches in order to reach as many children as possible. The Regional Council has discussed the reach and scale of the strategies and realized that, with the limited funding available, efforts to bring the strategies to scale will require an incremental approach, collaboration with other community and statewide agencies and partnerships to bring other resources into the region to further the development of the early childhood system.

One such partnership for FY2013 is with Arizona Department of Health Services-Federally funded Home Visitation program. First Things First is currently working closely with Arizona Department of Health Services to facilitate implementation of Home Visitation in Southern and Northern Gila County.

As the Regional Council reviewed program effectiveness, they agreed the Quality First Program, Quality First Scholarships, TEACH Scholarships and Early Literacy were successful in meeting their goals and felt that these strategies should continue. Although the Parent Education - Community Based Training for Pregnant and Parenting Teens was

funded effective July 1, 2011, the first data indicates that the program has made excellent progress in implementing services to the target populations. The Regional Council strongly supports continuing this program. The target population continues to be the area of highest need in the region. While the region ranked second in teen pregnancy in 2009, it regained its unwelcomed status as the area with the highest teen pregnancy in Arizona in 2010.

While the Regional Council believes that mental health and social emotional development are a high priority for the region, providing these services to the child care centers and homes may not be the most effective way to meet this need at this time. Currently only one child care center is participating in the program. In light of the budget constraints created from additional support for the Quality First program, the Regional Council felt that they would not fund this program going forward. They will revisit this strategy in future funding plan cycles.

### **Quality Access and Affordability**

One of the greatest needs in the region is access to quality and affordable child care. The current funding cuts and the economic downturn in the region provided extreme challenges especially in the southern Gila area. Two of the three licensed child care centers in the Globe/Miami area have closed in the last eighteen months. Many child care home providers are no longer providing services due to the inability of families to pay for services. The number of Child care homes is currently 13 down from a previous high of 45 three years ago. Many families are making choices of having family members, older siblings, neighbors and friends caring for their children even though the arrangements are less than ideal. Supporting the current system of child care centers and homes to stabilize enrollment and improve the quality of services has been the Regional Council's focus for this goal area. While other strategies such as Family, Friends and Neighbor (FFN) support were considered, the Regional Council felt there would not be sufficient funds to take such a strategy to scale and reach the numbers desired. The current combination of Quality First and Quality First Scholarships will continue the progress towards building a quality child care system in the region. The Regional Council realizes that this is a long term commitment that may require additional partners and financial support to make quality, affordable child care available to all children in the region.

The Regional Council will continue to support eleven regionally funded TEACH scholarships for the SFY2013. In the past few years, the regionally funded TEACH scholarships have not required the full allocation in the Gila region and has resulted in significant carry forward. For FY2014 and FY2015 the Regional Council has decreased this allocation to support only three (3) Scholarships for each of the two years and plans to review the program during the FY2014 funding plan cycle to determine need for the services and may choose to increase this allocation if the need still exists and money is available in carry forward to restore a higher level of funding to this strategy.

The following chart looks at the availability of Early Learning for three and four year olds in the region. The region has pre-school programs in every school district in the region with the exception of Young. While Pre-kindergarten is available in each community, most of the programs are heavily focused on serving children with special needs. Some typically developing children have access to the programs, but due to limited space and parent co-pay requirements many children that need the services the most are unable to attend. While ideally a Universal Pre-kindergarten program would be part of an Early Childhood System, the Regional Council recognizes that funding is not adequate to support this program at this time. The Regional Council will continue to advocate for Universal Pre-kindergarten and collaborate with the school districts in finding resources to open these opportunities to additional children. In the meantime, the Regional Council is committed to improving the quality of services provided, through its commitment to Quality First.

<b>Early Learning - Three and Four Year Olds</b>	<b>FY2012</b>	<b>FY2013</b>
<b>Estimated Reach of Programs</b>	<b>Target #</b>	<b>Target #</b>
Head Start	86	86
Pre-K in Public Kindergarten	215	215
Children in Quality First Centers	221	221
<b>Total Children Served</b>	<b>522</b>	<b>522</b>
Estimated Population 3-4	990	990
Estimated Living in Poverty	248	248
Current Scope and Reach	52.7%	52.7%
** Three and four year olds in Quality First is estimated at 75% of Licensed Capacity. Programs highlighted are First Things First participants.		

### Family Support

Family Support continues to be a very high priority for the Regional Council. Through the review of Gila's Needs and Assets Report, interactions with the community and newly released data, it is evident that families across the region struggle with an array of issues that place stresses on the families. The economic downturn and high unemployment in the region are having a compounding impact on the region's families. Poverty, teen pregnancy and incarcerated parents continue to be major issues in the region. Of growing concern is the number of children that are being raised by grandparents, great grandparents and even great great grandparents. In every community across this region grandparent raising grandchildren seems to be a growing issue. While statistics reflect that the number of grandparents raising grandchildren is lower than the statewide average, community stakeholder believe that this is significantly underreported and growing every day. Pre-kindergarten and Head Start programs are reporting over twenty five percent of their children are being raised by grandparents. Similar reports have been received from school districts and various agencies across the region. Another growing issue is the number of homeless families and those with housing instability. A growing number of families in the region are living in the forest or in campers parked in drive ways of friends or family. Many of these families struggle with substance abuse issues that further complicate the settings that the children are being raised. Another issue is that over sixty-five percent of the children in the region are born to single parents.

Developing a family support system with the above described challenges is difficult. The Regional Council has had many discussions on how best to support those children and their families. In SFY2012 the Regional Council agreed to address one of the most pressing problems in the region teen pregnancy. As a result a Community Based Parent Education program specially focused on Pregnant and Parenting Teens and Young Adults began implementation in the region. This program, while only in its first year, is showing significant progress in reaching this population. The Regional Council is committed to continue to support this effort through the FY2013-2015 funding cycle as long as the program continues to show outcomes in effectively assisting this population.

The Regional Council will continue Early Literacy strategy throughout the FY2013-2015 funding plan with the same 1,800 target numbers. For FY2014 and FY2015 the funding levels will continue to support the early literacy training and book distribution, but will scale back the outreach components. It is anticipated that the program will be at the target numbers and will require less outreach activities to maintain the target numbers as children can remain part of the program from birth until they turn five.

The Regional Council conducted an extensive review of the home visitation strategy. Their primary focus of reaching infants and toddlers through this home visitation strategy has not been successful. Therefore, the Regional Council has decided that it will not continue to fund Home Visitation. It is hoped that the Federal home visitation program through

the Arizona Department of Health Services will reach approximately fifteen percent of the newborn population. In addition, it is recognized that other current aspects such as Health Start and the Newborn Intensive Care Home Visitation also reach families in need. Thus the Regional Council decided that the strategies funded by First Things First to support families should be more universal in nature. Careful consideration was given to funding home visiting options such as Parents as Teachers or HIPPY (Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters). The cost of attracting a quality Home Visitation program into the region that could serve both Southern and Northern Gila County was a major concern of the Regional Council. The Regional Council made the decision to support as Care Coordination – Healthy Steps Strategy in place of Home Visitation.

To address the supports needed in the most rural communities of the region, the Regional Council has approved a new strategy to provide Parent Education - Community Based Training. This would be through a partnership with the local school district and the county school districts to provide a Parent/Child Education program within the school one to two days per week. The communities of Young and Pine/Strawberry are targeted for first year implementation with possible funding for a third site to be determined. The Regional Council wishes to explore funding for a program that would be conducted on the Tonto Apache Tribal Lands in the Child Care Center that is currently unused. This would be a partnership between the Tribe and Payson School District and would be available to families from the Tonto Apache Tribe as well as the Payson area.

### **Access to Quality Health Care**

Access to quality and affordability of health care is a significant issue across the region. The Regional Needs and Asset Report indicated that the region lacks access to comprehensive medical, therapeutic, dental, health screening and mental health consultation services that support health. Further, more children and their families must travel out of the region to obtain specialized health care services.

The Regional Council has been actively working with other community partners to improve the health care services in the region. As a result of community efforts, Canyonlands Health Clinic is opening a Federally Qualified Health Clinic in the Globe/Miami area in the spring of 2012. Staff and Regional Council members have attended planning meetings and the Regional Council provided official support in this process. Regional Council members have also been involved in efforts to bring a similar clinic to the Payson area. As both projects moves forward, the Regional Council is committed to participating in the planning process and exploring ways of collaboration to better serve the children of the region.

The Regional Council had examined ways of integrating family support, developmental screening and other health components within a single strategy. The Regional Council has chosen to support the development of a Healthy Steps Care Coordination strategy. This fits nicely into the overall system that the region is building while providing both health and family support to families. While this strategy is federally recognized as a research based home visitation program, imbedding the program within the health care system allows family support in health care, case management as well as family support issues. One benefit of imbedding this program within the health care system will allow service provision to homeless families, families living with friends/relatives and those that are uncomfortable in having Home Visitors in the home. Opportunities also exist to support grandparents raising grandchildren through this support model.

Implementing a Healthy Steps Care Coordination strategy will build partnerships between the county, clinics, hospitals and other community health stakeholders. This strategy seems to blend nicely with the other family support strategies, current existing programs and the Arizona Department of Health Services Home Visitation program as a more universal program to support families in raising healthy children. The other family support strategies targeted to specific high risk families and/or specific age group. The Healthy Steps model provides services to broader age range and can provide services to families of all income levels.

The Regional Council made the decision not to fund Mental Health Consultation for SFY2013, but will continue to look at opportunities to enhance social emotional development which builds a strong foundation for healthy children.

Although the Regional Council is committed to developmental screening, the strategy that was implemented in FY2010-2012 has experienced challenges in reaching target numbers. For FY2013-2015, the Regional Council would like to integrate these screenings into other programs allowing more children to be reached. The new Healthy Steps – Care Coordination strategy has a strong developmental screening component. In addition, the Regional Council set aside \$5,000 for the possible purchase of an on-line screening enterprise system that could be integrated into First Things First funded programs and other community programs to enable a coordinated screening effort.

The family support/health supports proposed for SFY2012 will reach approximately one third of the region’s children birth to three. (The Early Literacy Strategy was not included in this table) The following table provides a comparison between availability of service between SFY2012 and SFY2013.

<b>Family Support - Birth to Three</b>	<b>FY2012</b>	<b>FY2013</b>
<b>Estimated Reach of Programs</b>	<b>Target #</b>	<b>Target #</b>
Early Head Start	13	13
Health Start	60	60
Newborn Intensive Care Home Visiting	20	20
Community Based Parent Education - Pregnant and Parenting Teens	75	75
First Thing First Home Visiting	25	0
Community Based Parent Education - Rural School Districts		30
Healthy Steps (Combined Health/Family Support Strategy)		200
ADHS Federal Program		70
<b>Total Families Served</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>468</b>
Estimated Population 0-3	1482	1482
Estimated Living in Poverty	371	371
Current Scope and Reach	13.0%	31.6%

#### **Building Public Awareness and Coordination of Services**

There has been much progress during the past year in building public awareness of First Things First, the importance of focusing on early childhood and of the First Things First programs available. The media campaign and community outreach funding have been instrumental in raising the awareness of the importance of the early childhood years in the region. The Regional Staff and Council members have conducted over 200 outreach activities reaching over 6,000 people in every community of the region. The Regional Council funded a Community Outreach Liaison for a short time in fall of 2010, but after much discussion determined that the direct involvement of Regional Staff and Council members was critical in building a true system for children. The Regional Council is committed to continuing the process of building public awareness and would like to combine this with collaboration efforts.

The Gila Regional Council has worked diligently to identify needs in the Gila Region and to develop strategies that will best meet these needs. Real community change is a daunting task and building a system for early childhood health and education that will impact significantly the lives of children in the region requires fundamental change in the way things are done. It requires the communities within the region to come together and to commit that every child will have the supports needed to be healthy and ready to succeed when they enter school. This requires partnerships, volunteer commitments, infrastructure building and the commitment of the community to the change. The strategies listed above are first steps in building the support systems that will begin the change process. Building the necessary coordination, collaboration, and public awareness is the next step in this process. The strategies presented in this funding plan focus on building and sustaining capacity and infrastructure in order to engage in the ongoing work of community change.

**Section III B.**

**Strategic Plan for SFY 2013 – 2015**

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

<p><b>Regional Priorities</b> to be addressed</p>	<p><b>School Readiness Indicators</b> Correlated to the needs and priority roles</p>	<p><b>FTF Priority Roles</b> in the Early Childhood System</p>	<p><b>SFY 2013-2015 Strategies</b></p>
<p>Limited access to quality, affordable early care and education</p> <p>High number of children living in poverty</p> <p>High number of pregnant and parenting teens that lack the skills needed to raise successful children.</p> <p>Children arriving at school with significant undiagnosed delays</p> <p>High number of single and first time parents that lack the skills needed to raise successful children</p> <p>High number of Grandparents raising their Grandchildren that lack supports necessary to raise successful children.</p> <p>Limited access to parent education and information</p> <p>Limited knowledge and information about the importance of early childhood development and health</p> <p>Children arriving at schools with limited language and literacy skills.</p> <p>High number of Incarcerated Parents</p> <p>Small rural areas and Tonto Apache Nation have limited access to FTF</p>	<p>#/% children demonstrating school readiness at kindergarten entry in the development domains of social-emotional, language and literacy, cognitive, and motor and physical</p> <p>#/% of children enrolled in an early care and education program with a Quality First rating of 3-5 stars</p> <p>% of families who report they are competent and confident about their ability to support their child’s safety, <b>health</b> and well being</p>	<p>Early Care and Education System Development and Implementation – Convene partners and provide leadership in the development and implementation of a comprehensive early care and education system that is aligned both across the spectrum of settings and with the full continuum of the education system.</p> <p>Quality Early Care and Education Standards, Curriculum and Assessment – Convene partners, provide leadership, and provide funding for the development and implementation of quality standards for early childhood care and education programs and related curricula and assessments.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p><i>Note: Not all FTF Priority Roles are associated</i></p>	<p>Quality First (including CCHC, CC Scholarships, TEACH) (Statewide)</p> <p>Parent Education - Community Based Training:</p> <p>Parent Outreach and Awareness – Early Literacy</p> <p>Care Coordination-Healthy Steps*</p> <p>Developmental and Sensory Screening</p> <p>Scholarships TEACH (Statewide) Community Awareness</p> <p>Media</p> <p>Statewide Evaluation <i>*Indicates a new strategy for this Regional Council</i></p>

programs.

Large number of Parents with Drug and Alcohol abuse issues impacting their ability to parent.

*with indicators. A Regional Council may consider additional FTF Priority Roles to their plan not associated with indicators but which reflect their Regional Priorities.*

**Section III C.**

**Strategy Descriptions including Target Populations and Funding Levels**

<p><b>Strategy: Quality First</b></p>
<p><b>Strategy Description:</b> Expands the number of children who have access to high quality care and education, including learning materials that are developmentally appropriate, a curriculum focused on early literacy and teachers trained to work with infants, toddlers and preschoolers.</p> <p>Supports are 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.</p>
<p><b>Strategy Narrative</b></p> <p>The Gila Regional Council believes that a key to developing a quality early childhood system is to improve the early learning environments. The Gila Region will continue to fund 5 centers and 3 homes in the region with the full Quality First Package. This includes those centers previously funded with state funding and those Regionally funded in FY2012.</p> <p>The implication of the cuts for working families in the region is not clearly understood, but anecdotal information indicates parents are making difficult decisions with regards to child care options. Some must stay home to care for their children, foregoing earned income, or others rely on informal or unregulated care to keep their jobs. The quality of care for many children is therefore jeopardized. Given the number of parents in the workforce, high quality early childhood education programs are critical.</p> <p>This strategy addresses the identified Regional need “Limited access to quality, affordable early care and education”. It further aligns with School Readiness indicator 1 and 2 addressing both Children’s readiness for kindergarten as well as the number of children enrolled in an early care and education program with a Quality Rating of 3-5 stars.</p> <p>First Thing First identified the need to fund a quality improvement and rating system for early care and education programs serving children birth through five. Research indicates that children exposed to high-quality early care and education experiences have healthier relationships, enhanced language development and improved academics, particularly children from families of high risk and underprivileged backgrounds. Quality Rating Systems are being viewed as the framework for a broader, comprehensive early childhood system. While Quality Rating Systems vary in measurement techniques, system design and implementation timelines, all systems include parallel components that work jointly to identify, assess and raise quality standards in early care and education settings.</p> <p>The Gila Regional Council is committed to building their early childhood system with Quality First as a cornerstone. Funding at this level will allow approximately ten to fifteen percent of the Gila Region’s children to attend a Quality Rating Participating Center in any given year.</p>
<p><b>Target Population Description</b></p> <p>In Gila County, the Early Learning system includes 7 centers, 2 Department of Health Services Homes, 13 Department of Economic Security Certified homes, 3 Head Start centers and 6 Pre-kindergarten sites serving a total of approximately 900 licensed slots. The Gila Regional Council will continue to support the homes and centers participating in Quality First. This could be considered both a more universal as well as targeted approach. Improving the overall quality of the child care homes and centers in the region is a more universal approach, while the child care scholarship component is more targeted and</p>

provides children from lower income families with an opportunity to participate in a high quality child care program. The Gila Regional Council has funded 5 centers (includes one public school pre-k site), 1 Arizona Department of Health Services licensed home and 2 Arizona Department of Economic Security Certified homes. Quality First participating programs have a total licensed capacity of approximately 300 children. The Regional Council’s ultimate goal would be that all centers and homes have an opportunity to participate, but Regional funding levels do not allow any further expansion at this time.

While ideally these Quality First centers and homes would be evenly divided between the Northern and Southern Gila Region, due to lack of providers in the Southern Gila region only one Pre-kindergarten class and two child care homes are enrolled in this part of the region. The only licensed center provider in Southern Gila declined participation after applying and being selected to participate in Quality First.

This strategy is an important component in developing a system that will move the early learning readiness indicators and will impact approximately one third of the children served by the regions early learning system.

<b>Target Service Units - Quality First</b>	<b>FY 13</b>	<b>FY 14</b>	<b>FY 15</b>
Number of center based providers served	5	5	5
Number of home based providers served	3	3	3
<b>Funding Levels</b>	<b>FY 13</b>	<b>FY 14</b>	<b>FY 15</b>
Quality First	\$131,023	\$131,023	\$131,023
Child Care Health Consultation	\$20,160	\$20,160	\$20,160
Scholarships TEACH	\$36,300	\$9,900	\$9,900
QF Child Care Scholarships	\$235,487	\$235,487	\$235,487

<b>Target Service Units - Child Care Health Consultation</b>	<b>FY 13</b>	<b>FY 14</b>	<b>FY 15</b>
Number of center based providers served	5	5	5
Number of home based providers served	3	3	3
<b>Target Service Units - Scholarships TEACH</b>			
Number of professionals receiving scholarships	23	23	23
<b>Target Service Units - QF Child Care Scholarships</b>			
Number of children receiving scholarships	38	38	38

<b>Strategy: Scholarships TEACH (addition to QF package)</b>
<p><b>Strategy Narrative</b></p> <p>Provides scholarship for higher education and credentialing to early care and education teachers. This program improves the professional skills of those providing care and education to children birth through five.</p> <p>The Gila Regional Council, as a result of information obtained from the Needs and Assets Report, placed this strategy as a high priority. From the first funding plan the region has funded additional TEACH Scholarships. The first year’s target of 130 was found to be unrealistic and the numbers were reduced to 11 for FY2011 and FY2012.</p> <p>Educating the workforce is a key component in improving the quality of Early Learning programs. While the region is unable to support every program’s participation in Quality First, the additional scholarship will begin to improve the quality of all programs across the region. These regionally funded scholarships</p>

enhance the number of staff from Quality First Centers/Home that are able to pursue higher education and allow staff at programs not enrolled in Quality First with the opportunity to participate.

It is believed that the combination of TEACH scholarships funded through both the Quality First programs and those that are regionally funded are meeting the needs of most of the individuals needing assistance to obtain an AA degree or CDA Credential. A number of the staff in the Pre-kindergarten and Head Start Centers already have completed Associates or Bachelor’s degrees and would not be eligible for participation in this program.

The Department of Economic Security Child Care Survey combines Pinal and Gila County together in their data reporting; therefore it is difficult to ascertain the exact number of staff employed in Early Learning settings in the region.

**Target Population Description**

The target population includes staff of child care centers, homes and other early learning environments.

Currently regionally funded TEACH scholarship program has a small waiting list. It is anticipated that most of the applicants on the waiting list will be enrolled during the FY2012 year. The Regional Council is committed to continue this program at the current target of 11 scholars for one more year. They would like to see all scholars currently enrolled be able to complete their Associate of Arts degree.

The ultimate goal of the Regional Council would be that all early care and education workforce have at least an Associate degree. The Regional Council will carefully evaluate the needs for scholarships going forward and adjust the numbers to meet the needs and demands.

**Strategy: Parent Education Community Based Training**

**Strategy Description**

Strengthens families with young children by providing voluntary classes in community-based settings.

**Strategy Narrative**

First Things First will expand families’ access to the information, services and supports they need to help their young children achieve their fullest potential. To make the best choices, families need access to information that educates them about what their child is learning and doing, how to optimally support early childhood development and child health and what resources or programs are available in their community. Families also need opportunities to connect with other families in their community. The continuum of high-quality services and support will be planned, developed, funded, and delivered in a family-centered, comprehensive, collaborative, culturally and linguistically responsive manner that best meets the needs and preferences of families, leverages available resources, and involves families in the program development and implementation. As a result of First Things First’s efforts, families who need or want assistance have the support they need to use language and play throughout their daily routines and interactions, read with their children daily and increase their competence and confidence about their ability to support their child’s safety, health and well-being. The Regional Council will support two components for Parent Education - Community based training. These include a focus on pregnant and parenting teens and a focus on parents and child education in rural school settings.

**Parent Education Community Based Training-Pregnant and Parenting Teens**

Community based parent education supports pregnant and parenting teens/young adults in their ability to promote their children’s optimal development and health and to provide access to information, resources and high-quality social support.

The Gila Regional Partnership Council developed this strategy to ensure that pregnant and parenting teens and young adults have the information and support they need to be effective parents. The Gila Region has consistently had one of the highest rates of teen pregnancy in the state. The Regional Council, through the 2010 Needs and Asset reports, additional data collection, community meetings and forums identified that providing education and support for this group of young parents as one of the region's greatest needs.

Intervening with pregnant and parenting teens changes the lives of these vulnerable first time mothers and their babies. Pregnancy and parenting support during pregnancy and immediately after the birth has been shown to greatly impact many risk factors. The parenting skills learned during this critical time support families and their children throughout the early developmental years.

Currently, this program is being implemented by Teen Outreach Pregnancy Services (TOPS) in partnership with Gila County School District, Globe/Miami School District, Liberty High School, Cobre Valley Hospital and New Beginnings Pregnancy Center. These partnerships provide space as well as access to the target populations. In addition the Gila County School District and Liberty School provide transportation for all participants which allow more teens to participate.

#### **Parent Education – Community Based Training – Rural School Based Parent Child Education**

The school based parent child program provides classes on parenting, child development and problem-solving skills. This strategy strengthens families with young children, grandparents raising grandchildren and other caregivers by providing voluntary classes in community-based settings. This program will combine parent education with classroom activities that support the parent as the child's first teacher.

The Gila Regional Council has researched opportunities to implement First Things First in the most rural communities of the region. Cost and time involved in travel has provided major barriers in serving smaller communities such as Young and Pine/Strawberry.

This strategy will expand families' access to the information, services and supports they need to help their young children achieve their fullest potential. To make the best choices, families need access to information that educates them about what their child is learning and doing, how to optimally support early childhood development and child health and what resources or programs are available within their community. Families also need opportunities to connect with other families in their community.

The School Based Parent Education program will allow services to be provided in very rural communities that have limited access to early childhood services. Partnering with local school districts allows services to be provided without extensive travel costs that make it cost prohibitive to operate a similar county wide program. The use of existing school facilities allows programs to be implemented without extensive start-up costs and ongoing overhead costs.

The program will be delivered in a classroom setting using existing school based classroom facilities. This family-centered and community centered program will be; comprehensive across domains of development; collaborative; culturally and linguistically responsive to best meet the needs and preferences of families; leverages available resources and involves families in the program development and implementation.

As a result of First Things First's efforts, families who need or want assistance have the support they need to use language and play throughout their daily routines and interactions. They will have support in reading with their children daily and increasing their competence and confidence about their ability to support their child's safety, health and well-being.

The communities of Pine/Strawberry have approximately 75 children birth through four. The community of Young has approximately 21 children birth through four.

The Regional Council has provided funding for Rural School Based Program for the FY2013 and will look at the ability to continue funding this program for FY2014 and FY2015 during the FY2014 funding planning process. It is the intent to continue this program, but funding levels will not allow specific amounts to be set aside for continuation of this strategy at this time.

Both programs align with the following School Readiness indicators and provide critical linkage to reach parents and children. The first reaches a target population and the second provides services rural communities. The School readiness indicator addressed are listed below:

#/% children demonstrating school readiness at kindergarten entry in the development domains of social-emotional, language and literacy, cognitive, and motor and physical

% of families who report they are competent and confident about their ability to support their child's safety, health and well being

### **Target Population Description**

#### **Parent Education Community Based Training-Pregnant and Parenting Teens**

This strategy is targeted to pregnant and parenting teens and young adults up to age 24 that live in the region. According to Department of Health Services, Gila County has approximately 700 births per year. When the residents of the San Carlos Apache Tribal Nation are subtracted from the total, there were approximately 500 births within the Gila Regional Council area. Of that number approximately 150 are born to teens 19 and under. Over sixty percent or 300 births are to mothers 24 or younger. Well over half of all births in the region are to single parents.

The Regional Council engaged in many discussions around the appropriate scope and reach of the program. The decision on target numbers for the program was based on both estimated need for the services and available funding. This program was a new program for FY2012 and the initial target numbers were based on reaching approximately fifty percent of the teens giving birth in the region or twenty-five percent of the population 24 and younger. While the Gila Regional Council would like to expand this program to reach a larger percentage of these parents, there continues to be two main considerations: the ability to reach the teen populations and the availability of funding for a more comprehensive program. Since this program is in its first year of funding, it is difficult to know if the demand for services will exceed the available services.

For SFY2013, SFY2014 and SFY2015 the Regional Council will maintain the current target number, but continue to evaluate the needs each year and will adjust if money is available and the strategy continues to show successful outcomes. Funding for this portion of the strategy is set for \$115,000 for each of the three years.

#### **Parent Education – Community Based Training – Rural School Based Parent Child Education**

The Regional Council intends this strategy to be implemented through grants to school districts in the small rural areas of the region. Since very limited services and small numbers of children are living in these communities, Parent Education-Community Based training will be available to parents and their children, grandparents raising grandchildren, kith and kin providers as well as the children in their care.

Initial Funding will be to implement in Young and Pine/Strawberry. One additional location will be selected based on further evaluation of the highest levels of needs. This third location could be a partnership between Tonto Apache Tribal Nation and Payson School District utilizing an existing tribal classroom to provide this program to tribal children as well as children from the surrounding Payson community.

Funding of \$30,000 is provided for this program for FY2013 only. The Regional Council will continue to fund this program at proposed levels if funding is available from carry forward or other unallocated funding.

Target Service Units	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15
Number of Participating Adults	105	105	105
Funding Level	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15
Parent Education Community Based Training	\$145,000	\$115,000	\$115,000

**Strategy: Parent Outreach and Awareness – Early Literacy Program**

**Strategy Description:** Improves child development by educating parents and connecting them to resources and activities that promote healthy growth and school readiness.

**Strategy Narrative**

Provide education and information for families on language and literacy development of their young children. This strategy helps support their young child’s love of words and books by providing early literacy education and information as well as free books monthly by mail for children birth through four years of age in partnership with the Dolly Parton Imagination Library.

Children entering school without basic early literacy skills have been identified as a high priority for the region. This strategy has been implemented by Gila County Library District through collaborative partnership with the Dolly Parton Foundation and all libraries located within the Gila Regional Council target area. The program which has been in operation for approximately 18 months has been very successful in reaching children and their families across the region that will most benefit from participating in the program. The partnership with the Dolly Parton Foundation allows this strategy to be implemented with a cost of approximately \$50 per child including 12 books per year, postage and administrative cost of the program. This strategy is one strategy that is universally reaching children including those in the very rural communities.

In FY2012, an outreach component was added to reach out to high risk children and their families that might not use the services of the local libraries. Partnership with other First Things First grantees, Pre-kindergarten programs, Head Starts, WIC, Gila County Health Department and other social service programs have allowed services to reach low income children and other high risk families.

**Target Population Description**

The Regional Council’s intent for this strategy is for the program to be available universally across the region to every child aged birth to five. Due to the partnership with the Dolly Parton Foundation the age limits of this strategy is birth through four and is not available to five year olds.

Based on the births in the area, it is estimated that approximately 2,500 children in the region are birth through four and are eligible for the program. With a target of reaching 1,800 children approximately seventy-two percent of the regions eligible children will be served by this program.

Target numbers are based on a combination of funding available and current target number for this strategy. Reaching approximately seventy-two percent of region’s children on a long term basis by providing monthly books is part of building its system for raising awareness of books and the importance of early literacy.

Target Service Units	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15
Number of Parents Participating	900	900	900
Number of Books Distributed	21,000	21,000	21,000
Number of Children Participating	1800	1800	1800
Funding Level	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15
Parent Outreach and Awareness	\$85,000	\$65,000	\$45,000

**Strategy: Developmental and Sensory Screening**

**Strategy Description**  
 Provides children with developmental screening and referrals for follow-up services.

**Strategy Narrative**  
 This strategy would provide funding to begin to explore and possibly purchase an online Developmental Screening enterprise system that will improve the availability of developmental screening in the region. This strategy would implement an on-line enterprise system that would allow parent access to complete developmental screenings, as well as set up a system to ensure that all children in the region receive timely developmental screening and referral services.

The strategy would provide funding for purchase of the system and first year costs of screening. The Regional Council intends that this online screening be piloted with First Things First programs such as the Care Coordination Healthy Steps program.

Integration into the Healthy Steps Care Coordination strategy is a first step in obtaining commitment from other First Things First programs, schools, head start centers, child care centers and homes, clinic, physicians and health professionals to collaboratively implement the program across the region where children’s families come in contact with health, early learning or family support programs. This system could integrate into the existing Child Find and AzEIP system. This would provide a comprehensive data base that would allow screening of children where they first come in contact with the Early Childhood System as well as provide valuable information on the children of the region and their needs.

Using a domain name such as [www.readyazkidsgila.com](http://www.readyazkidsgila.com) would provide easy access for the program.

The intent is the Gila Regional Council is to fund system purchase costs and the online screening costs of \$.50 per child for the first year. During FY2013 Grantee and Community workgroups would be convened to plan for Region wide implementation.

After the first year all screening and follow-up would be done by the participating sites. Families entering in through the parent access self-screening would be referred to First Things First programs for follow-up through a procedure developed by the First Things First Grantee Collaboration Group. First Things First will not be providing direct funding after the first year, therefore no target service numbers have been established for this strategy for FY2014 and FY2015.

<b>Target Population Description</b>			
This is a universal strategy targeted to reach all children birth through five. By allowing families a variety of opportunities to access screening it is anticipated that the barriers will be lessens. Integrating this system into First Things First programs allows a first step in implementing a possible Region wide implementation that would provide access to physicians, other health providers, schools, community programs as well as First Things First grantees allows access to families across all demographics, risk factors and geography.			
<b>Target Service Units</b>	<b>FY 13</b>	<b>FY 14</b>	<b>FY 15</b>
<b>Planning Phase</b>	To be determined	No Funding Provided	No Funding provided
<b>Funding Level</b>	<b>FY 13</b>	<b>FY 14</b>	<b>FY 15</b>
<b>On-line Developmental Screening</b>	\$5,000	0	0

<b>Strategy: Care Coordination/Medical Home- Healthy Steps</b>
<b>Strategy Description</b> Provides children and their families with effective case management and connects them to appropriate, coordinated health care.
<b>Strategy Narrative</b> Healthy Steps for Young Children has been identified by the Regional Council as the program model that will be implemented and supported in the Region through the Care Coordination/Medical Home strategy. This strategy may be implemented in one or two of the following ways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Clinic-Based Healthy Steps for Young Children program implemented through the County Clinic and or Federally Qualified Healthcare Clinic (FQHC) in the region by providing care coordination services to children and families who are served by the County or Clinic practice.</li> <li>• The Community-Based Healthy Steps for Young Children programs that brings together partners from the health community including the region’s birthing hospital, Clinic-Based program or the Community-Based programs, depending on which pediatrician the parents have selected and the desire of the parent to remain in the program.</li> </ul> <p>Healthy Steps for Young Children is a national model that is intended to support the relationship between the parents of an infant and their pediatrician, through the child’s fifth year. The Healthy Steps Specialist will work with parents to connect them to services in the community, conduct developmental screenings on a regular basis, introduce and support early literacy activities through the provision of developmentally appropriate books to the child, and work to be sure that parent’s questions are answered. These care coordination services will address the selected FTF school readiness indicators of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• #/% children demonstrating school readiness at kindergarten entry in the development domains of social-emotional, language and literacy, cognitive, and motor and physical;</li> <li>• % of families who report they are competent and confident about their ability to support their child’s safety, health and well being</li> </ul> <p>The Healthy Steps for Young Children national model has been selected as the Care Coordination model that this Regional Council would like to see implemented in this region. Healthy Steps for Young Children embeds a child development specialist into the pediatric medical practice to support parents in their relationship with their child’s physician. This strategy is intended to provide a link between parents and physicians and to provide a source of information and support for parents as they parent their children.</p>

The expected target numbers for SFY 2013 are to reach 200 children and their families. The Regional Council will evaluate these numbers for SFY2014 and SFY2015.

**Target Population Description**  
 The Regional Council intends to begin this strategy in Globe/Miami and Payson areas with universally available services for newborns, infants, toddlers (birth to three) and their families. Programming implemented under this strategy is offered free of charge for all families who are interested. Initial focus will be on reaching families accessing well child care in community clinics and county health department services where services concentrate on serving low or lower income families. The initial program will reach approximately 13% of children birth to three in the region. This will allow approximately 100 children and their families to be served in the each of the Northern and Southern Regions. The majority of the region’s children receive their medical care in Payson or Globe/Miami, therefore this strategy will be available to the majority of the region’s children.

Target Service Units	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15
Number of Children Served	200	200	200
Funding Level	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15
Healthy Steps Care Coordination	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$85,000

**Strategy: Community Awareness**

**Strategy Description**  
**Community Awareness:**  
 Uses a variety of community-based activities and materials to increase public awareness of the critical importance of early childhood development and health so that all Arizonans are actively engaged in supporting young kids in their communities.

**Strategy Narrative**  
 The purpose of this strategy is to increase public information and awareness of the importance of early childhood development and health through targeted outreach and resource distribution.

The Regional Council would like to implement a similar strategy and budget as the FY2012 Community Awareness approved strategy. This will include purchase of reinforcement materials, Born Learning Materials, Scholastic Children Books, external printing, sponsorship and hosted events and purchase of community awareness equipment.

**Target Population Description**  
 Universal strategy designed to reach children and their families across the regions as well as community stakeholders.

Target Service Units	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15
No target service units identified for this strategy			
Funding Level	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15
Community Awareness	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$5,000

<b>Strategy: Media</b>			
<b>Strategy Description</b> <b>Media:</b> 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.			
<b>Strategy Narrative</b> Media efforts include purchasing television and radio spots, billboards, and other approved media buys. The Regional Council has request that \$1,500 be set aside for social media efforts with the caveat that the communications department present the plan to the Regional Council for approval prior to implementation.  The Regional Council was unable to allocate funding for FY2014 and FY2015 due to budgetary constraints, but will reconsider during the FY2014 funding plan process.			
<b>Target Population Description</b> This is a universal strategy that targets the entire region.			
<b>Target Service Units</b>	<b>FY 13</b>	<b>FY 14</b>	<b>FY 15</b>
No target service units identified for this strategy			
<b>Funding Level</b>	<b>FY 13</b>	<b>FY 14</b>	<b>FY 15</b>
<b>Media</b>	\$7,500	To be determined	To be determined

<b>Strategy: Statewide Evaluation</b>			
<b>Strategy Description</b> Statewide Evaluation includes the studies and evaluation work which inform the FTF Board and the 31 Regional Partnership Councils. Examples include: the baseline Needs and Assets reports, specific focused studies, and statewide research and evaluation on the developing early childhood system.			
<b>Strategy Narrative</b> 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.			

<b>Target Service Units</b>	<b>SFY 13</b>	<b>SFY 14</b>	<b>SFY 15</b>
<b>No target service units identified for this strategy</b>			
<b>Funding Level</b>	<b>SFY 13</b>	<b>SFY 14</b>	<b>SFY 15</b>
<b>Statewide Evaluation</b>	\$16,648	\$16,648	\$16,648

**Section III D. Proposed Funding Summary**

SFY 2013 - 2015 Regional Partnership Council Budget



**FY 2013 - 2015**  
**Gila**  
**Funding Plan Summary**

Allocations and Funding Sources	2013	2014	2015
<b>FY Allocation</b>	<b>\$611,100</b>	<b>\$612,321</b>	<b>\$614,618</b>
Population Based Allocation	\$333,261		
Discretionary Allocation	\$202,524		
Other (FTF Fund balance addition)	\$75,315	\$612,321	\$614,618
<b>Carry Forward From Previous Year</b>	<b>\$353,103</b>	<b>\$122,085</b>	<b>(\$13,812)</b>
<b>Total Regional Council Funds Available</b>	<b>\$964,203</b>	<b>\$734,406</b>	<b>\$600,806</b>
Strategies	Proposed Allotment	Proposed Allotment	Proposed Allotment
Quality First	\$131,023	\$131,023	\$131,023
Scholarships TEACH	\$36,300	\$9,900	\$9,900
Quality First Child Care Scholarships	\$235,487	\$235,487	\$235,487
Child Care Health Consultation	\$20,160	\$20,160	\$20,160
Parent Education Community-Based Training	\$145,000	\$115,000	\$115,000
Parent Outreach and Awareness	\$85,000	\$65,000	\$45,000
Developmental and Sensory Screening	\$5,000	-	-
Care Coordination/Medical Home	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$85,000
Community Awareness	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
Media	\$7,500	-	-
Statewide Evaluation	\$16,648	\$16,648	\$16,648
<b>Proposed Allotment Total</b>	<b>\$842,118</b>	<b>\$748,218</b>	<b>\$663,218</b>
<b>Total Unallotted</b>	<b>\$122,085</b>	<b>(\$13,812)</b>	<b>(\$62,412)</b>

Note: On November 18, 2011 the Gila Regional Council voted to move \$25,000 from Oral Health and \$47,500 from Community Outreach in the FY2012 funding plan to carry forward. This change in allotment is not reflected in the carry forward in this budget. If approved by the State Board, the \$72,500 will bring the FY2015 funding allocations to balance. A request for approval will be presented to the First Things First State Board in January 2012.