

FIRST THINGS FIRST

Tohono O'odham Nation Region



2015 IMPACT REPORT

SCHOOL SUCCESS BEGINS AT BIRTH



90% OF A CHILD'S CRITICAL BRAIN DEVELOPMENT HAPPENS BEFORE KINDERGARTEN,

so early experiences lay the foundation for success in school and in life. Arizonans created First Things First (FTF) to give more children the tools they need to arrive at school prepared to meet our state's high expectations. FTF provides resources and professional expertise then combines it with local decision-making to build on the work of community organizations impacting children and families. Local volunteers – parents, educators, business professionals, philanthropists, faith leaders and tribal representatives – decide how the funds will be used to best improve school readiness for children in their area.

EARLY CHILDHOOD IS ONE OF THE BEST INVESTMENTS A STATE CAN MAKE

Research by Nobel Prize-winning economist James Heckman showed that every \$1 invested in early childhood can yield returns between \$4 and \$16. Early literacy and its impact on school success is one of the best examples of the return on investment in early childhood. High quality early learning experiences, rich in language and literacy, reduce early learning gaps and ensure that children are ready to start reading when they enter kindergarten.



Gaps in children's vocabulary start to appear as early as **18 MONTHS.**



By the time children are **3 & 4 YEARS OLD,** their vocabulary, attention and general knowledge are predictors of **THIRD & FOURTH GRADE** reading comprehension.



THIRD GRADE reading ability is one of the best predictors of **HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION.**



As an early childhood system partner, First Things First invests in proven programs and innovative strategies that: strengthen families in their role as their child's first teacher; improve the quality of early learning environments like preschool and child care, and expand access to those programs; and, promote prevention and early identification of health problems that could impact learning later on. By getting more Arizona kids ready for school, FTF helps put children on a path to academic success that benefits them, our communities and our state.

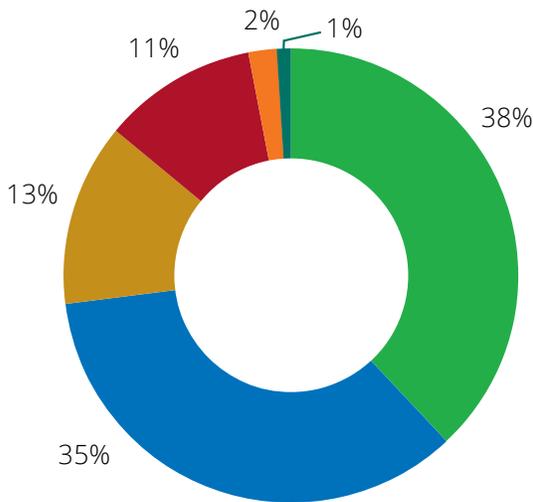
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INVESTED IN EARLY CHILDHOOD YIELDS UP TO A \$16 RETURN

FISCAL YEAR 2015 IMPACT

TOHONO O'ODHAM NATION FY2015 PROGRAM EXPENDITURES



- Quality Preschool and Child Care \$297,517.26**
 Children exposed to high quality early learning do better in school and are more likely to graduate.
- Strengthening Families and Early Literacy \$272,757.12**
 Families are a child's first and best teachers.
- Workforce Development and Training \$98,790.94**
 A child's relationships with early caregivers impact whether her brain will develop in ways that promote learning.
- Parent and Community Awareness \$86,836.84**
 We all have a shared responsibility to help children arrive at school prepared to succeed.
- Preventive Health \$18,943.74**
 Undetected or untreated health issues can impact learning later on.
- Research and Accountability \$8,722.07**
 Measuring effectiveness and promoting continuous quality improvement rely on robust, accurate data.

Total = \$783,567.97



239 Children had access to a higher standard of early learning through preschool and child care programs participating in Quality First.



39 Infants, toddlers and preschoolers received scholarships to access high quality early learning through preschool or child care.



70 Families of newborns left the hospital with tools to help them support their child's health and learning.

INVESTING IN SCHOOL READINESS



DISTRICT PRESCHOOL HELPS PREPARE TOHONO O'ODHAM CHILDREN FOR KINDERGARTEN

A preschool program at Indian Oasis Elementary School in Sells is providing quality early learning to children living on the Tohono O'odham Nation.

In 2013, the Baboquivari Unified School District partnered with First Things First to offer early learning to about 40 4-year-old children through a pre-kindergarten class.

Within 18 months, the program received a Quality rating from FTF's signature program, Quality First, which partners with child care and preschool providers to improve the quality of early learning across Arizona. Quality First funds quality improvements that research proves help children thrive, such as training for teachers to expand their skills and to help create learning environments that nurture the emotional, social and academic development of every child.

That same year, an additional pre-k classroom opened, this time providing learning to 3-year-old children and increasing the program's enrollment to 55 kids.

"Of all the students that have entered our preschool program, 98 percent of them are at or above grade level in their current grade," said Baboquivari District Superintendent Dr. Edna Morris.

Today, there are five pre-k classes on campus, serving 87 children who are 3, 4 and 5 years old.

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FUNDED PARTNERS - FY2015

Maricopa County Department of Public Health
Pima County Health Department
Southwest Human Development

Tohono O'odham Nation
United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona
University of Arizona Cooperative Extension
Valley of the Sun United Way

